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978-1-009-01680-3 — Temperament Based Therapy with Support for Anorexia Nervosa

Laura L. Hill , Stephanie Knatz Peck , Christina E. Wierenga

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Temperament Based Therapy with Support for Anorexia Nervosa

A Novel Treatment

Laura L. Hill

The Ohio State University

University of California, San Diego

Stephanie Knatz Peck

University of California, San Diego

Christina E. Wierenga

University of California, San Diego



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We dedicate this book to

Walter H. Kaye, MD

“Walt”

The visionary behind this
novel and emerging treatment:

Temperament Based Therapy with Support
(TBT-S)

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Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

Contents

List of Figures xi
List of Tables xiii
List of Contributors xiv
Foreword: Walter H. Kaye, MD xvii
Preface xix
Acknowledgments xxi

| | | | |
|---|----|--|----|
| Introduction | 1 | 3 Overview of TBT-S Intervention Strategies | 19 |
| | | Neurobiological | |
| | | Psychoeducation | 19 |
| | | Experiential Learning | 20 |
| | | Experiential Activities | 20 |
| | | Multi-Family Therapy (for Young Adult Version) | 20 |
| | | Client and Support Skills Training | 21 |
| | | Meal Coaching and Dietary Activities | 21 |
| | | Framework for Action via the Behavioral Agreement | 22 |
| Section 1 Temperament Based Therapy with Support (TBT-S) Overview | | 4 State of the Evidence Base for TBT-S | 23 |
| 1 What Is Temperament Based Therapy with Support (TBT-S)? | 3 | Multi-Site Open Trial in YA and SE-AN Adults | 23 |
| Why TBT-S Began by Focusing on Anorexia Nervosa | 3 | Single-Site Open Trial in YA AN | 23 |
| TBT-S Description | 3 | | |
| What Is Temperament, and Why Is It Important? | 4 | 5 How to Use This Manual | 25 |
| Who Are the Intended Participants? | 7 | | |
| Where Can TBT-S Be Applied? | 8 | Section 2 Setting Up Treatment | |
| TBT-S Modular Structure | 9 | | |
| Two TBT-S Versions: Young Adult (YA) and Severe-and-Enduring Anorexia Nervosa (SE-AN) | 9 | 6 How to Introduce the Biological Bases of Eating Disorders at Initial Engagement | 27 |
| 2 TBT-S Core Principles | 12 | | |
| Eating Disorders Are Brain and Biologically Based Disorders | 12 | | |
| Treat to the Trait: Targeting Temperament in Treatment | 13 | | |
| Food Is Medicine | 16 | | |
| Supports Are a Necessary Part of Treatment | 17 | | |
| Movement and/or Actions Are Fundamental to Change | 17 | | |

Cambridge University Press
978-1-009-01680-3 — Temperament Based Therapy with Support for Anorexia Nervosa
Laura L. Hill , Stephanie Knatz Peck , Christina E. Wierenga
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

| viii | Contents |
|------|---|
| 7 | How to Engage Supports in Treatment 29 Introducing Supports at the Beginning of Treatment 29 Including Supports in Treatment Segments 30 How to Ask Supports to Join the Adult Client in Designated Sessions 31 |
| 8 | Nuts and Bolts of TBT-S 33 Who Is Involved in the TBT-S Treatment Team, and What Are Their Roles? 33 Where TBT-S Treatment Takes Place 35 Food Considerations 35 How TBT-S Meals Are Conducted at All Levels of Care 35 |
| | Section 3 TBT-S Treatment Interventions |
| 9 | How to Deliver Neurobiology Psychoeducation as a Motivational Strategy 38 Objective 38 Content 39 |
| 10 | TBT-S Neurobiology Psychoeducation Module: Overview of the Neurobiology of Anorexia Nervosa 42 Objective 42 Content 43 |
| 11 | TBT-S Neurobiology Psychoeducation Module: Anxiety and Interoception 50 Objective 50 Content 50 |
| 12 | TBT-S Neurobiology Psychoeducation Module: Reward and Punishment Sensitivity 57 Objective 57 Content 57 |
| 13 | TBT-S Neurobiology Psychoeducation Module: Decision-Making and Inhibitory Control 64 Objective 64 Content 64 |
| 14 | Introduction to TBT-S for Young Adults (YA TBT-S) 70 Rationale for a TBT-S Model for Young Adults with Anorexia Nervosa 70 What Is the Conceptual Framework of YA TBT-S? 72 How Is Temperament Targeted in YA TBT-S? 73 Rationale for Including Parents as Supports in YA TBT-S 75 YA TBT-S Session Format 75 |
| 15 | Young Adult TBT-S Multi-Family Group Format 77 TBT-S Group Therapy for Parents and Young Adults with AN 77 How to Facilitate Cross-Group Interactions 78 |
| 16 | Young Adult TBT-S Parent Skills Training 82 Purpose and Description of the Parent Skills Training Module 82 Parent Support for Young Adults with AN 82 Parenting a Young Adult Activity 83 Dialectical Parental Support Module 84 Parent Skills Training 89 |
| 17 | Young Adult TBT-S Client Skills Training 94 Purpose and Description of the Young Adult Client Skills Training Module 94 Clinician Checklist for YA Skills 95 Targeting Anxiety Module 95 Targeting Interoception Module 102 Targeting Altered Reward Sensitivity/Motivational Deficits Module 103 |

| | |
|----|---|
| x | Contents |
| 27 | Summary of Temperament Based Therapy with Support 167 |
| | <hr/> |
| | Appendix 1 Ten Biological Facts about Anorexia Nervosa Handout 168 |
| | Appendix 2 TBT-S Trait Profile Checklist 172 |
| | Appendix 3 Young Adults: Emerging Adulthood Handout 175 |
| | Appendix 4 Parenting Young Adults with Anorexia Nervosa: Providing Parental Assistance in Developmentally Appropriate Ways Handout 176 |
| | Appendix 5 Dialectical Model of Parental Support 178 |
| | Appendix 6 Young Adult Client Rules and Framework for Meals and Snacks Handout 179 |
| | Appendix 7 List of Distraction Activities Handout 181 |
| | Appendix 8 Young Adult Client “RAD” Skills Handout 182 |
| | Appendix 9 TBT-S Toolbox 185 |
| | Appendix 10 YES/NO Game: TBT-S Neurobiological Experiential Activity 187 |
| | Appendix 11 Nondominant Hand: TBT-S Neurobiological and Problem-Solving Experiential Activity 193 |
| | Appendix 12 Telephone: TBT-S Neurobiological Experiential Activity 197 |
| | Appendix 13 Neuron Activity: Why Food and Support Are Needed: TBT-S Neurobiological Experiential Activity 203 |
| | Appendix 14 Brain Wave: TBT-S Neurobiological Experiential Activity 209 |
| | Appendix 15 Anxiety Wave: TBT-S Problem-Solving Experiential Activity 246 |
| | Appendix 16 Anxiety Brain Sculpt: TBT-S Problem-Solving Experiential Activity 252 |
| | Appendix 17 Wire-Re-wire: TBT-S Problem-Solving Experiential Activity 258 |
| | Appendix 18 Stop, Reboot, Reroute: TBT-S Problem-Solving Experiential Activity 265 |
| | Appendix 19 Landmine: TBT-S Problem-Solving Experiential Activity 268 |
| | Appendix 20 Social Gauntlet: TBT-S Problem-Solving Experiential Activity 277 |
| | Appendix 21 Charades: TBT-S Problem-Solving Experiential Activity 282 |
| | Appendix 22 What Will You Do? TBT-S Problem-Solving Experiential Activity 285 |
| | Appendix 23 Expert Client Advice: TBT-S Problem-Solving Experiential Activity 288 |
| | Appendix 24 Communicating and Listening: Young Adult TBT-S Experiential Activity Addressing Family Relationships 291 |
| | Appendix 25 Family Circuits: Young Adult TBT-S Experiential Activity Addressing Communication and Family Structure 294 |
| | Appendix 26 Family Wise Mind: Young Adult TBT-S Experiential Activity Addressing Communication and Family Relationships 298 |
| | Appendix 27 Young Adult Behavioral Agreement (YA BA) 302 |
| | Appendix 28 Severe-and-Enduring Anorexia Nervosa (SE-AN) Behavioral Agreement 308 |
| | Glossary 317 |
| | References 322 |
| | Index 331 |

Figures

| | | |
|-------|--|-----|
| 1.1 | Temperament in relation to personality and character | 4 |
| 1.2 | What is temperament? | 5 |
| 1.3 | Traits are distinguishing <i>features</i> of temperament that interact with environment | 5 |
| 1.4 | Current ED therapies focus on personality and character | 5 |
| 1.5 | TBT-S augments other treatments by focusing on temperament | 6 |
| 1.6 | The relationship between traits and environmental influences on symptoms | 7 |
| 1.7 | Temperament Based Therapy with Support (TBT-S) | 8 |
| 2.1 | TBT-S neurobiological model of AN | 13 |
| 2.2 | Common eating disorder traits | 14 |
| 2.3 | How traits relate to symptoms | 15 |
| 2.4 | Example of trait impact on symptoms | 15 |
| 8.1 | Treatment team | 33 |
| 10.1 | TBT-S neurobiological model of AN | 46 |
| 10.2 | Areas of the brain involved in eating | 48 |
| 11.1 | Insula | 52 |
| 11.2 | Example of a neural interoceptive prediction error | 53 |
| 11.3 | Decreased insula response to touch anticipation is associated with increased body dissatisfaction and harm avoidance in women remitted from anorexia nervosa | 55 |
| 12.1 | Reward circuit | 59 |
| 12.2 | Decreased reward circuit response to food pictures and pleasant taste in anorexia nervosa | 60 |
| 12.3 | Decreased caudate response to taste is associated with increased harm avoidance in women remitted from anorexia nervosa | 60 |
| 12.4 | Exaggerated cognitive circuit response to losses in AN | 61 |
| 12.5 | Influence of hunger/satiety on taste reward processing in AN | 62 |
| 13.1 | Inhibitory control circuit | 65 |
| 13.2 | Altered brain response during decision-making in AN: Money | 66 |
| 13.3 | Altered brain response during decision-making in AN: Food | 68 |
| 16.1 | Blank dialectical model of parent support | 86 |
| 16.2 | Dialectical model of parent support, overview | 87 |
| 16.3 | Dialectical model of parent support | 88 |
| 17.1 | Young adult client rules and framework for meals and snacks | 100 |
| 17.2 | Young adult prompts to identify healthy external motivational sources | 105 |
| 18.1 | TBT-S Toolbox | 108 |
| 20.1 | Practical food portions | 125 |
| 22.1 | Young adult prompts to prepare for the Behavioral Agreement | 133 |
| 22.2 | Parent prompts to prepare for the Behavioral Agreement | 135 |
| 23.1 | Trait Profile Checklist | 138 |
| 23.2 | Preparation for SE-AN BA Worksheet 1 | 141 |
| 23.3 | Goals and Objectives, SE-AN Behavioral Agreement Worksheet 2 | 144 |
| 23.4 | Summary SE-AN Behavioral Agreement, Worksheet 3 | 149 |
| A12.1 | Neuron | 198 |

Cambridge University Press
978-1-009-01680-3 — Temperament Based Therapy with Support for Anorexia Nervosa
Laura L. Hill , Stephanie Knatz Peck , Christina E. Wierenga
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

| xii | List of Figures |
|-------|---|
| A12.2 | Female with arms extended representing a neuron 199 |
| A12.3 | Areas of the brain involved in eating 202 |
| A13.1 | Neuron with glial cells 204 |
| A13.2 | Glial cell 205 |
| A14.1 | Areas of the brain involved in eating 210 |
| A14.2 | Areas of the brain involved in eating 214 |
| A14.3 | Areas of the brain involved in eating 216 |
| A15.1 | The corticolimbic system 247 |
| A15.2 | Areas of the brain involved in eating 248 |
| A15.3 | Anxiety wave symptoms 250 |
| A15.4 | Anxiety wave responses 250 |
| A17.1 | Areas of the brain involved in eating 259 |
| A17.2 | Hands holding a skein of yarn 261 |
| A19.1 | Insula 269 |
| A19.2 | Areas of the brain involved in eating 270 |
| A19.3 | Reward circuit 271 |
| A19.4 | Landmine sketch, client solo, uncompleted meal 272 |
| A19.5 | Landmine sketch, with Support, completed meal 273 |
| A20.1 | Areas of the brain involved in eating 278 |
| A20.2 | Running the gauntlet 279 |
| A26.1 | Wise Mind dialectical model 299 |

Tables

- 2.1 Reconceptualizing traits as strengths and strategies to treat to the trait 14
- 8.1 TBT-S treatment team members and roles 34
- 17.1 YA TBT-S treatment targets matched with skills 96
- 19.1 TBT-S experiential activities 116
- 20.1 TBT-S dietary nomenclature 122
- 24.1 5-day YA TBT-S program schedule 154
- 24.2 Six-session YA TBT-S series 155
- 24.3 5-day SE-AN TBT-S program schedule 156
- 24.4 Examples of TBT-S modules added to intensive outpatient eating disorder program 157
- 24.5 Examples of TBT-S modules added to outpatient eating disorder treatment as usual 158
- A14.1 Brain Wave cards 210
- A14.2 Brain responses for AN: What’s true for me? 214
- A14.3 Brain responses for binge eating: What’s true for me? 216

Contributors

Dr. Laura L. Hill is Adjunct Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health, The Ohio State University, and Voluntary Assistant Clinical Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of California, San Diego. Dr. Hill is one of the original founders of the Academy for Eating Disorders and was Director of the National Eating Disorder Organization, now known as the National Eating Disorder Association (NEDA), from 1990 to 1994. She was also Founder, President, and Chief Executive Officer of The Center for Balanced Living from 2000 to 2017. Dr. Hill is the recipient of the Muskingum University Distinguished Service Award and the NEDA 2011 Lori Irving Award for Excellence in Eating Disorders Prevention and Awareness. She is a 2012 TEDx presenter, titled “Eating Disorders from the Inside Out,” and has spoken internationally and conducted eating disorder research for more than forty years.

Dr. Stephanie Knatz Peck is Associate Clinical Professor at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD). She is Director of Intensive Family Treatment (IFT) Programs at the UCSD Eating Disorders Treatment and Research Program, an internationally known eating disorders treatment program emphasizing family involvement, peer support, and brain-based treatment. In addition to her clinical work, Dr. Peck co-developed Temperament Based Therapy with Support (TBT-S) and is responsible for the development and evaluation of the Young Adult version of TBT-S. In addition to program development and oversight, she

continues to pursue her passion for helping others by providing direct clinical care for clients and family members affected by eating disorders. Dr. Peck has directly treated hundreds of clients and families over her career.

Dr. Peck has presented nationally and internationally on her work related to brain-based treatments and the Intensive Family Treatment Programs with world-renowned experts. She frequently conducts continuing education seminars for professionals and has presented clinical workshops and intensive trainings for lead organizations in the field, including the Academy of Eating Disorders/International Conference of Eating Disorders (ICED), the National Eating Disorder Association (NEDA), and the International Association of Eating Disorder Professionals (IAEDP). Additionally, she co-runs biannual two-day intensive trainings at the UCSD Eating Disorders Center for invited professionals. Dr. Peck has coauthored nine book chapters and various original scientific articles on topics related to eating disorders, including brain-based treatment.

Dr. Christina E. Wierenga is Professor of Psychiatry and Clinical Neuropsychologist at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), and Co-director of the Research Program at the UCSD Eating Disorders Treatment and Research Program. She received her PhD in clinical psychology with a specialization in neuropsychology, neuro-rehabilitation, and clinical neuroscience from the University of Florida and completed an NIH postdoctoral fellowship at UCSD in biological psychiatry.

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Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

and neuroscience. She is an expert in the neurobiology of eating disorders, in particular related to the neural circuitry supporting cognition and behavior. She conducts neuroimaging and neuropsychological research examining the brain basis of disordered eating, with an emphasis on key constructs that contribute to altered motivation to eat, including cognitive control, reward processing, learning, and interoception. She is also heavily involved in treatment development efforts for eating disorders guided by a neurobiological understanding of temperament based behavior, as well as

treatment outcome studies. Through close collaboration with Drs. Peck and Hill, she has developed and continues to test the Temperament Based Therapy with Support (TBT-S) approach for individuals with eating disorders. She is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, a Fellow of the Academy for Eating Disorders and a member of the Eating Disorder Research Society and has published more than 100 peer-reviewed papers and received research funding from multiple agencies (e.g., National Institutes of Health, National Eating Disorders Association, the Department of Veterans Affairs).

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Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

Foreword

Walter H. Kaye, MD

Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry, University of California, San Diego Department of Psychiatry, and Founder and Executive Director, UCSD Eating Disorder Treatment and Research Program

Anorexia nervosa is often a chronic behavioral disorder with a high rate of medical complications and risk of dying. However, there has been limited progress in developing more effective treatments for this disorder. In part, a lack of a mechanistic understanding of anorexia nervosa has thwarted efforts to develop powerful evidence-based interventions. In recent years, innovations in genetic and biobehavioral research on anorexia nervosa have shed light on the neurobiological contributions to disease risk and chronicity. Temperament Based Therapy with Support (TBT-S) offers insights into how this knowledge can be translated into effective clinical interventions.

There has been a growing realization that people with anorexia nervosa tend to have certain personality and temperament traits. These traits, such as drive for achievement, perfectionism, anxiety, or risk or harm avoidance, tend to occur first in childhood, well before the onset of an eating disorder. These traits tend to become exacerbated when the individual is ill but persist in a mild to moderate form after recovery. These traits may create a vulnerability to developing anorexia nervosa and play a role in restricted eating.

For most people, not eating for a few days is uncomfortable, whereas hunger makes food more motivating and rewarding. In contrast, for those with anorexia nervosa, eating is anxiety producing, whereas not eating reduces anxiety or may even be empowering. New brain imaging research is revealing that primitive systems in the brain that we share with lower animals may miscode reward and anxiety signals in those with anorexia nervosa, resulting in anxious messages about food.^[1] That is, the anxious temperament in many with anorexia nervosa may flood the brain and overwhelm motivating and reward messages about food.

It is very difficult to change temperament. Several years ago, we raised the question, in a paper called “Temperament-Based Treatment for Anorexia Nervosa,”^[2] that people could learn compensatory skills to better understand and manage temperament in anorexia nervosa. This concept was tested and published in several papers.^[3–5] How is this possible? Humans are remarkably adaptable to learning to compensate for deficits. For example, if you are blind, you can learn to use touch and sound to navigate the world. As we begin to understand more about these temperaments, which are hardwired into the brain, we can help people with anorexia nervosa, and their families, develop compensatory skills and strategies to manage their anxiety and facilitate eating.

I am very grateful that I have been fortunate to have worked with Laura, Stephanie, and Christina in developing these concepts and treatment. They are extremely talented, clever, and smart and have shown outstanding imagination and skill in transforming biological concepts into treatment applications. Laura has constantly amazed me in regard to her insights into behavior of those with anorexia nervosa and her creativity in developing

interactive approaches that get the attention and participation of those with this disorder. Stephanie is one of most brilliant therapists I know in terms of her ability to explain the symptoms of anorexia nervosa to families and guide them in conceptualization of effective interactions. I am in awe of Christina’s outstanding ability to demystify complex, cutting-edge science and translate these constructs in terms that both laypeople and therapists can understand and use. I am delighted to see them bring to life this comprehensive and detailed book that describes neurobiology, core principles, and a range of applications of TBT-S. I have witnessed the enthusiasm of patients and families who use and benefit from TBT-S because it explains their puzzling symptoms and, most importantly, gives them strategies that are effective. Moreover, Laura, Stephanie, and Christina make this treatment interesting, and even fun, and build an alliance between those with anorexia nervosa and their Supports.

I am particularly proud of the work that has contributed to the development of TBT-S. As I get older, it is reassuring to know that Laura, Stephanie, and Christina will continue this work, expand the reach of TBT-S, and continue to generate data that will demonstrate efficacy – and that TBT-S improves communication with those with anorexia nervosa, who often lack motivation to change or insight into their behaviors, and provides tools that they are more willing to employ and skills that help them recover.

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Preface

I (Laura Hill) was formally introduced to the work by the artist Henri Matisse in the house of Matisse, in Nice, France. Until that time in my early life, I had thought art was not “real art” unless the subject matter looked like illustrations, such as paintings by Norman Rockwell. The day I walked into the Matisse Museum, my appreciation for art turned around 180 degrees.

The rooms were laid out chronologically. The first room was filled with portraits. At first I thought they were black-and-white photographs. Upon closer examination, I realized they were pencil drawings – hundreds of lines portraying a face, a shadow, and light, hundreds of lines detailing a woman’s eyes, nose, mouth, chin, and hair. I was mesmerized by the exactness of the images.

The next room continued to display Matisse’s portraits of various subjects, but the drawings had fewer lines. Lines were removed, yet the essence of the image remained strong and clear. In each consecutive room, lines were removed from the images. Some portraits displayed great detail of half of the subjects’ faces; the other half was blank, allowing the viewer to perceptually complete the images. The essential lines defined the image as they simultaneously opened the viewer to the expanse of their potential.

The rooms culminated in the upstairs loft area, where Matisse’s cutouts filled the space. His flowers, leaves, shapes, and figures were simply portrayed, yet they vibrantly expressed the essence of the overall image. A transformative new technique was developed in art making. I stood in that space, looking at the work of an artist who presented the viewer with less, and yet so much more.

A few years later, I was in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, walking down a hallway looking ahead at a colorful depiction of chaos in a large painting by Jackson Pollock. I became aware of a sensation that I was swimming. I looked to my right, and there on the hallway wall was a continuous flow of blue paper, cut in wave-like shapes. One line flowed throughout the image. I stopped. The title of the piece was *The Swimmer*. It was by Matisse.

This book introduces you to a new treatment approach, Temperament Based Therapy with Support (TBT-S). We originally wrote the book by using hundreds of lines to depict an illustrative understanding of the treatment. We portrayed in detail its development, its interactive process, and the biological nature of the illness and treatment. However, each draft contained so many lines that it became difficult to see the core principles illustrated throughout the book. The challenge became, how do we present the reader with a novel treatment, without writing every line and describing every aspect?

We decided less is more. This manual describes the essential points of TBT-S. We share the key point of each topic and simultaneously open the reader to the expanse of its potential. This is harder than it appears. We have removed sections, lines, dimensions, and details. It has taken many versions to maintain the clear and strong fundamental nature of the treatment, while leaving it open for the reader to realize the breadth of its ability to augment other treatments and to intervene in other diagnoses. Whether the reader is new to eating disorder treatment or an expert, this book is a manual of the essential themes of TBT-S. The intent of this style of writing is to influence clinicians as they enter a treatment

session to detect client traits flowing through their thoughts, feelings, and actions and realize the traits are “cut out” from the client’s temperament.

The manual practices what TBT-S preaches: to actively move toward a solution, allowing one’s natural tendencies (temperament) to drive and determine what works best to reach that destination. The ongoing neurobiological findings of anorexia nervosa are complex. Eating disorder symptom reduction is complex, difficult, and counter to dominant eating disorder trait tendencies. Yet, people with anorexia nervosa can and do get better. How? What has been missing that could help ongoing treatment processes become more succinct in the short term and have better long-lasting outcomes? This book provides a novel temperament based approach that fills in a significant therapeutic gap by integrating research findings on the neurobiological bases of AN with clinical interventions.

We hope you find this manual helpful to your practice. Young adult (YA) clients with anorexia nervosa and those with severe-and-enduring anorexia nervosa (SE-AN) have repeatedly told us that TBT-S has turned them around 180 degrees. They reported that they understood their illness better and realized what they could and could not do to move forward on their own. This manual is to be used to augment ongoing eating disorder therapies, as a classroom guide to instruct emerging professionals and for research studies. It addresses how to approach the essential nature of anorexia nervosa. A key point is that TBT-S treats to the traits – the core substance that delineates one’s potential.

Acknowledgments

We, Laura, Stephanie, and Christina, acknowledge and offer our deep gratitude to the nonprofit organization Eating Disorder Families of Australia (EDFA). EDFA was developed to ensure that Supports are included in the treatment of anorexia nervosa, to help increase treatment outcomes and improve collaboration among clinicians, clients, and Supports. Their goal overlaps with a core principle of Temperament Based Therapy with Support, to include Supports (any person to whom the client turns for support) in portions of the treatment process. EDFA led the hosting of extensive TBT-S training programs across Australia, collaborating with other eating disorder organizations. The authors of this book led face-to-face trainings for clinicians and Supports from coast to coast. This book was conceived during this tour of trainings in 2019.

Laura Hill

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