

Crisis Intervention:

How to take action when you think someone is in crisis

When we are concerned about someone, we are often afraid to intervene and feel it's our responsibility to solve their problems. If you are worried that someone might be struggling with their mental health, below you will find how to approach the situation as well as how to identify where your responsibility ends.

If you are worried that someone is going to hurt themselves or be hurt, act immediately and call emergency services. Once someone is safe, they can then start to work on whatever led them to that place where they were at risk.



How to identify someone in a crisis:

- Avoiding work and other obligations
- Very flat and low
- Agitated
- Rapid mood swings
- Isolation / withdrawal
- Erratic behaviour
- Abusive behaviour
- Increase substance abuse or self-harm
- Giving away personal possessions
- Talking about hurting themselves

Ask

1. Be human - show empathy
2. Don't overcomplicate it; "are you ok?" is sufficient
3. Ask twice
4. Show compassion
5. Find an environment that feels natural and safe for both of you

Listen

1. Be an active listener
2. Zero judgement
3. Avoid interrupting
4. Be aware of body language

*This might be something they've never shared before, therefore just saying it out loud can be hugely beneficial for them.

Signpost

1. Remember you are not a 'therapist'
2. Signpost to professional support
3. Signpost to internal support
4. Offer them optional support
5. Call emergency services if you are worried at all

Your role stops when you have done what you can. Professional help and guidance may often be needed and **further UK support can be found here:**

Papyrus hotline:

0800 068 41 41
(10am – 10pm)

Shout text service:

85258
(24/7)

Samaritans:

116 123
(24/7)

Calm hotline:

0800 58 58 58
(5pm – midnight)

If in crisis:

999