

ALMOST ANOREXIC

Is My (or My Loved One's) Relationship with Food a Problem?

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Table 16.

Your Personalized Relapse Prevention Plan

Although different for everyone, common triggers for relapse include:

- events similar to those that first triggered the eating disorder (for example, others' comments about weight/shape, life transitions such as moving or graduating)
- unintentional weight gain (during pregnancy, for example) or loss (such as during a physical illness)
- events that increase focus on weight and shape (such as beach vacations or weddings)
- feeling like you have "failed" in another key life domain (such as a job or a relationship)
- negative mood (such as anxiety, depression, anger, frustration, or shame)

Which triggers are most likely to be relevant for me in the next 6 months?

What are the early warning signs that I am already starting to relapse?

- **Thoughts** (such as "I should really lose 3 pounds before my date on Friday")

- **Feelings**

- **Behaviors** (such as weighing myself frequently, eliminating specific food groups)

Table 16.

Your Personalized Relapse Prevention Plan

What can I do to prevent a relapse from occurring?

- If you have gained or lost weight recently, write your feelings in your journal.
- If you are experiencing a negative mood, distract yourself with a fun task like knitting, watching a movie, or taking a yoga class, or express yourself by writing, drawing, or reaching out to a friend or family member face to face.
- If you have a stressful day, try meditation, deep breathing, or listening to music.
- Don't try to solve problems in unrelated life areas by changing your eating or weight. Such issues are part of life, no matter how thin or abstemious you are.
- If you feel a strong urge to use an eating-disordered behavior, experiment with setting a timer to delay for 10 minutes. Try one of the ideas listed in this section while you wait. By the time the buzzer rings, the urge may have passed.

Strategies that have worked for me in the past include:

What can I do to get back on track so a lapse doesn't become a full-blown relapse?

- Remind yourself that all is not lost! If you beat yourself up, you are promoting the same feelings of guilt and shame that put you at risk in the first place.
- Lapses are a great learning opportunity. Regroup and think about how you will handle the same situation differently next time.

Strategies that have worked for me in the past include:

For more information about the book, visit www.AlmostAnorexic.com.