

understanding your own fairy tale

5

focus

This exercise will help you understand your personal myths and how they relate to your life.

In many stories, children read about the prince who saves the helpless princess. This recurring theme has created generations of girls, and perhaps boys, who believe that we all need someone to rescue us. The theme of “happily ever after” is another fairy-tale idea that has influenced how we view our relationships and has made us wish for happy endings.

1. Write a fairy tale about your idealized life. Before you start, think about these questions:
 - What will your happy ending be?
 - Who is going to rescue you?
 - What will happen to cause a conflict in your life?
 - Who is your archenemy?
 - Who will magically be there to support you?
 - What do you need to survive the conflict?
 - What will happen to you after you have everything you want?

activity 5 * understanding your own fairy tale

My Fairy Tale

Title _____

There once was a _____

who lived _____.

And she felt _____.

Sometimes she liked to _____.

Then _____.

And next she met _____.

Something terrible happened: _____.

And her archenemy _____.

Then an amazing magical thing occurred: _____.

And she was rescued by _____.

A secret was revealed: _____.

In the end, _____.

And *after* the "happily ever after": _____.

2. Think about the fairy tale that was your favorite when you were growing up.

- What fairy tale was it? _____

- What did you like about it? _____

- How did that story help you create the fairy tale you just wrote? _____

- What character do you most relate to in your fairy tale, and why? _____

- What would be an alternative ending for your fairy tale? _____

follow-up

How do myths in our culture help us, and how do they hurt us? _____

What fairy-tale character do you most relate to? _____

Why is it important to think about what follows the happily-ever-after ending of fairy tales?

How do you think these ideas apply to your eating disorder behavior? _____

more to think about

- ◆ Can you write a new fairy tale that focuses on you as a different character?
- ◆ Who do you want to be?