

Chapter 13: Reducing suicide risk

Suicide risk prevention plan: downloadable chart

Purpose of this chart: To have a risk prevention plan to implement at times when you feel suicidal.

Tips for using this chart:

- Complete this prevention plan when you are well
- Check those items on the list of examples that are relevant to you and add names and places that apply to your personal situation as in the example in chapter 13
- Discuss and confirm the items that involve others with the people concerned and give them a copy of the prevention plan. You can ask everyone involved in the plan to sign it if you like.
- Keep it in a place that you can easily refer to when feeling suicidal

For more detailed instructions, explanations and an example of using this suicide risk prevention plan see pp. 167 of *Living with Bipolar*.

My Suicide Prevention Plan

Contact details

Doctors' names and phone numbers:

Psychologist/case worker's name and phone number:

Emergency Dept phone number:

Close family or friends' numbers:

Early warning signs that I may become suicidal:

List warning signs that you may be becoming suicidal. These could be similar to your

early symptoms of depression or mixed states or be specific to becoming suicidal:

What I can do about warning signs

List ways of dealing with your warning signs, for example, contact your doctor or key support people, activate relapse prevention plans to reduce symptoms, enlist support with challenging hopeless thinking or to deal with a problem that may be triggering your suicidal impulses and consider treatment and your safety:

Consider safety and getting treatment

What do you need to do to ensure your safety and access to treatment? For example:

- *phone your clinician(s) and let them know you are suicidal*
- *book an emergency appointment to discuss treatment*
- *go to an emergency department*
- *enlist the help of your support system to temporarily look after weapons, pills and other means of committing suicide*
- *spend time with family or friends so you are not alone*
- *let family or friends know that you feel suicidal and help you access the appropriate treatment like contacting your doctor or taking you to hospital*
- *contact your doctor again or go to hospital if your suicidal impulses increase or you have a plan to commit suicide*
- *abstain from drugs or alcohol*
- *contact suicide hotline*

Other strategies I can use and ways others can assist me

What other strategies can make things easier and reduce your suicidality? For

example:

- *put your strategies for reducing your mood symptoms into practice*
- *plan soothing or distracting activities (see chapter 13) to get through the next hour or day and once they are done plan more short term activities to help you get through this time*
- *talk things through with a trusted person to try and gain a new perspective on old problems*
- *remind yourself or let others remind you that your suicidal symptoms are temporary symptoms and that you will feel differently in the future*
- *tell yourself that you are not going to make any decisions about your life until you have been better for a while*
- *challenge negative thinking about the future*
- *prioritise and delegate stressful demands*
- *ask yourself what may make a difference in the future so you have something to work towards*
- *consult your reasons to live list*

Signatures: