



Moonshadow's Spirit honors the memory of Jennifer Mathiason by offering need-based financial assistance to individuals with an eating disorder diagnosis who are seeking treatment at residential facilities (hospitals or privately owned) or intensive partial hospitalization program facilities.

***"Eating disorders are too often simplified, and often trivialized."  
Read one woman's story of her struggle and her friendship with Jenn (Moonshadow).***

I am not an expert on eating disorders or an expert on anything really. I don't speak or write on this topic regularly. I was friends with Jenn, and I had my own experience with an eating disorder, so that's what I'm going to share with you. I feel the weight of what this illness can do, how it can seize someone and cause an implosion. When you see individuals who have starved themselves, you see it from the outside. You see the body, wasted. But that's just the consequence – the real illness is all in the head, the heart, and the soul.

When I started college, I was relatively healthy. I was health conscious, ate well and exercised a few days a week, but as far as I can tell, I was pretty normal. By spring break of my freshman year in college, I had lost a lot of weight. My face was gaunt, my elbows poked, and my clothes were too big.

What happened? Well, during my experience, everyone had their theory: I must have looked at too many models in fashion magazines, and now I feel fat even though I'm not. I must be so busy with school that I forget to eat. I must be getting pressured by boyfriends or sorority friends to look sexy. I must be trying to get attention.

Eating disorders are too often simplified, and often trivialized. It's not always about trying to be thin or sexy, and the cure is not a matter of putting away the magazines, or as my dad once innocently suggested, just drinking a couple milkshakes each day. Different people have different issues, different triggers for the behavior. But I would theorize that there is at least one common ground between individuals with eating disorders – both the cause and the solution are complex.

For me, there were a lot of things going on at that time in my life. For most teenagers, starting college is full of transition, which is more stressful for some than others. There was so much uncertainty. What would I study? How successful would I be at this new Ivy League school? What would I do after college? Who would I be friends with? What kind of person would I be? What guys was I attracted to? What relationships would I keep with those friends and family back home?

I was struggling with an identity crisis. My perfectionism didn't help. I equated normal or average performance with deficiency, mediocrity. I wanted all or nothing, to be exceptional at something or drop it altogether. And on top of everything else, moving up north for school proved quite difficult for me.

With all the uncertainty, pressure, and personal dissatisfaction, I felt like my life was totally out of control. As I lost confidence, I began to introvert further. I began feeling more and more isolated, being so far from the friends and family I had known back home and not yet feeling very close to anyone at school. I was searching for something by which to define myself, to fulfill me. While I was struggling with my identity, there were certain things I knew I did not want to be. I did not want to be at the bottom of my class in school; I did not want to be in the nerdy sorority; and I did not want to be fat.

Food and exercise became a source, and soon the sole source, of personal satisfaction. Here was something certain, under my complete control, without having to rely on other people or worry about external circumstances.

*"Moonshadow helped me so much! If it weren't for them, I wouldn't have been able to go to treatment. I am so thankful for being awarded the scholarship. I am doing so well and living a happy and healthy life."*

- Caitlyn Moore

I began to define myself in terms of calories; I could structure my day in terms of calories. Calories did not depend on weather or test scores. I could think about what I would eat and when I would exercise, come to decisions, and that would be that. Unlike everything else that seemed so uncertain and unsatisfying. Of course, all of these issues only fueled each other.

As I became more depressed, I became more isolated, and therefore even more depressed. As I became more starved, I became more paranoid and obsessive, which caused me to starve more. All of these things I understand now – but I didn't then. This understanding didn't happen in a week, or a month. It took a few years to gain.

I sporadically kept a diary at the time. That spring, I wrote: "Nothing can make it go away anymore. My heart races and my mind won't shut up or let me sleep. I can never concentrate. I want to cry, vent, but nothing will come out. I just want some peace and quiet. I want to be able to think about things, like I used to, before I got a one-track mind. I feel so alone! No one I can talk to, yet everyone knows, which makes it worse. I don't enjoy anything, and the best I can hope for is a distraction."

When I got back to school, I made the best decision that I had made in probably several months. I picked up the phone and called the student health center to make an appointment. The best decision, but one of the hardest phone calls of my life. I remember sitting on the floor in my dorm room, my heart racing, trying to think about what I would say. I turned up the stereo, just in case anyone might hear me in the hallway. I remember finally saying the words "I think I have an eating disorder" and they were like rocks in my throat.

*[Read the rest of the story on our web site.]*

[http://www.moonshadowsspirit.org/stories/make\\_it\\_happen](http://www.moonshadowsspirit.org/stories/make_it_happen)

### **Eating Disorder Facts:**

- Nearly half of all Americans know someone with an eating disorder .
- Death rate is 12 times higher than all other causes of death for females 15 – 24 years old.
- Treatment can cost \$1500 to \$2000 per day - with initial inpatient treatment of more than \$50,000.
- The cost of outpatient treatment, including therapy and medical monitoring, can extend to \$100,000.
- 10-15% of people with anorexia are males.
- High school and college wrestlers are 7-10 times more likely to develop bulimia nervosa than the average male .
- 20% of people suffering from anorexia will die prematurely from complications related to their eating disorder.
- Eating disorder rates are climbing throughout the world. For example, rates in Japan and Iran are now comparable to rates in the United States.
- 8% of women over the age of 50 are engaging in unhealthy weight control methods such as purging and the use of laxatives.

### **The Need Is Greater than Ever**

Applications to Moonshadow's Spirit are on a steady increase. We are on pace to receive 34 this year - more than double the 2011 requests. Our 2012 fund raising is not keeping pace with the increased need. The good news is that you can help! Your donations have helped sustain us. You can also help by telling your friends and family about this cause and participating in events. This work would not be possible without you. We truly thank you for your generosity! You can donate on our web site (<http://www.moonshadowsspirit.org/donations>) or by using the enclosed envelope.

### **How To Find Us**

Our E-mail is: [info@moonshadowsspirit.org](mailto:info@moonshadowsspirit.org)  
Visit the Moonshadow's Spirit facebook page

Visit our web site [www.moonshadowsspirit.org](http://www.moonshadowsspirit.org)  
Follow us on Twitter (@mshadowsspirit)



*"I am so grateful for the treatment that this organization allowed me to obtain. The financial assistance I received from Moonshadow's Spirit allowed me to continue in a partial program that I desperately needed for much longer than I would have otherwise been able to attend, given my loss of insurance at the time. Furthermore, I found such warm, caring comfort sent to me from the people at this organization. I received a touching inspirational card and a handmade blanket, and this illustrated to me that I was cared about as an individual by these people who I hadn't even met face to face. I have never felt such support, hope, and encouragement from even my own family. My experience with Moonshadow's Spirit has been an encouraging one, and has brought a new light of hope to my fight for recovery. I sincerely thank them with all my heart. "*

-Kate Lawson

### About Our Financial Awards

We began accepting applications in February of 2010. Since that time we have provided 19 awards totaling more than \$44,000. Our recipients have received treatment in centers across the country.

**Who can apply?** Applications are accepted from anyone seeking treatment at an in-patient treatment center or a partial hospitalization program in the United States.

**How are awards determined?** Applications are reviewed once per quarter by our Application Committee. The Treasurer determines the amount of funding available for the quarter. All applications received by the deadline are reviewed against the published criteria and dollar amounts are allocated within the funding limit.

#### What are the criteria?

- Urgency of need (based on treatment team recommendations and presenting information)
- Financial need
- Commitment to treatment program and desire to change behaviors
- Strength of support structure post treatment

**How is the award dispersed?** In most cases the money is sent directly to the treatment center. However, the committee has reimbursed travel expenses on an exception basis.

**Is there a typical award?** No. Everything is based upon funds available, number of applications and the specified criteria. Award amounts have ranged from around \$500 to nearly \$7,000.

### Prayer Shawls

Last year many of you responded to our request for prayer shawls. You can see in our testimonials how much they are appreciated. With the increase in applicants, our supply is empty. If you would like to knit a shawl, please contact us. We'll supply directions and yarn.

### Merchandise for Sale

We continue to sell note cards, journals, and prints. Thanks to **Christine Tandy** of **Two Creative Sisters**, we now have Moonshadow earrings for sale.

Visit our web site to order.

<http://www.moonshadowsspirit.org/store>



### Fourth Annual Moonshadow's Spirit Jennifer Mathiason Memorial Garage Sale a Big Success

Our fourth annual garage sale was held June 8 & 9. Thanks to donations from 24 families and assistance from 18 volunteer workers, we raised over **\$2,600** in sales and donations.

*"I am so grateful to MoonShadow's Spirit for supporting me on my road to recovery. With the help of MoonShadow I was able to [alleviate] some of the stress and expenses that come along with making this very important decision. There are so many girls who are desperately in need of help who can't afford it. MoonShadow's scholarship gives us a chance to make a life changing decision." -SL*

*"I had been struggling with my eating disorder for nearly 10 years and my insurance would not fully pay for treatment. Just when I thought all hope was lost and I was mentally and physically ready to give up, MoonShadow's Spirit was there to help me. Not a day goes by that I don't think about the enormous gift the foundation has given to me. Because of MoonShadow's Spirit I've been given the opportunity to continue fighting for recovery and restore my life! I believe that full recovery is possible and with the help of this foundation I'm living this out in my life." -Sarah Davis*

*"MoonShadow's Spirit has been such a blessing to me on my road towards recovery! I am incredibly grateful for the support of everyone who works behind them. Without MoonShadow's Spirit I would have never been able to afford the outpatient php [partial hospitalization] program that I needed.... Not only did I receive that amazing support, but I also received support through kind e-mails, motivating letters, packages, and etc. It was so nice to know that I was not alone and had the support of people I have never met behind me and by my side. This organization is such a gift, and I hope that one day I can give back just as much as Jen has given back to me and everyone else she has touched." -A*

**Financial Summary  
(July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012)**

Balance (June 30, 2011):	<b>\$21,444.05</b>
<b>Income:</b>	
Donations:	\$17,891.58
Fundraisers:	\$12,461.70
Merchandise:	\$825.40
Interest:	\$7.35
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>\$31,186.03</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>	
Fundraising:	\$5,593.42
Merchandise:	\$448.17
Office:	\$1,664.67
Insurance:	\$970.00
Miscellaneous:	\$146.19
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$8822.45</b>
<b>Awards Given:</b>	<b>\$28,347.85</b>
<b>Cash Balance (July 1, 2012):</b>	<b>\$15,459.78</b>

**The Year in Review**

**Awareness Day:** On February 11, Moonshadow's Spirit hosted an Eating Disorder Awareness Day. We started the day by telling Jenn's Story of her 10-year struggle and recovery. **Dr. Fran Carns** followed with a discussion on nutrition. Dr Carns stressed proper nutrition without a focus on calories. The next speaker was **Jennifer Brown**, who shared her own personal story of recovery. Jennifer has agreed to tell her story again at our dinner in October. Next was a demonstration of self defense by **Marisa Diliberto** and **Steve Scott**. During breaks attendees were treated to massages, foot detoxification, hand paraffin treatments and Reiki. These treats were provided by **Judy Barton, Karen Thompson, Eileen Ruf, Rosa Milne** and **Melissa Parkhurst**. Attendance was quite good and we plan to hold additional "Awareness Days" in the future.

**Speaking Engagements:** Sharon Mathiason gave a talk on Eating Disorders at Hamburg High School. The presentation focused on Jennifer Mathiason's story.

**2011 Dinner:** The dinner continues to provide a great night out: 132 people ate, socialized, bid, bought raffle tickets, and helped us raise over **\$7,000**. We had two guest speakers. Our first speaker was **Helena Boersma**, program director at Harmony Place, a residential treatment center for adolescents in Rochester, NY. Helena helped us to understand why treatment is so costly. Our second speaker was **Ayesha Sundrum**, a friend of Jennifer's. Ayesha shared her own personal story with an eating disorder and how Jenn helped her. We want to thank the **Xerox Community Involvement Program, Wegmans** and **Edible Arrangements** for helping us with our expenses.

A special thank you to **Lauren Sackey** of Warren, MI. Lauren held a Zumbathon for Moonshadow's Spirit and raised \$535. In her note, Lauren said, *"I battled anorexia for four years and, thankfully, I [have] been in recovery for a couple years. However, an eating disorder forever changed my life and the lives of my loved ones. I hope this small amount of support can help your incredible mission."*

**Our Board of Directors**

Sharon Mathiason (President and Secretary), Helen DeNero (Vice President), David Mathiason (Treasurer), Nancy Rees, Jeff Koff, Erika Fillmore, Matthew Terp, Lisa Paine

*Jennifer – You inspire us all.*

If you have a group that is interested in hearing Jenn's story and learning more about eating disorders, please contact us at [info@moonshadowsspirit.org](mailto:info@moonshadowsspirit.org)



**Fourth Annual Moonshadow's Spirit Dinner, Raffle and Silent Auction**

Friday, October 12, 2012 at the Burgundy Basin Inn, Pittsford, New York

**Invite your friends and help us break last year's record!**

For more information and updates on auction and raffle items, visit our web site

[www.moonshadowsspirit.org](http://www.moonshadowsspirit.org)

