

C.A.R.E.S.S.

I agree that when I get the impulse to engage in my ED, BEFORE I do, I will incorporate one behavior from each category below. (Set and re-set a timer before you begin each section, so you have an external boundary to re-ground you after 10-15 minutes.)

C.A.- Communicate Alternately (10-15 minutes)

Hurting the body is a way to communicate feelings, thoughts, needs, and unresolved trauma memories/pain. Clients need other, less destructive modalities to communicate.

Draw/paint the body part you want to “hurt”

Draw the emotions that accompany the urge to binge/purge/starve

Make a collage of words/images that capture thoughts/feelings

Write a poem about your feelings

Draw an outline of your body and write words on various body parts

Visualize doing the ED behavior and write about what you think/feel

Write about what was happening when you felt the urge to self-harm

R.E.- Release Endorphins (10-15 minutes)

Clients feel better after they self-harm because the brain releases endorphins, (naturally occurring opiates), in response to pain/body trauma. Clients need other ways to experience the release of endorphins. (Exercise, laughter, hugging)

Run up/down the stairs or the periphery of your house/march in place

Do 100 jumping jacks

Go on a piece of exercise equipment

Do a part of an at-home exercise tape

Put on the radio and dance

Listen to a funny comedian on a CD/video

Watch a funny movie/TV show

Read something that tickles you

Hold/ stroke and hug a stuffed animal or live pet

Hug a pillow, rag doll, or a tree

S.S.-Self-Soothe(10-15 minutes)

Clients need to learn new strategies that promote self-care and decrease anxiety from future triggering events.

Wrap in a quilt and rock in rocking chair

Take a warm shower/bubble bath

Light scented candles or oil/play soothing music

Read positive affirmations

Massage hands with soothing lotion