

# Creating a Plan to Help Cope, Promote Safety, and Connect with Others

## FACILITATORS GUIDE

### *Adult version*

**Confidentiality Statement:** We will make every effort to ensure that your personal privacy is protected. We will not discuss you what you tell us or the information you provide with others unless you appear to be at risk of hurting yourself or others, or if we suspect abuse or neglect of a child or dependent adult.

READ/PARAPHRASE: We are going to work on this plan together. The goal of creating this plan is to provide you with a resource to help keep you safe and support your wellbeing. Stress, anxiety, and sadness are a normal part of life, but sometimes can become overwhelming and might lead to more severe states of being. For example, too much stress can make us feel really sad or depressed with these feelings lasting a couple of days or longer. Too much stress can also affect us physically, by making our bodies feel tired, tense, or unable to relax and calm down.

Today, we will work to create a plan for you when these types of emotions begin to feel overwhelming. This plan is something you can come back to and remind yourself of the tools and resources you have when you are feeling particularly down or are considering taking your own life. I will help guide you through this process and then call to check in with you over the next few weeks to see how are doing and if we need to change or update anything in your plan.

A. READ/PARAPHRASE: The first thing we are going to do is to think about how you know you are starting to feel very *[name emotion in person's own words]*. Think about what happens in your mind, in your behavior or your body when you are starting to feel *[name emotion in person's own words]*. For example, some people may start sleeping less, eating more or less, or feeling tense muscles. Others may start becoming irritable or have less patience. What are some of your signs for when you start feeling particularly down?

**A. My warning signs**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

B. READ/PARAPHRASE: It is normal to experience difficult feelings. Sometimes when you are feeling depressed or are considering suicide, there are things that can help calm us down, begin feeling better, and take our mind off our problems. These activities can be small or large but remember they are things YOU control, that make you feel good and do not depend on other people. What are things you can do when you are feeling particularly down or anxious that help take your mind off your problems?



**Facilitator Note:**

Remember these do not depend on contacting other people. These are ways to distract oneself. These need to be healthy things to do.

NOTE: If participant is struggling to come up with things, provide your own examples or refer to the back page of their safety plan for other examples. You might also consider mentioning traditional activities, such as beading, singing, dancing, praying, or talking in your native language to family or friends.

**B. Things I can do to help take my mind off things:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

C. READ/PARAPHRASE: Remember that there are many in our community who care about you. We can reach out to others in our community for support. **These people can help you and help distract from the things that are bothering you.** For example, you might spend time with specific family members and friends. When you are feeling very down or even unsafe, who are the people you know from whom you trust and can ask for help?



**Facilitator Note:**

If a parent wishes to list their child, make sure that the child is an adult. Encourage adults to list those who are more age appropriate in helping to deal with heavy emotions.

**C. My support people are:"**

**Names & Phone Number:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

D. READ/PARAPHRASE: Sometimes we can also go to places that help us feel better or take our mind off things. For example, you may go to a certain spot in nature near your home or may go to someone's house. Are there places you can go that help you feel calm or take your mind off the problems you are experiencing?

**D. Places I can go to help take my mind off things**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E. READ/PARAPHRASE: If you are feeling unsafe, thinking about harming yourself, or worried about the safety of others, there are also professionals and service agencies that can help during a crisis. Let's consult our guide and write down a couple of these together:



**Facilitator Note:**

You can use your resource guide to help.

**E. Professionals and agencies I can go to for help during a crisis:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

F. READ/PARAPHRASE: Having items that can be used to harm yourself when you are in crisis can be dangerous. What items do you have nearby that could be used to harm yourself and what can you do to safely remove them or make it hard to access them? For example, do you own a firearm? might you lock that up? Or keep it with someone else? What other items do you have access to that might cause harm and how can you make it harder to access during a time of crisis.

## F. Making the environment safe

Safety Step: \_\_\_\_\_

Safety Step: \_\_\_\_\_

G. READ/PARAPHRASE: Keep this resource somewhere you can access when you need it. As a reminder, I will be following up with you over the next couple of weeks to check in. When would be a good time to do that? Would you prefer a phone call? Or a visit? I am happy to do either one.

Remember – you are part of a community and your community cares for you!  
**Being connected to others is good medicine.**

Other resources to have just in case:

Call 988 - National Suicide Hotline  
(24/7)

Text: HOME to 741741 to reach a Crisis  
Counselor

Strong Hearts Native Helpline  
1-844-762-8483

Keep this resource somewhere you can access when you need it.



**Remember:**

**You are part of a community and your community cares for you!**