**Activity 7**

**Starting to monitor**

If you now feel ready to start making changes the first step is to practice monitoring your dietary intake. You can use the template food diary provided in appendix 1 (at the back of this pack), print off copies of the template from the resources on our website ([www.leicestereatingdisorders.co.uk/about-us/resources](http://www.leicestereatingdisorders.co.uk/about-us/resources) in the MOPED section) or make your own monitoring sheets which need to capture where, when, and what you eat and drink and the thoughts you have about this. You do not need to make changes to your eating, simply practice writing it all down for the next three days and then review before you start the next chapter on regular eating. Work with your therapist/clinician to try to understand what triggers you to restrict, binge, or purge.

Monitoring is a vital tool in getting better. Monitoring your food intake is not a stage which can be skipped so it is important to practice and get this right. Do not write what you have eaten at the end of the day, but as soon as you have eaten it. This is called monitoring in “real time” which is much more effective and will help you keep to regular, planned, and controlled eating as discussed in the next chapter.

Some people find it easier to take a piece of paper (in their pocket) with them so they can write down as soon as they eat something, or they record it in the notes sections of their smartphone. There are even free to download apps that can help you to do this, such as Recovery Record (do not use Apps targeted at weight loss or calorie counting such as MyFitnessPal as these will exacerbate problems).

**Warning!** Monitoring in real time is not easy, might feel unsettling, and is intrusive, so if this is how it feels congratulate yourself on doing it well!