

---

# **Emergency Support Guide for Peer Supporters**

## **For Peer Supporters Only – Please Read Carefully**

As a peer supporter on this platform, you are offering a compassionate ear, not clinical advice. However, sometimes people may share thoughts or behaviors that signal a **crisis** or **mental health emergency**. When this happens, your role is to **recognize the warning signs** and **guide them to professional help immediately** — not to manage the crisis yourself.

---

## **Recognizing Mental Health Emergencies**

Be alert for these red flags during a conversation:

### **1. Suicidal Thoughts**

- Mentions of wanting to die, harm themselves, or not wake up
- Talking about being a burden
- Saying things like “no one would miss me” or “I can’t do this anymore”

### **2. Self-Harm**

- Admitting to cutting, burning, or hurting themselves
- Expressing intent or plans to self-harm

### **3. Harming Others**

- Expressing a desire to hurt someone else
- Describing violent plans or threats

### **4. Psychotic Symptoms**

- Hearing voices others don’t hear
- Strong paranoia, extreme confusion, or detachment from reality

### **5. Severe Emotional Distress**

- Intense panic, hopelessness, or loss of control
  - Sudden, extreme mood changes
- 

## **What You Should Do**

- 1. Stay Calm and Empathetic**
    - Don't panic. Use a calm, caring tone.
    - Acknowledge their feelings:  
"I hear how overwhelmed you're feeling, and I'm really sorry you're going through this."
  - 2. Gently Encourage Immediate Help**
    - Clearly and kindly urge them to reach out to a professional:  
"It sounds like you're in a lot of pain right now. I'm not a professional, but I care about your safety. I think it's really important to talk to a mental health professional or contact a crisis line right away."
  - 3. Provide Emergency Resources**
    - Offer direct contacts based on location:  
"If you're in the U.S., you can call or text **988** for free, 24/7 support from trained counselors."  
"Or text **HOME** to **741741** for the Crisis Text Line."
  - 4. (You can also direct them to their local emergency services if outside the U.S.)**
  - 5. Encourage a Trusted Contact**
    - Suggest they speak with a friend, family member, or someone nearby who can help.
  - 6. Do Not Try to Fix or Diagnose**
    - Never suggest medication, diagnosis, or therapy alternatives.
    - Don't give advice like "you just need to..." or "you'll get over it."
- 

## What NOT to Do

- **✗** Don't make promises like "everything will be okay."
  - **✗** Don't try to handle the crisis on your own.
  - **✗** Don't give legal, medical, or professional advice.
  - **✗** Don't ignore red flags — take all mentions of self-harm seriously.
- 

## Sample Response You Can Use

- **If someone mentions suicidal thoughts or self-harm:**

*"I'm really sorry you're feeling this way. I care about your safety, and I think it's really important you talk to someone trained to help. Would you consider reaching out to a crisis line like 988? They're available 24/7 and can talk with you right now."*

---

---

*"It sounds like you're going through something incredibly painful. I want to support you the best I can, but I'm not a mental health professional. You deserve help from someone who can truly support you — like a therapist or a crisis counselor."*

---

*"Thank you for opening up about how you're feeling — that takes courage. I'm not equipped to give the help you might need right now, but there are people who are. Please consider texting HOME to 741741 for the Crisis Text Line. They're here for you."*

---

*"Thank you for trusting me with this. I care about your safety and well-being. I'm not a mental health professional, and I really think it's important you talk to someone who is. You can call or text 988 to get free, confidential support right now. You're not alone."*

***If someone expresses feeling hopeless, overwhelmed, or unable to cope:***

*"It makes sense that you're feeling overwhelmed — what you're dealing with is really hard. I'm here to listen, but I also want you to know that there are professionals who can help guide you through this."*

---

*"You don't have to face this alone. I'm here to talk, but I also really encourage you to reach out to someone trained who can help. There's no shame in asking for professional support — it's a strong and brave thing to do."*

---

***If someone is showing signs of confusion, detachment from reality, or psychosis:***

*"I'm noticing you might be feeling disconnected or confused. That can be scary. I really think it's important you talk to a professional who can support you in the right way. You're not alone, and help is out there."*

---

*"What you're describing might be really hard to deal with on your own. I'm not trained to help with this, but I care about you and I really believe talking to a mental health professional could help."*

---

**If someone is hesitant to reach out for help:**

*"It's okay to be nervous about asking for help. You don't have to figure everything out right away. Just starting with one call or text to a crisis line can be a good first step. They're there to listen, not judge."*

---

*"Getting help doesn't mean something is wrong with you. It means you're strong enough to recognize you deserve support. Even just having a conversation with a professional can make a big difference."*

---

 **Final Reminder**

As a supporter, you are **not responsible for solving a crisis**, but you can play a vital role in **getting someone to the right kind of help**. When in doubt, always lean on compassion and encourage professional support.

---