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I didn't hear anything groundbreaking in Philosophy 1104. In fact, aside for references to ancient philosophers and Latin words, I had heard it all before. But sometimes you can hear the same thing 1000 times and it doesn't stick with you until the 1001st. At the time I took philosophy last year, my almost decade-long eating disorder was having one last hurrah. I wasn't still consumed by not consuming, and I didn't think I needed to lose weight, but every day I worried about what I did and didn't eat, how much I exercised, and what my body looked like. I was relentlessly finding ways to make myself happy. I fantasized about fixing what I couldn't change about myself, overthought everything I did, and dwelled on every decision. But for the most part I felt fine; I hadn't known life any other way since the third grade, and my day-to-day thinking was so much healthier than it had been that I was comfortable with how I lived.

Maybe it was because Aristotle was telling me instead of my parents, but there were a few moments in that class when I realized just how shitty I was making myself feel. The lecture was on how we orient our lives towards our goals. One theory is we arrange our goals either like a pyramid or a mountain range. In the pyramid scenario, we have one intrinsic goal and everything else we desire is instrumental and ultimately serves to satisfy that one goal. If we put more than one goal at the very top, decision-making becomes virtually impossible. After years of fruitlessly punishing myself to be thin, my intrinsic goal was to just be happy. But the happiness I was working towards was too fragile, and really only served as pain-relief. It would make me selfish and miserable, and nothing I did ever felt like the right decision. I was at odds with myself every day because satisfying a desire to avoid feeling unhappy isn't happiness, or *eudaimonia* as I had learned in class. Slowly but surely, I changed the goal at the top of my

pyramid from being happy to feeling whole. I no longer was searching to avoid any negative feeling, I was after more meaningful reasons to feel good. It became easier for me to make better decisions and actually feel in control of my life. I constantly challenge myself instead of relentlessly punishing. I feel less selfish and more secure. Decisions don't take up all my energy, and I trust my own judgement better. A semester of philosophy didn't do all of this though. This class did just what any class is meant to do; it made me think. It made me think I could change my life goals. It made me think comfort wasn't the answer. It made me think I was wrong, and presented me with an opportunity to be right.