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MOVEMENT

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Movement and Exercise During Recovery

WORKBOOK

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A note from the author:

I dedicate this workbook to anyone reading and using it. Your desire to take ownership of your health, strength to overcome obstacles, and bravery to embark on a recovery journey are constant inspirations to me.

During my time working with eating disorder clients, I've seen how these qualities are life changing. Witnessing firsthand how treatment changes lives has taught me the power of perseverance, determination, self-compassion, and tenacity. Upon reflection, I realize these are the same qualities needed to successfully balance exercise during recovery.

This workbook is an offering of support and guidance to help you apply those same qualities in a way that enables you to take ownership of exercise back from your eating disorder.

I've seen how helpful the techniques and activities included in this workbook can be. My hope is that you take full advantage of what this workbook has to offer and that it helps you continue the work of balancing exercise throughout your recovery.

To your continued success,

Brian

The Movement and Exercise During Recovery

WORKBOOK

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

How to use this workbook.....	1
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SECTION 1

What you need to know before starting a movement or exercise routine during recovery

How to use your exercise assessments results during recovery	4
Movement and exercise during recovery	7
Understanding the motivation behind movement and exercise	10
Tips for safely including movement and exercise during recovery	12
Rest.....	14
Pushing through pain – is it really worth it in the long run?	15
How to use goal setting during recovery	18
Identifying how exercise fits into your values and self-identity	20
Believe in yourself	24

SECTION 2

When you get moving: tips and suggestions for your movement and exercise routine

Daily stretching.....	32
Mindfully connecting with your body.....	35
Yoga during recovery	38

SECTION 3

Staying on track: workbooks to help you plan, identify barriers, and understand how movement or exercise fits in your recovery

Overcoming adversity	44
Self-identity workbook.....	46
Perfectionism vs. excellence workbook.....	48
Movement planner	50
Monitoring movement.....	52



Movement and exercise in your recovery

Many people find movement and exercise to be a fulfilling part of their recovery that helps with creating and nurturing social connections, respecting the physical self, and calming the mind. Others find that they must avoid exercise altogether, as it can bring up many eating disorder specific emotions and sensations that lead to an increased risk for relapse. Deciding if or how movement will be a part of your recovery journey is deeply personal and completely up to you.

To be clear, *you do not have to exercise if you do not want to or you do not feel ready yet.*

This workbook is designed to be a continuation of the work that you started as part of the Movement Dimension during treatment. The content and activities within this workbook can help you understand how movement and exercise relates to your eating disorder during recovery. By using this workbook regularly, you can decide if movement can be a part of your recovery journey, what aspects of movement or exercise may be risky for you, and how to navigate movement related challenges during recovery.

WHAT TYPES OF EXERCISES ARE INCLUDED IN THIS WORKBOOK?

Research and clinical practice overwhelmingly show there is no one-size-fits-all workout in any population. This includes those who are struggling, or have struggled, with eating disorders.

This workbook is not an exercise prescription but an evidence-based guide designed to empower you with the skills and awareness needed to explore movement in recovery, safely. This type of approach allows you to choose movement and exercise that are meaningful and enjoyable for you – not to meet someone else's expectation. It respects each person's individual preferences for movement.

If you'd like to exercise, this workbook will help you navigate challenges and celebrate successes along the way so you can include safe exercise in your recovery.

To use a sports metaphor, this workbook will help you be your own coach.

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

Throughout this workbook you will find useful information, thought provoking questions, and activities that are designed to help you understand the function of movement and exercise in your recovery.

⇒ *As you read this workbook, notice text that appears in blue italics. Italicized fonts indicate action items that are designed to help you find and understand the functional relationship of*

movement or exercise in your recovery. You can use these to prepare for movement or exercise during recovery by using them as journal topics, discussing them with your outpatient therapist, or as a topic to challenge your beliefs about exercise in general.

HOW THIS WORKBOOK IS ORGANIZED

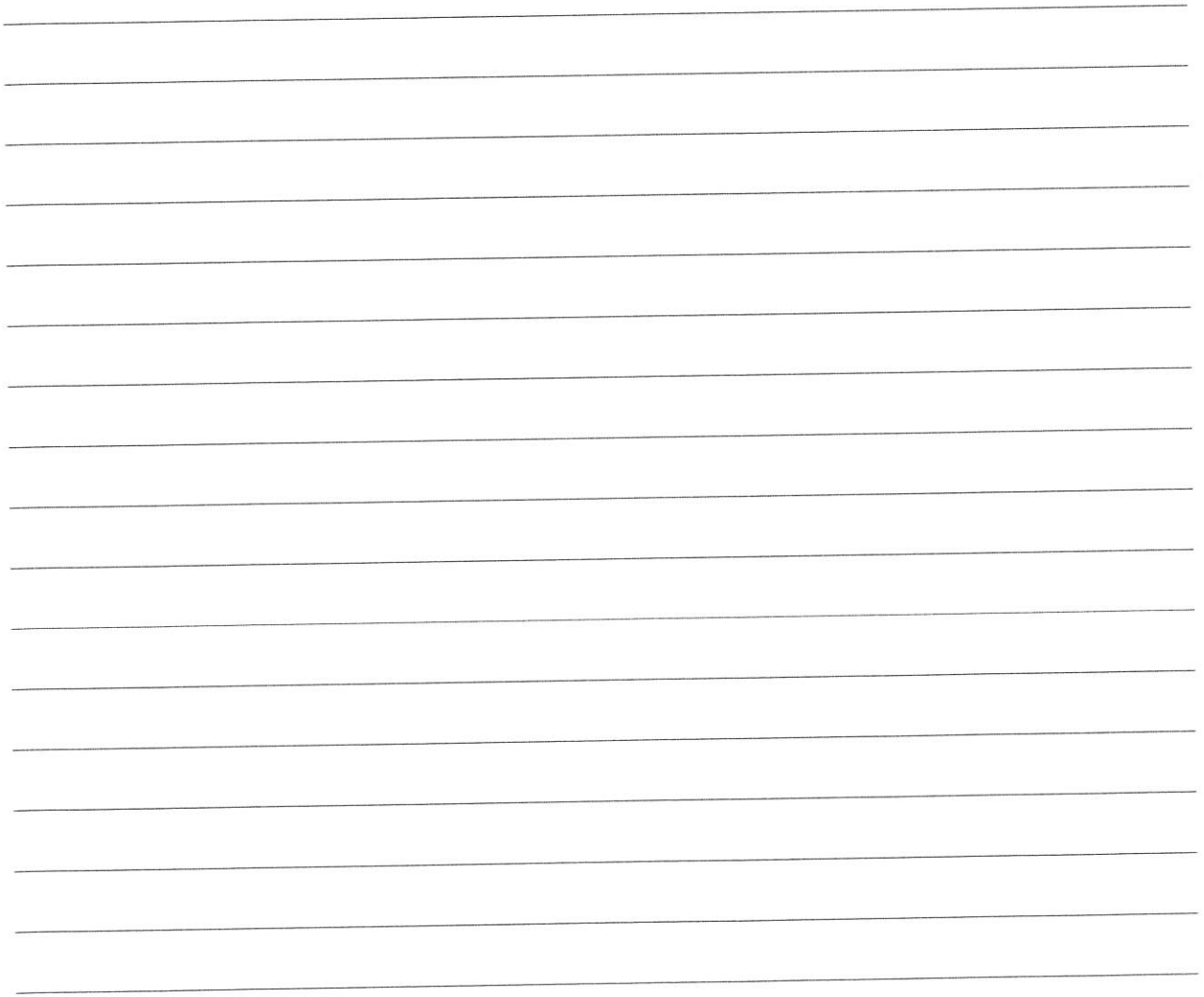
This workbook is divided into three sections. First, there is a review of your movement assessments completed when you discharged from treatment. This section will explain your scores and give you specific tips for how to work on the parts of movement or exercise that may still be tied to your eating disorder, and therefore present risks for exercise during recovery. This is followed by a description of important information that can help you safely include movement or exercise during your recovery, celebrate your progress, anticipate challenges, and remind you of the little things that are often overlooked when starting or continuing a movement or exercise routine.

The second section has information about how you can continue many of the practices you started in treatment during recovery. For example, there are suggestions for daily stretching, activities to mindfully connect with your body, and a great set of tips from our Alsana yoga instructors.

Finally, the third section has more in-depth activities that you can use to understand how movement is personal to you, how to create a movement plan, and how to know which important aspects of movement to monitor during recovery.

GETTING STARTED

The key to including movement or exercise in recovery is reevaluating your beliefs about the function of exercise in your life. At the most basic level, ask yourself – *How much of this function serves you? How much of this function serves your eating disorder?* This workbook can be a starting point for exploring how ready you are to work on your understanding of this function.



What you need to know
before starting a movement
or exercise routine
during recovery



How to use your exercise assessments results during recovery

The exercise assessments you completed as part of your treatment at Alsana were used to identify areas to work on during treatment. Similarly, your results can identify areas that need continued attention during recovery. Use your scores to see which aspects of exercise you are doing well with and which may need a little more attention. Here's how:

COMPULSIVE EXERCISE TEST (CET)

The CET is designed to help understand what may be influencing exercise in individuals with eating disorders. You can use the CET to identify areas that you may need to work on so exercise does not interfere with your recovery. There are two main things to look for in your CET scores.

⇒ **First, check your total score.**

- Scores of 15 or above indicate that exercise is strongly linked with your eating disorder. This indicates that returning to your old exercise routine may trigger relapse. It is important to remember that you DON'T have to rush back to exercise during recovery. *Taking time off will allow your body and your brain to heal, reset, and come back stronger. You may benefit from working on some non-movement aspects to prepare you for including movement and exercise behaviors during recovery. This workbook may help by looking at the sections about how to incorporate rest, exercise during recovery, motivation, and setting small clearly defined goals.*
- A score below 15 indicates that you are doing a great job with separating exercise from your eating disorder. Keep up the good work! *Continue balancing exercise with all aspects of recovery, listening to your body, using coping strategies other than exercise, and using movement as a way to work with your body, not against it.*

⇒ **Second, look at each sub-scale scores to identify areas that still need a bit of work.**

There are no cut offs for these sub-scales. Rather higher scores indicate areas that may be risky while exercising during recovery. Try discussing your highest scores with your therapist and/or journaling on these topics.

Here are some tips for each sub-scale:

Avoidance and rule-driven behavior

Higher scores on this sub-scale indicate that you may be using exercise to deal with unpleasant feelings like guilt, shame, or anxiety; feel like you let yourself down by not exercising or missing an exercise session; or continue to exercise when your body is telling you to rest (for example, when you have injuries or are overwhelmed by a tough day).

- ⇒ *Honestly reflect on how exercise is allowing you to avoid something else that is bothering you. For example, why are you really upset that you missed an exercise session? What does this mean to you?*
- ⇒ *What are some non-exercise activities that you can do that may fit more holistically into your recovery?*
- ⇒ *Try journaling on how your emotions relate to exercise, why you hold exercise in such high regard, and what are other alternatives to exercise that may help to neutralize avoidance and rule driven behavior.*

Weight control

Higher scores on this sub-scale indicate that you are still using exercise to control your weight or change your body shape.

- ⇒ *Try to identify the source of why you believe you need to control your body weight or shape and why exercise is an option for this. Where did your beliefs come from?*
- ⇒ *Is this motivation for exercise actually your eating disorder trying to convince you that exercise is a "healthy" activity, despite signs that it is interfering with recovery?*
- ⇒ *If the source of your belief is external (e.g., social media, friends), are these sources legit?*
- ⇒ *How can exercise be truly a joyful experience, rather than something that is done for weight control?*

Mood improvement

Higher scores on this sub-scale indicate that you may be using exercise to regulate your mood. Exercising to boost our mood is certainly a benefit! However, this can become problematic when exercise is the primary or only thing we turn to for mood improvement.

- ⇒ *In what other ways can you find joy?*
- ⇒ *How has exercise distracted you or taken you away from other opportunities?*
- ⇒ *It is important to remember that exercise is only one of many activities that can help enhance mood.*

Lack of exercise enjoyment

Higher scores on this sub-scale indicate that you may not enjoy exercise despite doing it regularly. Higher scores on this scale may suggest that you are missing out on other areas of life that can be enjoyable.

- ⇒ *Reflect on if you are using exercise as a self-punishment.*
- ⇒ *How is doing something you don't enjoy related to other areas of who you are?*
- ⇒ *What other things can you do, or have you been putting off, instead of exercise?*

Exercise rigidity

Higher scores on this sub-scale indicate that you are prone to following strict patterns or rules about your exercise behavior.

- ⇒ *What are some ways that you can accommodate conflicts with your exercise schedule?*
- ⇒ *Can you come up with a list of things you can do instead of exercise?*
- ⇒ *Try finding one new non-exercise activity every week. Reflect on your experience trying new things and breaking old patterns.*
- ⇒ *Can you be ok with not exercising?*

ATHLETIC INVENTORY QUESTIONNAIRE (AIQ)

The AIQ is a measure that assesses how your self-concept as an athlete, exerciser, or someone who enjoys physical activity motivates your exercise behavior. You can use your AIQ scores to understand how your view of yourself as someone who exercises may be affecting your recovery. Use the AIQ to reflect on how your view of yourself as an active person may relate to either recovery or your eating disorder. The

measure consists of four domains. Higher scores on a domain indicate something that is closely tied to your self-identity and why you exercise.

- ⇒ *Look at which domain score or scores are the highest. Do these scores add context to your CET or other assessment scores?*
- ⇒ *What similarities do you see with how a part of your self-identity may be related to the eating disorder-specific motives on the CET?*

You can use the domains identified on the AIQ as topics for journaling about your experiences with exercise during recovery or topics to discuss with your therapist. **Start with the scores that are highest first.** Here are some tips for each domain:

Appearance

Scores on this domain indicate how important it is to look like an athlete or exerciser. Higher scores may indicate that exercise or sports participation may be a way to control weight and/or body shape to fit an athletic ideal. For example, if your scores on this domain are high and your Weight Control scores on the CET are also high, this might indicate your eating disorder is trying to convince you that an athlete must have a certain look or body type.

- ⇒ *Honestly reflect on how ideals about what an athlete or exerciser looks like are related to your eating disorder and therefore may be motivating your exercise behaviors.*
- ⇒ *In what part of you is the inner voice that says you must look a certain way to be an athlete or an exerciser?*
- ⇒ *Why should looking a certain way dictate whether you enjoy an activity or sport, find solace in the enjoyment of participation, or value in the relationships formed through participating in these activities?*
- ⇒ *Are there other activities that may be fulfilling that don't prioritize ideals about appearance?*
- ⇒ *What activities can you do that strengthen your inner self through kind attitudes and compassion while also holding no judgment about appearances? Remember that exercisers and athletes come in all shapes and sizes.*

The key to excelling in athletics is finding ways to work with your body, not against it.

Importance

Scores on this domain show how important it is for you to exercise, play sports, and/or just be physically active. Higher scores on this domain indicate you have higher amounts of intention to be active. This can be a very good thing to keep us motivated to exercise. *Just make sure that higher intentions are not allowing exercise or sport to override other important things in your life.* It's easy to be motivated by the important benefits of exercise, but high scores on this domain make it more likely that exercise becomes unbalanced and leads back to your eating disorder.

- ⇒ *Remember, being active is only one part of who you are. If you score high on this domain, honestly reflect on how exercise or being athletic may have impacted your relationships with your family and friends, your ability to do well at work or school, your finances, or caused or worsened any medical conditions.*
- ⇒ *How can you balance all areas of your life to sustain holistic recovery?*

Competence

Higher scores on this domain indicate that having athletic ability, being good at sports, or being very competitive about the exercise or sports that are part of your self-identity. While this can be good for some athletes, it can also cross a line and negatively impact other parts of life.



- ⇒ *The 'Perfectionism vs Excellence' activity on page 48 can help you determine if being athletic or good at sports is overriding other areas of your life. Use this activity to examine the subtle differences in WHY you exercise or play sports.*

Research has shown that exercise in eating disorders is tied to perfectionism.

- ⇒ *How can you develop more grace and humility to align more with Excellence motives than Perfectionism motives?*
- ⇒ *What are some roadblocks to making these changes?*

Encouragement

This domain shows how much important people in your life influence your exercise or physical activities. It is important to have people around you who understand exercise during eating disorders recovery is different than exercise without an eating disorder. High scores on this domain can be a good thing when you are surrounded by people who support your recovery.

- ⇒ *However, if these scores are high and you are still struggling with exercise during recovery, consider the quality of your social relationships related to exercise or sports.*
- ⇒ *Do these people support your recovery? Reflect on the level of empathy they have with your recovery, if they are willing to listen when you need support with exercise during recovery, and understand that being athletic is much more than simply being physically active.*
- ⇒ *Can you talk to these people about helping you listen to your body, recognize the need for rest, properly fuel and hydrate yourself before during and after exercise sessions, be flexible enough to skip an exercise session or take consecutive days off, and exercise with less intensity or for a shorter duration than what you would ideally like?*
- ⇒ *Would these people stay in your life if you didn't exercise?*
- ⇒ *Who can you turn to for support that understands the complicated relationships of exercise in recovery?*

Movement and exercise in recovery

It's very likely that you will be faced with movement opportunities during recovery. For example, having to park at the far end of a shopping parking lot, being invited to go for a hike with friends, or wanting to try a sport you once enjoyed. Recovery means enjoying these activities without being taken over by an eating disorder.

The main challenge around movement during recovery is recognizing how to enjoy movement without allowing exercise to trigger relapse. There are many things to consider when deciding whether movement and exercise can be included in recovery. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

ACCEPT THAT EXERCISE IS NOT MANDATORY

You may want to immediately return to your old exercise routine after treatment. That can be a good distant goal, but success lies in slowly building up to that goal. Use the skills and knowledge you cultivated during treatment. For example, you now know that exercising is not just about the behavior itself.

Exercise during recovery requires full awareness, mindfulness, and an honest appreciation of the mind-body connection. It's essential to listen to your body, recognize the need for rest, properly fuel and hydrate yourself, be flexible enough to skip an exercise session or take consecutive days off, exercise with less intensity or for a shorter duration than what you would ideally like to, and have good social support that understands exercise is very different during eating disorders recovery than for someone who does not have an eating disorder. Remember, there will be some days you want to exercise, but your body might not be feeling it. Listen when your body is tired, sore, or feeling the effects of stress. Your mind may tell you exercise can help, but often these sensations are ways that our body tells us we need rest.

BUILD OFF WHAT YOU LEARNED IN TREATMENT

Safely exercising is complex. During treatment, you learned a lot about the role of nutrition, need for rest, how to differentiate injury from soreness, goal setting, challenging exercise beliefs, and so many other important skills that will help support your exercise during recovery. Practice these skills as you *listen to your body and work with your body, not against it. Remember, there is no one "best" exercise routine. Rather, find activities that you enjoy.*

CHALLENGE YOUR BELIEFS ABOUT WHAT EXERCISE IS AND THE OUTCOMES YOU EXPECT

Eating disorders have a way of fundamentally changing our beliefs about the function of behaviors like exercise. *To exercise during recovery, it is vital to fully understand what the function of exercise in your life is at the current moment. Are your exercise beliefs and expectations rational? Where did those beliefs originate? Try to remember that exercise is not the cure-all that many people believe it is.* This can be especially challenging given the barrage of fitspo on social media and misleading marketing from the fitness industry. Often the beliefs we have about exercise-related outcomes seem like a carrot dangling just out of our reach. We must *accept that sometimes these outcomes, while highly desirable, are unattainable.* Simply pushing harder or exercising more will not somehow allow us to reach that carrot.

UNDERSTAND THERE IS NO "BEST" EXERCISE ROUTINE

Black and white or perfectionistic thinking allows exercise to lead to relapse. Rather, *including exercise in recovery requires acceptance, grace and humility.* Exercise during recovery should be something that nourishes the soul, sustains recovery, and is a way to experience joy. To this end, the "best" exercise routine is the one that allows for pure enjoyment. This is a fundamentally different goal than chasing expected benefits of exercise. Finding acceptance around all aspects of exercise and experiencing joy are necessary steps before other benefits can be realized. *Be careful to not let the idea of joyful movement overshadow other warning signs that exercise may be leading to relapse, such as over-exercising to manage your emotions, control weight or shape, exercising despite physical injury, or exercise interfering with work, school, or relationships.*

RECOGNIZE YOUR PROGRESS AND EXPERIENCES

Getting to this point in recovery is a tremendous accomplishment! You put in a lot of hard work, honest reflection, and struggle through adversity. The skills and strategies that you developed along this journey can also be used to keep you on track during recovery.

Think about the progress you have made and celebrate your successes. Recognizing that you have made important strides along the way helps fuel belief in your ability to continue to safely incorporate exercise into your life. A great way to build upon your previous successes is to gradually progress with your exercise routine. Going slowly allows you time to process emotions, connect with your body during exercise, and reflect and recognize how you can keep exercise as a safe part of your recovery without letting old habits come back. It may be frustrating at times to do less exercise than you once did. The saying, "sometimes less is more" definitely fits here! Allow yourself the patience to slowly build up the mental and physical resources you will need as you incorporate exercise into your recovery.

SEE YOURSELF IN RECOVERY

- ⇒ *Close your eyes and see yourself as you maintain your recovery.*
- ⇒ *How has your view of yourself in recovery changed?*
- ⇒ *How does exercise fit into this?*
- ⇒ *What does successfully including safe forms of exercise look like today, a month from now, or 6 months from now? Try to be as specific as possible when thinking about exactly how different your relationship with exercise is now than before or during treatment.*

KEEP HELPFUL RELATIONSHIPS

Many people want to share their view and experiences with exercise. While they often have good intentions, remember that their messages may not fit with the medical, nutritional, emotional, and relational aspects of exercise during eating disorders recovery. It is important to have good relationships that we can turn to for support, questions, or when we want to celebrate our successes with someone who can truly appreciate what we are going through. *Find helpful relationships that reinforce what movement in recovery is and is not. Identify friends, family*

members, and loved ones who can help you, listen to your concerns, be a source of support, and understands that exercise during eating disorders recovery has its own unique challenges.

FIND SUBSTITUTES

Many people often exercise to "clear their head" or deal with a bad day. *Remember that exercise is not the only way to cope with negative emotions, a bad day, or stress in general. Think of different enjoyable activities that can help boost your mood when you need it. For example, you can meditate, write in your journal, or play with your pet. It may help to fill in the blank of this sentence: "Instead of exercise, I will _____." For instance, instead of doing a HIIT workout at the end of a stressful day, I will call my best friends and see if they want to meet up.*

THINK OF RECOVERY AS A JOURNEY, NOT A DESTINATION

Recovery is an ongoing process that requires you to actively participate in managing risks and preventing relapse. Often, we may have to take one step forward, then 2 steps back or 3 steps to the side before making forward progress. *Understand that maintaining an exercise routine during recovery will be challenging at times. Anticipating setbacks will help you prepare for when they inevitably happen. View any setbacks as only temporary and a necessary part of the journey. Some common things that help prevent setbacks are removing cues that might tempt you to fall back to old habits, making a list of situations that tempt you to over exercise, avoiding boredom by incorporating new activities, substituting any negatives with positives, and exercising with a close friend or partner who understands eating disorders.* Setbacks will happen. Do not allow them to undo all the hard work that you've already done.

TAKE HOME MESSAGE

Everyone's journey during recovery is unique. *Keep in mind that your relationship with exercise during recovery will most likely be very different than other people's experiences of when to begin exercising, the intensity or frequency of exercise, or how much rest you need.*



Understanding the motivation behind movement and exercise

Try to think of movement or exercise during recovery as a different behavior than movement or exercise before or during an eating disorder. This may sound odd because the act of exercising is similar, if not the same as what you may have done in the past.

It may help to consider the full scope of exercise. For example, exercise during recovery requires different approaches to rest, connections with your body, and mindfulness. Taking a closer **look at motives specific to all aspects of movement and exercise during recovery** can help identify areas that support movement and exercise during recovery.

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL MOTIVES

On a very basic level, motivation can be external or internal. External motives come from sources outside of us, while internal motives are personal and come from within us. Eating disorders are ego syntonic, which means they have a way of feeling very compatible with your sense of self, values, and beliefs. Therefore, exercise for an eating disorder may seem like an internal motivation because there is some overlap with truly internal motives (e.g., enjoyment, feeling satisfied with accomplishments). However, exercise that supports your eating disorder really is **external** because the motivation originates from the eating disorder while capitalizing on pieces of your internal sense of self. As you can see, motivation is rarely completely external or internal.

A good way to check how much motivation is external versus internal is to **ask yourself:**

What are the rewards you want from exercise? _____

How much of these rewards are external or internal motives? _____

Do you feel that you should or must exercise? Explain. _____

Do you exercise because you feel it is important to do so? Explain. _____

Can you stop an exercise session halfway through and still feel fully satisfied? Explain. _____

Many eating disorder-related motives will have both external and internal aspects. The next section will help identify how to better internalize motivation.

THREE SOURCES OF MOTIVATION

Initializing motives requires autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Autonomy

Autonomy is defined as having substantial freedom, independence and discretion over behavior. Rigid rules about exercise (e.g., having to run a certain speed, time or distance; not taking days off or resting), relying on exercise as your only coping response, and using exercise as a weight control or food as a reward for exercise are examples that are common partially internalized motives. These are the opposite of true autonomy. Rather, they all have some part rooted in an eating disorder.

- ⇒ *What percentage of exercise is under your own autonomy?*
- ⇒ *What percent is under your eating disorder?*
- ⇒ *How can you minimize pressure on yourself to exercise?*

Competence

Competence focuses on the ability to adapt to complex and changing environments. It is about experiencing grace, acceptance, and satisfaction with the process and reality of movement. This is in many ways opposite from definitions of competence that rely on accomplishment or meeting a goal (e.g., beating a personal best, winning a competition, outperforming yourself or others). This is important for exercise during recovery because there will inevitably be times when

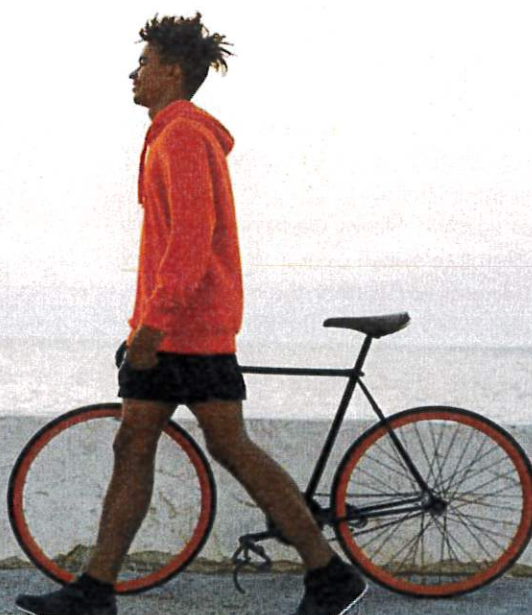
you can't follow your ideal exercise plan; for example, when you are sick or have an injury, work or school obligations need to take priority, or when friends and/or family need your time.

- ⇒ *Therefore, the challenge during recovery is – can you find ways to adapt to exercise during recovery?*
- ⇒ *How can you change your exercise routine?*
- ⇒ *How can you listen to and work with your body?*
- ⇒ *How can you balance exercise with other areas of your life?*

Relatedness

Relatedness is the ability to feel connected to others, be a member of a group, and to both give and receive love and care. Movement and exercise offer opportunities to experience communion and develop close relationships with others. It is important to recognize the quality of these social relationships, not just the quantity of social connections exercise communities offer.

- ⇒ *Does your exercise routine take time away from any of your friends and/or family?*
- ⇒ *Describe a time when you missed out on a social opportunity as a result of your exercise routine.*
- ⇒ *Are the social connections you have through exercise truly there for you?*
- ⇒ *Would your social connections be there for you if you stopped participating in exercise, no longer attended the studio or gym, or if you couldn't perform at a high level anymore?*



Tips for safely including movement and exercise during recovery

Safety is the main concern for anyone engaging in movement or exercise during recovery. Adding or returning to movement or exercise after eating disorder treatment presents additional risks beyond pulled muscles or twisted ankles, because exercise can also lead to eating disorders relapse.

While this should be of concern to anyone who includes movement or exercise in their recovery plan, there are some simple ways to keep exercise safe. Many of the skills that you've developed and mastered during treatment can also be used to minimize the risks of movement and exercise during recovery. Here are some tips on applying those skills to movement and exercise during recovery.

1. STICK TO YOUR MEAL PLAN

Several reviews of studies that have examined if exercise is safe for individuals with eating disorders have found that following an appropriate meal plan is vitally important. Fueling your body helps to provide the building blocks for a variety of physiological needs during recovery. Movement or exercise without properly fueling yourself further drains resources from your body, consequently leading to an increase risk of injury and eating disorders relapse.

2. WORK WITH YOUR BODY, NOT AGAINST IT

There are no effective exercise prescriptions or preapproved exercise plans for eating disorders recovery. Rather, successfully including movement or exercise in recovery requires that we are totally honest with ourselves. **Think about how we are feeling both physically and emotionally. By listening to how your mind and body feel before, during, and after any movement or exercise, you can safely include movement and exercise in your recovery.**

3. EASE INTO IT

Don't just jump right into the deep end and expect to swim. Rather than hitting the ground running, slowly amp it up by including a 5 – 10 minute warm up at the start of your exercise or movement session. Slowly warming up allows the body's systems to switch over from rest or low intensity movements and gather the resources to do more without over taxing the system.

4. THINK ABOUT THE BIG PICTURE

Many people turn to exercise when they are feeling drained, fatigued, run down, or stressed. **It's important to remember that these**

sensations are ways our body is trying to tell us something. These feelings could be a sign of an oncoming illness, a signal that you are experiencing burnout, or just an early indication that your batteries are empty. No matter what the cause, they are your body's way of saying your resources are low. These are also the same resources that are needed for movement and exercise. While we may feel temporarily better after an exercise session, using resources will inevitably further deplete us. **Remember that rest is part of a movement or exercise routine. Rest is essential to safely sustain movement over the long haul.**

5. SLOW AND STEADY

Studies have shown that working on the mental side of movement and exercise is crucial to safely engaging in physical activity during recovery. Therefore, it is important to **work on rebuilding the mind – body connection during recovery.** This means going slow and steady with exercise amount, frequency, and intensity to allow time for the connections to be set. **Stick to your game plan, be patient, don't take on too much at once, rest, fuel yourself, and most importantly listen to your body.** Think of the fable, "The Tortoise and the Hare." Slow and steady wins the race!

6. BREATHE

Breathing helps keep us relaxed and provides essential oxygen that our muscles need to move. **Don't hold your breath during exercise.** This can create pressure imbalances and overly stress your system. **Remember that oxygen is one of the key ingredients needed to fuel movement.**



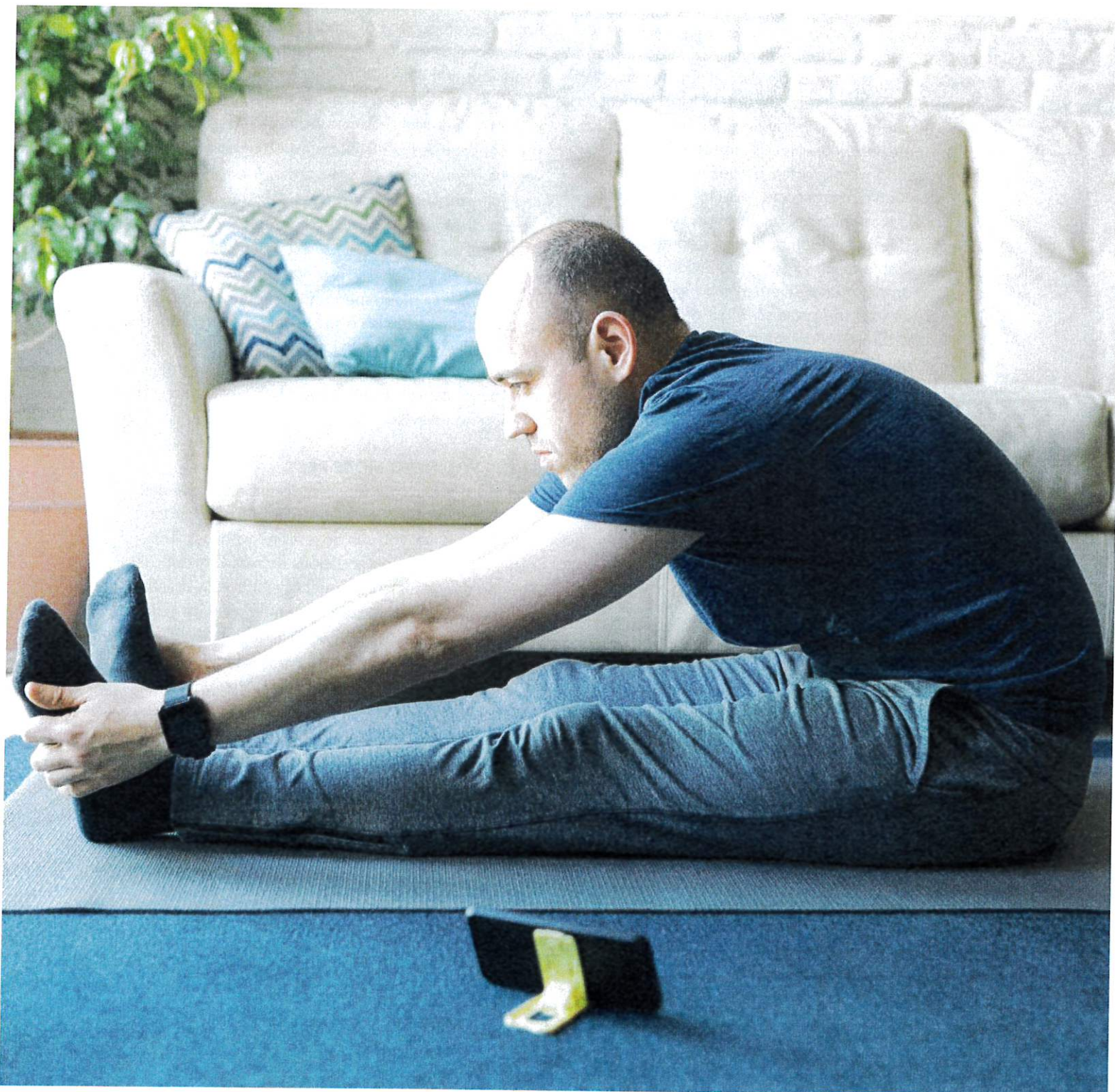
7. LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

It's important enough to say it again! **Avoid using exercise as a way to disconnect, tune out, or turn off your mind.** Your body will tell you what is safe, how much you can do, how intense you can go, how movement can respectfully be included during recovery, and where you are at along the journey. Mindfulness applies to exercise and movement too!

8. SEEK CONNECTIONS

Avoid turning to the internet or fitness industry when you have questions or need support.

They are not experts on movement and exercise during eating disorders recovery. Instead, find a trusted friend, doctor, dietitian, or therapist who understands the unique challenges of exercise and movement during eating disorders recovery.



Rest

Rest is **the** essential aspect that allows the body and mind to benefit from movement and exercise. Specifically, when we exercise, we use energy, suffer micro-tears in muscles, and shift a variety of nutrients in and out of cells throughout the body. Rest after exercising is necessary to allow enough time for the body to replenish nutrients and energy sources, while also repairing any damage from exercise (e.g., the sore muscles you feel after exercise).

In fact, it takes two hours after exercise to return most systems to balance, a whole day to regenerate energy stores that were used during exercise, and 36 hours to create the proteins needed for cell structures and functions. Altogether, the full scope of biochemical changes throughout the body takes 72 hours after exercise to return to complete homeostasis! So really, by resting we allow our bodies to continue to “exercise” on a microscopic level for up to three days after we stop moving. As a bonus, when we have enough rest and fuel, our bodies come back stronger and able to do exercise behavior in the future. Remember, that movement and exercise behaviors just start the process. Most of the benefits from exercise happen during time spent in rest, while everything within us is busy at work on a microscopic level. In other words, **rest is part of exercise!** It is the time when the real benefits of exercise take hold. **By skipping rest, we do not allow our bodies to gain the benefits we are trying to get from exercise.**

WHAT IS REST

Rest is when you allow your body to replenish itself with fuel and allow for the cellular level repair after exercise. This can include sleep, sitting still, reading a book, or any time that allows your body to recover from movement or exercise. **Rest = respecting our body!**

HOW MUCH REST DO YOU NEED

The amount of rest you need depends on the amount of resources you have used. **Try to think of this like a battery being drained. Exercise certainly is one thing that can drain your batteries. Remember that other parts of life equally drain your batteries. Keep the big picture in mind and don't put on blinders by thinking of only what's going on in your exercise or movement routine.** Mental stress is just as much, if not more, of a powerful drain on your body's resources as exercise. This is why everything feels like it takes more effort when you are stressed. That type of feeling is a big sign that your body is telling you to rest!

Specific amounts of rest depend on multiple factors, not just exercise type or amount. Your previous exercise experience, stress levels, emotions, medical issues, and even your meal plan all influence how much rest you need. As you can see, there are a lot of moving pieces with rest! **General recommendations are to rest muscle groups for 48-72 hours after exercise. This means if you focus on your arms during an exercise session you should not repeat that same activity for two to three days. You can also do cardiovascular exercises with 24 hours of rest in between, but you will need to include several full days off mixed in.**

For example, a recommended schedule could be to do cardiovascular exercise every other day (e.g., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday). As you progress through recovery, you may be able to add consecutive days of cardiovascular exercise followed by complete rest days off with no exercise.

SIGNS YOU NEED MORE REST

The recommendations for rest described above are extremely variable. Sometimes you will need more rest, other times you can do just fine with less. This makes giving recommendations for rest very difficult. Getting the necessary amount of rest to fully realize your exercise goals **requires connection with your body, absolute honesty about how you are feeling physically and mentally, and complete understanding that common advice about the need to push through and do more exercise is in fact counterproductive.** Some telltale signs that you need more rest include: **profound soreness (e.g., every step causes pain) that is not actually a sign of injury, trouble sleeping or just feeling fatigued in general, feeling winded when you're doing normal activities, having a “rubbery” feeling in your muscles, depression, and emotional changes or swings.**

TAKE HOME POINT

Exercise is only ONE part of a complicated picture. Rest is essential to recovery!!!!

Pushing through pain – is it really worth it in the long run?

Unfortunately, injuries are an almost unavoidable part of being physically active. The trick is to do everything we can to minimize the risk of injuries becoming severe or even life threatening. Here is some basic information about injuries and how to prevent them.

TYPES OF INJURIES

Injuries are classified as either acute or chronic.

Acute injuries happen suddenly as a result of putting too much stress or pressure on a specific area of the body. For example, severely twisting your ankle commonly results in a sprained ankle (e.g., stretching or tearing ligaments). Common examples of acute injuries are sprains, strains, bruises, and fractures.

Chronic injuries develop over time as a result of overuse; especially when repeatedly using poor form/ technique or not having enough rest in between exercise sessions. Common examples include tendinitis, stress fractures, and shin splints.

TIMING OF INJURIES

Injuries occur when the body is put under more stress than it can handle. Therefore, the secret to injury prevention is timing. When you begin an exercise routine during recovery go **VERY slow at first, for several weeks**. This will allow the body to adapt to movement GRADUALLY. The more fatigue you experience (from exercise or other areas of life) increases your risk of injury because fatigue is a result of the body using resources. By exercising at low intensity and duration and slowly progressing to next level of intensity or increased duration, we allow our bodies to strengthen and become more resistant to injuries. Importantly, going slow also allows for mind-body connections to understand how to process and respond to exercise and injuries.

WHEN INJURIES HAPPEN

Immediately stop moving when you experience an injury while exercising or suspect an injury after an exercise session. Determine the extent of the injury and pain. **Ask yourself if the pain you are experiencing is normal soreness or actually tissue damage (injury)?** If medical attention is not immediately needed, try **R.I.C.E. – Rest (do not exercise again for several days), Ice (apply ice or a cold compress on the affected area of your**

body), Compression (use an elastic wrap bandage to apply light compression to the injured area), and Elevate (raise the injured area to reduce swelling). If pain, swelling, or other symptoms of the injury worsen, seek medical care immediately. Also, see a doctor or medical professional if using R.I.C.E. does not result in improvement within two days.

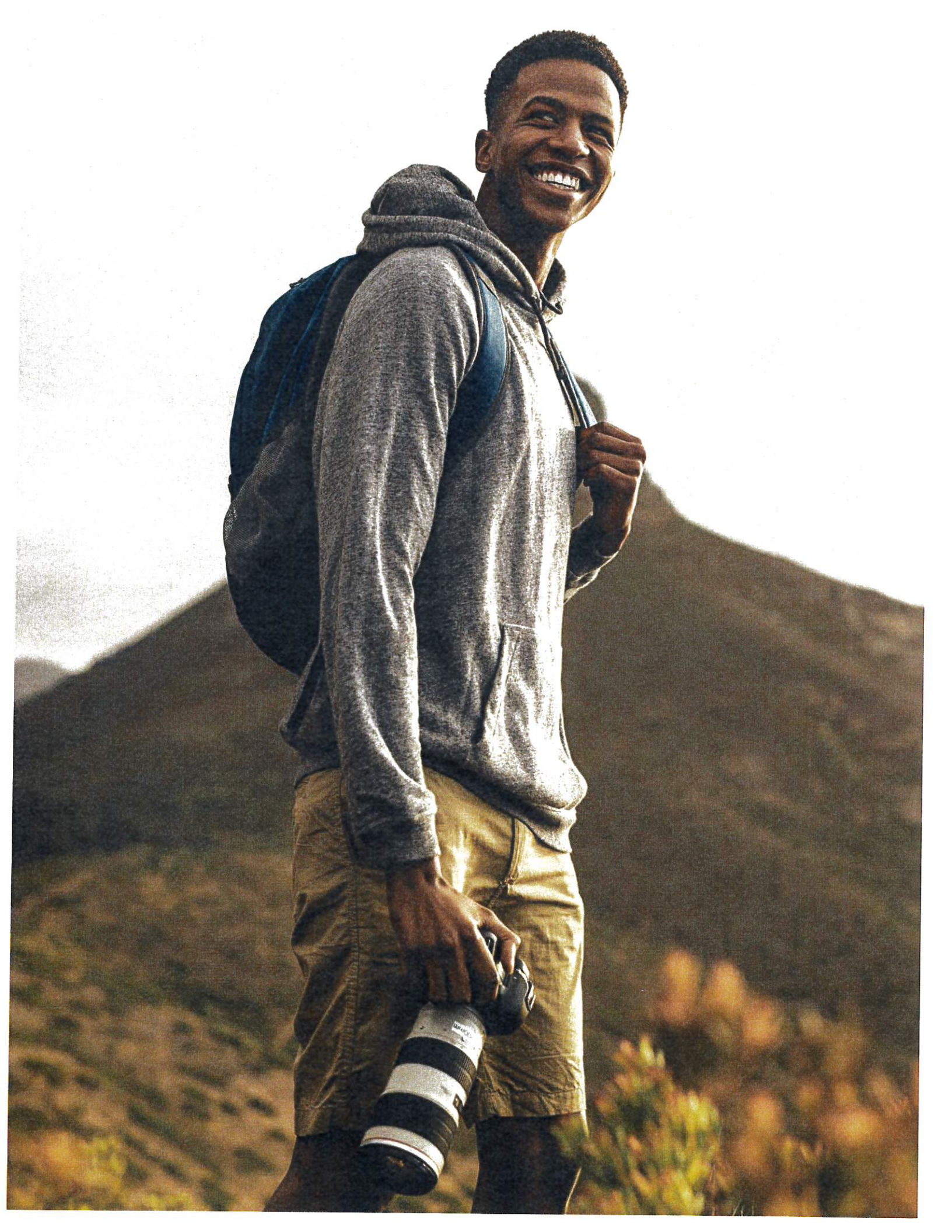


10 TIPS FOR INJURY PREVENTION

Here is a *Top 10 List* of things to remember to reduce the risk of injuries:

1. *Stay Hydrated.*
2. *Adhere to your meal plan.*
3. *Use proper equipment. Make sure there is no wear and tear, defects, or breaks on all of your gear (clothes, shoes, equipment, helmets, pads, etc.).*
4. *Build up your exercise limit GRADUALLY to allow enough time to learn new movements, understand how the body feels and reacts, and strengthen muscle groups.*
5. *Mix cardiorespiratory, resistance, and flexibility exercises.*
6. *Warm up and cool down for at least five minutes before and after every exercise session.*
7. *Talk to an expert who understands exercise during eating disorders recovery and avoid relying on social media and personal testimonies for information about exercise.*
8. *Pay attention to current and forecasted weather conditions. Wear appropriate clothing and bring necessary gear to safely exercise within your environment.*
9. *Stay away from group exercises that encourage competitiveness. Find mindful activities that allow you to go at your own pace. 'One size fits all' approaches increase risk of injury.*
10. *REST!!! This is the MOST IMPORTANT part of any exercise program. Allow at least 48 hours between using individual muscles or muscle groups.*





How to use goal setting during recovery

Maintaining a movement or exercise routine during recovery is complicated. Setting goals helps us to remember important aspects, recognize successes, stay motivated, and prevent setbacks.

THREE TYPES OF GOALS

Setting different types of goals is essential to successfully including movement or exercise in recovery. **First, set process goals.** These are the fundamentals of what you are doing. Process goals are entirely under your control and provide the basis for any future success or failure. **Set process goals that focus on executing key details like proper form and technique, remembering to bring water with you during an exercise session, scheduling rest, and adhering to your recovery meal plan.** The reality of exercise is that progress is more like a dance. You may take one step forward, two steps back, three forward, then two to the side as you are progressing over time. Focusing on process goals will help keep you dancing and eventually get to where you want to go. **Next, set performance goals that focus on accomplishing smaller tasks that can**

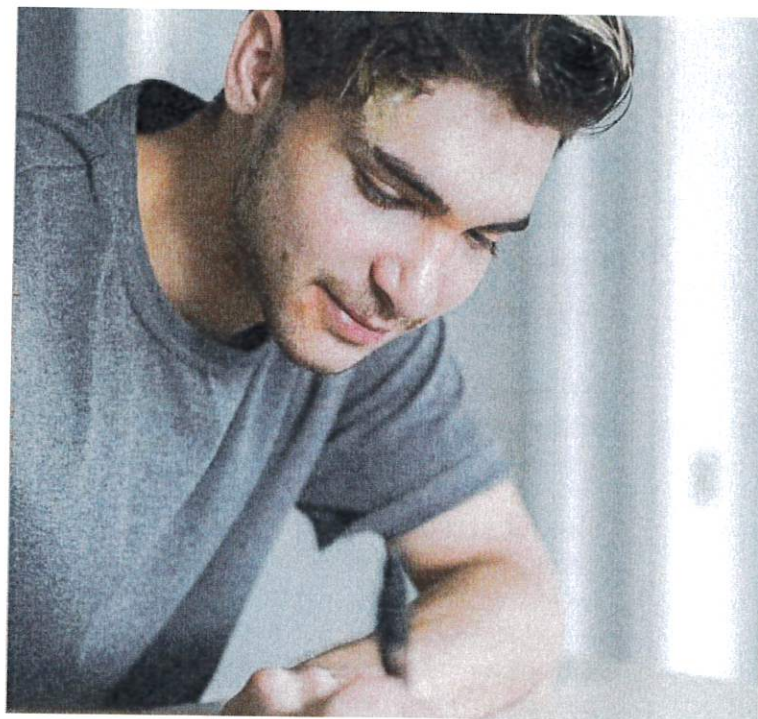
lead to successfully accomplishing our big picture outcome goals. Accomplishing performance goals is also a great way to find enjoyment in an activity or exercise even if the outcome is not realized. These types of goals are about finding joy in movement and not making enjoyment about accomplishing an outcome. Finally, **using some outcome goals can be helpful.** Outcome goals focus on accomplishing a task, like completing a race or winning a game. They are a result of properly executing process goals, which in turn lead to realizing performance goals. However, they are not entirely within our control and simply accomplishing performance goals often does not guarantee realizing an outcome goal. **While some outcome goals are helpful, setting too many or focusing only on outcomes will very often allow exercise to lead to eating disorders relapse.**

Use this table to write down some process, performance, and one outcome goal you can set for the next month.

TYPE OF GOAL	DESCRIPTION	MY GOAL
Process Goal	Under your control Focus on executing key details (e.g., proper form)	Example: I will drink at least 12 oz of water during my workout. Write your process goal: _____ _____ _____
Performance Goal	Focus on accomplishing smaller tasks in progress to your larger goal	Example: I will take 48 hours off to rest and replenish my body, mind, and spirit after my exercise session. Write your performance goal: _____ _____ _____
Outcome Goal	Focus on accomplishing a task	Example: I will learn a new form of dance that I have always wanted to try. Write your outcome goal: _____ _____ _____

MAKE SURE YOUR GOALS ARE S.M.A.R.T.

SMART is an acronym to help us *remember key details for effective goal setting strategies by using Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely goals*. First, make sure your goals are as *Specific* as possible. No detail is too minor to consider. Next, keep track of your progress and risk for slip ups by setting goals that are *Measurable*. Remember that goals are useless if they are too simple, distant into the future, or difficult to achieve. Therefore, make sure that your goals are *Attainable*. Being honest with yourself, listening to your body, recognizing the unique challenges during recovery, and setting moderately difficult goals will help in setting *Realistic* goals. Finally, keep your goals *Timely* by using a mix of short, medium, and long-term goals. Using S.M.A.R.T. goals is a proven way to stay on track, deal with setbacks, and identify how to safely keep movement and exercise as holistic parts of your recovery.



TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE GOAL SETTING

1. *Use S.M.A.R.T. goals*
2. *Clearly identify time constraints*
3. *Use moderately difficult goals*
4. *Monitor your goals*
5. *Mix process, performance, and outcome goals*
6. *Set short, medium, and long-term goals*
7. *Make your goals personal to you*
8. *Practice skills needed to attain goals*
9. *Internalize goals by finding joy in movement*
10. *Recognize how your personality may influence your goals*

COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

1. *Poorly written goals*
2. *Overlooking important details when setting or monitoring goals*
3. *Setting goals that are competitive*
4. *Failure to devise a goal attainment strategy*
5. *Failure to adhere to your goal strategy*
6. *Failure to monitor and track goals*
7. *Setting goals that are too difficult*
8. *Using only or too many outcome goals*
9. *Setting too many goals in general*
10. *Not readjusting goals*

Identifying how exercise fits into your values and self-identity

Self-identity plays an important role in eating disorders recovery. It helps with motivation, defines our preferences, and even helps us find the extra effort needed to overcome challenges. Exercise is an important piece of self-identity for many people before and during their eating disorder, and therefore is often highly desired during recovery.

It is important to keep a balanced view of how exercise contributes to our self-identity, without allowing it to overtake other important contributors to recovery. Here are some tips to keep the role of exercise balanced with recovery and your self-identity.

WHAT IS SELF-IDENTITY?

We all see ourselves as having roles. The roles we take directly and indirectly lead to our behaviors. For example, we may act a certain way at work (e.g., the role of a good employee), but act in a very different way when out with old friends. Simply put, the way we identify ourselves plays a large role in how we adopt the norms, ideals, and behaviors we believe fit that role. In fact, research has found that self-identity is one of the main predictors of behavior for many people.

HOW DOES EXERCISE IDENTITY FIT IN RECOVERY?

Exercise is an important part of many individuals' lifestyles. A strong sense of exercise-specific self-identity usually helps motivate exercise behavior. This can be great to help us stay motivated for movement. We also need to ***keep in mind how exercise-identity may overshadow other important parts of recovery and therefore allow exercise to trigger relapse.*** For example, one of the main things exercise offers is a sense of connection to others. Types of exercises create communities with unique culture, attitudes about movement, and influence the way we engage in movement or exercise behaviors. These social influences also keep a reciprocal relationship with exercise behavior itself. These connections among social influences, self-identity, and exercise can be great ways to stay active. However, they often have a way of overshadowing another essential part of your self – recovery. ***How can you balance the multiple sources of your self-identity with the new role of a person working towards maintaining recovery? How does exercise change these roles?***

CREATE A SELF-IMAGE OF EXERCISE IN RECOVERY

Imagery is a powerful technique that can help see how self-identity may be related to behaviors.

Close your eyes and visualize your self-identity. What are the sources of your identity? _____

How does recovery fit into this identity? _____

What about exercise? _____

Can you imagine yourself as someone who balances fitness-related groups, exercise, and recovery? _____

How exactly does this look in your image? _____

Describe how you see yourself now, in a few months, in one year, and in five years? _____

How would your self-identity change if the possibility of relapse from exercise were not part of this image? _____

CREATE A PICTURE OF YOU

On a blank piece of paper, create a collage or draw a picture of yourself 5 years from now depicting what your relationship with recovery looks like. _____

In what ways do you enjoy your recovery? _____

What is the best thing about exercising during recovery? Don't forget to add in pictures or images that describe your emotional connection to yourself, your new exercise or movement routine, and your social connections. _____

WHAT ABOUT ATHLETIC IDENTITY AND RECOVERY?

Being an athlete is a central feature for many people's self-identity. Athletes face unique challenges in recovery due to the complex relationships among eating, exercise, and performance. Often, athletic ideals can overshadow important considerations for recovery.

It can help to **reflect** on:

What rules do you have about exercise/sport and eating? _____

What rules do you have regarding exercise/sport and your body? _____

How do these rules facilitate performance or recovery? _____

Can these rules serve both performance AND recovery? How or why not? _____

As you can see from this reflection, there is a fine line between things that can help athletic performance and those that can facilitate recovery. **Be careful not to get trapped into perfectionistic thinking about how to excel in athletic performance.** For example, **consider how maintaining your athletic identity may actually be a way to help you cope with stress, negativity, and other negative emotions.**

What role does athletic performance play in this dynamic? _____

What other ways could you cope with these negative emotions? _____

Does exercising or playing a sport help you avoid something? _____

What are you giving up for sport participation? _____

How is your self-worth or value contingent on whether or not you are viewed as an athlete? _____

How can you balance recovery with your athletic identity? _____



Believe in yourself

Believing in yourself is a key to maintaining recovery. This may seem like an obvious motivational saying until you reflect on the deeper meaning of this simple advice. The type of deep belief in yourself that is necessary for sustained recovery is much more than simply being confident; it is called **self-efficacy**.

Self-efficacy goes beyond simply having self-confidence. It is **100% honest appraisal and belief in your ability to do a specific behavior**. This includes recognizing barriers, anticipating limitations, and maintaining rational expectations for success. This may seem similar to confidence, and in some ways it is. In fact, confidence leads to self-efficacy. However, the difference is that confidence is more general, whereas self-efficacy is much more specific. Think of confidence as, "fake it till you make it" and self-efficacy as fully understanding the ins and outs of exactly how you will do a task. It is seeing the bigger picture and not overlooking or exaggerating the importance of one particular factor. For example:

⇒ *You may enjoy exercise, but is something else masking that feeling of enjoyment (like using exercise to regulate emotions)?*

⇒ *Do you take sufficient rest days, and what is your response when you occasionally must take time off from exercise to spend extra time on work, social relationships, or to heal an injury?*

⇒ *Putting too much emphasis on one aspect of exercise while ignoring other aspects is a surefire way for exercise to sabotage recovery.*

Therefore, self-efficacy is realistic and based on acceptance of our self, our abilities and how we can plan to overcome barriers. Many studies have shown that self-efficacy is one of the most important factors in maintaining eating disorders recovery.

Use this **Exercise in Recovery Self-Efficacy Checklist** to identify areas where you are and are not yet fully comfortable with how exercise fits into your recovery. On a scale of 0% to 100%, write how confident you are in how you can respond to the following statements.

I HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT...	0-----50%-----100%
<i>I am able to eat feared foods without compensating through exercise</i>	
<i>I am able to skip days of exercise</i>	
<i>I am able to exercise without counting calories</i>	
<i>I am able to stop exercising before I intended</i>	
<i>I am able to stop exercising when I feel pain</i>	
<i>I am able to use methods in addition to exercise to regulate my emotions</i>	
<i>I am able to cancel my plans for exercise to spend time with friends</i>	
<i>I am able to cope with a bad day by doing something other than exercise</i>	
<i>I am able to exercise without trying to control my shape or weight</i>	
<i>I am able to skip an exercise session without feeling guilty</i>	

Look at your responses to each item. They indicate areas where you have more or less self-efficacy. Depending on where you are in your recovery process, you may be less confident to some of these questions. This may be an indicator that you need to build your self-efficacy for movement in your eating disorder recovery. **What can you learn from areas that you are high in self-efficacy?** _____

HOW TO ENHANCE SELF-EFFICACY

The key to enhancing self-efficacy is to be as honest with yourself, realistic, and specific as possible. Here are several areas that have been shown to increase self-efficacy.

Learn from Previous Experience

Reflecting on your experience is the best way to increase self-efficacy. **Think about your previous successes when exercise was not part of your eating disorder. Describe in as much detail as possible how you exercised appropriately, included rest, and listened to your body.** _____

What can you learn from your previous successes? _____

How are these experiences different from exercising as part of your eating disorder? _____

What are some small goals you can set to get back to this type of exercise? _____

Imagine Your Future:

Close your eyes and picture yourself now. What does your relationship with exercise and your eating disorder look like? _____

What would this relationship look like if you were to use exercise to help facilitate your recovery? _____

Describe your motives and your beliefs about exercise. _____

Describe how you feel by using exercise for recovery rather than to manage some part of your eating disorder. _____

Turn to Others

Do you have someone in your life who understands the risks and nuances of exercise during eating disorders recovery? This may be your therapist, a close friend, or a family member. Try to avoid turning to the internet and social media. It is best to have someone who can provide specific feedback about where you've been, what you are currently doing, and what you may be overlooking. Who can you turn to for support? _____

Listen to Your Body

Our minds have a way of making our body do things that we probably shouldn't. How can you improve the way you listen to your body when it is telling you to exercise to manage emotions, you need more rest, or you are literally running on empty? _____

Think About Your Emotions

Exercise is often used as an emotional coping mechanism. Make sure exercise is not masking emotions or being used as a sole method to feel better. Keep a journal of your emotions immediately before and after exercise. Don't forget to journal about your emotions on rest days, when life gets in the way of exercise routines, or when you are sick or injured and can't exercise. _____

Plan for Barriers

Setbacks will happen. List other coping skills you have or can develop to deal with eating disorder triggers, negative emotions, and/or when exercise is overtaking your recovery. _____

Remember, it's easy to stay in recovery when things are going well.

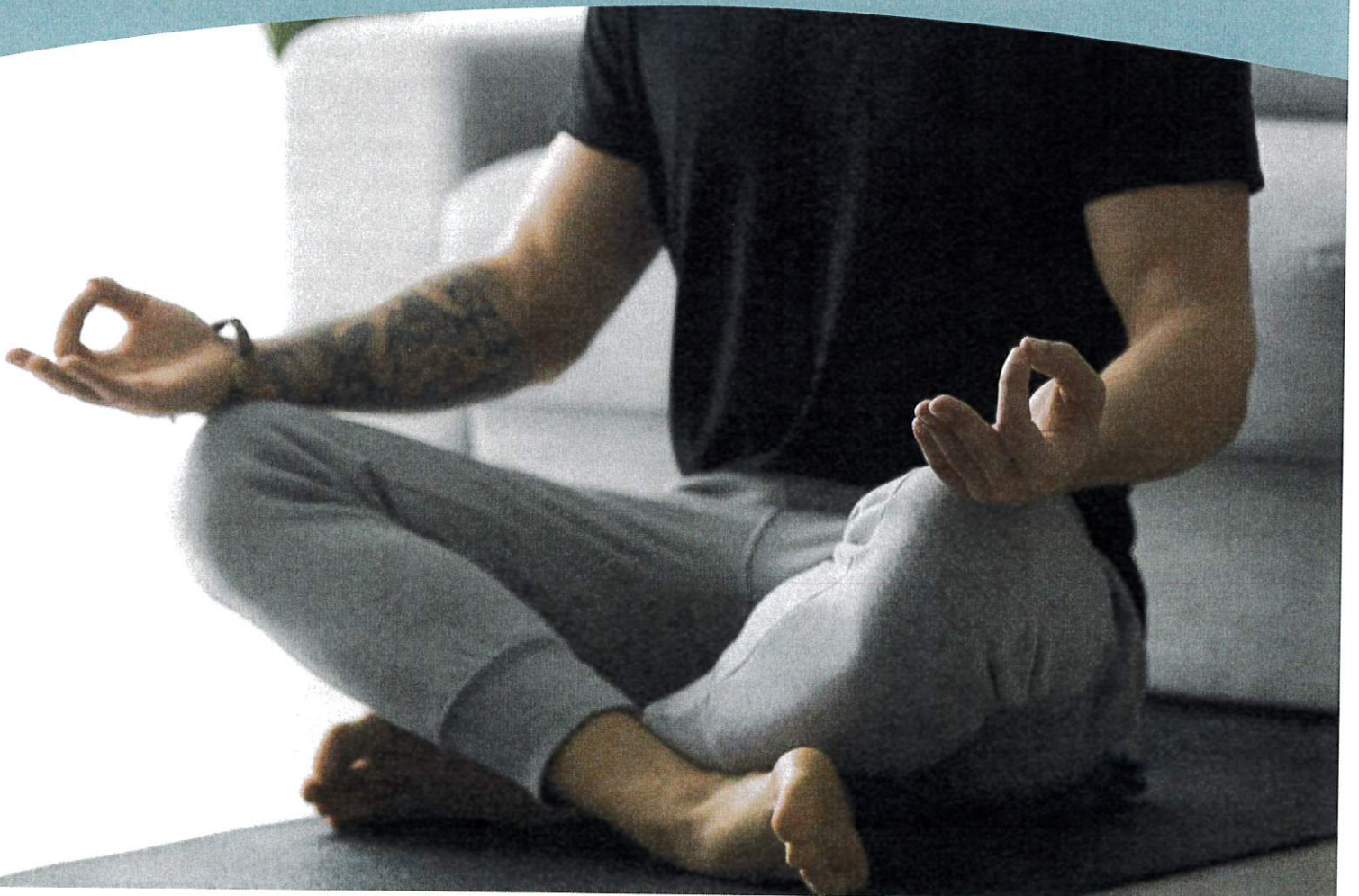
How prepared will you be when you face adversity?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

SECTION 1: REFLECTION PAGES

SECTION 1: REFLECTION PAGES

When you get moving: tips and suggestions for your movement and exercise routine



Daily stretching

Stretching in the morning is a great way to welcome the day! Not only can it increase flexibility and range of motion, but stretching also helps us connect with our bodies, find tension in our muscles, and physically prepare us for the day to come. Here are a few tips for how stretching can support recovery.

STRETCHING SAFELY

Generally, stretching is a very low risk movement. Just remember that **low risk does not mean no risk**. Here are few things to keep in mind to stretch safely:

- **Do not allow your head to drop below the level of your heart.** For example, if you want to stretch to touch your toes, do so from a seated position rather than while standing. This will allow the same areas on the back of your legs to stretch while also not risking orthostatic changes that can happen when your head dips below the level of your heart.
- **Pay attention to injured or previously injured parts of your body when stretching.** Be careful to not overdo it while stretching these areas. Seek immediate medical care if you feel intense pain, feel or hear something pop during a stretch, tear a muscle, or lose function of the muscle or body part during or after stretching.
- **Do not bounce when you stretch.** Bouncing can put more pressure on a muscle, tendon, or ligament than what is needed for a stretch. This can lead to injuries like pulls, strains, sprains, and tears.
- **Breathe while you stretch.** Breathing provides your muscles and brain with much needed oxygen while stretching. Holding your breath can also cause dangerous changes to your blood pressure.
- **Don't twist.** Keep each stretch in a single plane of motion while gradually elongating the muscle.

HOW TO STRETCH

Stretching should activate the entire length of a muscle by pushing it through its natural range of motion. To do this, **slowly move into a position to stretch the designated muscle. Move to the point of feeling the stretch in the muscle, but NOT to the point of feeling pain. Focus on slowly, smoothly, and gradually performing a gentle stretch for 10 to**

30 seconds. Perform each stretch two or three times. Important – STOP IMMEDIATELY IF ANY PAIN IS FELT. A good stretch should feel slightly uncomfortable, but there should not be any pain.

Pain during stretching means you have gone too far.

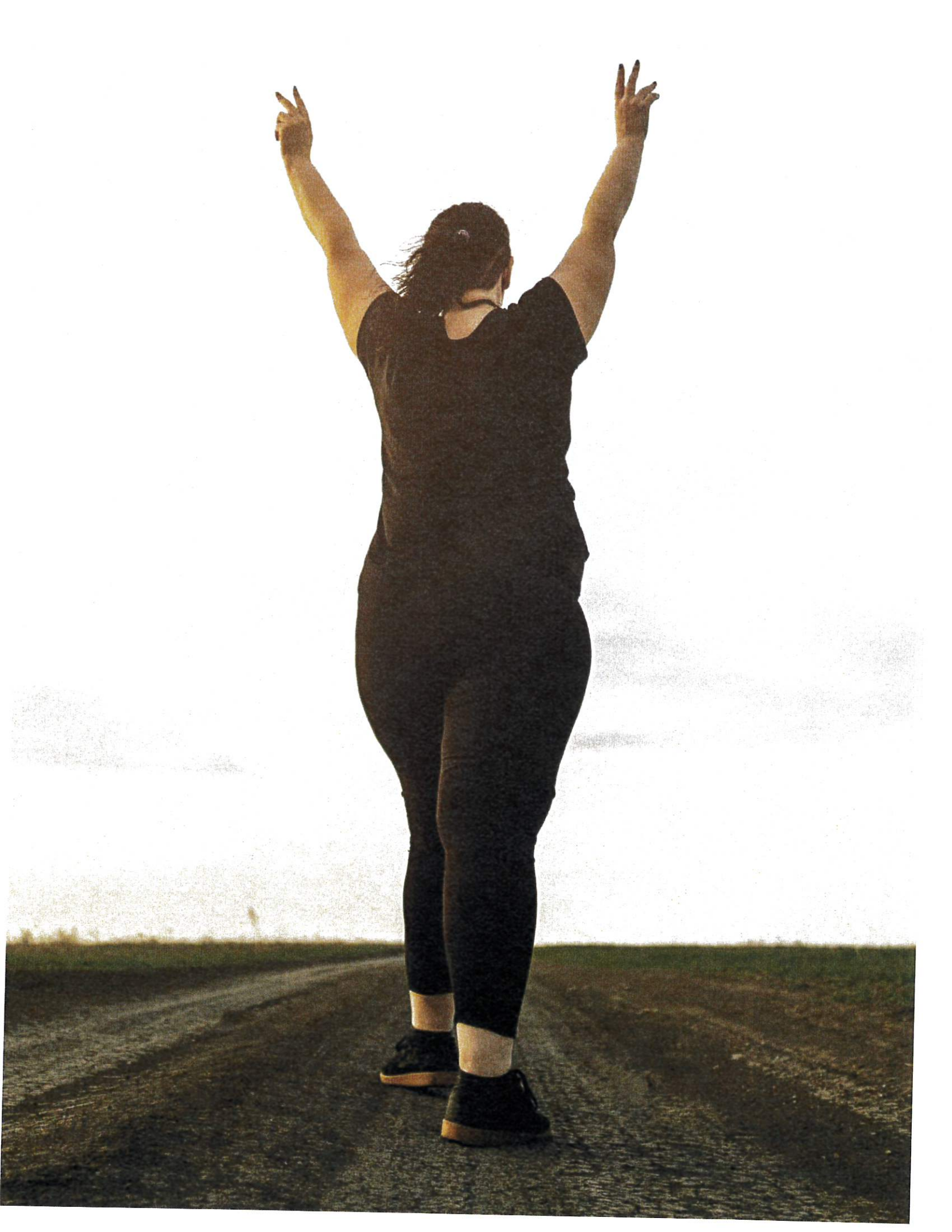
STRETCHING AND INJURY PREVENTION

Many people learn from an early age that you should stretch before exercise to prevent injury. Stretching before exercise is a good idea to help ease your muscles into being active, but there is not much evidence to suggest stretching immediately before or after exercise decreases the risk of injury. However, regularly stretching will lead to increases in flexibility. Increased flexibility is associated with a lower risk of injury. So, the injury prevention effect of stretching really is a long-term ancillary benefit. Stretching does provide other injury related short term benefits. For example, stretching allows for better circulation within muscles. This allows for more rapid healing from exercise and minor injuries by flushing out waste products that accumulate in muscles during exercise.

END ON A POSITIVE NOTE

As you can see and feel, even a few minutes of stretching returns some great benefits! By practicing stretching daily you will learn what your body is telling you when there's a knot in your shoulders or tightness in your back. By identifying the physical sensation, you can then reflect on what may be contributing to the tension in your body. The mind and body are inexplicably linked! Stretching is a great way to feel that link. Try ending your stretching session with gratitude for this ability to work with your body. Write down or say out loud a positive affirmation for the day. For example, **"I feel great today."**, **"Today I will accomplish my goals."**, **"I am thankful my body is telling me _____."** or **"I am thankful I can feel connected with my body."**





Mindfully connecting with your body

One of the keys to maintaining a healthy relationship with movement and exercise during recovery is to be aware of your body. Building mindful connections with your body helps combat triggers for exercise related to your eating disorder and understand the function of movement during recovery. Here are a few techniques that can help build mindful connections during recovery.

MEDITATION

Meditation is a way to be present and aware of what is happening right now. This includes experiencing thoughts, emotions, sensations, or awareness of your presence. Meditation is something that requires practice. Over time, meditation leads to self-acceptance, calmness, mental clarity, stress reduction, and kindness. Studies have even shown meditation can help with aspects of physical health such as pain management, blood pressure, and sleep. In short, meditation is a tool that can build resiliency and therefore reduce the risk for maladaptive forms of exercise that may derail recovery.



MEDITATION PRACTICE

A good way to begin a meditation practice is with simple, guided breathwork.

Try this practice for five minutes:

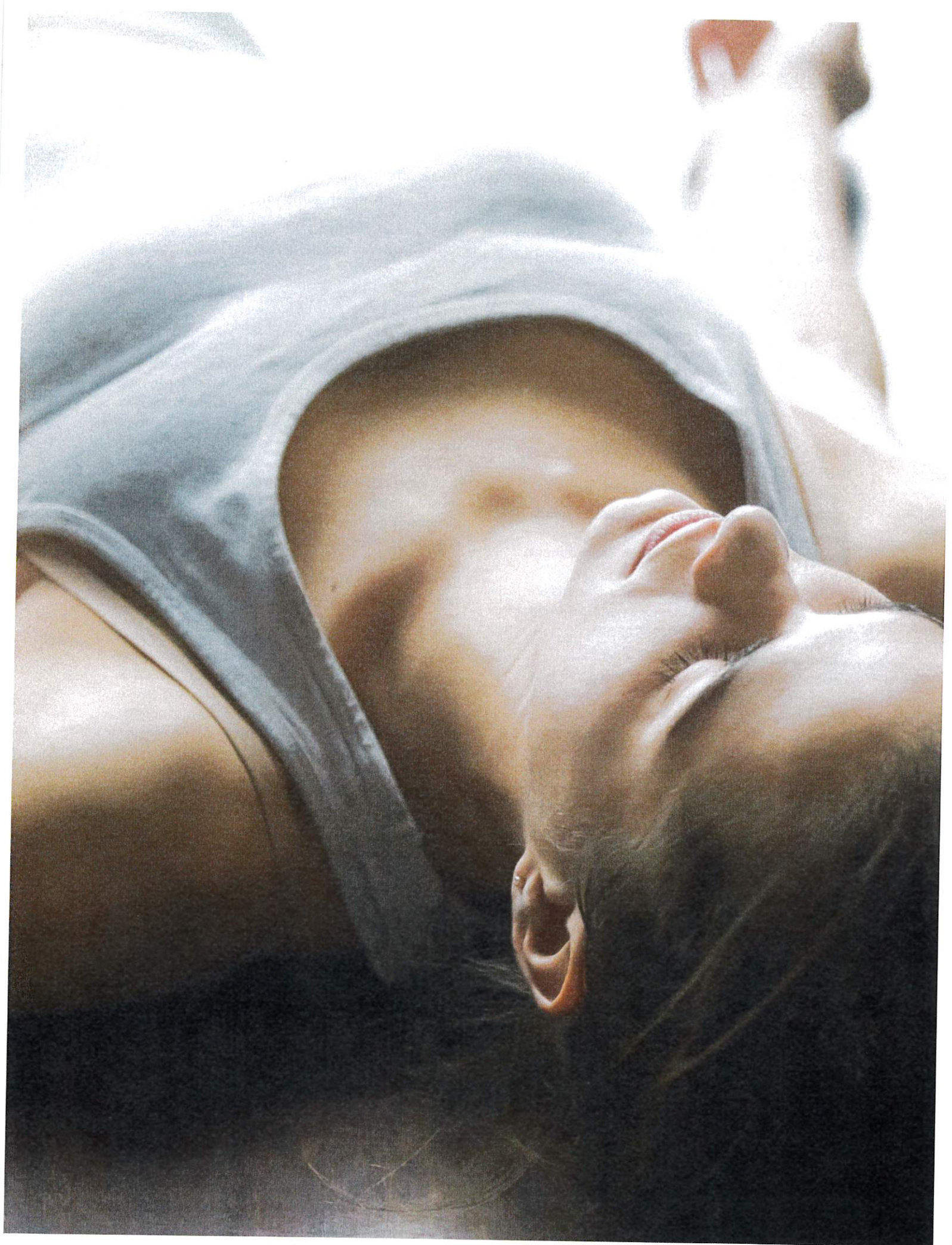
1. *Start by finding a comfortable position such as in a chair or laying on some cushions or a mattress.*
2. *Place your hands in a comfortable position.*
3. *Close your eyes and bring your focus to your breath, the length of the inhalation, the length of the exhalation.*
4. *You may find that your breathing speeds up or down once you become aware of it. This is ok.*
5. *Continue to bring your focus back to your breath. Inhale loving kindness, exhale tension.*
6. *Observe how your body responds and functions with each breath. Your mind may try to explore, or become distracted by, other thoughts or emotions. If you notice the mind has wandered away, just invite it back to the breath with loving kindness.*
7. *Pause once you are full, then exhale slowly through your mouth.*
8. *Once you have a good rhythm, with each breath, repeat the following:*
 - *"May I experience peace and joy in movement today"*
 - *"May I be free from pain and injury"*
 - *"May I listen to my body"*
 - *"May I have compassion for myself"*
9. *When you feel ready, slowly open your eyes.*



PROGRESSIVE RELAXATION

Progressive relaxation is a validated tool that can help encourage awareness, acknowledgment, and acceptance of one's own body. Practicing this technique regularly helps us learn how emotional states like stress, anxiety, and depression are not confined to the mind. Rather, they are all held in the body too. Therefore, progressive relaxation is a great coping technique to undue the unpleasant physical effects of stress and other negative emotions. This can help us press the pause button just long enough to gather our resources and not engage in compulsive exercise as a response to emotional triggers. Here is a brief script to help you continue the practice of progressive relaxation you started while in treatment at Alsana.

1. *Begin by finding a comfortable space. Usually laying down on the floor or some cushions works well.*
2. *Take a few deep, relaxing breaths. Focus on your breath. Bring your attention back to your breath if it strays away. Continue to breathe slowly throughout the progressive relaxation session.*
3. *Start at your head and work down through the entire body, progressively tensing each muscle, hold the tension for 3-5 seconds, and release. Allow each muscle to stay relaxed for 10 seconds before moving to the next muscle.*
4. *Start at your head by wrinkling your forehead or raising eyebrows as high as they will go.*
5. *Continue to release the tension held around your eyes and bridge of the nose (you may have to remove contact lenses before this step), cheeks, and jaws.*
6. *Next, move down to your neck, shoulders, and upper back. Tense and release these areas one at a time. These are areas that often hold tension.*
7. *Move to each arm, one at a time. Start in the upper arm, followed by the lower arm and hands.*
8. *Don't forget to tense and relax the muscles in your midsection and in your lower back. These are often muscles that hold emotions.*
9. *Similar to how you relaxed your arms, focus on one leg at a time as you slowly tense and relax each muscle from the top of your leg down to your feet.*
10. *Finish the session with rest for several minutes to experience a state of relaxation. End with a positive affirmation of gratitude about connecting with your body and releasing tension.*



Yoga during recovery

Many people find solace in yoga during recovery. Yoga offers opportunities to practice mindfulness, gratitude, grace, and acceptance while also connecting with the body through functional movement. The important word here is **practice**. The skills and connections that are cultivated through practicing yoga are very applicable to sustaining eating disorder recovery.

Here are some tips from two Asana yoga instructors (Rebecca Kennedy in Westlake and Trevor Deiterle in Monterey) to remember if you are considering adding yoga to your recovery process or continuing your current yoga practice.

FIND A YOGA STUDIO/TEACHER WHO CAN SUPPORT RECOVERY

These are the top three things to consider:

Look for studios/teachers that facilitate mind-body connection and healing and encourage yoga practiced with attention on embodiment, care and love.

Some styles that may be good starting points are restorative, gentle, vinyasa, or yin yoga. ***Sit in on a class to see if it can meet your needs.***

Communicate your concerns.

Group yoga classes are easy to find and can be a good option. It can be helpful to arrive early and introduce yourself to the teacher before class.

Let the teacher know that you may prefer to take short rests throughout the class and may take breaks to check in with yourself to make sure you're not overworking or pushing too hard. This can ensure the teacher understands that if you are taking a break you simply may need a more restorative practice.

If possible, work with a yoga teacher who understands eating disorders.

It is important to look for a teacher who is willing to listen and adaptively respond by modifying sessions appropriately. In short, look for the same qualities from a private yoga instructor as you would want in a good therapist.

TRAUMA-INFORMED YOGA

Yoga can be a good way to reconnect the mind and body. Unfortunately, this can be very difficult or even reactivating for individuals that have experienced trauma. Trauma-informed yoga can be helpful for individuals who have experienced trauma. Trauma informed yoga focuses on reactivating pathways involved in feeling what the body is experiencing

(e.g. hunger, fullness, thirst, physiological sensation). Practicing this form of yoga helps the brain experience the present moment and interact with the body through breathing or changing possess that can help make unpleasant sensations more tolerable. Unlike other forms of yoga, Trauma-informed yoga instructors use gentle language and generally limit or avoid any hands-on instruction or pose corrections. ***Look for instructors that are trauma sensitive or trauma aware, or with a certificate such as Trauma Center Trauma-Sensitive Yoga (TCTSY) (<https://www.traumasensitivelyoga.com/united-states.html>).***

THINGS TO BE AWARE OF THAT MAY IMPEDE RECOVERY

Finding a yoga practice takes time and may mean trying multiple studios. ***Watch for common red flags that can indicate when a studio or instructor may not be a good fit for you. As a general rule, stick with studios that focus on yoga.*** Many studios use persuasive marketing that is not facilitative of eating disorders recovery such as hyping fad eating plans like fasting, juicing, and restrictive eating regimens. These are obvious triggers for eating disorders. Similarly, ***avoid studios that focus on high intensity practices or take place in heated rooms.*** For example, Ashtanga yoga is very physically demanding and rigid in nature, gymnastic style yoga also doesn't always align with working with your body, and barre or yoga sculpt classes tend to focus on controlling weight or shape. These are all major triggers during eating disorder recovery.

TAKE AWAY MESSAGE

Selecting a yoga instructor or studio takes time. ***It's important to keep in mind that you are searching for a person and place that meets your specific needs and standards. Ideally, yoga is practiced because of the way it makes you feel. Find a practice that allows grace and compassion as you work with your body, not against it.*** Studios and instructors that listen to your concerns, respect your individual needs, and empower self-empowerment are best suited for safely including yoga as part of your movement routine during recovery.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, typical of notebook paper. There is no handwriting or other markings on the page.



SECTION 2: REFLECTION PAGES



This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Staying on track: workbooks
to help you plan, identify
barriers, and understand
how movement or exercise
fits in your recovery



Overcoming adversity

Maintaining an exercise routine is challenging for most people. For example, injuries are common, life has a way of throwing curveballs that can prevent us from exercise, and the aging process naturally affects our exercise abilities and preferences. ***Change is really the only thing we can count on!***

Simply put, maintaining a movement or exercise routine is anything but a straight line forward. It's more like a dance: you'll take a few steps forward, then maybe a few to the side, or even a few steps back. It is important to keep in mind that over time you will move forward. Being prepared for inevitable change will help you maintain exercise during recovery. Here's some tips that can help:

COPING STRATEGIES

Exercise is often the first (or only) coping strategy people use when times are tough. ***What other strategies do you have for dealing with negative emotions, bad days, stress, or when you experience adversity with exercise during recovery?***

DEALING WITH DRAWBACKS, ROADBLOCKS AND SETBACKS:

It is often tempting to go back to old exercise habits that were part of your eating disorder. View the temptation to exercise as part of your eating disorder as a temporary roadblock. Here are three activities that can help overcome these challenges:

1. ***Create a list of benefits of safely exercising during recovery. This list cannot include any aspects of exercise that may be part of your eating disorder. Next, make a list of drawbacks of exercise during recovery. This can include challenges, old patterns of exercise for your eating disorder, and any other thing about exercise that will be a hassle during recovery. Revisit creating these lists in a month, three months, and so on, to see how your lists change. Do you have more benefits or hassles? How important are each of these benefits and hassles?***
2. ***For each hassle in your list above, how serious is the consequence of ignoring the hassle? Compare how difficult it will be in the short term to get over these hassles with the benefit in the long term of persisting through adversity as you reestablish a holistic recovery.***
3. ***List your three biggest roadblocks, challenges, or drawbacks to changing your approach to exercise during recovery. Next to each of these, write an alternative. For example, if your challenge is that exercise makes you focus on counting calories, an alternative could be to do a different activity that helps you focus on the connections you experience while exercising.***

USE SUBSTITUTES

Replacing old habits and ways of thinking that support your eating disorder with new habits and thoughts that support recovery is one of the secrets to sustained recovery. *Make a list of old thoughts and habits about exercise. Next, make a list of new thoughts and habits you can develop that reflect what you have learned about exercise to support recovery. On a blank piece of paper, create a table like this one to list these thoughts and habits:*

OLD WAY OF THINKING	HEALTH SUBSTITUTE
Exercise improves my mood	I've discovered I really enjoy photography and looking at a good picture I've taken makes me happy.

Next, create a table like the one below to go through your old ways of thinking and old behaviors and replace each one with a substitute.

INSTEAD OF...	I WILL...

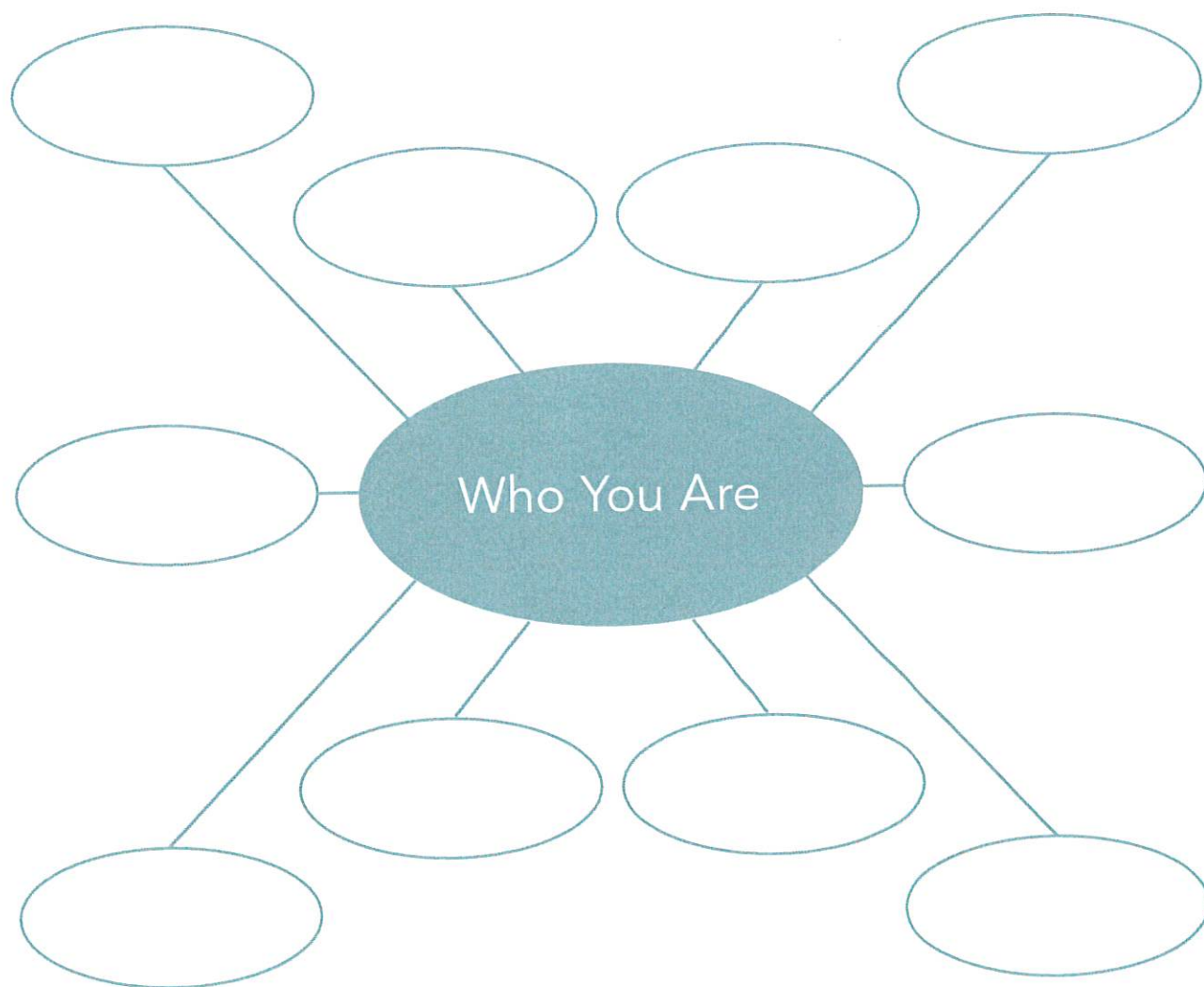


Self-identity workbook

The following activities can help you identify your self-identity. *Copy this page or use a blank piece of paper so you can redo these activities and see if or how sources of your identity change over time.*

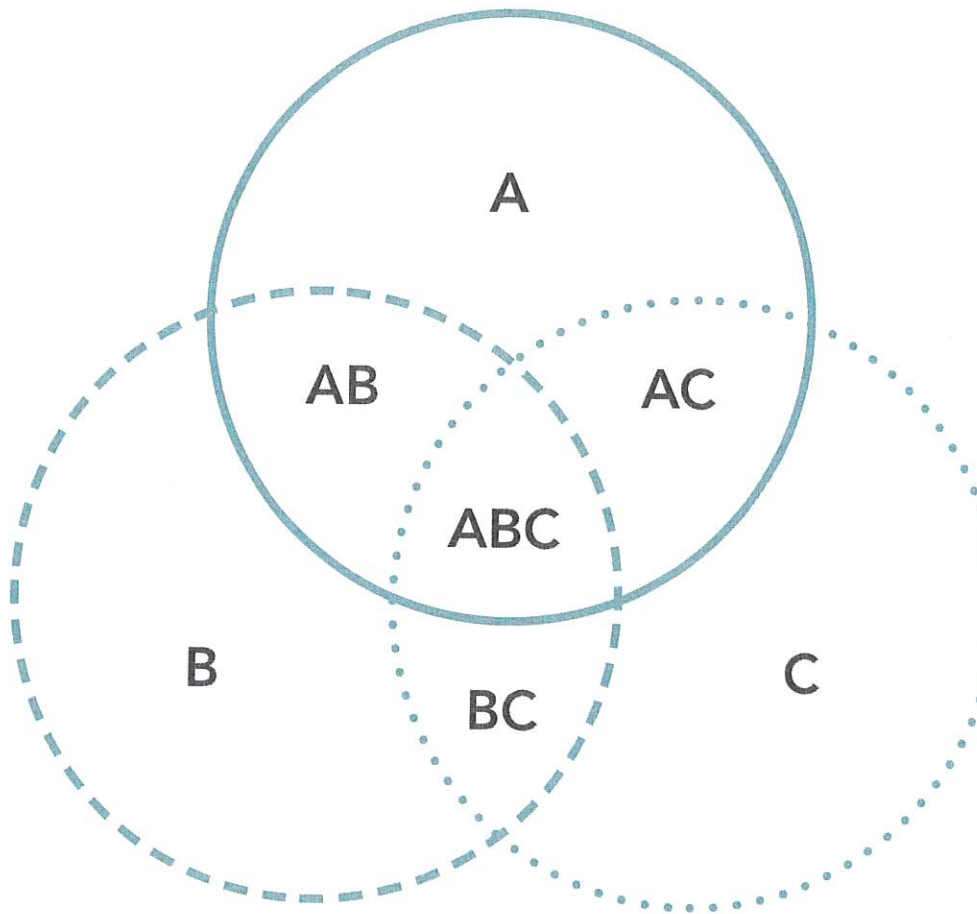
SELF- IDENTITY

Fill in each circle with things that contribute to your self-identity. Put things that are most important to you in circles with the shortest line to the "Who You Are" circle. This activity can help you identify aspects of your self that may be influencing your behavior. Which circles are related to exercise?



HOW DOES EXERCISE FIT WITH YOUR SELF-IDENTITY AND RECOVERY?

The three circles in the figure below represent three different aspects of you. Each of these circles influences your self-identity and therefore your behavior.



- *Fill in how a particular part of your life influences exercise in each circle.* For example, the solid line circle can represent you as an exerciser or athlete, the dotted line circle can represent recovery, and the dashed line circle can represent you in your family. *How would you exercise based on these three roles that are parts of your self-identity?*
- *In space A, write how you would exercise to fit your role as an exerciser or athlete. How would you exercise if the other circles had zero influence on you?*
- *Fill in space B and space C with how exercise relates to your roles related to recovery and family.*
- *Notice that the circles overlap. In space AB, AC, and BC, write about how you would exercise while filling both roles. Is this different than what you wrote in space A or B or C?*
- *Fill in space ABC with how you can balance all your roles and exercise. What differences do you notice compared to other spaces and circles?*

This activity shows a few of the many things that contribute to self-identity. *What other circles can you add to these three? How can you balance these influences to safely exercise during recovery?*

Perfection vs. excellence workbook

There is no shortage of misconceptions, myths, and flat out lies about exercise. One of the biggest that affects exercise in eating disorders recovery is that you have to meet external goals, predetermined benchmarks, or that certain exercises or sports are the "best".

These types of objectives around exercise can be very constricting. They perpetuate false narratives about the function of exercise in a person's life. Even worse, they are the same type of black and white and perfectionistic thought patterns that help eating disorders thrive. This is a big reason why exercise is linked to eating disorder relapse.

The table below can be used to help differentiate perfectionistic motives from excellence. Eating disorders and increased risk for relapse flourish in perfectionism, while sustained recovery truly embodies excellence.

Use this table to help you as you reflect, as prompts for when you journal, or to discuss these nuances with your therapist to discern these subtle, yet extremely important, differences.

	PERFECTION	EXCELLENCE
Self-talk	I must/should/have to...	I want/wish/would like to ...
Results in	Demoralizing you	Motivating you
Focus	Appearances, external validation, and fear of failure	Self-satisfaction with the process and desire for success
Goals	Strive for impossible goals	Enjoy meeting high standards within reach
Source of value	What you do	Who you are
Adversity	Leads to defeat/giving up	Temporarily disappointed, then move forward
Failure and criticism	Devastating	Learn from it
Mistakes	Dwells on them/forbids them	Learns from them/accepts them
Competition	Needs to be number 1/the best; be better than others	Can live without being the best, especially if you have tried your hardest; be the best you can be
Self-esteem	Win to keep self-esteem	Finishing second or lower is ok
Rooted in	Irrational beliefs/fantasy	Rationality/reality

SUGGESTIONS FOR HOW TO USE THIS TABLE FOR JOURNAL TOPICS:

Are you competitive with sport or exercise? _____

How do the topics in bold on the left of the table influence your competitiveness? _____

How are they similar and different from other aspects of your eating disorder? _____

Think about a time you lost an athletic competition or didn't meet your exercise goal. What was your reaction? _____

Was your eating disorder influencing this reaction? If it did, describe how. _____

What are the similarities and differences now when you don't meet a goal or lose a competition? _____

What are your beliefs about exercise during recovery? _____

Where did they come from? _____

How realistic are they? _____

Do they include many details and paint a clear picture of how you will attain your goals? _____

Do your beliefs about exercise during recovery allow you to feel satisfaction with exercise or are they contingent upon the outcome for which you are striving? _____

Movement planner

Planning ahead is a great way to make sure you are not overlooking a key part of your movement or exercise plan. This movement planner worksheet can help you identify important considerations for how to approach movement or exercise during recovery. Use this page to help guide your initial movement plan after treatment, when you want to try a new exercise routine, or as a way to reset after a setback.

Think about all of the skills you learned as part of the Movement Dimension of your treatment at Alsana.
What parts can help you during recovery? _____

What parts need more attention? _____

DAILY STRETCHING

What date will you start daily stretching in the morning? _____

What are some positive affirmations you will use to welcome the day at the end of your stretch session: _____

YOGA

Will you practice yoga during recovery? No Yes

What date will you begin your practice: _____

Where will you practice? _____

If you do not want to practice yoga, what other activities will you do to practice mindfulness, gratitude, acceptance, and make mind body connections? _____

PROGRESSIVE RELAXATION, MEDITATION, IMAGERY

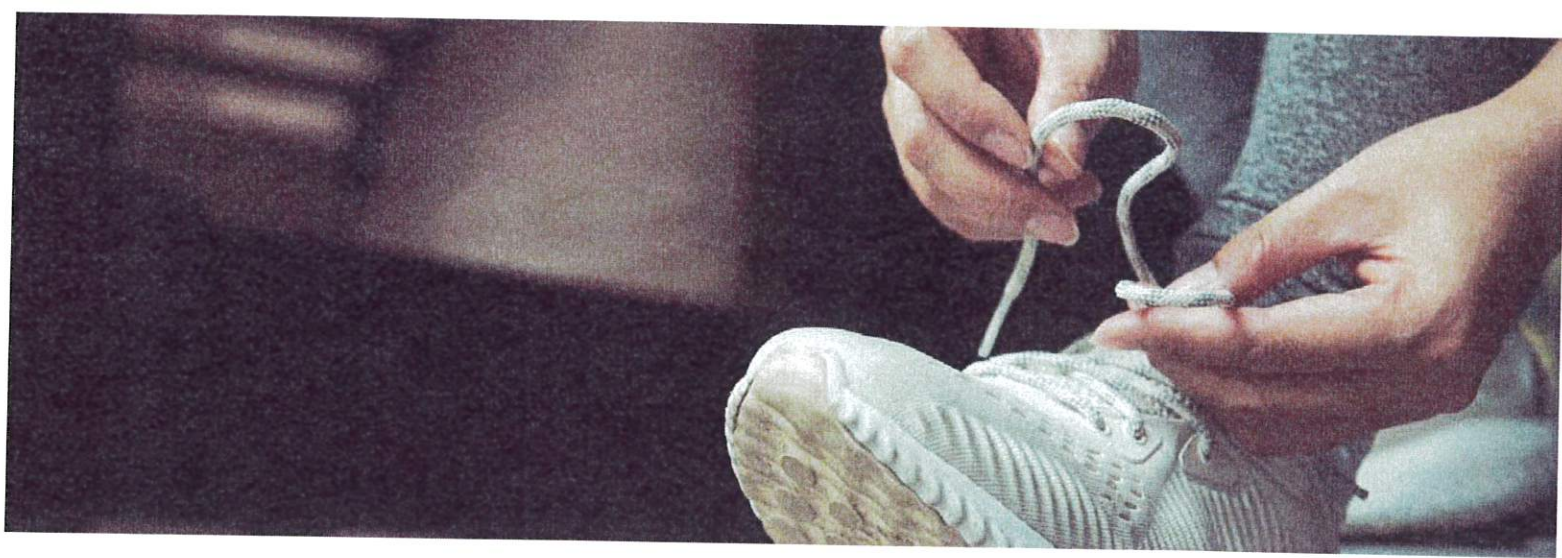
Will you continue practicing any of these? No Yes

If yes, which practice will you do? _____

What date will you start your practice? _____

Where will you do this? _____

If you do not want to continue these practices, how will you check in with your body? _____



MOVEMENT ASSESSMENTS

What was your Compulsive Exercise Test Overall score at discharge? _____

Which subscales of the Compulsive Exercise Test had the highest scores? _____

How will you work on these areas from your assessments that are related to exercise? _____

RELATIONSHIPS

Who will you turn to for exercise support? _____

MOVEMENT OR EXERCISE BEHAVIOR

What date will you begin your new movement plan? _____

What exercise/activity will you do? _____

What do you need to do this? _____

GOAL SETTING

Using SMART goals, describe your first Process goal _____

Describe your first Performance goal _____

Describe a short-term Outcome goal _____

REST

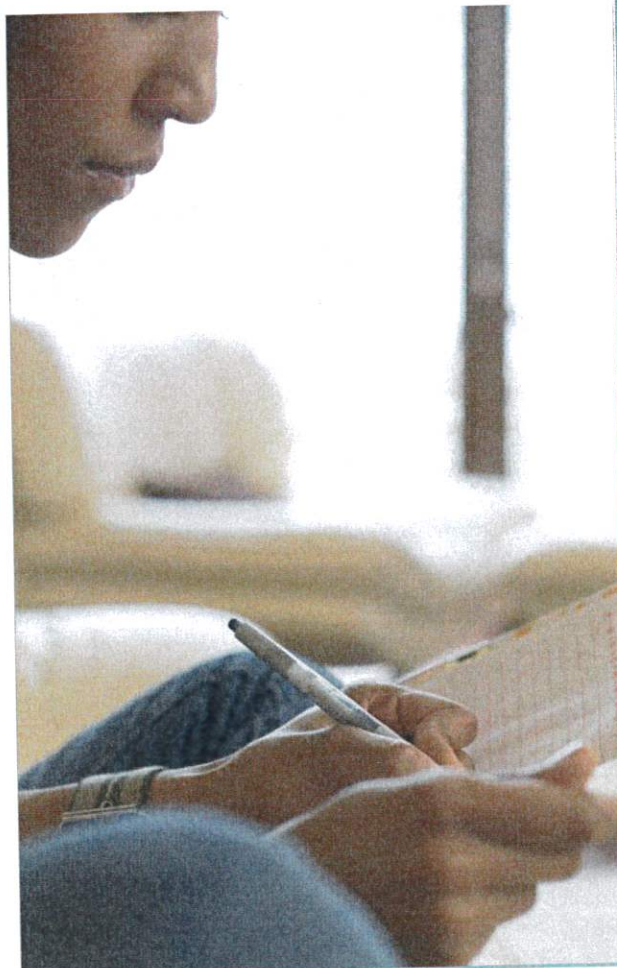
What days will you schedule rest? _____

Monitoring movement

Monitoring a movement or exercise routine can be a vital tool to help stay on track. It allows us to see progress, identify challenges, and learn from our own experiences. *The secret to monitoring is to be as specific as possible.* Specific to movement and exercise during eating disorders recovery, monitoring should ***focus on the QUALITY of exercise, not the quantity.*** Focusing on the quality also helps us to understand how movement can fit into holistic recovery.

The monitoring form on the next page can help with movement and exercise during recovery. To use it:

1. ***Decide which days you will plan as rest days. Cross out or black out the "Activity" boxes for those days. Don't forget to complete the remaining columns on your rest days.***
2. ***Describe your emotions before, during, and after your movement or exercise session in the next three columns.***
3. ***Describe how you felt physically during your activity. For example, how much were you working with your body? Were you tired, sore, or in any pain?***
4. ***Describe your mental focus. Were you disconnected or tuned out while exercising? What were you thinking about while engaged in this movement?***
5. ***Describe your relational focus. What or who did you connect with while engaged in this movement? Did you feel immersed by your surroundings? Did you feel a connection to a higher power? Describe the quality of the connection with anyone who engaged in this movement with you.***
6. ***What percentage of this activity was driven by or related to your eating disorder? Fill this in the second to last column.***
7. ***Describe in detail how much and what kind of rest you will do after this activity.***



Photocopy this page or recreate this table elsewhere to continue to track your movement.

Movement Monitor for week of: _____

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Activity							
Emotions Before							
Emotions During							
Emotions After							
Physical Sensations							
Mental Focus							
Relational Focus							
% Eating Disorder							
Rest							

Photocopy this page or recreate this table elsewhere to continue to track your movement.

Movement Monitor for week of: _____

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Activity							
Emotions Before							
Emotions During							
Emotions After							
Physical Sensations							
Mental Focus							
Relational Focus							
% Eating Disorder							
Rest							

Movement Monitor for week of: _____

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	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Activity							
Emotions Before							
Emotions During							
Emotions After							
Physical Sensations							
Mental Focus							
Relational Focus							
% Eating Disorder							
Rest							

Photocopy this page or recreate this table elsewhere to continue to track your movement.

Movement Monitor for week of: _____

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Activity							
Emotions Before							
Emotions During							
Emotions After							
Physical Sensations							
Mental Focus							
Relational Focus							
% Eating Disorder							
Rest							

SECTION 3: REFLECTION PAGES

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SECTION 3: REFLECTION PAGES



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