

Safety Plan

Important

- Just try to get through today rather than focusing on the future
- Talk about how you are feeling with someone you trust or an emotional helpline
- Contact a health professional such as your GP or Community Mental Health Team (CMHT)
 - Try to do activities you enjoy which take your mind off what you are thinking
- If you are in real danger of taking your own life call emergency services on 999 or go to A&E

A Safety Plan is a structured, personalised plan developed to help individuals in a mental health crisis, particularly those experiencing suicidal thoughts or behaviours. It serves as a proactive and preventive tool, designed to guide individuals through difficult moments by providing clear steps and resources for immediate support and long-term management. Here's a detailed breakdown of what a Safety Plan typically includes:

Key Components of a Safety Plan

1. Warning Signs:

- Identification of personal warning signs or triggers that indicate a potential mental health crisis or onset of suicidal thoughts. These can be emotional, cognitive, or situational cues.

2. Internal Coping Strategies:

- A list of activities and techniques the individual can use to distract themselves or manage distress without needing to contact others. This can include deep breathing exercises, engaging in hobbies, physical exercise, or mindfulness practices.

3. Social Contacts and Environments for Distraction:

- Identification of safe and supportive people or places that can provide a positive distraction. This may include friends, family members, or public places where the individual feels comfortable and safe.

4. Family Members or Friends Who Can Help Resolve a Crisis:

- A list of trusted individuals who can be contacted for immediate support during a crisis. This step emphasizes reaching out to people who can offer emotional support and practical assistance.

5. Professional Agencies and Emergency Contacts:

- Contact information for mental health professionals, such as therapists, counsellors, or crisis intervention services. This section also includes emergency contacts like local suicide prevention hotlines, emergency rooms, or urgent care facilities.

6. Making the Environment Safe:

- Steps to reduce access to means of self-harm or suicide. This might involve removing or securing potentially harmful objects, medications, or weapons from the individual's immediate environment.

7. Reasons for Living:

- Personal motivations and reasons to keep living. This can be a list of people, pets, goals, or values that give the individual a sense of purpose and hope for the future.

Process of Creating a Safety Plan

Creating a Safety Plan typically involves collaboration between the individual in crisis and a mental health professional, though it can also be developed with the support of trusted family members or friends. The process includes:

1. Assessment:

- Understanding the individual's specific triggers, risk factors, and current mental state.

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2. Personalisation:

- Tailoring the plan to the individual's unique needs, preferences, and circumstances.

3. Education and Training:

- Ensuring the individual understands how to use the plan and practicing steps in a non-crisis situation to build familiarity and confidence.

4. Review and Update:

- Regularly revisiting and updating the Safety Plan to reflect any changes in the individual's situation, new coping strategies, or support networks.

Importance of a Safety Plan

- Immediate Guidance: Provides clear, actionable steps during a crisis, reducing the likelihood of impulsive decisions.
- Empowerment: Helps individuals feel more in control and prepared to manage their mental health challenges.
- Connection: Strengthens support networks by identifying key people and resources that can provide assistance.
- Prevention: Reduces risk factors and enhances protective factors, thereby potentially preventing suicidal behaviour.

In summary, a Safety Plan is a vital tool in mental health support and suicide prevention, offering structured guidance and resources to help individuals navigate through crises safely.

Interventions, things that may help keep you safe

- Go to a safe place like your bedroom, mental health or spiritual centre, crisis centre, friend's house, library.
- Stay away from things you could use to harm yourself such as razor blades or pills. If you have a lot of medication, you can ask someone to keep it for you until you are back in control of your feelings.
- Talk to other people, it could be helpful for you to talk to someone about how you're feeling. There are different people who can help. You could speak to colleagues, friends and family or your GP
- Be around other people
- Distract yourself. Read a book or magazine, watch a film or TV, go to a museum, walk in a green space like a park, draw or paint, listen to music, sing, listen to nature, pay attention to nice smells such as coffee shops, your favourite food, a favourite perfume or soap, treat yourself to a food you like and pay close attention to how it tastes, how it feels in your mouth and what you like about it, wear something that you feel great in, spend time with your pet
- Set small goals to focus on, you could do the laundry, make a cake or tidy or organise something
- Try to relax

Tick what you know works

Underline what you'd like to try in the future

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listening to music | <input type="checkbox"/> Spend time with friends/family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taking a hot/cold shower | <input type="checkbox"/> Give someone a hug |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deep breathing exercises | <input type="checkbox"/> Doing chores |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading a book | <input type="checkbox"/> A cold cloth on your face |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talking to friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Go to your safe place (where): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Time out of your home | <input type="checkbox"/> Write down some affirmations: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play a video game | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Going to the gym | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cold water on your hands | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lying down | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crying | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise | |

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Triggers

Triggers are things which might make you feel worse. Triggers are different for different people. You may find that certain music, photos or films make you feel worse. Try to stay away from these.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling lonely | <input type="checkbox"/> Arguments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling pressured | <input type="checkbox"/> Darkness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not being listened to | <input type="checkbox"/> Time of day: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling unsafe | <input type="checkbox"/> Time of year: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling isolated | <input type="checkbox"/> A person: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not having control | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Emergency contacts

Create a list of contacts that you can use for now and in the future

Family/Friends:	Telephone Number
GP:	
The Samaritans	116 123 (24/7)
Shout	Text "Shout" to 85258 (24/7)
Mind	0300 123 3393
Emergency Services	999 or 112 or A&E (24/7)