

Making Changes Group



Binge Eating Disorder (BED) is characterized by repeatedly eating a large amount of food (more than most people would in a similar situation) within a relatively short period of time while feeling that you have lost control of your eating. BED is associated with significant health concerns, including obesity, cardiovascular problems, type 2 diabetes, gall bladder disease, sleep apnea, digestive problems and more. BED can also contribute to serious mental health problems, such as anxiety, depression and social isolation. Therefore, it's important to treat patients suffering from BED to improve their health and quality of life. In Hamilton the waitlist for BED treatment in a specialist setting is as long as two to three years! As a result, the HFHT is piloting a new group program called *Making Changes*, led by a mental health counsellor and a registered dietitian.

Interestingly, BED is the only eating disorder that does not include patient overvaluation of weight and shape in its diagnosis — in other words, people with BED may not associate their body weight or shape with their self-worth. People with other types of eating disorders (anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa, for example) tend to associate their body weight and shape with their worth or value. Our pilot group has been designed for those who have BED *without* overvaluation of weight and shape. This is one way that our *Making Changes* group is different from other treatment programs available.

In the group, participants will learn about BED, as well as some evidence-based cognitive behavioural therapy strategies that will provide effective management of their disorder. The registered dietitian leading the group will provide a specialized diet plan for patients to follow, and they will be closely monitored throughout the program to help increase successful recovery and optimize health outcomes.

By the end of the group, patients will be able to recognize their triggers for binge eating and have go-to strategies to reduce binge eating episodes, improve their nutritional intake to meet their nutrient needs, gain a greater sense of control over their food choices, plan for relapse prevention and improve their overall health. This group is all about using the skills and expertise of our allied health professionals to help patients who want to improve their health and mood and conquer their eating disorder!

