

Personal Action / Crisis Prevention Plan

This Plan is meant to help clients/consumers, their support persons and providers prepare for times when life seems too hard to manage. This Plan is designed to support conversations about what would help when additional support or action is needed. It is not just another form to fill out! It may be helpful to talk about this Plan with a person who knows you well enough to understand your strengths and your challenges. It is best to complete this Plan when you are feeling better about yourself and your life.

The list of “Ideas to Help Spark Your Thinking” that is included with the Plan is meant only to start a conversation, and to encourage you to be creative and decide what is important to you. We don’t want you to just “choose one or two and fill in the blank”. Use your own ideas and make this Plan truly fit you. You can fill out this Plan by yourself, with a peer support person or family member or friend, or with a mental health provider.

This Plan is best used by professionals as a tool to begin a series of conversations about recovery, how clients experience good times, and what might help them recognize and cope with times of stress or difficulty.

The Plan is most useful if it is available to you and your support people at moments of crisis. Consider having copies in several places:

- o Where you can find it easily as needed
- o In the file kept by your mental health provider

MY CRISIS PLAN WORKSHEET

This worksheet is designed to help you identify early warning signs of crisis and plan ways to prevent a crisis from occurring. You can write your answers right on this worksheet, but if there isn't enough room, you can record this information in the journal found in this kit.

PERSONAL WELLNESS – Being able to notice the differences between good times and bad times can help you identify when you need to take care of yourself and ask for more support. Think about how you feel and the things you do when you are feeling well.

When I am well, I...

Now think about how you feel and the things you do when you're not feeling well.

When I am not well, I...

EARLY WARNING SIGNS – Being self-aware can help you identify early signs that there is a change in your mental health. Examples of early warning signs may include being over-tired, having a hard time getting out of bed, feeling agitated, missing deadlines or being late, and feeling sad, but not knowing why. What are your early warning signs?

I know I am not doing well when...

ACTIVITIES – Finding activities that help you take control or focus your thoughts can be helpful in keeping your symptoms from getting worse. Examples of helpful activities may include calling a friend, eating a piece of fruit, petting the cat, breathing deeply, practicing yoga, or going for a walk.

These activities make me feel more in control and can help me prevent a crisis:

SUPPORT SYSTEM – If you know you are at risk of entering a mental health crisis, calling someone from your support system will help. These are the people who know you have a mental illness and who know what is helpful for you.

These are people I trust and I know I can call when I need support:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Phone Number</i>	<i>Best Time to Call</i>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

These are my doctors and therapists who can also help me:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Phone Number</i>	<i>Office Hours</i>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

When I can't reach anyone, I can call the crisis line at 1-800-273-TALK.

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MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION **mHam**
of Minnesota

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Ideas to help spark your thinking when filling out your Plan

Pick any ideas that fit for you -- Add your own ideas -- Use your own words

#2 Signs that I'm doing okay:

- ... I can laugh at myself; find my sense of humor
- ... I feel that life is good; I am grateful
- ... I have confidence in myself; I'm not ashamed or afraid
- ... I can balance both positive and negative aspects of life
- ... I can think things through and am in control of my actions, thoughts, feelings
- ... I make time to see friends; I feel sociable, safe, secure.
- ... I participate in meaningful activities or work; I feel connected to society
- ... I feel energetic, calm and strong.
- ... I take time to exercise
- ... I don't feel nervous or anxious; I'm curious, interested, not bored;
- ... I am focused; I can concentrate; I'm not easily distracted
- ... I enjoy sound sleep; I like waking up

#3 Early signs that I'm not feeling well:

- ... changes in sleep habits: fatigue, insomnia; wanting to sleep all the time
- ... changes in eating; stop eating or eat compulsively
- ... more sensitivity to what I see, hear, smell, or touch
- ... seeing figures, hearing voices
- ... I stop taking care of myself
- ...I start believing that people are against me, but know that my thinking is off
- ... I am bothered by thoughts I can't get rid of
- ... I feel like harming myself or others
- ... I think about getting back into addictive behavior
- ... I feel more anxious or depressed; I experience more panic
- ... I get confused or have increased difficulty with memory
- ... I experience racing thoughts
- ... I'm more irritable or angry; I disagree with people a lot
- ... I stop answering the phone or knocks on the door; I don't open my mail

#4 What I can do to help myself:

- ...hum; sing; read; lie down and rest; take a nap; talk with friends
- ...tell the voices to go away; think "STOP"
- ...watch TV or a video; go to a movie; listen to music
- ...help other people
- ...debate with the voices
- ...exercise; take a walk; clean a room
- ...journal; write a letter; do my hobby
- ...take a bath or shower; soak my feet; fix my fingernails
- ...let someone know that I am having symptoms and what they are
- ...use my mindfulness skills
- ...safely release my anger or frustration
- ...use alternatives to harming myself
- ...make myself a treat or a good meal or buy a flower
- ...pet my dog or cat
- ...breathe
- ...take time to be by myself
- ...call somebody who understands; call a peer support person

#5 Ways others can help me:

- ... listen to my story long enough to really hear what I'm saying
- ... talk to me; encourage and reassure me; show me my successes
- ... encourage me to pace or move around, to listen to my music, to draw or paint
- ... call my peer support person
- ... remind me of my goals, my interests, my connections
- ... hold me; breathe with me; help me become aware of what is happening
- ... ask me if I am hearing voices and how loud they are
- ... tell me that you want to help; ask me what I want from you
- ... accept and respect me; understand that I am doing the best I can
- ... treat me the same as when I am not having problems; take me seriously
- ... give me space; leave me alone
- ... treat me gently, calmly; slow me down
- ... help me communicate my needs to professionals;
- ... if you give me any instructions, make them clear and write them down
- ... problem solve with me on concrete things I can do to take care of myself
- ... be aware of how the volume of your voice affects me
- ... ask me if I've eaten; feed me _____

#6 What I don't want - What doesn't help :

- ... keeping me waiting
- ... dismissing, forgetting, or ignoring what I tell you
- ... asking immediately whether I'm a danger to my self or others
- ... talking to me
- ... touching me
- ... not listening to me; making assumptions about what I need
- ... telling me what to do or what not to do; nagging me; lecturing me
- ... judging me, or criticizing me, or labeling me
- ... trying to control me or threatening me
- ... making me sign a safety contract
- ... putting me in the hospital
- ... taking my choices away; taking my clothes away
- ... putting me in restraints
- ... overwhelming me or pushing me to do things I'm not ready for
- ... patronizing or talking down to me

7 I know I need to get help when:

- ... there are too many noises and sounds-I can't focus on what I want to hear
- ... a voice (not my own) tells me to do things and I can't ignore it
- ... I am convinced that people are out to get me
- ... what I see in the mirror is not me
- ... I talk in ways that don't make sense to others
- ... it feels like something is crawling on my skin
- ... I have a plan to hurt myself or others
- ... I feel out of control
- ... I can't stand myself
- ... I engage in addictive behavior
- ... I can't stand how I feel – I have to do something now!