

Worksheet 12.4: Looking forward and stepping back

Carers have several frequently asked questions around this topic, particularly towards the end of a series of workshops. For example:

- Where do we go from here?
- How will I know when my loved one is recovered?
- How do I know when to take a step back?
- My loved one is telling me she is better, but I am still seeing shadows and I am terrified she will have a relapse.
- My son is telling me I need to get my life back now he is better. How do I know if he is really better or if it is his eating disorder speaking?

As a group

- Create a menu of options for ongoing support following the workshops.
- Discuss signs that Edi might be moving towards recovery and independence and ways in which carers might increase their confidence in stepping back from the caring role.

Your group facilitator may be able to signpost you to any local support such as a regular carer group. If there isn't one already set up then perhaps this group can create one, or at least share contact details and perhaps meet up on a more informal basis. There are also online carers groups such as those run by Beat.

All stages of recovery are challenging and carers who can provide their ongoing support throughout can significantly increase the chances that their loved one will make a full recovery and go on to lead a good quality of life. Carers recognising the challenges of recovery, acknowledging and affirming progress, however small that might be, and helping Edi to review and reflect on any setbacks are all invaluable in the recovery journey. At the same time, it is important that carers prepare themselves to step back and allow their loved ones to become independent as individuals in an age appropriate manner and to be responsible for their own health.