


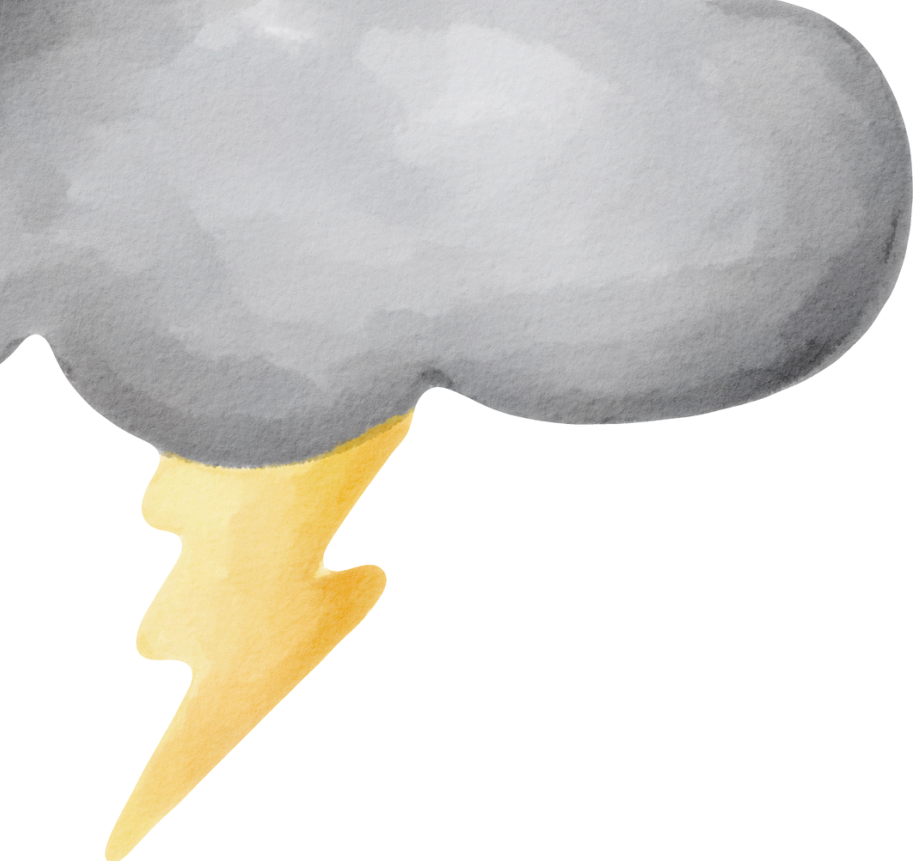
# Ask a therapist...

"WHEN MY CHILD /  
YOUNG PERSON WITH AN  
EATING DISORDER SEEMS  
DISTRESSED, HOW CAN I  
SUPPORT THEM?"

CYP AND PARENT SUPPORT THERAPIST

**Georgeana**  
shares her tips






When your child is in distress — crying, overwhelmed, shutting down, or angry — it can feel very challenging.

Adolescents are at a stage of life where they may not yet have all the tools needed to fully regulate their emotions.

And if they're not eating enough or are using food to cope, this can make the part of the brain that helps with emotional regulation even harder to access.



**Our CYP Therapist, Georgeana, explains how 'distress tolerance' is vital in these moments...**



**“Distress tolerance is something that we need to model to younger people.”**

Distress tolerance means staying present, remaining calm, and offering emotional containment even when things feel chaotic

“It's a modelling technique, really, to tolerate our own stresses, so that the young person can learn to build resilience as well.”

CYP AND PARENT SUPPORT THERAPIST

**Georgeana**

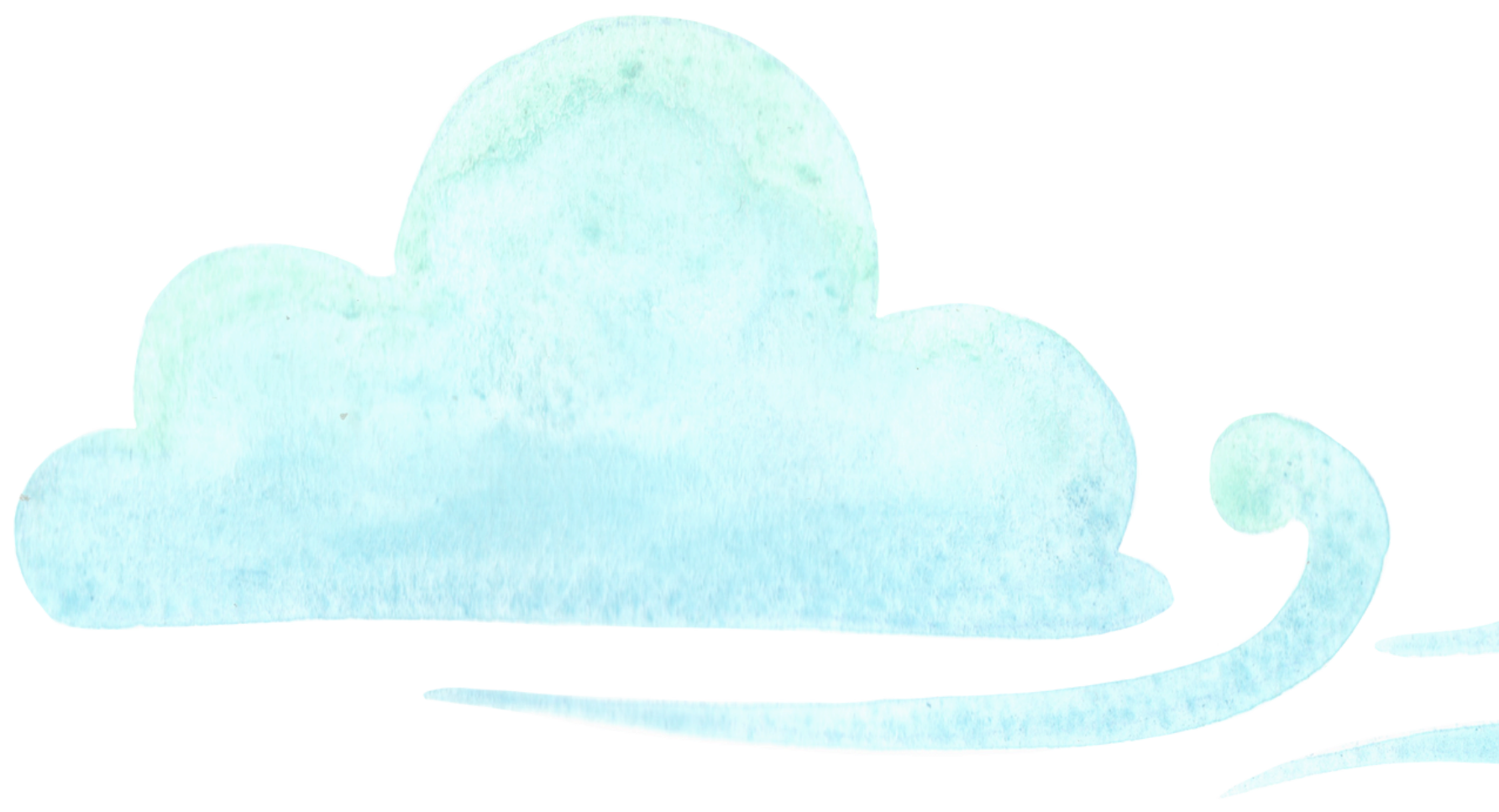


# What distress tolerance looks like:

As a parent or carer, your ability to stay grounded during emotionally intense situations can offer your child a sense of safety. When a child is distressed, you might say something like:

“I'm sorry that you're feeling this way today. I can see that is quite challenging for you. I'm here for you.”

This kind of response shows your child that it's okay to feel upset — that you can handle it, and things will be okay. That sense of safety allows them to begin learning how to handle it too.



# Distress tolerance is NOT the same as bottling up

“In fact, bottling up is the opposite of distress tolerance. If you’re not talking about your emotions or pretending everything is fine, that just builds up. You may end up having an outburst of emotions that you can’t control, or you might have a panic attack.”

Instead, it’s about being a role model of healthy emotional regulation, through acknowledging and listening to emotions, and not feeling threatened by them.





# It's not about being perfect

“There will be times when you may be struggling yourself. That's ok – you're only human, you won't get it right all of the time.

Parents are so involved in in the role of being the carer that sometimes they forget that they need to do things for themselves as well, to be able to regulate their own emotions.”

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide featuring a rainbow with curved bands of yellow, orange, red, and blue.

**Georgeana**

**CYP AND PARENT SUPPORT THERAPIST**



# Take care of yourself

Distress tolerance means taking care of your own needs — whether it's taking a walk, having a quiet moment, or talking to someone you trust. The more balanced you are, the more capacity you'll have to support your child in moments of crisis.

When your child sees you handling hard moments in your own life with healthy self-care techniques, they begin to believe they can do the same.

