

Crisis Plan with Instructions

The purpose of this document is for you to create a plan you and or your providers can access when you are having a hard time. The best time to work on this document is when you are doing well. While those may not be the times you want to think about crisis, it can be beneficial for you should you ever need to access crisis services in the future. You can fill this out alone or in conversation with someone else. This is simply a guide, it is YOUR crisis plan, use it however you would like. This “Crisis Plan with Instructions” may help you answer many of the questions.

Name:

Address:

Phone #:

Birthdate:

Gender: Female Male Transgendered

Emergency Contact: *Who would you like to have notified if you are having a hard time? Are there limits you would like set around this? For example, “I would like you to call my emergency contact if I can’t speak for myself, however, if you are able to converse with me, please ask my permission to contact this person. ~or~ only contact this person if my life is at risk.”*

Health Needs: *Are there things in regards to your health that you need to be mindful about? For instance if you have dietary arrangements, or allergies? Perhaps you have a c-pap breathing machine. These are things you should consider when you think about your needs when you are in crisis.*

Directions to Home: *This is helpful if you give your plan to a crisis team, peer organization, or others who may come to your home to support you.*

Service Providers: *Who are the “professionals” in your life? Are there some you want contacted when you are in crisis? Are there some you may need support around contacting?*

Pets: *If you have pets, what are the arrangements if you have to be away from home?*

Children: *If you have children living with you, what are the arrangements if you’re having a hard time or have to be away from home?*

Cultural Heritage/Spirituality: *Is there something about your culture you’d like to share? Is there something that would be important for someone who’s giving you support to know?*

Describe what crisis looks and feels like to you?	
What is different in times of crisis than in other times of your life?	
Crisis:	Other times in my life:

This question is an opportunity to look at what is different between a time of crisis and other times. You can also think of this in terms of a “good day” vs. a “bad day” For example – Most days I have to struggle a bit to get out of bed, but I’m able to do it – when I’m in crisis it feels like getting up isn’t even an option. If I’m having a really hard time, it can be helpful to have encouragement to get up, sometimes a gentle reminder of how good it feels to get up and move around, feel the sun on my face and have some breakfast can really get me going. Thinking about what is helpful on a regular day, may enlighten you about what could be helpful during a time of crisis.

When you've been in a crisis situation what kinds of support did you seek? What (people, places, services) things were the most helpful? Why?	
Support	What was helpful?

Make a list of ways you’ve sought help before. Then think about that support and what was the most helpful. Consider all of your experiences, for instance, there may have been places that you hated going to, but there was something about it that really worked for you. Example: “I didn’t like feeling confined in the hospital, but it was helpful to have people to talk to.” When you’ve made your list of what was helpful, it should help you think about what you want to put into place when you are having a difficult time.

What are the most difficult feelings for you to experience? Please check the <u>Most</u> difficult feelings or add any you don't see listed here:		Think about what happens when these feelings get overwhelming. Consider the following: What does it feel like inside your body? What do you need when this happens? What can you do for yourself? What has been helpful before?	
Happy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Boredom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Joy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loneliness	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sad	<input type="checkbox"/>	Emptiness	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grief	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Afraid	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Angry	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Rage	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Anxiety	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Overwhelmed	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

This exercise is an opportunity to think about “feelings.” Often when we have strong feelings it can be a signal that we need to do something to “make the feelings go away.” However, what if you could turn that around, and think about a strong feeling as a signal to do something different? For instance, consider feeling overwhelmed. “When I’m overwhelmed I feel like giving up, so I need to call someone so I don’t hurt myself.” Is it possible to challenge yourself to “sit” with the overwhelming feelings and think what the feeling is “telling you?” Are there other feelings involved? How long could you tolerate that before you would need someone else to support you? How do you know when it is time to reach out for support? Write about that in the following box.

When do you decide to reach out for support? How do you identify when you need to do something different? Write about that.

Think about the people around you when you experience crisis. Are there behaviors or actions you take that might frighten other people? Please Describe.

How do you feel about these behaviors? What would you like the people around you to understand about this? How would you like them to react? What do you need to hear? Also identify what can make it worse, what you *don't* want people to do. What do you need to do personally? Write about that.

Sometimes when we're not doing very well we may say or do things that result in other people feeling uncomfortable or even scared. Be honest. Are there things you say, or behaviors you have that have this result? If so, think about what it is you really need when this happens. For instance, "When I feel really pressured, I feel short-tempered, and I'll snap at people. I may stomp around, grumble to myself and appear pretty unfocused. I know that I'm feeling out of control, and I need to focus on one task and let others focus on everything else. Sometimes its helpful for a person to point out that I've snapped at them and ask what is going on for me. It is not helpful for someone to snap back at me, or to tell me to stop pacing. I don't need "directions at that point, I need assistance to identify what is happening for me"

Can you identify things that you're not likely to talk about when you're in crisis, or "code words" you may use?

For example, “When I’m having a hard time I use the word ‘fine’ a lot. When I say “I’m fine” I’m usually feeling really lousy and hopeless. I really need for people to push me a little and explain what that means.

Are there people in your life who are important to you? (Children, Partner, Friends, Relatives, Clergy, Staff) Think about who they are, and who you may want to be in touch with if you’re experiencing crisis, or end up getting support other than in your home. List their information here.

Name	Relationship	Phone #

There are probably many people in your life who are important to you. In this list you may want to list only those you want to be in touch with when you’re having a hard time. This can be useful if you stay somewhere other than your home. .You can use this list for people you are willing to have visit you.

Are there people from this list who you would want consulted if there was any question of “next steps” when you are in crisis. Name those people. Make sure their contact information is included in the list above.

If there is any question about if we are “ok” to stay at home, or go to a friend’s house rather than admission to a program, it can be helpful to have people who know us really well whose insight can be valuable If that is true for you, list them here. Make sure their contact information is accurate, it may difficult to remember accurate information if you’re having a hard time. If you have this document with you when you’re meeting with a crisis team or hospital staff you can point out that you’d like them to consult with people on your list.

Is there anything else you would like people to know or consider when you’re “in crisis”? Is there anything else you need to remind yourself about when you’re “in crisis”?

This final question is an opportunity to say anything that wasn't covered in the other questions. Remember this is YOUR crisis plan. You can write anything you want. Also remember – if you want people in your life to honor your requests when you're having a hard time, you may want to share this with them. However, it is your personal decision whether you share this or not.