



NORMAL nonprofit

NEWS RELEASE

NORMAL is a national nonprofit organization that educates about eating disorders, body image and self-esteem through arts and mindfulness programs.

Date: March 12, 2012
Contact: Sedef Onder, The Halo Project Inc.
T: 212.699.3761, M: 212.464.7332, sonder@thehaloproject.com

NORMAL Non-profit Re-Launches #1 Body Image Blog Universe
*New and Improved "We Are The Real Deal" blog unites
body image, wellness, expressive arts, eating disorders and psychology fields*

New York, NY -- NORMAL, a national non-profit organization that uses arts and mindfulness programs to educate on eating disorders, body image and self-esteem, today announced the re-launch of its repurposed educational blog universe, We Are The Real Deal (WATRD), with the goal of instructing today's youths on body image, healthy coping and self-esteem via expressive arts therapy and via empowering content authored by professionals from arts, wellness, yoga and psychology fields.

"Over the last decade, I've learned that issues of negative body image aren't faced solely by young girls and women; they exist for everyone – including men and boys, from all cultures and all walks of life. These issues are universal," said NORMAL founder and CEO Robyn Husa. "During the course of writing a book that teaches self-acceptance through an array of arts and mindfulness techniques, I realized the need for a place where my colleagues, mentors and friends from diverse backgrounds can give voice to a united message."

The site's impressive roster of more than 40 contributors features prominent voices including poet and writer Caroline Rothstein; nutritionist and eating disorders specialist, Sandra Kronberg; world champion martial artist Michelle Gay of The Society for Martial Arts Instruction; popular "YeahDave" blogger and yogi David Romanelli, and myriad others who will write on everything from body image and eating disorders to HAES (health at every size), nutrition, self-esteem and wellness. For a complete list of Contributors, please visit: <http://wearetherealdeal.com/be-a-contributor>.

In addition to educating about body image, Husa has re-purposed the WATRD site to offer healthy coping strategies provided by artists and art therapists:

- Experts in martial arts, yoga, theatre, dance, writing, poetry, music, and film will contribute posts offering unique strategies for coping with stress
- The beauty of food as nourishment and as an art form will be highlighted

In a first for the eating disorder non-profit community, a host of established and burgeoning eating disorder organizations and associations will collaborate in sharing resources and tools to effect change. Contributors include NEDA, BEDA, ANAD, NAMED, Eating for Life Alliance (ELA), Eating Disorders Activist network (EDAN), and others.

Another feature of the WATRD site enables the public to learn of volunteer opportunities and connect with a community of others in "giving back through volunteering," a practice that Husa notes helps individuals find greater purpose and increased sense of self-worth.



NORMAL nonprofit

NEWS RELEASE

NORMAL is a national nonprofit organization that educates about eating disorders, body image and self-esteem through arts and mindfulness programs.

Hussa's experience filming dozens of national experts in eating disorders, mental health and body image revealed the importance of increasing self-esteem for building resilience. "Body image bloggers, psychologists, therapists, poets, dancers, musicians, artists, yogis, martial artists and chefs all converge on this site to voice unique perspectives in teaching old and young to embrace self-acceptance," she said.

Hussa's vision for the site is to serve men, women, boys and girls alike as a "safe" space to learn about healthy body image, find his/her voice, and promote media literacy. "Everyone can benefit from learning about healthy ways to manage stress through arts and mindfulness techniques," she notes.

WATRD was donated to Husa and NORMAL in late 2011 by recovered eating disorder patient, body image blogger and activist Heather Blessington, a supermodel who beat anorexia, and who currently blogs at Mamavision, and has volunteered for NORMAL since 2006.

Hussa holds a Masters in Fine Arts from the University of Virginia and is an E-RYT certified yoga instructor with the Yoga Alliance. She recently authored her first book *Healthy Selfitude*, published this month by White Elephant Enterprises and available for pre-order at www.healthyselfitude.com.

Hussa co-founded the Drama Desk and Obie-award winning Transport Group Theatre Company in New York in 2001 and originally produced NORMAL THE MUSICAL Off-Broadway in 2005. In a 2005 review, the *New York Post* wrote "[NORMAL] is a feel-good musical ... [that] shows that any subject, if handled right, is grist for the musical mill." *Variety* magazine followed with "Let's wrap this up and send it out to schools where it can do the most good."

###

NORMAL is a national non-profit arts-and-education organization that educates about eating disorders, body image and self-esteem through arts and mindfulness programs. It offers an array of resources and programs – one of which brings the NIS Program (a hip musical "NORMAL", a related curriculum, panel of medical experts, and persons in recovery) to schools, and that has clinically shown to inspire individuals into treatment.

NORMAL was founded by Robyn Husa, a 2010 recipient of the Champion in Women's Health Award by Sue Ann Thompson's Wisconsin Women's Health Foundation.