QUESTIONS ABOUT KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTIONS

The questions listed below are a sample of the kinds of questions you may wish to ask so as to obtain information about the client’s knowledge and perceptions.

Where appropriate, educational information can be provided so as to correct unrealistic beliefs or enhance the client’s knowledge base. At all stages the client should be encouraged to ask questions and to express his or her thoughts and feelings.

“You say that you are experiencing symptoms such as... (e.g., abdominal pain, absence of menstruation, loss of energy, difficulty concentrating, etc.) What do you think might be causing these symptoms?”

“Do you feel that you could control your dieting behaviour if you wanted to? For example, could you stop dieting today and go back to eating normal, regular meals from now on?”

“You mentioned that you have unpleasant and distressing symptoms such as.... In what way do you think these symptoms will change if you continue your present diet?”

“What is the worst thing that can happen to you if you were to stop dieting?” (Common answer: I’ll get fat! Response – we don’t know that until we try/research suggests otherwise).

“What is the worst thing that can happen to you if you keep dieting the way you are now?” (Possible outcomes: increasing deterioration of health or even death).

“Why is it so important to you to lose weight/diet?”

“Are you happier and has your life improved since losing so much weight/ since you began dieting/purging? For example, you said that thin people are more popular. Have you gained more friends or been to more parties since losing weight/dieting?...Do other people think you’re more attractive now that you’ve lost so much weight?”