Safety Plan

For thoughts of suicide or extreme distress\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Everyone struggles with mental health from time to time. Intense thoughts/feelings such as hopelessness, despair, misery, worthlessness, desire to hurt self/others, etc. usually only last a short period of time. Having a plan in place to deal with these emotions will help you get through it.

# Step One: Recognizing the Signs

What are the warning signs when you begin thinking of suicide or when you feel very distressed? These signs can include thoughts, moods, images, or behaviors.

Examples: Seeking out means to hurt myself, posting sad or angry messages on social media sites, lashing out at loved ones, feeling overwhelmed or trapped, loss of appetite, etc.

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
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# Step Two: Coping Skills

What can you do by yourself to take your mind off of the problem? What obstacles might there be in using these coping skills?

*Examples: Watch a favorite movie, Go shopping, Read a book, Learn a new hobby, Journal your feelings, Play video games, Play with a pet, exercise, etc.*

Coping Skill: Potential Obstacle:

1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Step Three: People and Settings that Provide Distraction

When self-coping doesn’t seem to work, reach out to friends or go to a place that will provide distraction from the problem. List several people whom you could talk to (either as a distraction or talking about the problem) and list several places that you can go to be safe.

People to Call: Safe Place to Go:

1. Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Phone #:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Phone #:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Phone #:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Phone #:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Phone #:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Step Four: Emergency Planning

Contact local professionals or emergency services if you continue to experience serious distress.

**CALL**: 1-800-273-TALK **TEXT**: “LISTEN” to 741-741 **CHAT**: [www.ImAlive.org](http://www.ImAlive.org) **CONTACT HELPLINE:** 717-652-4400

### **Homelessness**

If you no longer have a place to stay, where can you go? List the name and address:

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### **Safe Environment**

Remove any means of injuring self or others from your environment. This includes firearms, medications, sharp items, rope, etc. Give these items to a trusted friend to hold on to.

### **Physical Safety**

Is your physical safety being threatened by another person? **Contact the police by calling 9-1-1.** While you wait for the police to arrive, get away from the potential attacker. Seek shelter at a neighbor’s house or call a trusted loved one who is close by to be with you. If you are injured, seek medical attention and be sure to press charges. You may also want to take photographs of any bruises or marks left by physical assault.

**Domestic Violence Hotline:** 1-800-799-7233 **| Harrisburg YWCA Shelter:** 717-238-2851 **| Sexual Assault Hotline:** 1-800-656-HOPE

### **Self Injury (non-suicidal)**

Feeling the urge to self-injure? Follow the steps outlined above in this safety plan. Try some of these alternatives:

* Drawing lines where you would cut
* Screaming into a pillow
* Snapping a rubber band against your skin
* Painting your nails
* Color Mandelas
* Tear apart newspapers or magazines
* Slash an empty soda bottle, cardboard, old shirt, etc.
* Cut up fruit or veggies
* Break sticks
* Stomp around in heavy shoes
* Blow up a balloon and pop it

# Step Five: Self-Evaluation

What has brought you to this crisis situation? Ask yourself these questions to make sure you’re taking good care of yourself.

### **Biophysical**

Am I currently taking medication for a mental illness?   
Have I stopped taking my medication without consulting my doctor?   
Did my medication recently change?  
Do I need to discuss altering the dosage with my doctor?  
Is there a pattern to my feelings? Hormonal cause?  
Has my diet recently changed? Am I taking care of my body?

### **Psychological**

Am I seeing a counselor, therapist, psychiatrist, or other professional on a weekly basis?  
Am I being completely honest with my professional about the severity of my symptoms?  
Is there an emotional need that is not being met? (Importance, Connection, Variety, Security)  
Will hospitalization help me?

### **Social**

Am I reaching out to the people on my safety plan?  
Do I need to surround myself with more positive people?  
Do I feel loved, accepted, and safe within my home?

### **Spiritual**

Do I have a goal that I would like to reach?  
How can my personal faith help me in crisis situations?