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## 'I didn't know how sick I was, I didn't think anything was wrong': Woman suffering from anorexia at just 12 years old reveals how she turned her life around and is now chasing her dreams of becoming an actress

- Laura Beverley, from New Zealand, was diagnosed with anorexia at 12 years old
  - The aspiring actress had treatment in San Diego using the Mandometer Method
  - It involved monitoring food intake and 'fullness', as well as 'warm room' therapy
  - She now lives in Los Angeles and is pursuing her dream to become an actress
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A 23-year-old woman who was diagnosed with anorexia at just 12 years old has revealed how she turned her life around to chase her Hollywood dreams.

Laura Beverley, from New Zealand, had to be hospitalised and tube fed after her weight plummeted to dangerous levels before she had even reached her teen years.

But after undergoing treatment in San Diego more than 10 years ago, the LA-based film star said she found a way to 'stop destroying myself' and live a normal life.



Laura Beverley, 23, was diagnosed with anorexia at just 12 years old and has revealed how she turned her life around to chase her Hollywood dreams



The New Zealand woman, who is now an aspiring actress living in Los Angeles (right), had to be hospitalised and tube fed (left) after her weight plummeted to dangerous levels

Speaking about her disorder, Beverley told Daily Mail Australia her situation changed dramatically just before her teenage years.

'When I was 12 I was placed into a hospital for anorexia. I had been in a gradual slide to that point,' she said.

'At the time I didn't know how sick I was, I had started going through puberty and that was changing my body.

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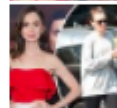
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But the treatment facilities she went to in New Zealand were not specialised to deal with eating disorders and failed to work for her.

'I didn't understand why everyone was against me and I didn't think anything was wrong,' Beverley said.

She added: 'When you are in the middle, it is all that you can see and all the world is for you. It is all-consuming and prevents you from seeing the other parts of life.'



Speaking about her disorder, Laura (pictured during treatment in San Diego) told Daily Mail Australia that her situation changed dramatically just before her teenage years



She said her weight had been in 'a gradual slide' before she was admitted to hospital and then treated with a naso-gastric tube as an outpatient (pictured above in the months before she was admitted)

When she failed to get better, her parents heard about a treatment program from Sweden that had produced promising results.

'We met another family who had sent their daughter to the Mandometer Method program and they highly recommended it, so we went to a talk.'

Convinced by the certainty of Dr Cecilia Bergh, one of the scientists who spearheaded the treatment, Beverley's family took her to one of their American clinics, splitting the family up.

The in-patient program she attended, called the Mandometer Method, was developed in Sweden in 1993 and focused on helping Beverley reconnect with what her body felt.



**When she failed to get better, Beverley's parents heard about a treatment program from Sweden and took her to the clinic's centre in San Diego, America**

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Beverley (second right) said her family, including (L-R) dad Dean, sisters Alex and Anna and mum Mandy Beverley, were all impacted by her disorder but helped her overcome it



**The in-patient programme called the Mandometer Method, gave Beverley incentives to move through treatment, which was when she put her efforts into becoming an actress**

The program gave incentives to patients as they moved through treatment, which was when Beverley finally discovered she was ready to put a long-term plan into action.

She said: 'I knew I wanted to get into acting since I was eight years old, but had never made firm steps towards it.'

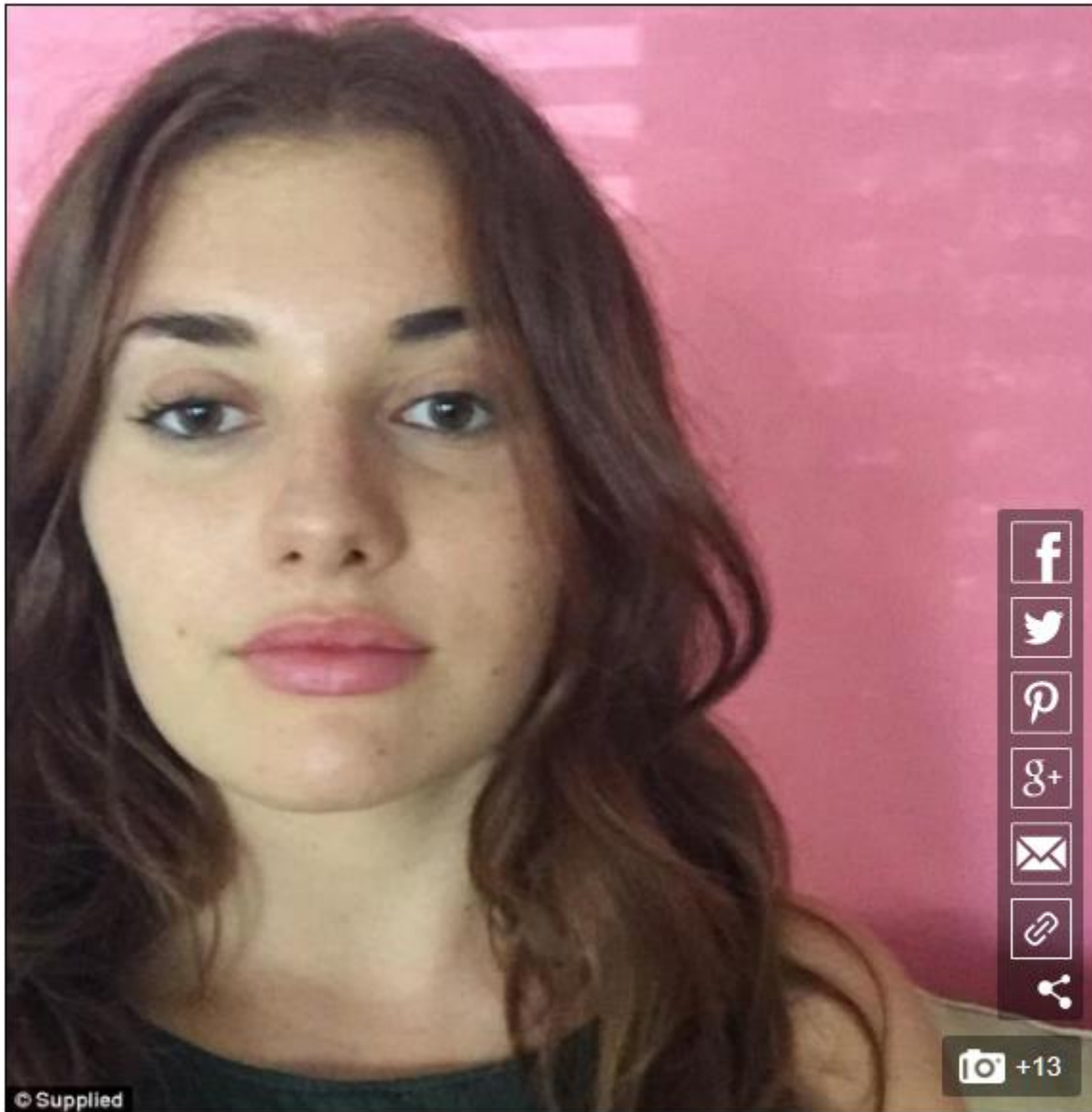
'During treatment, my case manager asked me to make a dream-board and I had put pictures of actors and movies all over it, so part of my reason for getting better was having something bigger than me to work towards.'

As her life returned to normal her passion for drama began to increase, eventually leading her to complete a Bachelor of Fine Arts at UNSW and star in the science-fiction feature film *Infini*.

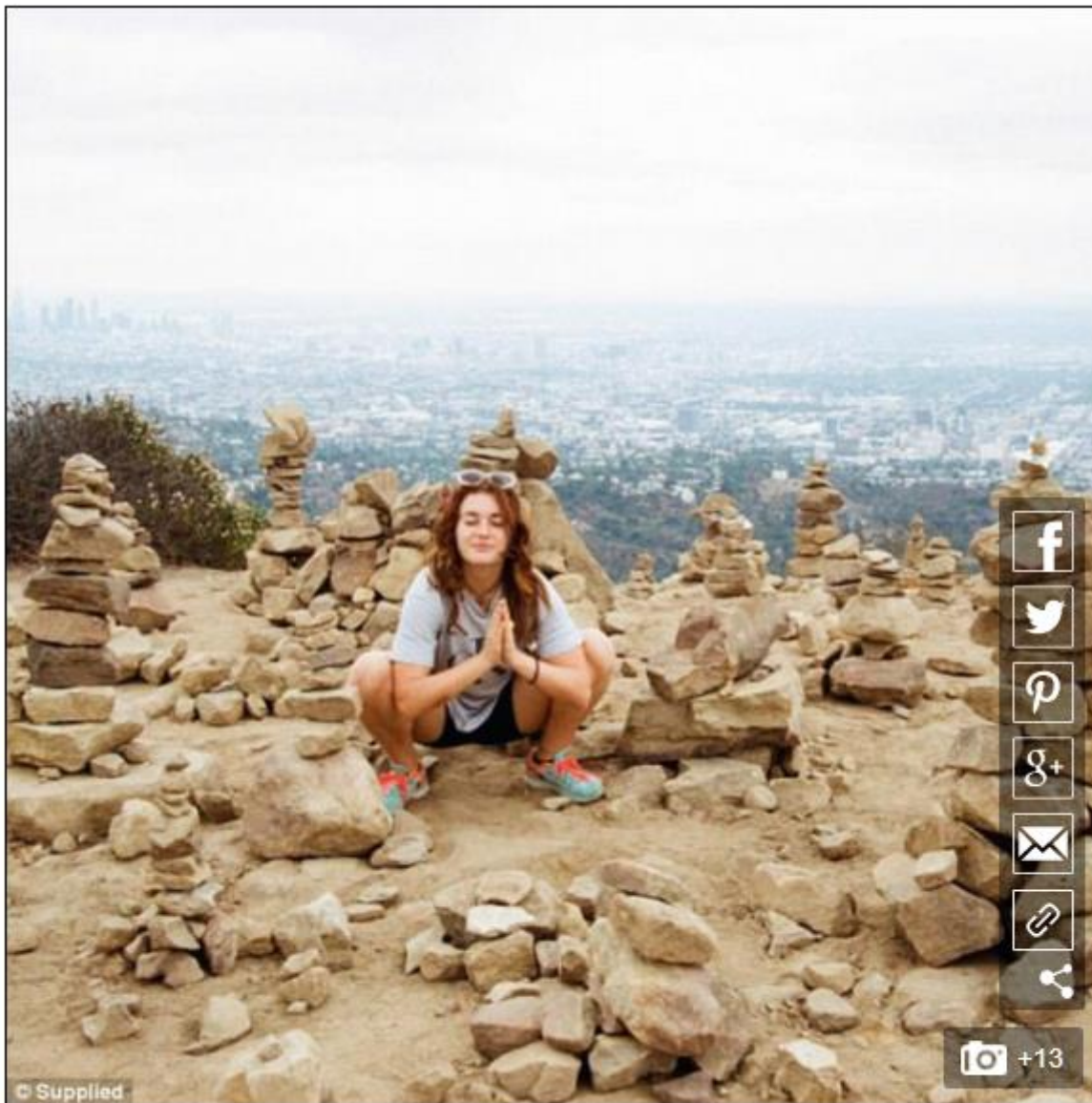
'Even though I had teams of people helping me, the decision to get better eventually had to come from myself,' she said.

'But finding what to do with my life took the focus off destroying myself and helped me to get better.'





Her case-manager asked her to create a dream-board, which she filled with pictures of actors and movies, and she was allowed to attend acting classes as she regained a normal weight



Beverley said finding her passion and being able to work towards it helped 'take the focus off destroying myself and helped me to get better'

Beverley's team included a Mandometer case-manager who watch her progress and provided one-on-one meetings about her meal plans and goals.

At meals Beverley said they would use the Mandometer tool and a food scale, which today can be used with a smartphone, to track their consumption in real-time.

'As you ate it would take off the weight and ask you how full you were, so you were slowly teaching yourself how to get back in touch with your body,' she said.

Afterwards, patients would lie in a 'warm room' to help reduce anxiety, aid digestion and help them to relax.

After six months in the clinic she returned to New Zealand and took part in extensive follow-up checks with their Melbourne centre.

'The treatment really helped me mentally. At the time I was in a pretty dark place and really didn't see the point in getting better,' she said.

## Mandometer Method

Today's Mandometer is an app wirelessly connecting a smartphone to a small scale.

The patient's plate is placed on the scale that measures it during a meal.

Feedback is provided based on questions about how 'full' they are.

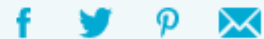
The patient's plan is monitored by their case manager.

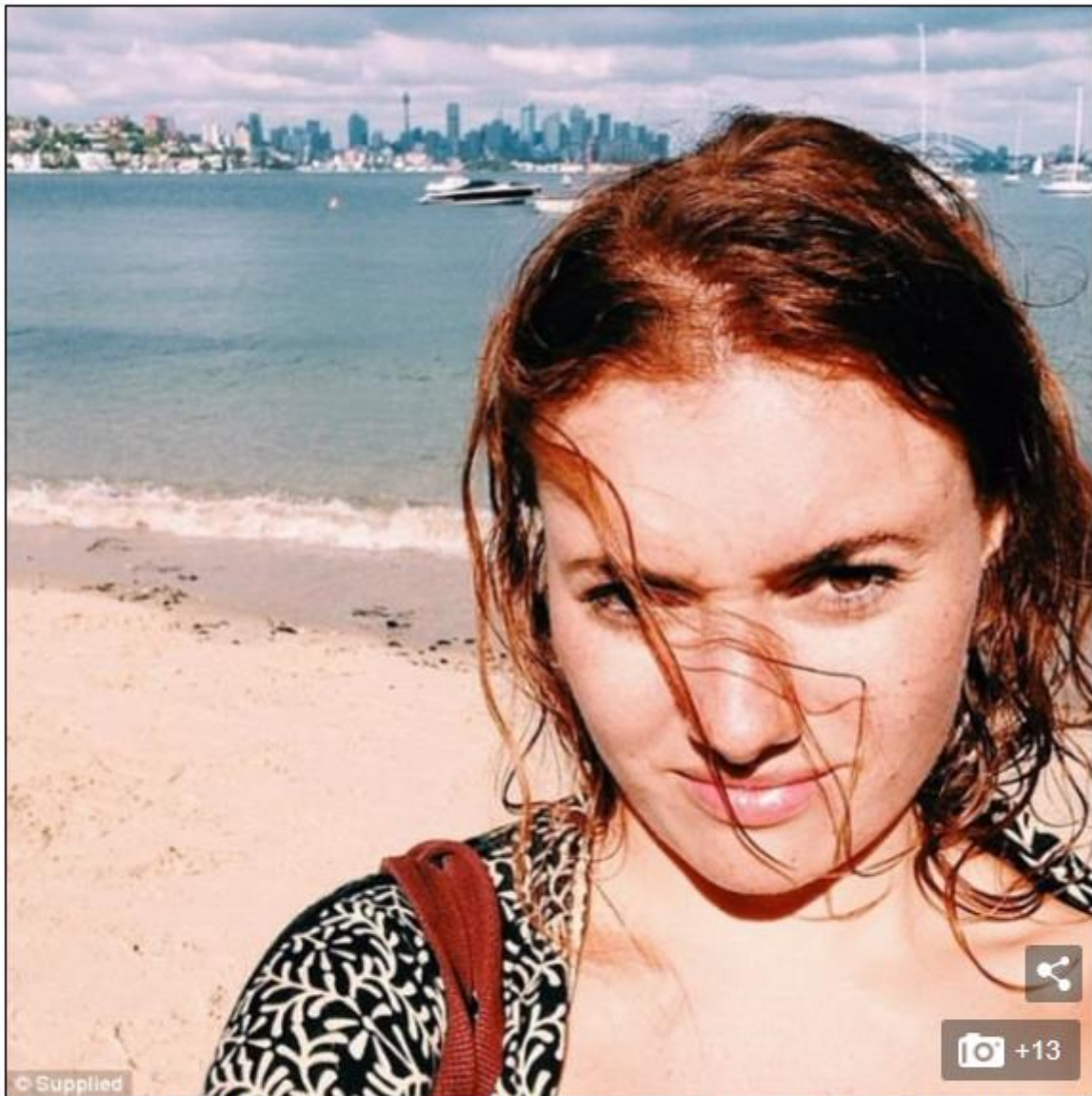
Patients then use 'warm room' therapy following the meal to help them relax and refrain from exercise.

Meals start out with small proportions and get bigger over time.

Treatment usually takes between 6 and 12 months.

Source: [www.mandometer.com.au](http://www.mandometer.com.au)





The program Beverley took part in involved a Mandometer tool and a food scale which would measure food consumption versus how full the patient was to help them get in touch with their body

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Beverley now lives in Los Angeles and said she is aware of the Hollywood standards often associated with that world but instead chooses to ignore them and refuses to weigh herself

The aspiring actress moved to Los Angeles last year and said she is aware of the Hollywood standards often associated with that world.

'There is a pressure, but I try not to buy into it, because so much of what we see on TV or in magazines is the superficial side,' she said.

'That's not why I got into acting, I'm in it for the stories and the art.'

That is why she now refuses to weigh herself, a practice she learned in the program, instead listening to her body and giving it what it needs.

'It does take hard work, a lot of trust in your loved ones and people that are helping you, there will be good days and bad days, but you will see the sun shine again!'

'I would tell those suffering to love yourself, and if that is too hard, find the few things about yourself you do love and keep adding to that list.

'As hard as it is in this day in age, stop comparing yourselves to others.'

**The latest research findings will be presented at the Eating Disorder Forum in Sydney 16 August, and Mandometer Clinic in Brighton, VIC, on August 19.**

**You can reserve a place in [Sydney](#), or to register in [Melbourne](#).**

**Those wanting more information about the Mandometer Method or the clinics upcoming talks can visit [mandometer.com.au](http://mandometer.com.au)**