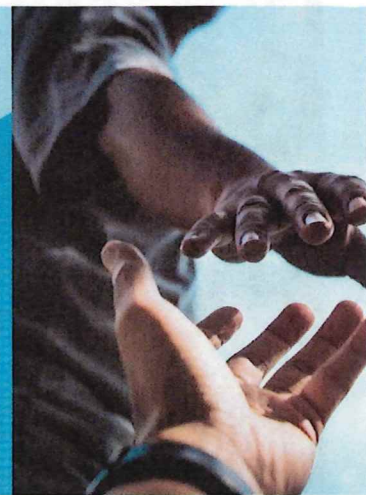


# Crisis Management



## What Is a Crisis?

A **crisis** is "a time of intense difficulty, trouble, or danger." – Oxford Languages

A **mental health crisis** is "any situation in which a person's behavior puts them at risk of hurting themselves or others and/or prevents them from being able to care for themselves or function effectively in the community." – National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

## ALGEE 5 Step Action Plan

**A**

**Approach and Assess** – safely approach the person, assess the situation taking action or assisting based on the severity and likelihood of the assessed risks

**L**

**Listen nonjudgmentally** – actively listen with patience and compassionate curiosity

**G**

**Give reassurance and information** – offer support, comfort, hope, validation, facts, resources, encouragement, etc.

**E**

**Encourage appropriate professional help** – encourage the person to get professional help with empathy, emphasizing the strength in seeking help

**E**

**Encourage self-help and support strategies** – help the person identify support systems like family, friends, community groups, and self-help tools



**Crisis behaviors may emerge suddenly or gradually due to major life changes, trauma, loss, stress, substance use, mental health issues, or a mix of these**

## Behaviors



A person experiencing a mental health crisis may exhibit:

- ✓ **Abrupt and dramatic shifts in mood and behavior**
- ✓ **Distress**  
*extreme anxiety, sorrow, emotional turmoil, panic or pain*
- ✓ **Emotional Dysregulation**  
*an inability to cope with or control one's feelings, rapid mood swings, emotional outbursts, or difficult calming down*
- ✓ **Impaired Functioning**  
*difficulty with daily activities (work, school, relationships) and/or self-care (eating, sleeping, bathing, brushing teeth, taking medications, etc.)*
- ✓ **Paranoia & Defensiveness**  
*distrust, suspicion, hypervigilance, and self-protection from real or perceived persecution or threats*
- ✓ **Psychosis**  
*disconnection from reality characterized by delusions (false beliefs), hallucinations (false sensory experiences), or disorganized thoughts (ruminative perseveration, tangentiality) and speech (rapid, slowed, slurred, jumbled, etc.)*
- ✓ **Risk Behaviors**  
*harmful, abusive or violent behaviors towards oneself or others, including threats or attempts of violence, self-harm, suicide, or homicide*



# De-escalation Crisis Management



- Stay calm and fully present
- Promote a sense of safety
- Convey respect & autonomy
- Ask open questions
- Listen empathically
- Allow for some venting
- Acknowledge feelings
- Reflect your understanding
- Use short & simple statements
- Use warm & caring tones
- Be mindful of body language
- Provide limits with choices
- Allow time for silence & reflection
- Continue to assess risk
- Call for help if needed



- Lose your cool
- Present as an authority
- Confront or intrusively monitor
- Ignore or assume they're 'fine'
- Shame, blame or judge
- Pressure them to speak/share
- Dismiss or invalidate feelings
- Try to fix or solve problems
- Share unsolicited advice
- Persuade, debate or argue
- Neglect personal space
- Make unreasonable demands
- Block exits or isolate
- Forget their humanity
- Forget to ask for help

## Crisis Intervention Resources

In Springfield, MA - Behavioral Health Network (BHN) has a 24/7 line available for consultation, support and to triage and dispatch mobile crisis intervention teams on location as-needed.



**BHN**      **Police Line**  
413-733-6661    413-417-6511

The Massachusetts Behavioral Health Help Line is another resource for 24/7, real-time support that helps connect individuals to a full range of support including immediate crisis care: 833-773-2445

*In emergencies where imminent harm is evident - contact 911*

