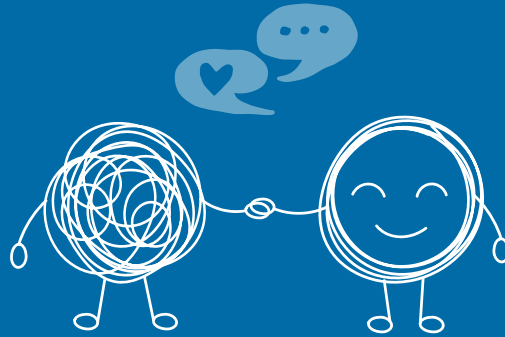


# HOW TO HELP SOMEONE IN A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS



## What Does a Mental Health Crisis Look Like?

A mental health crisis may look different for different people. In general, there are often signs that indicate a person is experiencing difficulties that could lead to a crisis.

Potential signs to look for include but are not limited to:

- Changes in mood such as feelings of hopelessness, depression, irritability, anger, or anxiety.
- Changes or a decline in work and/or school performance.
- Inability to perform daily tasks (such as not getting out of bed, not eating, or failing to go to work/school).
- Self-neglect such as a change in hygiene or grooming habits.
- Expressing suicidal thoughts or talking about or engaging in self-harm behaviors.
- Isolation, becoming withdrawn or disconnected from others.
- Not engaging in the things that formerly brought them joy.

Interacting with someone in crisis requires that you be brave and step into courage. While it may seem difficult at first, equipping yourself with some knowledge, skills, and resources can help you to feel empowered to reach out and provide help;

## You could save a life.

The following guidelines are a good starting point to help someone navigate a mental health crisis.

## **LET THEM KNOW YOU CARE.**

Start off with a simple statement and question. See examples below:

- You don't seem like yourself lately. Would you like to talk?
- I've noticed that you are quieter (or sad or down or tired etc.) than usual. I'm here for you if you'd like to talk.
- You seem really stressed today. Can I be of help – even if it is just listening if you want to talk.

## **LISTEN.**

### **• DON'T**

- Give advice.
- Try to solve their problem.
- Talk about yourself and your own experiences or problems.
- Tell them it's not that bad.

### **• DO**

- Simply listen with compassion.
- Be present and let them know you are there to support them.
- Let them go at their own pace and disclose only what they are comfortable disclosing.
- Encourage them to talk to someone else who is close to them if they don't want to talk with you.

## **CONNECT THEM WITH SUPPORT.**

Offer to help them call for support or, encourage them to call/text a crisis resource or trusted support person, such as:

- 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
- Mobile crisis 415-970-4000
- SFHSS Employee Assistance Program (EAP) 628-652-4600

**If you believe the person is an imminent danger to themselves or others, call 911.**

Those who provide support, often need support as well. Practice self-care. Be sure to take care of your own needs and seek support if you need it.

## **Additional Resources:**

- [Help Guide](#)
- [Suicide: How to Support a Friend](#)
- [Mental Health: Warning Signs and Symptoms](#)
- [Family Members/Caregivers - How to help someone in crisis](#)
- [Suicidal Behavior](#)
- [Suicide Prevention Resource Center - Workplaces](#)
- [The role of co-workers in preventing suicide](#)

