

The eating disorder

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All your power is gone.

A suffragette prisoner being force fed by prison authorities, Britain, 1912.
Mary Leigh was force-fed in September, 1909:



"On Saturday afternoon the wardress forced me onto the bed and two doctors came in. While I was held down a nasal tube was inserted. It is two yards long, with a funnel at the end; there is a glass junction in the middle to see if the liquid is passing. The end is put up the right and left nostril on alternative days. The sensation is most painful - the drums of the ears seem to be bursting and there is a horrible pain in the throat and the breast. The tube is pushed down 20 inches. I am on the bed pinned down by wardresses, one doctor holds the funnel end, and the other doctor forces the other end up the nostrils. The one holding the funnel end pours the liquid down - about a pint of milk... egg and milk is sometimes used."

Letter to The Times (10th October, 1909) signed by Kitty Marion, Constance Lytton and Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence:

"We want to make it known that we shall carry on our protest in our prison cells. We shall put before the Government by means of the hunger-strike four alternatives: to release us in a few days; to inflict violence upon our bodies; to add death to the champions of our cause by leaving us to starve; or, and this is the best and only wise alternative, to give women the vote."

Thoughts of the probelm eater

Your verbal protestations and ignored, no they are not even acknowledged. They don't even exist.

What you do is denegated - "stupid waste of time".

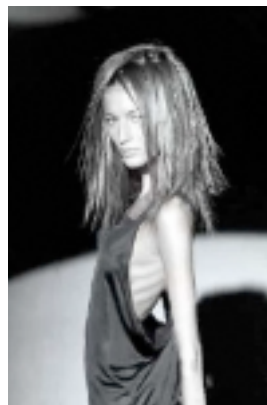
You are becoming a nobody

They know everything about you - what you do, where you go, what you say, who

you see. Your body is not even yours anymore. They want to know what you eat, they count your intake, they want to know your bowel movements, they want to know your periods, they want to know your weight. They know everything about you.



All your edges are getting fuzzy, my sense of me is disappearing. What is left that is me being me. What can I do that is not someone else's want or idea.



Eating disorders. So tragic and yet so childlike. The two year old sitting in the high chair. Mummy puts a spoon to its mouth and the child closes its mouth and pouts its lips. "Come on be a good baby and eat for mummy" is what she says.

Independence, defiance, "I am me and I will take into my body what I want", "I am in charge of my body" is what the two year old says to mummy with the lips closed like a vice. The hunger strike is the ultimate defiance of authority.

Eating disorders



I need to eat in order to stay alive. I can't get food myself. I am dependent on

this person to give me the food so I can live. Food - dependency - life. Now that is a problematic equation.



You have to be perfect. I am dependent on this person. They want my body to be perfect. If I am not perfect they will not give me food. If I have no food I will die.



I am dependent on this person. I don't know who I am. This person defines who I am. This person wants me to be alive. If I don't eat I won't be alive. I can be who I am by not eating. I can be who I am by starving to death.

Why?

This examines in a pictorial sense two aspects of eating disorders

1. The relationship between food and power
2. The relationship between food and dependency

Above are some of the thoughts or situations that confronts the person with an eating disorder.