

Taking Care of Yourself



How can we make changes to our eating behaviours?

Self-care encompasses activities that support our emotional, mental, and physical well-being, such as exercise, a balanced diet, quality sleep, mindfulness, meditation, and relaxation.

Sometimes, when our well-being is compromised, we might neglect self-care. Signs of self-neglect include:

Failing to prioritize self-care to the extent that it jeopardizes personal health and safety.

Ignoring personal hygiene, health, or surroundings.

Engaging in self-harm.

Refusing to seek help or access services to meet one's needs

Engaging in self-care can be challenging when struggling with disordered eating due to low energy levels and self-worth. In this session, we will explore simple ways to enhance self-care by examining your daily routine.

What are some self-care practices that you currently engage in?

What happens when we neglect ourselves?

Establishing a consistent self-care routine can significantly enhance our well-being and foster a more positive attitude toward our bodies. Routines serve as anchors during periods of negative self-perception, making us more resilient to everyday challenges. However, when implementing a routine, it's crucial for it to be realistic and adaptable, as life events can disrupt even the most well-structured plans.

Reflecting on moments when you've neglected your self-care, can you identify any triggers that might have led to this neglect, such as emotions, events, stressors, etc.?

Taking the first steps towards your self-care routine

First, let's focus on the importance of nourishing yourself as a part of your self-care routine. We understand that this can be challenging, so we will work with you to break down the steps, with the goal of identifying and addressing the barriers you have previously identified. As the sessions progress, we will introduce additional steps to support your nourishment.

Self-monitoring through an emotional food diary is a helpful tool to promote nourishment. Its purpose is to increase your awareness of the situations, thoughts, feelings, physical sensations, and behaviours that perpetuate your disordered eating patterns. It serves as a valuable tool for reflection.

Emotional Food Diary

Remember: Self-monitoring is not about calorie counting, dieting or limiting your nutritional intake. It is to provide awareness and reflection.

Time	Food/Liquid Intake	Where were you? With who?	Binge or any compensating behaviours	Trigger/Thoughts/Feelings

Overcoming Barriers - When new activities are introduced, it's common to feel nervous. Below are some common barriers to completing the monitoring diary. If you've identified additional barriers, please refer back to session 2 and collaborate with your practitioner team to address these.

It will make my disordered eating worse

When writing you're eating down on paper it can cause a short-term increase in anxiety and preoccupation with food, that's because when writing it down on paper it can be overwhelming, and your brain is likely to pay attention to that. You may have previous experience of food diaries when trying to restrict your intake, this is not the same and this is the first step in making a change, remember we are trying to understand triggers

I feel guilty and ashamed.

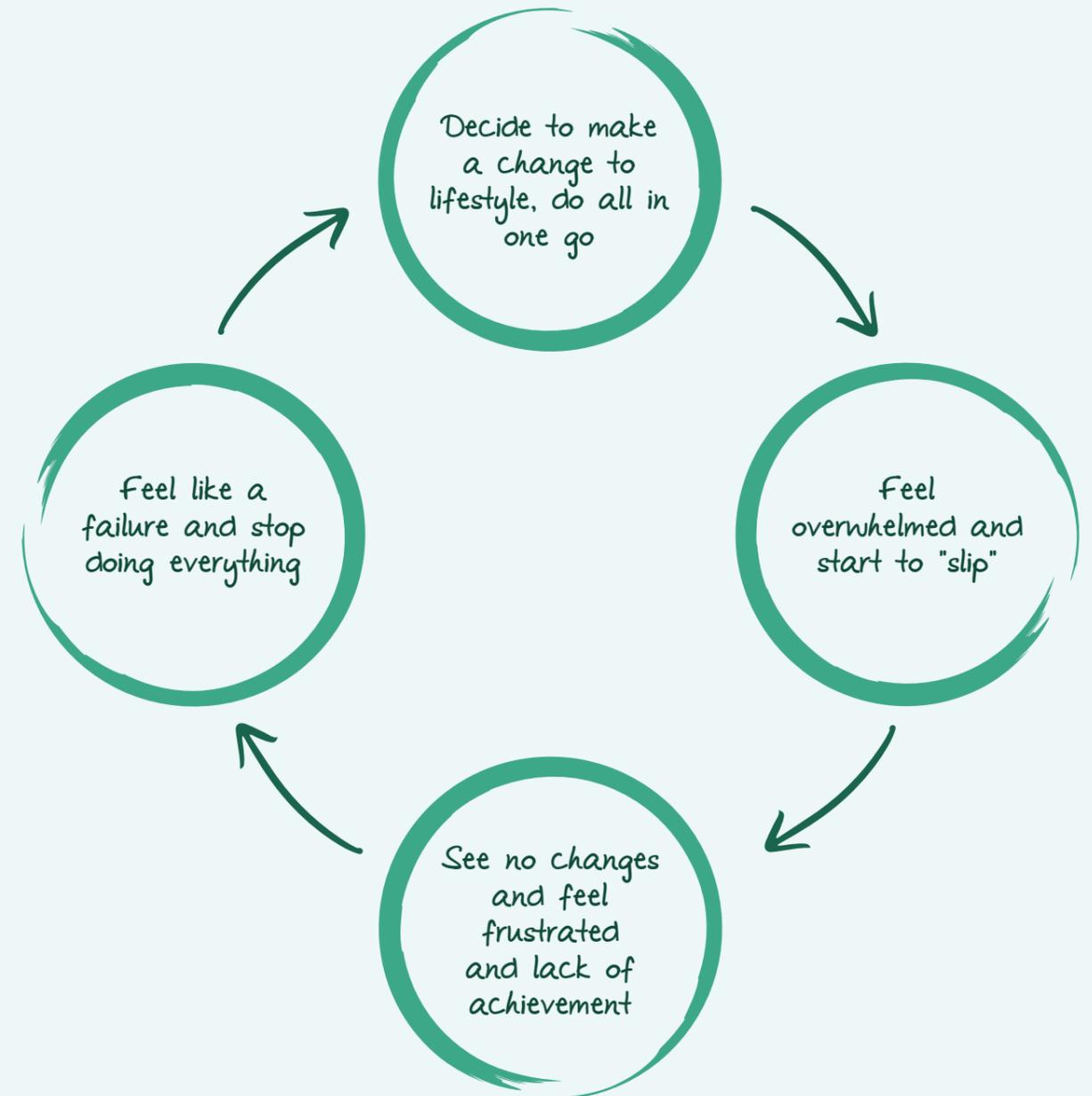
It can be tempting to omit certain foods or behaviours, and doing so may evoke an emotional response. It's entirely natural to feel guilty in the early stages of your journey. While avoiding uncomfortable emotions may provide short-term relief, it can have long-term impacts on your recovery and hinder you from gathering valuable insights into your eating patterns and behaviours. Please make note of your feelings. In the upcoming sessions, we will work on accepting and normalizing these emotions

It is too much work.

Tracking your diet can feel very time consuming, the hardest thing might be remembering to complete your forms, there are also lots of apps that may help (see further support) Each entry should take no longer than 2 minutes, the more you practice the better you will become at using the diary

Changing Routine

Starting something new can be challenging and may trigger negative thoughts. Attempting to change many things simultaneously can lead to feeling overwhelmed and often trap us in a cycle.



When making changes to your routine, it's crucial to start small and avoid overwhelming yourself. This week, our focus is on introducing the emotional food diary. As the sessions progress, we will introduce additional tools. Turn to the next page to find some tools to help you monitor your progress

Reviewing Self-Monitoring

It is important to review your diary in detail each week. This will help you identify issues and areas for change early, additionally it helps you monitor your progress and see how things are changing over time. Try below to help:

Schedule a day and time for your weekly review

Day

Time

Review the diary

Example Food Diary						
When? Date/Time	Who were you with? What were you doing?	What did you eat?	Triggers identified	Thoughts/Feelings prior to eating	S/L/P	Thoughts after event?

My Week in Review

What went well with my eating behaviours this week:

Any behaviours which need my attention:

What I will focus on next week:

Reflect!

What did I learn from my diary?

Top ten tips for enhancing self-care

1. Set a routine monitoring alarm.
2. Keep your diary with you or bring note paper.
3. Consider self-monitoring apps (e.g., Ate or Recovery).
4. Acknowledge barriers.
5. Weekly diary reflection.
6. Focus on one task at a time.
7. Prioritize 'me' time.
8. Self-awareness of thoughts and feelings about eating.
9. Set realistic goals.
10. Commit to using the diary, even when you don't feel like it.

Emotional Food Diary

Further Support

If you need some more help after this session,
you can contact:

Self-Help:

www.getselfhelp.co.uk

www.cntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp

Helplines and support:

Beat:

0808 801 0677

www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Local Support:

Together We

0808 196 1773

MindLine Cumbria

0300 561 0000

Example Food Diary

When? Date/Time	Who were you with? What were you doing?	What did you eat?	Triggers identified	Thoughts/ feelings prior to eating	B/L/P	Thoughts after event?

My Week in Review

What went well with my eating behaviours this week:

Any behaviours which need my attention:

What I will focus on next week:

Meal Structure & Review

Week Start M T W T F S S

Meal 1

Meal 2

Meal 3

Snack 1

Snack 2

Other Eating Episodes

What went well?

Challenges:

My positive quote:

Goal of the week:



together we

Cumbria

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