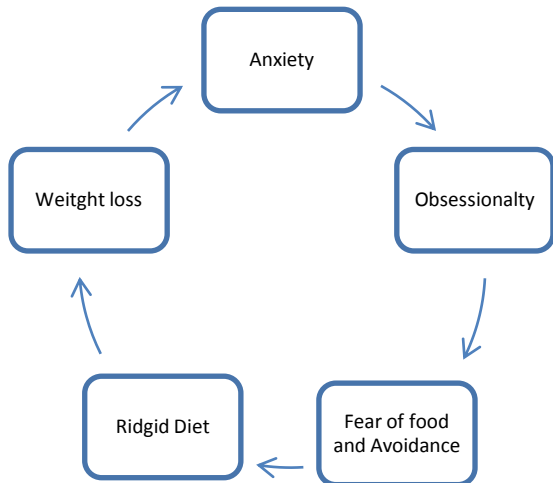


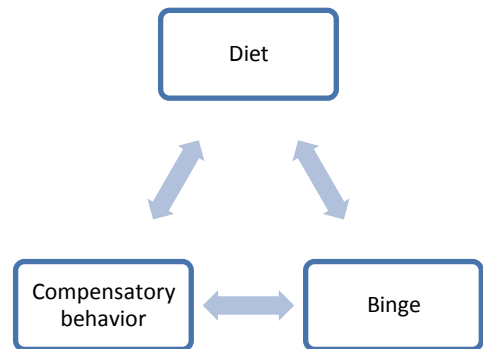
Benefits of Meal Group in Outpatient Treatment of Eating Disorders

Sabine Haake, RD, and Lynne Martin, RD,

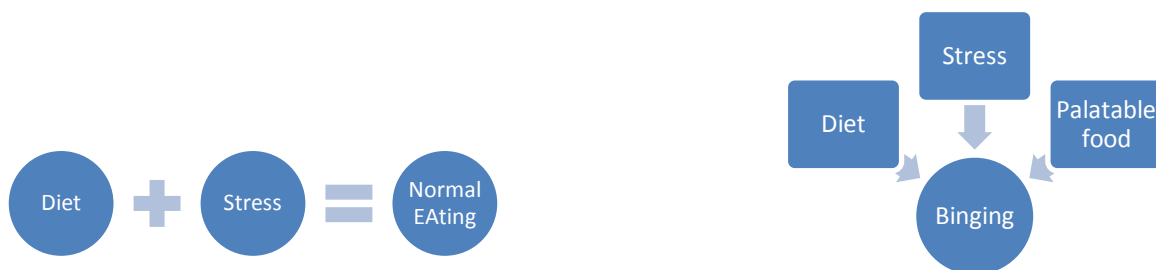
Eating in Anorexia Nervosa



Eating in Bulimia Nervosa



Eating in Binge Eating Disorder



Benefits of Meal Group

Benefits to Patients:

- calories and nourishment that they may not get otherwise in the day
- containment and safety to take risks and feel they have support to do this
- structure around pacing and meal choices to help get them started
- education around food combinations and portion sizes
- demonstrate the use of distraction to help make it through a difficult meal
- allows patients to be confronted with real life issues in a clinical setting (finishing a group that brought up issues that leave them with the urge to restrict but eating through it, or the urge to vomit or binge and sitting with it)

Benefits to Group Leader:

- a better understanding of patients distress around food choices
- insight into distortions with regards to portion sizes
- insight into patients rigidity/flexibility around food choices

What Works in our Practice:

- structure (time limit for meal and guidelines patients are required to follow)
- patients having the freedom to choose what they bring
- a minimum food requirement that patients must eat to be in meal group
- flexibility with regards to the food choices to help decrease power struggles
- grocery shopping and outings to decrease stress of doing it on their own

Challenges:

- getting past the fear of taking risks with the food
- keeping conversation going, finding neutral topics of conversation
- boundaries
- being aware of the time and helping patients to pace themselves to make the meal a success
- changing the topic of conversation without making patients feel like they did something wrong

Long term goals:

- Support learning to live with normal weight
- Encourage individual to take responsibility for normalized eating
- Learning to choose and cook their own meals
- Practice eating in public, with family and friends or eating alone if that is when symptoms come up for them