

BASIC STEPS TO TAKE IN A CRISIS



1. REDUCE THE INTENSITY AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE:

Speak calmly, softly and slowly. Relax your body and voice.

Be genuine. Do not talk to the person like a child.

Be non-judgmental. Try to truly understand the person's experience, rather than assess, judge or push solutions.

Ask simple, respectful questions about what happened and your loved one's thoughts/feelings. Do not try to talk the person out of delusions or hallucinations. This will only create mistrust (see pg. 64 for more info).

Ask how you can help your loved one feel safe. Try to find out what would help them feel more secure and in control.

2. IF THE PERSON IS WILLING TO SEEK CARE, ESTABLISH A GAME PLAN:

Is there a therapist, doctor or other care provider we could call? If the person already works with health care providers, contact them for advice.

What has helped when you've had similar feelings in the past? The person may have a written plan of action for mental health crises or other ideas about what works for them.

What are your preferences? Is there a certain hospital or clinic you prefer? Would you prefer non-medical support? (see pages 32-33 for info about peer-run respite) Do you want to bring anything with you? Is there anyone else you would like to call? When we get there, do you want me to stay with you or drop you off?

3. INVOLVE PROFESSIONALS: IS THE PERSON IN IMMEDIATE PHYSICAL DANGER AND UNWILLING TO SEEK CARE?

YES

Call 911. Explain that it is a mental health crisis and request an officer with mental health training (see page 47 for more info).

NO

Ask the person if they are willing to call a crisis line* and talk with someone.
IF THEY ARE NOT WILLING...

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Call the crisis line* yourself. They will help you process the situation, provide referrals and possibly send a crisis worker.

*CRISIS SERVICES INFORMATION ON PAGES 73-81.