

# WHAT IS A CRISIS?

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- Generally, a crisis is a situation that the person or their loved ones are unable to resolve without the help of trained professionals
- Common crisis emotions include feeling very afraid, overwhelmed by negative emotions and/or out of control
- A mental health crisis does NOT ALWAYS mean someone is a danger to self or others

## WHAT CAN CAUSE A CRISIS TO OCCUR?

**EXTERNAL FACTORS:** increased stress, loss, traumatic events, major life changes

**INTERNAL TRIGGERS:** intense depression, hopelessness, anxiety, anger, panic

## WHAT ARE SIGNS THAT ACTION MUST BE TAKEN?

- Attempts to harm or kill oneself, making plans to do so
- Threats to hurt oneself or others
- Verbal or physical abuse
- Excessive withdrawal
- Not sleeping or eating for several days
- Acute psychotic symptoms causing distress (delusions, hallucinations)

## IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- Crisis does NOT happen because someone is weak, has “cracked” or should have worked harder to get well.
- Crisis is NOT an inevitable or unavoidable part of living with mental illness.
- Crisis often signals problems with services and/or support, not with the person’s ability to get well.
- Crisis looks and feels differently for each person.
- Someone in a self-defined crisis should never be turned away from services.