

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.

Identifying a crisis

Recognising signs of a mental health crisis in someone may include observing sudden and extreme changes in their behaviour, such as intense mood swings, social withdrawal, expressing feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness, engaging in risky behaviours, or talking about wanting to harm themselves or others.

Ask

- Be human - show empathy
- Ask twice
- Show compassion

Listen

- Be an active listener
- Have zero judgement
- Avoid interrupting

Signpost

- Signpost to professional support
- Give more than one option
- 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