Session 8: My Crisis and Safety Plan: Written Before I Need It

PHASE 1 — FOUNDATION: SURRENDER AND STABILIZATION (WEEKS 1–2) · WEEK 2 — STABILIZATION

Date: _____ My craving today (0–10): _____ One word for my week: _____

Handouts for this session: the Session 8 handout (My Personal Crisis & Safety Plan) and its companion handout (If You're in Crisis) — in the Handouts Packet.

Before your first group, a licensed counselor completed your assessment, safety plan, and treatment plan. This session reviews and rehearses that plan. It does not replace it, and the facilitator does not read your clinical detail.

The governing copy of your plan is the plan completed with your licensed counselor before your first group. The copies in this workbook, in Appendix A, and in the Session 8 handout are working copies for review and rehearsal — keep them current, and change any step only with your counselor.

Completeness check (without reading clinical detail): cover the written content, confirm in your own words that each step is answered, and ask the facilitator to initial the cover check. The facilitator does not read your clinical detail.

What we're learning

A crisis plan is a plan made while you are calm, so it can help you when you are not. It has six steps, in order: my warning signs; things I can do on my own to steady myself; people and places that ground me; people I can ask for direct help; professionals and crisis lines; and how I will make my surroundings safer. Today you will review, use, and rehearse the plan a licensed counselor completed with you before your first group — checking every section, saying the steps in your own words, and making sure it is findable and current. If you are ever in crisis, call or text 988 (Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, 24 hours) or call 911 in an emergency.

- Written beats remembered Crisis narrows thinking to almost nothing. The plan thinks for us because we already did the thinking today.
- Steps in order, help early Most crises resolve at steps one to four. Reaching for people at step three is strength — the emergency lines exist for when the earlier steps are not holding.
- Safer environment is an act of love Removing or distancing means of harm — and handing a house key, medication concern, or substance access to a trusted person — is something we do for our future selves while we are strong.

- The plan is alive After any crisis, we review the plan within days: what worked, what failed, what changes. A plan that failed and got revised is more trustworthy, not less. Change any step only with your counselor.

Goals for this session

☐ I can review every section of the Personal Crisis / Safety Plan (Appendix A) and rehearse using it

☐ I can name warning signs in my own words and at least three people and one professional resource I will contact One person counts. An empty line gets a dated plan to fill it — an empty line is not a failure.

☐ I can state the difference between a hard day plan and an emergency response

Check-in

Think of your last crisis before you came here. In the first hour, what did you actually do — and what do you wish had been within reach?

Discussion — write your answers

Write what you would say out loud — and more, if it comes. There is no right-length answer; there is only an honest one.

1. What are your personal warning signs — the thoughts, feelings, or behaviors that tell you a storm is coming?

2. Who steadies you just by being around them, even without talking about the problem?

3. Is there anything in your current environment that should be moved, stored, or handed off to make you safer? What is stopping that from happening today?

4. How will you make sure this plan is findable at 2 a.m.?

Session 8 — Skill Practice

In pairs, review your plan and rehearse one step aloud in your own words; the facilitator initials the cover check only, without reading clinical detail. Save the three people and the professional contact in your phone. Keep the paper face-down except the step being reviewed. Phones come out (the one exception to the phone rule) to save the contacts. Rehearse in general words only.

Copy the plan the counselor completed with you into the form below as homework, or as a first-group task, with the counselor copy in hand, section by section. Keep the paper face-down except the step being copied. Change any step only with your counselor. Rehearse in general words only. If your plan is not confirmed, tell the facilitator in this session; the facilitator connects you to the counselor the same day, and you stay in group. Nobody is asked to build a plan for the first time, and nobody is graded on a plan.

Copy your Personal Crisis / Safety Plan below, as homework or as a first-group task, from the plan completed with your licensed counselor. This is a working copy of the same plan as the final pages of this workbook — keep all working copies current, and change any step only with your counselor. Bring the plan the counselor completed with you — the counselor copy will be in the room.

New here? In your first group or two, your facilitator confirms your plan is in place, gives you crisis contacts, and reviews the plan with you inside the group. You do not wait for Session 8 to have a plan.

Name: _____ Date the counselor plan was completed: _____ Review date: _____

Step 1 — My warning signs

Thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that tell me a crisis is building:

Step 2 — Things I can do on my own to steady myself (volume knobs, grounding, movement):

Step 3 — People and places that ground me

Social contact — no problem-solving required. Person/place + phone:

Step 4 — People I can ask for direct help

Name + phone:

Step 5 — Professionals and crisis resources

- Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (U.S.): call or text 988 — 24 hours
- Emergency: 911
- My counselor / care coordinator: _____ Phone: _____
- Program / house contact: _____ Phone: _____
- My prescriber / clinic: _____ Phone: _____

Step 6 — Making my environment safer

Substances, means of harm, access — what I will move, store, or hand to a trusted person:

My reason for living, in my own words:

Signature: _____ Staff initials (cover check only — does not read clinical detail): _____

My takeaway

The one thing from this session I most need to remember — in my own words:

Homework — this week's application

☐ Put your plan where you will find it and tell your three people they are on it — that conversation is the homework. Review the plan once this week on a calm day, and change any step only with your counselor.

Space to do the homework and note how it went:

An optional Scripture handout for this session is available from your facilitator on request.