

What is a Mental Health Crisis?

A crisis is, “any situation in which a person’s behaviors puts them at risk of hurting themselves or others and/or when they are not able to resolve the situation with the skills and resources available.”

Many situations can be anticipated; relatives may have a suspicion the person in New Journeys is not taking their meds, is feeling hopeless, becoming more symptomatic, or is becoming agitated.

You may be able to use the tools you develop in the New Journeys family education program to resolve these difficulties. Sometimes, your loved one may just need a day or two of reduced stress to feel back to their old selves.

Examples of situations that can trigger a crisis:

- *Changes in family situations*
- *Grief and loss of any kind*
- *Trauma/violence*
- *Mounting pressures about school or work deadlines*
- *Lack of understanding from peers, co-workers, or teachers*
- *Stop or missed doses of medications*
- *Use or abuse of drugs or alcohol, including marijuana*
- *Lack of sleep*

What items do I take to the ER?

- ✓ *Medical information- types & doses of medications*
- ✓ *Their mental health providers’ names & numbers*
- ✓ *Basic hygiene supplies*
- ✓ *Change of clothes*
- ✓ *Snacks*
- ✓ *Music, books, or other items that will help pass the time*



Crisis Resources

New Journeys Team
(Not available after hours)
Nurse Helpline 360-704-7170
Katherine 360-280-8180
Gardenia 360-239-8335
Katelyn 360-819-7794

24 Hour Services

Designated Crisis Responders
(360)-754-1338

The Crisis Clinic
ADULTS: 360-586-2800

Youth Help Line: 360-586-2777

Children’s Crisis Stabilization
360-480-5721

National Suicide Hotlines

24/7 phone crisis hotline:

1-800-273-8255

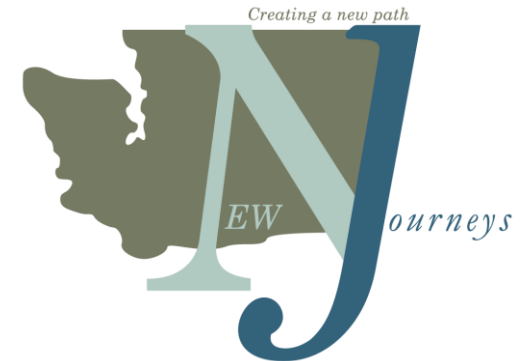
24/7 Crisis Text Line:

Text “HOME” to 741741

Supporting Recovery

Crisis Guide

Thurston/Mason Team



Office 360-704-7170
Toll Free 1-800-825-4820
Fax 360-292-4249

3859 Martin Way E, Suite 102
Olympia, WA 98506

www.newjourneyswashington.org

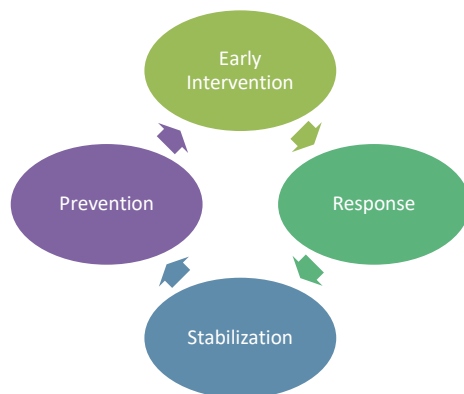
WARNING SIGNS of a Mental Health Crisis

- ✓ Mood disturbance
- ✓ Irregular expression of feelings
- ✓ Social withdrawal
- ✓ Changes in behavior
- ✓ Thought disturbances

**It is not uncommon for a person in the middle of a mental health crisis to be unable to clearly communicate their thoughts, feelings, or emotions.*

If you are worried that your loved one is nearing a crisis, seek help. It is often helpful to assess the situation before deciding who to call.

- *Is your loved one in danger of hurting themselves or others?*
- *Do you have time to start with a phone call for guidance?*
- *Do you need emergency assistance?*



If at any point the situation becomes unsafe, call 911

WHAT TO DO in a Mental Health Crisis?

1. Activate Your Wellness Plan!

*2. If the crisis is posing **no immediate danger**, notify a member of the New Journeys team for advice and support.*

Techniques that can help de-escalate a crisis:

- ✓ Listen
- ✓ Keep your voice calm
- ✓ Express support and concern
- ✓ Avoid giving advice
- ✓ Avoid reasoning with the person
- ✓ Avoid continuous eye contact
- ✓ Keep stimulation low
- ✓ Don't argue or try to reason with the person
- ✓ Ask how you can help
- ✓ Move slowly
- ✓ Avoid touching the person unless okayed by them
- ✓ Announce actions before doing them
- ✓ Be patient
- ✓ Give them space, so they don't feel trapped

Stay as calm as possible during this process and be clear about what you want to happen

*3. If you cannot reach someone or if the situation is worsening, you can take the next step by calling your county's **mental health crisis line or crisis response team***

- *Be brief and to the point*
- *Be specific about what you're observing*
- *Indicate that the individual receives mental health services from BHR's New Journeys team*

Crisis staff may determine that law enforcement needs to intervene, that your loved one should be seen at the nearest ER, or that they would benefit from crisis stabilization services.

4. At any time if there is immediate danger, call 911

When you call 911, tell them someone is experiencing a mental health crisis and explain the nature of the emergency.

- ✓ *Stay as calm as possible during this process and be clear about what you want to happen*

When law enforcement arrives provide them with the following information:

- ✓ *Diagnosis*
- ✓ *Medications*
- ✓ *Mental health provider*
- ✓ *Hospitalization history*
- ✓ *Previous history of violence or criminal charges*

Once a law enforcement officer arrives on the scene, they now control the situation and will make a determination about what should happen next.