

Family Support for Eating Disorder Recovery

Families are vital to the recovery journey. Here are tips and suggestions to help you provide the best possible support for your loved one.

Communication Tips



Avoid any comments
– positive or negative
– about **physical appearance and weight.**



Listen with empathy. "I can hear that this is really scary and overwhelming."



Have conversations that **do not include talk about diets, calories, or exercise.**



Express that you understand how eating disorders are complicated and can change the brain. **Recovery is hard work.**

Support at Meal Times



Your loved one may want support during meals and snacks. **Keep the conversation light, be open, and listen.**



Express confidence that eating meals and snacks with regularity will help your loved one recover.



Check on your own food rules. **All food is good food** and has its place in recovery.



Emotional Support



Have compassion for yourself and for your loved one. Everyone is doing the best they can. Recovery takes time.



If you experience anger or guilt, it is understandable. Yet if you express this to your loved one, it can jeopardize their recovery. Find other outlets for these big feelings. Talk to close friends, peer support groups, or your own therapist.



Prioritize your own emotional and physical wellness

When you care for someone in recovery for an eating disorder, it's important to understand the **potential for stress**. Reach out to friends and family to develop **your own support system**. Eating disorder organizations can connect you with help or resources.

This infographic developed in partnership with