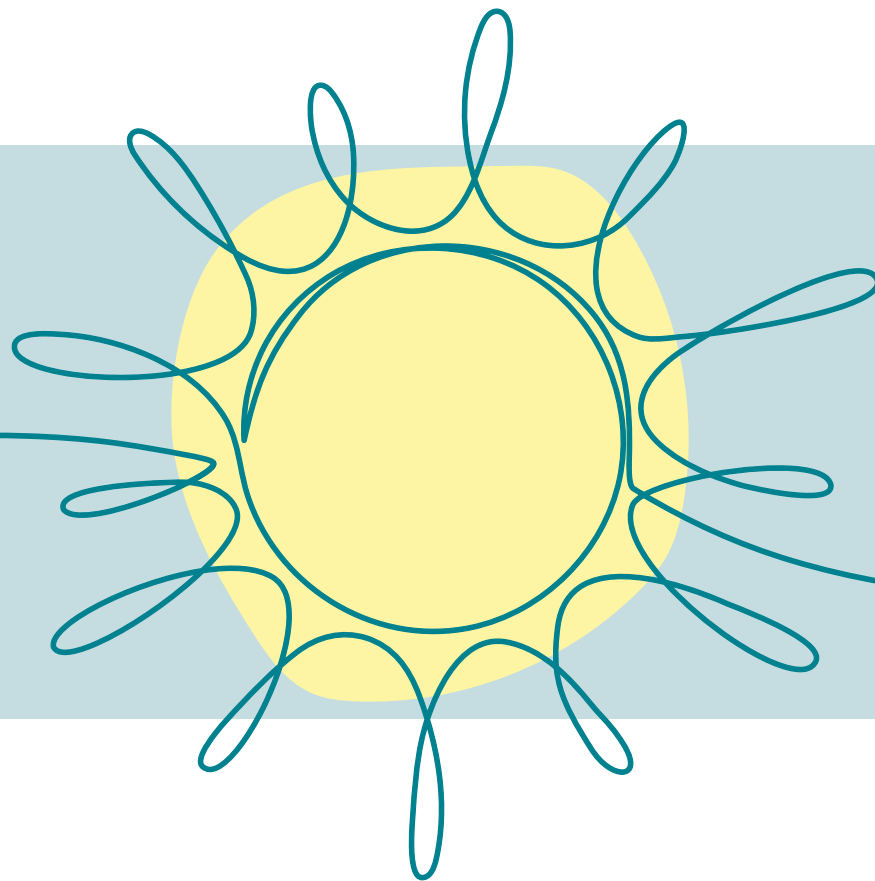


# STAY THE COURSE: PRACTICAL STEPS TO SUPPORT

## Resource Guide

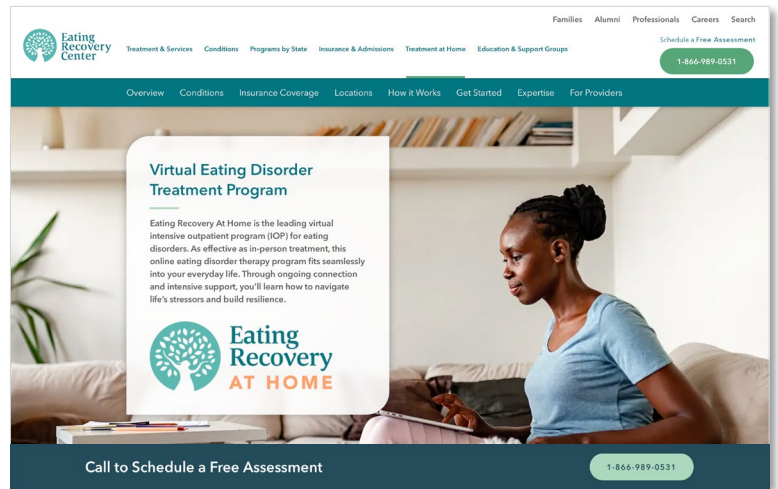
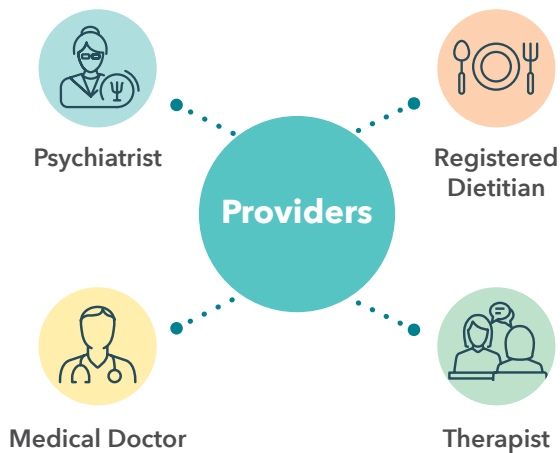


Eating  
Recovery  
Center

# TREATMENT AND RECOVERY DON'T HAPPEN ALONE

Eating disorders are complex illnesses that affect both the body and the mind. The very nature of the illness requires care from a multidisciplinary team. The multidisciplinary team consists of health care professionals from a variety of disciplines. As caregivers, lean on the treatment team and trust the process.

- While at ERC, secure recommendations from your loved one's care coordinator if needed.
- After your time at ERC secure recommendations from your community outreach liaison at [Alumni@ERCPATHLIGHT.COM](mailto:Alumni@ERCPATHLIGHT.COM)
- For intensive outpatient programming contact 866-491-3360 or [Info@ERCPATHLIGHT.COM](mailto:Info@ERCPATHLIGHT.COM)
- For virtual intensive outpatient programming, go to [EatingRecoveryCenter.com/VirtualCare](https://EatingRecoveryCenter.com/VirtualCare)



Consult with your treatment team before implementing ideas outside of their recommendations.

## EATING RECOVERY CENTER RESOURCES

[EatingRecovery.com/Family](https://EatingRecovery.com/Family)

Family & Caregiver Support Groups

Eating Disorders 101 & 201 Presentations

EDFC Facebook Page

Mental Note Podcast

Virtual Family & Friends Education Series

# STRUCTURE, ROUTINE AND FLEXIBILITY

## Meal Plan

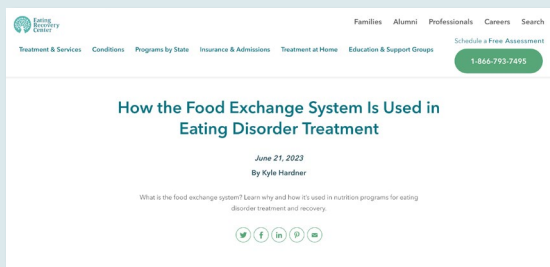
Meals play a crucial role in eating disorder treatment and nutritional rehabilitation. Mealtimes can be difficult; caregivers may feel challenged. Through collaborative meal planning with the treatment team and your loved one, normalized eating can return.

- Grocery shopping
- Meal and snack schedule
- Meal preparation
- Meal distractions

ERC Programming: [EatingRecoveryCenter.com/Resources/Nutrition-Program](https://www.EatingRecoveryCenter.com/Resources/Nutrition-Program)

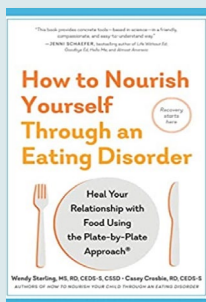
As your loved one transitions through treatment the meal plan may be adjusted by their treatment team. It is likely that they will not follow all of these meal plans below while in treatment but will work on addressing flexibility around recovery-focused food decisions.

### EXCHANGE PLAN

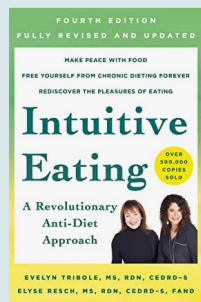
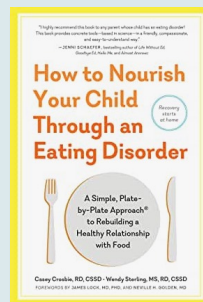


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### PLATE METHOD



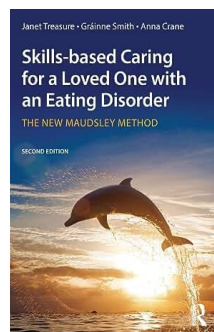
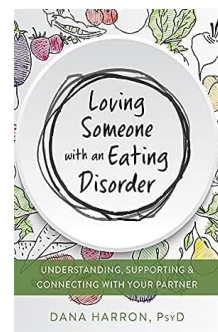
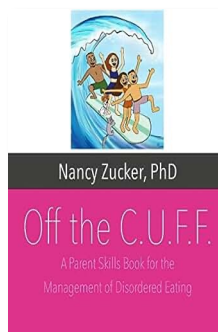
### INTUITIVE EATING



## Calendar

When normal routines are disrupted and days have little structure, staying on the path to recovery can be challenging. The key is to create space each day that allows for meaningful activities – not too much, not too little. A calendar that highlights daily expectations can offer the structure needed to stay the course.

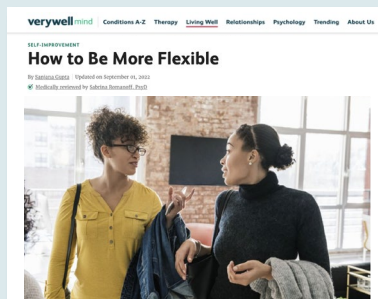
- Treatment appointments
- Social engagements
- Work and/or school obligations
- Home tasks
- Extra-curricular activities



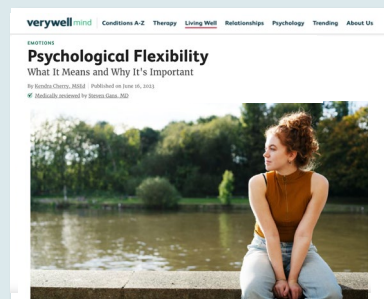
## Cognitive Flexibility

Cognitive flexibility is the ability to shift thoughts and actions to meet a given situation. For many who have a rigid way of thinking, learning to adapt is an essential part of the recovery process. Cognitive flexibility can be strengthened by engaging with new experiences and new people.

- Make small changes.
- Try new experiences.
- Look for opportunities.



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[Bit.ly/46Dw7eL](https://bit.ly/46Dw7eL)

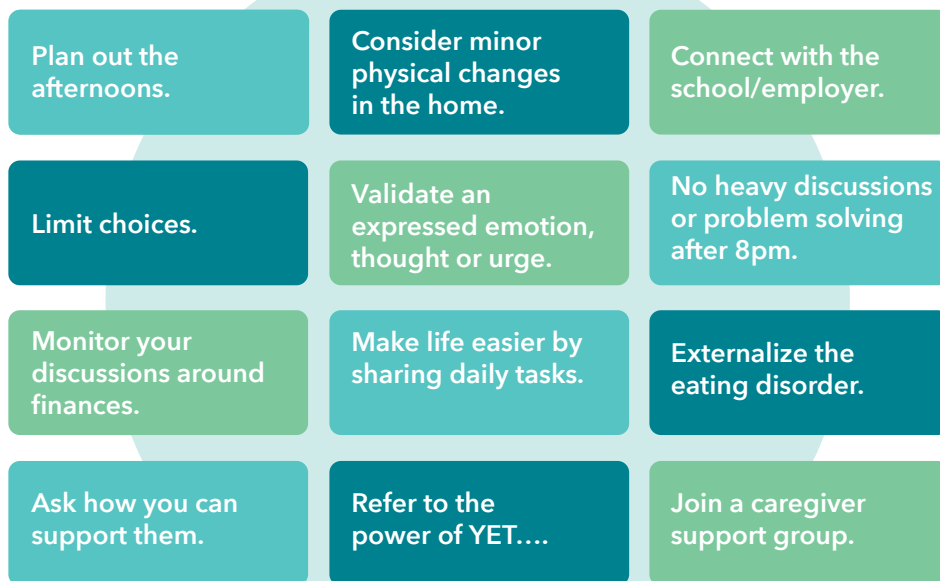
## KEEP THE DAY-TO-DAY SMALL AND MANAGEABLE

Eating Recovery Center  
Caregiver Dos and Don'ts

[Bit.ly/3ZEEMeA](https://bit.ly/3ZEEMeA)

Family Support Guidelines  
When Your Loved One Has  
an Eating Disorder

[Bit.ly/3PFK9FS](https://bit.ly/3PFK9FS)



## ELEMENTS OF A WELLNESS PLAN

Targeted areas of the Wellness Plan may include:

- Nutrition (meals and snacks)
- Sleep
- School and/or work expectations
- Exercise/joyful movement
- Structure (day, week, weekend)
- Medication
- Social engagement
- Technology

Each section of the Wellness Plan may include:

- The targeted area
- Current issues specific to that area
- Ideas specific to change in that area
- Recommendations for the caregiver

Eating Disorder Relapse Prevention:  
How to Cope in Recovery

[Bit.ly/3F3lpSV](https://bit.ly/3F3lpSV)



## PLAN FOR SUCCESS AND EXPECT TRIGGERS

Recovery from an eating disorder, even when an individual is fully committed to recovery, can be challenging. Slips, lapses and, for some, relapses are a part of the experience. It is often two steps forward and one step back. However, with the learning and relearning of new skills, an individual will get stronger in recovery.

- Identify the triggers that are specific to your loved one.
- Eliminate the triggers that are appropriate to remove.
- Prepare for triggers by discussing or role-playing possible responses to situations.
- Refer to scripts to offer support.

“

“I’m wondering if you’re struggling with some negative self-talk?”

“I’m wondering if there is something that is stressing you out more than usual?”

“I’m thinking I need to do a better job of supporting you right now.”

✓ I found... (something)

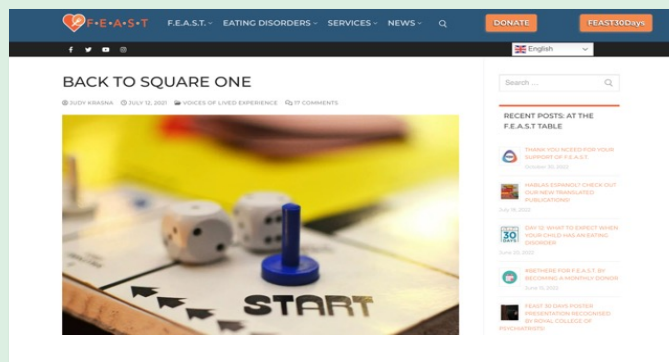
✓ I’ve noticed...(comments)

✓ I see you...(engaging)

## STAYING CONNECTED

Eating disorders can be extremely isolating illnesses. Regardless of the reason why, we know the importance that having connection with others plays in the recovery process. Relationships provide unconditional love, support, and hope that ease the burden of recovery.

- Giving a compliment
- Asking advice
- Wearing the hat of curiosity
- Hitting the pause button
- Offering an occasional gift



[Feast-ed.org/Back-to-Square-One/](https://Feast-ed.org/Back-to-Square-One/)

## SELF-CARE

Helping a loved one through the recovery process can feel all-consuming. It's important that caregivers take the time to replenish their energy, stay connected and seek out support. As the adage goes, a lantern without oil cannot produce light.

- Take a mindful break each day.
- Balance out the challenges. Daily journal entries may include:
  - Things that raised your curiosity.
  - Things that brought you joy or put a smile on your face.
  - People and experiences that you are grateful for.
- Spend time with people who lift you up.
- Practice self-compassion.

