

NAVIGATING

a mental health

CRISIS



WARNING SIGNS of a Mental Health Crisis

It's important to know that warning signs are not always present when a mental health crisis is developing. Common actions that may be a clue that a mental health crisis is developing:

- ✓ **Inability to perform daily tasks** like bathing, brushing teeth, brushing hair, changing clothes
- ✓ **Rapid mood swings**, increased energy level, inability to stay still, pacing; suddenly depressed, withdrawn; suddenly happy or calm after period of depression
- ✓ **Increased agitation** verbal threats, violent, out-of-control behavior, destroys property
- ✓ **Abusive behavior** to self and others, including substance use or self-harm (cutting)
- ✓ **Isolation** from school, work, family, friends
- ✓ **Loses touch with reality (psychosis)**, unable to recognize family or friends, confused, strange ideas, thinks they're someone they're not, doesn't understand what people are saying, hears voices, sees things that aren't there
- ✓ **Paranoia**, suspicion and mistrust of people or their actions without evidence or justification



WARNING SIGNS of Suicide

- ◆ **Giving away personal possessions**
- ◆ **Talking as if they're saying goodbye** or going away forever
- ◆ **Taking steps** to tie up loose ends, like organizing personal papers or paying off debts
- ◆ **Making or changing a will**
- ◆ **Stockpiling pills or obtaining a weapon**
- ◆ **Preoccupation with death**
- ◆ **Sudden cheerfulness or calm** after a period of despondency
- ◆ **Dramatic changes** in personality, mood and/or behavior
- ◆ **Increased drug or alcohol use**
- ◆ **Saying things** like "Nothing matters anymore," "You'll be better off without me," or "Life isn't worth living"
- ◆ **Withdrawal** from friends, family and normal activities
- ◆ **Failed romantic relationship**
- ◆ **Sense of utter hopelessness** and helplessness
- ◆ **History** of suicide attempts or other self-harming behaviors
- ◆ **History** of family/friend suicide or attempts