

Eight ingredients for change in Anorexia Nervosa

- 1: **Engaging** in treatment and in meaningful relationships with professionals who can help you, to provide the security, stability and continuity from which change can happen.
- 2: Gaining **self-knowledge** through working on a shared understanding with your therapist, of how the problems developed for you and the role the 'eating disorder' plays in your life. This can help you explore if its costs are greater than its rewards and help with deciding if you are ready to change.
- 3: You begin to recognise the **toxicity of your self-criticism** and self-deprivation, and tentatively at least, begin to join the professionals in fighting the self-criticism and learning self-acceptance.
- 4: You make a **commitment to change** and take responsibility for learning new ways to manage your feelings. At some point you'll reach a tipping point where you start to feel the benefit of working on change and being less self-critical, but only if you make the commitment first.
- 5: You start to **accept 'failing'** is essential to changing, and a healthy part of the learning process. You stop retreating to unachievable high standards, self-criticism and over-control when something goes wrong, because that only ends up making you believe you are not good enough or you're unable to change.
- 6: Testing out **opening up to others** to develop trusting, understanding and accepting relationships, begins to relieve feelings of loneliness and isolation.
- 7: You **persevere** with the hard work and **repetition of behavioural change**, over and over treating yourself in a way that is kind and self-caring. At some point this must include eating more and **weight gain**.
- 8: Gradually, you **build confidence** in a 'good enough' healthy self, capable of meeting your core emotional and physical needs. In other words developing **self-acceptance** and a '**healthy self**' identity, as a **fabulously flawed** human being, like all of us.