



Compass – A Coaching Support Programme for carers of young people

What is Compass?

Compass is a **coaching programme** for carers of young people (aged 12–17) who have symptoms of disordered (a diagnosis is not required). We ask that the young person has at least attended one visit to discuss the onset and symptoms of disordered eating before making a referral into the programme. The aim of Compass is to support families and care givers before their young person commences treatment.

Support will be **delivered over zoom. As carers/ family members you will receive a fifty-minute video call every week for ten weeks**, facilitated by one of our trained Programme Officers. Compass has been developed to complement our other carer programmes as part of a supportive pathway or when utilised on its own begin your carers journey through your loved one's recovery.

Objectives of Compass

The aim of Compass is for yourself as a carer to **gain a stronger insight into your loved ones disordered eating and to understand your role within your young person's journey to recovery**. The sessions provide a safe space for you to talk openly about your situation, share emotions and look for supportive strategies.

Compass will enable you to have the foundation of knowledge and resources, including psychoeducation and support plans to prepare you for supporting your young person's. The programme is based upon a book called 'Help Your Teenager Beat an Eating Disorder' by James Lock and Daniel Le Grange; we will share lots of resources and support during your time with us.

It is important to note that Beat's Programme Officers are not medically trained and so cannot advise on medical queries but they will signpost you to appropriate services.

How do I know if Compass is the right support for me?

Eligibility criteria

- Your young person must be aged between 12 and 17 at the time of programme commencement.
- Your young person must have symptoms of disordered eating and be within three years of becoming unwell and has not started treatment for their eating disorder at the time of programme commencement.
- Your young person must have visited their GP at least once to discuss the onset of the disordered eating. (A formal diagnosis is not required); we just ask that a medical review has happened once.
- Your carer / family group can include up to four people of your choice. At least one of the carers from each family group needs to be consistently attending every session with the other carer needing to attend at least 50%. Attendees must be able to commit to the sessions as session times cannot change regularly throughout the programme.
- As a carer group you must be committed to completing the required homework each week.
- As carers you must be committed to completing the evaluation surveys that we send to you at the beginning, middle and end of the programme. This helps us to monitor the progression within

your sessions and supports us when we evaluate the programme, so we can go onto help other families in the future.

- As carers you must remain responsible for the young person's physical and mental health throughout the duration of the programme. Our team can cease the sessions if they feel there is a risk to the young person at any point during the programme.

Exclusion criteria

- You are unable to commit to programme requirements and cannot attend the sessions.
- You or any other member of the carer group have an active intent/plan to end your life or are in crisis.
- You or any other member of the carer group displays use of alcohol or recreational drugs that would impact participation in the programme.
- If any changes occur throughout delivery of programme that deem a carer no longer suitable, the Programme Officer will signpost you into relevant services depending upon the support needs being identified.

What can I expect from Compass?

Prior to commencing the programme, you will have completed a sign-up questionnaire and will have an introductory telephone or zoom call with a Programme Officer on the Compass programme to discuss your needs, explain the format of sessions and set clear expectations from the programme. Once it has been agreed that you are starting the programme we will confirm this via email and agree with you a suitable time to commence your support.

1. Foundation for recovery

- The programme officer will discuss with you, your knowledge of disordered eating and what to expect during the recovery journey. You will be introduced to setting SMART goals to help provide direction for the sessions and establish from your perspective what you hope to gain from the program.

2. Stages of change

- Discussions around the stages of change model will be introduced to help you to understand people's motivation to change and how these may differ; we will look at this from both the carer and young person perspective. We encourage carers to reflect on barriers and opportunities to change and to identify personal goals.

3. Separating the illness from the child

- *Discussion around empathy versus sympathy and how this plays an important part within recovery. We will introduce the concept of the disordered eating voice and ways carers can effectively manage this within the home. We will work on an awareness of different caring styles using a range of animal analogies and how certain approaches aid recovery.*

4. Self Care and effective communication

- Discussions around helpful communication and the importance of carer self-care to best support their young person. Carers are encouraged to reflect on how their child responds to different communication styles and how to prioritize their self-care needs.

5. Being available and establishing regular mealtimes

- Discussion around the family dynamic and establishing a family norm surrounding mealtimes both currently/ before the eating disorder started and the importance of a united front. Discovering strategies to support regular eating and introducing the analogy of food is medicine.

6. *Setting clear expectations*

- Discussion around how yourself as a carer feel about offering food choices to your young person and 'enforcing' changes; looking at the importance of communication and the consequences of deviating from this.

7. *Exercise, Binging and Purging / Accommodating & Enabling Carer Behaviors*

- *Discussion around how exercise is viewed within the family and how to support the young person. The session will look at the reassurance trap and cover the importance of not enabling disordered eating behaviors. We also cover how to implement boundaries. Exploring carers understanding of binging and purging behavior and how this relates to their young person.*

8. *Exploring emotions*

- Discussion around how emotions are expressed within the family and looking at the way our emotions are interconnected to our thoughts and behaviors. The emotions wheel will be introduced to encourage you to be more in touch with your/ your young person's emotions and aid connectivity between you both.

9. Progress and motivation

- Discussion and reflection about how you feel about the SMART goals set at the beginning of the program and how you feel they have progressed with these goals. Carers to create a progress and motivation document utilizing the traffic light structure to reflect on their own/ each other's behavior and what they need to do to remain on track. Review any other areas of support that is needed.

10. Final session

- You are encouraged to reflect on what you have learnt from sessions and the progress you have made and actions you will take forward. Within this session you are allowed to consolidate what you know with support still present to hopefully install confidence in your own ability once the program has completed.

How can I refer myself to Compass?

If you meet the referral criteria above and think Compass would be supportive for you, there are two possible routes available to make a referral:

- In some areas you can self-refer into Compass using this link <https://forms.office.com/r/cQZRjQpGvF>. A Programme Officer will be in touch with you in 5-7 working days once you have completed this form.
- In some areas you may need a clinician, such as your GP or an eating disorder team to refer you to Beat directly. We advise you speak to your GP or eating disorder team about this.

How can I contact the Compass team?

If you have any questions about the Compass programme, you can get in contact via email at compass@beateatingdisorders.org.uk. A member of the Compass team will get back to you in 5-7 working days.