



RECOVERY BY DOING GROCERY SHOPPING GUIDELINES

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In part-two of this blog series, we continue to discuss the processes and objectives of the grocery shopping outing.

Grocery shopping and meal planning play a vital role in self-care and the **Recovery by Doing** approach. At Esperanza, our nutrition team assists adults and adolescents (as part of their treatment plan) throughout the grocery shopping process. It's beneficial to view this in terms of behaviors (such as restricting, binging, purging, etc.) if you don't identify with any specific diagnosis listed. Any form of strained relationship with food deserves attention and care. **Here's how grocery shopping goals can differ for various diagnoses:**

Anorexia Nervosa

When you have Anorexia the first goal is to fill in any nutritional gaps with food.

- When you have anorexia, your dietitian will meet with you in sessions and in meal planning groups to help identify your budget, nutritional needs, and current foods consumed. The first goal is to fill in any nutritional gaps with food. The same as any other disorder, we work to ensure sufficiency first. Are you eating enough according to your meal plan your eating disorder RD gave you?
- We work to make sure there is enough to fully fuel you, and from there, we work on challenging specific food rules like beliefs around nutritional values, carbohydrates, fat, protein, fiber, fluid, volume, and more.
- For example, if ice cream was a previously enjoyed food taken away by the disorder, we work to reintroduce ice cream, and your team will go to the grocery store with you and support you in purchasing it.
- We might encourage you to use opposite action to not calorie check on the label and might encourage you to use your wise mind (DBT therapy skill) to leave it in your cart instead of walking around the store and putting it back
- Through intentional exposure over time, you learn to eat your challenge foods and heal your relationship with all foods.

Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID)

When you have ARFID we work to set nutritional goals including grocery shopping based off the food hierarchy made with the dietitian and therapist.

- You may struggle to remember to grocery shop due to limited interest in food. Other times, you may have no problem grocery shopping, but only purchase certain kinds of foods.
- Exposure hierarchy helps to appropriately challenge according to your values and fears. Once your nutritional needs are consistently met, we begin to complete food exposures.
- Purchasing the food can be a very challenging piece of this exposure. We work with you to help you identify foods that you have previously had and eliminated, foods that interest you, foods that remind you of foods you currently eat but are slightly different (ex: a different brand, shape, temperature, texture, color).
- Your dietitian may suggest other ideas of foods or help you identify similarities between foods you already eat and foods that are important for you to be able to eat.
- We might suggest different forms of the same food to help ease you into challenging your fears: example, what about frozen fruit that is more consistent in taste and texture, compared to fresh fruit?
- Our goal is to challenge you, but not beyond your ability to use skills.

When pursuing the journey of recovery, it's not only about consuming a meal or snack; it involves planning, budgeting, shopping, storing, preparing, and reframing any disordered thoughts or behaviors that may arise during the process.

