

CRISIS PLAN FOR...

What is a crisis?

A crisis is a moment of distress that seems overwhelming emotionally. This means that what you are going through is not really relevant, is more about the emotional impact you feel it has on you.

Being overwhelmed is feeling that emotions are so intense that you can get frightened by them. And you have the sensation that it would be very difficult for you to get out of them, or get out of them without consequences.

What is a crisis plan?

If you got this “cheat sheet” it is because we had been working together on how to handle stressful situations that you feel you have no effective resources to tackle this crisis.

A crisis plan is about self care. What you will read are self care routines put into action so you can navigate whatever comes with success.

This crisis plan was designed for the times where you can't get in contact or ask for support from your regular therapist at Skeiv Verden (outside office hours, weekends, holidays, travelling abroad, etcetera).

THIS DOCUMENT IS MAINLY TO REMIND YOU WHAT YOU HAVE IN YOURSELF AND WHAT YOU ALREADY LEARNT IN OUR WORK TOGETHER

What should I do in a crisis?

Actions are listed in the order you can execute them, including who to call. We are together in this. Read this when you are calm and have some time to think what can you apply to your personal situation:

1. **BODY:** When feeling overwhelmed emotionally, usually the body reacts generating pain, discomfort or nausea. Pay attention to these signs building up and do some physical activity to get off your train of thoughts. Sometimes a warm or cold shower also helps. Doing things with your hands, cooking, dancing, jumping the rope or going for a jog.
2. **HEART:** Unloading your chest can also be helpful, talking to someone who can listen about your fears, feelings, concerns without judging. This doesn't mean that the other person has to provide any solution or recommendation, and you don't have to talk about the things that activate or trigger you outside of a therapeutic setting. We call it a “cathartic buddy” because the other person mainly listens, has some eye contact with you and maybe gives you a hug if you ask for it. This is not therapy. Talk about how you feel, you know people that went through the same. We know from working together that emotions ebb and flow.
3. **MIND:** If you manage to feel safe in your own body, breathing with long exhales, sighing and even singing can help you cope. You can observe around and do a mindful meditation for some minutes if this calms you down. If not, skip it.

4. **SLEEP:** if you feel that your sleep gets interrupted or you just can't sleep properly for a couple of days, it is important that you take action. Lack of sleep affects directly our capacity to self emotionally. We had been working on tips on sleeping better and the amount that is appropriate. Bring this to your fastlege if you have difficulties sleeping as we spoke about.
5. **FOOD:** Not eating for more than a day is also a warning sign to take action. In the same sense, if you feel that you are overeating, pay attention.
6. **MEDICATION:** If you are in treatment, use your medications responsibly. Do not interrupt the intake because you are in crisis, and do not abuse them to phase out, disconnect or harm yourself. If you think you are in danger of not handling this task, ask for an "accountability buddy" to keep your pills for you and to remind you when you need to take them. You can also ask your doctor handling smaller packages in your prescription if you feel more comfortable, sometimes this is also a solution.
7. **CONTACT:** If you feel that you are not being able to function properly, that your routines got disrupted and that you are starting to get isolated and you can't get out of this emotional state let someone you trust know. Beyond your therapist at Skeiv Verden, you probably have a counsellor you work with. Reaching out is an important action.
8. **HEALTH:** If symptoms are persistent and you feel stuck, contact 116117 to talk to a nurse and see if you need to be directed to the acute team or emergency ward in your area. The acute team can provide psychological and psychiatric support on demand during crisis and the emergency ward can contain symptoms until you can see a doctor if needed.
9. **SAFETY:** If you are having suicidal ideation or you are starting to plan to hurt yourself because of the intensity of your emotional distress, call immediately 113 and they will give you support and guidance. You are not alone.
10. **RESPONSIBILITY:** In Norway we are encouraged to take care of ourselves, to be equal in treatment and services. The system will expect you to ask for help when you need it and also to be independent when the crisis is over. This can seem very detached but is a great expression of how much freedom and autonomy is valued in this country.
11. **EMPOWERMENT:** We know that emotions are never permanent, even though sometimes they feel like they are. You are here to thrive. This crisis can be bitter and you will get through this if you follow this plan and ask for the intervention of qualified professionals.

This list is incomplete, I am sure that there are things that you know it helps and you tried yourself. Is easy to forget when we are overwhelmed, this is why we went through this together. People through the organization have a copy of this plan and they will encourage you to follow it, as in cheering you to follow it, ok?

We are with you. When you take care of yourself, you show the community you belong how to deal with this. You can do this!