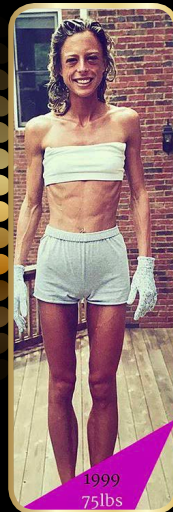


# 2017 Best Self Atlanta Magazine Courage Award Finalist

# KIM SCHAPER

BEFORE



AFTER



**M**y transformation has made dramatic shifts throughout the course of my life, ranging from anorexia to binge eating/bulimia to finally settling into a space of contentment, joy, peace, and strength within my body.

I believe I'm a warrior at heart because, since the age of 19, I've battled severe depression and suicide, all facets of disordered eating, anxiety, abuse, and more. I'm now 38 and can finally say, without a shadow of a doubt, I'm comfortable in my own skin.

Obviously, this transformation didn't occur overnight and in fact, over the course of a significant part of my life, I desperately tried to live up to an unrealistic body standard. The immense pressure I had placed on myself, resulted in starvation at the young age of 19, binge eating and purging at 21, engaging in obsessive exercise and over training throughout my late 20's, and entering and exiting 8 different treatment centers to get myself well.

It wasn't until a few years ago that I finally realized something had to change because whatever I'm doing is not working. I stopped trying to eat "perfect", learned to listen to my body's cues with hunger and

fullness and began to take control of my life. I sought the help of a counselor, attended regularly scheduled gym sessions while setting solid boundaries to not over exercise and slowly began to take small action steps to better myself and the life I was living.

I discovered, we can diet all day long, try the next fad meal plan or workout routine, but until we choose to take a look at our own internal battles and make a conscious choice to better ourselves from the inside out, we will never come out ahead.

Today, I've taken the lessons, trials, and tribulations I've learned and applied these tools to help hundreds of women like myself. My philosophy is simple, own your body confidence, engage in strength training sessions and feel the release of the diet chains that have been holding you down. We work together to find other healthy avenues to gain internal strength. Beauty and confidence starts from the inside out. It's become my mission to help as many as I can with my story.

We only have one body and we need to treat it with respect, love, compassion, and empathy because at the end of the day, "a woman cannot hate herself into leanness."

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