

Safety Plan

Preparing a Plan for when you're not feeling safe is one of the most important things you can do for yourself, as well as your loved ones. When you are suffering from a severe anxiety attack and/or depressive episode, chances are you may not be thinking clearly. This is when you want to follow a plan that is already in place, to help remind you of skills, tools, and resources that can help you stay safe. It is important to have immediate access to your plan. Make a copy and put in a few locations (e.g., home, work, car, etc.). Consider giving a copy to a close friend or family member. Remember that in any case, if you are still not feeling safe, get HELP IMMEDIATELY by going to the closest ER or by calling 911 (ask for a Psychiatric Emergency Response Team, if your area has one).

- Call a crisis or hotline
 - National Prevention Suicide Lifeline, available 24/7: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
 - National Crisis Center: 1-800-273-8255 or Text "ANSWER" to 839863
 - Crisis line in your state or county: # _____
- Call any sponsors or mentors you might have:
 - Name/Affiliation: _____ # _____
 - Name/Affiliation: _____ # _____
- Call friends, family, or outpatient providers (e.g., psychiatrist or therapist) who can help:
 - Name/Affiliation: _____ # _____
 - Name/Affiliation: _____ # _____
 - Name/Affiliation: _____ # _____
 - Name/Affiliation: _____ # _____

Step 1: Know Your Triggers

What might trigger an episode? If you're not sure, use a planner to write down events or situations and track your anxiety and/or depression scores : _____

What are some warning signs? (e.g., too little or too much sleep, talking fast, work stress): _____

What can people say or do that will help calm you? (e.g., say nothing and sit with you, talk kindly and softly): _____

Step 2: Reasons and Reminders for Getting Well

What reasons or reminders help you focus on recovery and getting well? For instance:

- This is only temporary
- I have had time of happiness and can have that again
- I have overcome crisis in the past
- Even though I feel like there's no solution *now*, it does not mean I cannot solve this problem.

Your reasons and reminders:

Who do you have a sense of belonging to? (e.g., friends, family, partners, co-workers, pets)

Who relies on you?

Step 3: Distractions and Self Soothing

Think of the five major senses. What soothes you?

Auditory (e.g., music, sounds): _____

Visual (e.g., funny movies, pictures, flowers): _____

Touch (e.g. different textured material, blankets, pet an animal): _____

Smell (e.g., lotions, candles): _____

What are things that can distract you? (e.g., board games, counting backwards by 7, puzzles): _____

What are some actions that you can do? (e.g., walking, running, dancing, singing): _____

Step 4: KNOW that you can get through this crisis. You are not alone. Promise yourself you will hold on for another day, hour, minute, or whatever you can manage.

Remember, with this plan, you have the resources and skills to help keep you safe. Do not hesitate to call someone listed here or 911, if you still feel unsafe. Follow up with a professional to help you manage your symptoms. www.nami.org is a great resource for locating treatment centers and accessing a wealth of information.