

NowMattersNow.org Emotional Fire Safety Plan

Select those that fit you, cross out those that don't, add your own. Based on research, and advice from those who've been there. For [Guide](#), visit nowmattersnow.org/get-involved. Free for personal or org use. Last update 2024.05.13. ©2019 Ursula Whiteside

ON FIRE

Direct advice for overwhelming urges to kill self or use opioids

— Shut it down —

Sleep (no overdosing). Can't sleep? Cold shower or face in ice-water (30 seconds and repeat). This is a reset button. It slows everything way down.

— No Important Decisions —

Especially deciding to die. Do not panic. Ignore thoughts that you don't care if you die. Stop drugs and alcohol.

— Make Eye Contact —

A difficult but powerful pain reliever. Look in their eyes and say "Can you help me get out of my head?" Try video chat. Keep trying until you find someone.

IN A FIRE

Things I Know How To Do for Suicidal Thoughts and Urges to Use (practice outside of crisis situations)

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visit NowMattersNow.org (guided strategies) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Opposite Action (act exactly opposite to an urge) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ice-Water and Paced Breathing (exhale longer) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Mindfulness (choose what to pay attention to) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Call/Text Crisis Line or A-Team (see below) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Mindfulness of Current Emotion (feel emotions in body) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "It makes sense I'm stressed and/or in pain" | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> "There are things I can do to manage this moment" |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "I want to feel better, not suicide or use opioids" | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Notice thoughts, but don't get in bed with them |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distraction: | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Put Crisis Resources in Phone (take photo of this safety plan with phone and practice calling/texting)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255, Press 1 for Veteran and 2 for Spanish | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crisis Text Line 741741 Help | <input type="checkbox"/> Trevor Lifeline (LGBT youth) 1-866-488-7386 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> See nowmattersnow.org/help-line | <input type="checkbox"/> Trans Lifeline (transgender) 1-877-565-8860 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safety Plan app (US Dep of Vet Affairs) | <input type="checkbox"/> 911, ask for mobile crisis unit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WarmLine.org | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Keeping Myself Safe (address if relevant, as best as possible, as part of collaborative conversation)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guns locked up w/out key or combo (___NA) | <input type="checkbox"/> Suffocation or overdose thoughts addressed (___NA) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guns stored separate from ammo (___NA) | <input type="checkbox"/> Preferred suicide methods reviewed and addressed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guns stored outside of home (___NA) | <input type="checkbox"/> Remove alcohol and opioids from home (___NA) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A-Team supports these safety steps (___NA) | <input type="checkbox"/> No one with or using opioids allowed in home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confirm steps with another person | <input type="checkbox"/> Remove or store prescription medications safely |

The reason(s) I want to live or not use drugs _____

- ☐ Visible reminder (e.g., note to self or photo of loved one: phone background, gun case, med cabinet, car dashboard, wallet even after suicidal crisis has passed)

The #1 thing leading to suicidal thoughts or urges to use _____

Create an A-Team (people I can talk to about suicide, drug or alcohol or mental health struggles)

Can be healthcare provider, peer support, friend, family member or other

- ☐ Possible A-Team member(s) _____
- ☐ Message or call A-Team members, individually or as a group to let them know they are A-Team
- ☐ Discuss in advance what would be helpful in crisis ("I believe in you," support this plan, just listen, hospitalization or not)
- ☐ Decide how to ask for help effectively (be willing to take help, try to communicate before a crisis)

Watch Out for These

- ☐ Not sleeping
- ☐ Feeling really anxious or irritable
- ☐ Increased alcohol or drug use or relapse
- ☐ Being in frustrating and painful situations

Things I'd Be Willing to Try

- ☐ Regular sleep for a week (8 hours nightly)
- ☐ Validate yourself, "my emotions make sense"
- ☐ Talk to someone in recovery
- ☐ Make plans to get out of these situations

FIRE PREVENTION

- ☐ Stop taking medication without support
- ☐ Avoiding calls or messages
- ☐ Suicidal thoughts or images
- ☐

- ☐ Go to scheduled appointments or schedule one
- ☐ Message an A-Team member a caring message
- ☐
- ☐

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Please add more detail if you like. Parts of this resource are adapted from [Stanley Brown Safety Plan](#) and [Linehan's DBT](#).

ON FIRE

--Shut It Down-- What will you use for cold? practice when?

--No Decisions-- What decision is most important for you?

--Eye Contact-- With who and how (A-team)? back up?

IN A FIRE

Things I Know How To Do for Suicidal Thoughts and Urges to Use

Visit NowMattersNow.org

FIRE PREVENTION


Building a Life Worth Living Small step: I can put energy into the things that keep me alive

Addressing Pain and Problems Small Step: I can try to address one thing that make me hopeless

A-Team Development Small Step: Identify someone who you think is trustworthy

Steps to Keep Myself Safe Physically

Crisis Resources I can practice using a phone or text line so I understand (and can show others)

Watch Out for These	Things I'd Be Willing to Try
	 SAFETY PLAN