

Eating Disorder Toolbox - For You

Gentle tools for difficult moments

This toolbox is for the person living with an eating disorder. It is not about doing recovery perfectly. It is a place to come back to when food feels frightening, thoughts become loud, body image feels painful, or you simply need help getting through the next part of the day.

USE THIS TOOLBOX WHEN...	REMEMBER
Meals feel difficult • thoughts are louder • home feels tense • you need words for what is happening	Small, repeated acts of safety matter. Recovery and support can be imperfect and still be meaningful.

When thoughts get loud

- Name the thought: “My eating-disorder voice is telling me...”
- Ask: is this a fact, a fear, or a rule?
- Try a compassionate alternative: “I do not have to obey every thought I have.”

Before food

- Reduce decisions where you can: familiar plate, familiar seat, familiar food.
- Use a grounding cue: feet on the floor, slower breathing, something comforting nearby.
- If you have a treatment meal plan, use it rather than negotiating with the eating disorder.

After food

- Plan 20-30 minutes of gentle distraction: a programme, puzzle, craft, music or company.
- Avoid checking, weighing or compensating if these are part of your difficulties.
- Remind yourself that discomfort can rise and fall without needing to be fixed immediately.

Body-image days

- Choose comfortable clothing and reduce mirror checking.
- Shift from appearance to function: what has your body helped you do today?
- Curate social media if certain accounts intensify comparison.

My emergency card

- Three people I can contact:
- Three things that help me feel safer:
- My clinical/team contact:
- If I feel medically unsafe or at immediate risk, I will seek urgent professional help.

Important: Eating disorders can become medically serious at any body size. Seek professional assessment if you are worried. In an immediate medical emergency or if someone is at immediate risk of harm, use emergency services.

Created for the Space to Breathe Therapy Support Hub.