

Crisis Curve

The Crisis Curve shows the process from your everyday state to peak escalation. Planning, prevention and identifying early stages of escalation can help you interrupt the process, flatten the curve, and respond effectively.



1- BASELINE/CALM

Your baseline is how you function when things are status quo, nothing notable is happening and you feel generally in a calm state of mind. How do you know when you are calm or at your baseline? (examples: think before acting, enjoy talking to others, able to think about the future or daily responsibilities)

2- TRIGGERS

What triggers or stressors can you identify that may cause you to feel increased anxiety or worry? (examples: specific people, places, events, etc.)

3- AGITATION/ANXIETY

What warning signs do you notice in your body, mind, and behavior when you FIRST feel agitated or anxious? (examples: upset stomach, tightening in throat, heart racing, clenched fists, using curse words, racing thoughts, pacing)

4- ACCELERATION

This is when things ramp up and head towards the crisis stage. People often feel a loss of control over their emotions, feelings, and thoughts. Warning signs increase in severity and can become physical or verbally escalated. Are there signals for you that things are escalating? (examples: yelling, driving fast, hitting self/others, feeling out of control)

5- CRISIS/PEAK

When you reach an unmanageable state of heightened emotion the thinking part of your brain shuts down, you go into survival mode and can make decisions you may not normally make. This can be dangerous for you and those around you. What does a crisis look like for you? What does it feel like? (examples: thoughts of harming yourself, harming others, or making poor choices)

6- DE-ESCALATION

This stage is flexible; with the right tools and self-awareness can be practiced during any phase of escalation. De-escalation is when you feel a reduction in intensity and begin to feel a return to control over your emotions, feelings, and thoughts. What have you tried in the past that has helped you feel better?

7- POST PEAK DEPLETION

Being at the Peak of an emotion is exhausting and oftentimes people feel depleted. This is your period of recovery. In what ways can you be gentle with yourself in this stage?

