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Why your eyes are lying to you when it comes to body image

Jackie O must do better than this



Mia Findlay

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JACKIE O's comments this week about her [weight loss and very limited diet](#) struck a chord with me.

I am an [eating disorder survivor](#) and advocate for others afflicted by this crippling and deadly illness.

'On the days when I eat less, I feel better about myself.' Jackie told her audience on Tuesday morning.

So did I Jackie O, so did I.

When I was in the depths of anorexia, my day on the plate looked very similar to yours. And just like you, I didn't eat like that every day. Some occasional pizza or a slice of toast

if my eating disorder permitted it.

That's precisely how I was eating shortly before I almost lost my life to the illness. It's how many of the million Australians suffering from eating disorders are eating too.

If I'd heard Jackie and Kyle's casual chat about her restrictive diet when I was sick and seen the media coverage applauding her 10 kilo weight loss, my eating disorder would have cheered her on.

I could have easily pointed to her diet and insisted I was fine, as my loved ones begged me to eat and warned me I would die. As a bonus, I'd have a brand new prescriptive diet to follow, starting with nothing but a black coffee for breakfast.

I'm by no means accusing Jackie O of having an eating disorder.

And I'm certainly not implying she is the first and only person of influence to make careless statements regarding diet and weight loss. [Kim Kardashian's endorsement of appetite suppressant lollipops](#) ironically took the cake on that one.

What I am saying, as a survivor and advocate who hears from thousands of sufferers impacted by comments like these, is that people with this level of influence have got to do better.

Not as a matter of courtesy, but urgency.

Eating disorders kill more people than any other mental illness, with as many as one in five dying from anorexia alone.

Not to mention the sufferers we lose annually to bulimia, binge eating disorder, and OSFED (Other Specified Feeding and Eating Disorder). And that one million number I mentioned earlier? It's rising.

The onset age for these illnesses used to be 15, that's now dropped to 9 years of age. Eating disorders affect men and women of all ages, races and socio-economic backgrounds. They do not discriminate.

Are eating disorders caused by comments like Jackie O's? Obviously not. They are complex psychiatric illnesses, which are about much more than food or wanting to be thin.



📷 Jackie O should have thought twice before glorifying a near-starvation diet on air. (Pic: Mega Agency)

But do comments like these enable, exacerbate and normalise eating disorders? Undoubtedly.

Anyone with a platform as large as Jackie O’s has an obligation to their audience to educate themselves about the pervasive nature of eating disorders and to choose their words more wisely.

A more informed and considered approach to diet related statements won’t just save Jackie O from a clumsy clarification, it will surely save lives.

Mia Findlay is [a body image coach](#) and an ambassador for [The Butterfly Foundation](#).

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Tom 1 year ago

How very Sydney. Ms Henderson's adoring fans rush to defend her. Nowhere else would this pair of bogans get airtime.

  Reply**Andrew** 1 year ago

I haven't read the story, only read the headline. I am totally disinterested in anything this woman says. Please don't give her air to breath. People like this thrive on publicity, any publicity and giving it only encourages them to open their mouths again. Please desist.

  Reply**Tom** 1 year ago

Why can't she say what works for her? She wasn't telling others to do it. Everyone is responsible for their own actions.

  Reply**Paul** 1 year ago

Maybe Kyle should take up her diet. Pault

  Reply**Louise** 1 year ago

This is a serious over reaction! Jackie lost 10 kilos over 12 months, after her GP warned her she was borderline obese. She looks fantastic, she's certainly not thin. I think you need to worry about something more important.

  Reply**Tony** 1 year ago

What percentage off people have eating disorders I'm pretty sure there isn't that many and what percentage would listen to kiss probably pretty low also. The human body has enough fat to survive for at least 15 days with only water but you could push that to 30 for most people stop making a mountain out off a mole hill and breakfast is named that way not because you eat in the morning but because you're breaking a fast

  Reply

Greg 1 year ago

Why would people listen to HER ??? or her radio offsider

  Reply

stefan 1 year ago

Get over it and find something else to write about

  Reply

Chris 1 year ago

I've got the big one Jackie!! want you baby!

  Reply

Scott 1 year ago

Yawn. Leave her alone. Can no one say anything anymore?

  Reply

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