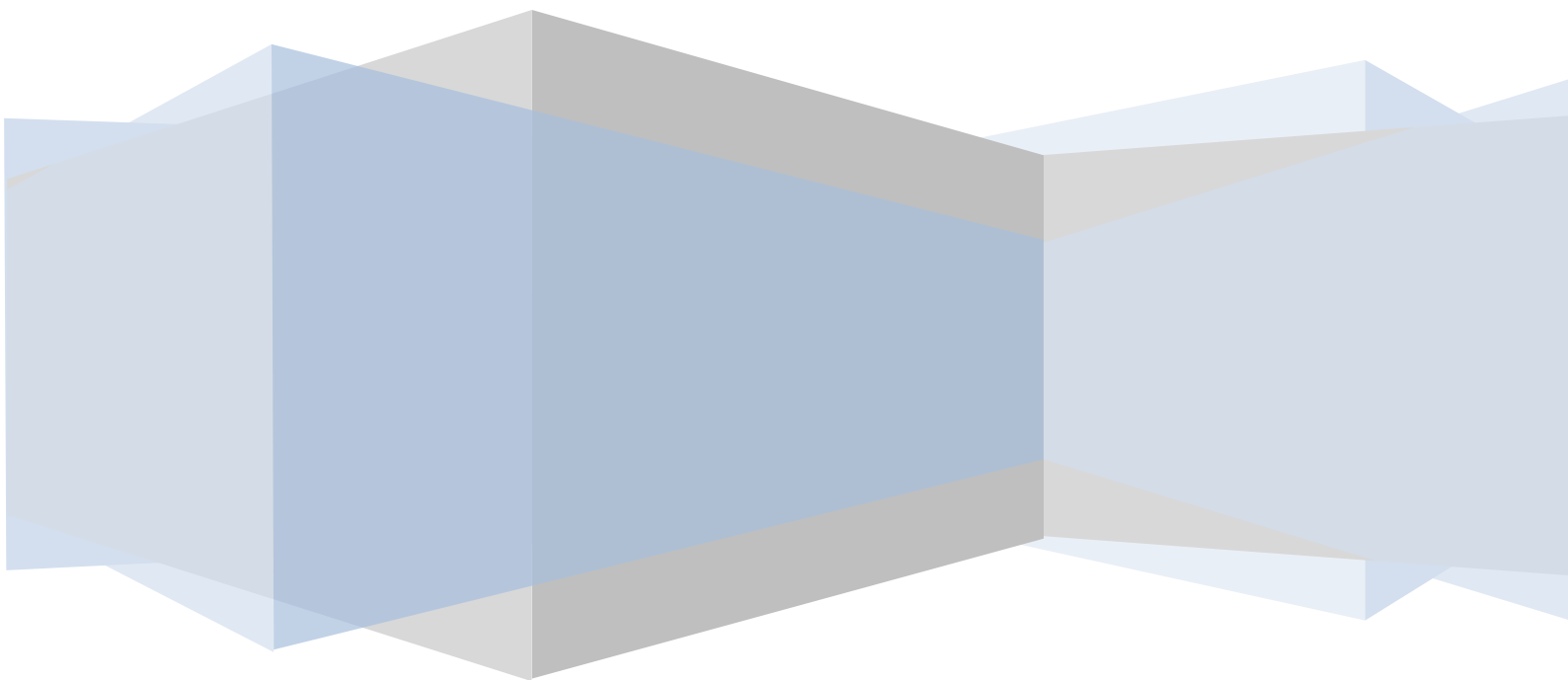


Cwm Taf University Health Board – Psychological Therapies Department



Crisis Planning

Stabilisation Pack



Crisis Planning

A mental health crisis happens when stresses and difficulties outweigh what someone feels able to cope with, so that they feel overwhelmed and unable to see a way forward. They may then have thoughts about self-harm or suicide. Sometimes there is a slow build-up to a crisis, and at other times a particular event seems like the last straw. When the crisis is over, it may be worth talking about this with your mental health worker, friends or family, to see if the event was a trigger or reminder of a trauma memory or event. When you are in crisis, you will need a plan to help you get through the next minutes, hours and days, until you start to feel better.

Here are some ideas:

CREATE A LIST OF '10 THINGS TO DO WHEN I'M IN CRISIS'

Draw up a list of strategies that can be used when you need them, and put it somewhere easily reached. Some people chose to share this with partners, family and/or their key worker, who can prompt them to use it. It might be useful for the crisis team to have a copy as well, if you are using mental health services; discuss this with your mental health worker.

You can include ideas from this manual or from anywhere else. This is what your list might look like:

1. Distract myself by tidying the kitchen.
2. Breathe slowly and calmly.
3. Look at photos of my family, friends or favourite things.
4. Listen to calming music.
5. Have a bath with oils.
6. Read some inspiring quotes.
7. Go to my safe place (in your mind or in your house somewhere: see section on 'Soothing and safety').
8. Look at my survival kit (see below).
9. Phone a family member or friend.
10. Phone mental health worker or crisis team or Samaritans.

WRITE AN 'ANTI SUICIDE NOTE'

When you are feeling calm, it may be a good time to write an anti-suicide letter which you can read in times of desperation. This letter will be written from you, to you. In it, you may wish to remind yourself of all the reasons that you want to keep working towards your recovery. This may include your strength, talents, abilities, and values. You may want to list the people in your life whom you care about and who care for you. Remind yourself of your hopes and dreams for the future and all the reasons you have for staying alive. Remind yourself to use all your strategies and coping skills to keep yourself safe.

CREATE A SURVIVAL KIT

A survival kit can be used to get through difficult times and crisis. It is important to put it together before you feel unsafe as it will be more difficult to think clearly by the time you need it. Your survival kit might include a card or note written by your therapist or mental health worker, a positive self statement, your list of things to do when desperate, a photograph of someone or something to live for, a good luck charm, an object like a stuffed animal or blanket, a list of people to call, letters of love and support from friends or family, and so on.

Crisis Planning Resources

Crisis and home treatment team, 24 hours a day: 01443 443443 x 4285

Samaritans, FREE phone number, 24 hours a day: 116 123 (UK)

CALL helpline for mental health difficulties – offers listening, support and advice:
0800 132737

Apps - These can be located and downloaded from the iPhone store and GooglePlay.

'*Breaking Free – The Journey Begins*' is an app for people who have experienced childhood sexual abuse, and consists of information and various coping strategies and is free to download.

'*Breaking Free – Keeping Safe*' is an app that provides strategies to help people stay safe while working through their difficulties, including managing harmful coping strategies, recognising triggers, coping with intense feelings and taking control of panic attacks.

'*Breaking Free – Safety Zone*' is an app that contains over 15 techniques to help the user to gain more control over their emotions, thoughts and behaviour.