

# Communicating Care and Referring For Teaching During Times of Crisis

## In the Classroom During a Crisis

1. Acknowledge the crisis or stressful event(s) in plain, direct terms.
2. Acknowledge and validate that there are various reactions to a crisis, and they have different trajectories over time for different people.
3. Communicate care and provide referral to available campus resources (see next slides for examples).
4. Do not invite your students to have a discussion about their stress or trauma responses.
5. Demonstrate grace, humanity, humility, and flexibility with class attendance, coursework, and so on, in line with university guidance.

## Model Regulated Behaviors

- How is my breathing?
- How is my voice?
- How is my posture?
- Attune to student.

## Active Listening

- Give your student undivided attention
- Exaggerate active listening body language
- Don't be afraid of silence

## Beneficial actions in responding:

- Acknowledging
- Clarifying the setting
- Holding boundaries as needed
- Re-direct if appropriate
- 

Here are 3 things (microskills) you can do in this situation while honoring your bandwidth and the fact that you are not a mental health provider:

Show compassion and empathy by--

- Paraphrasing
- Expressing care
- Asking questions about support
- Making the referral

## Connect to Resources

"That sounds painful. Sounds like it might be helpful to talk with someone."

"I may not be able to understand exactly how you feel, but I want to help. Would you be open to talking with someone about this?"

"If it's okay with you, I'm going to call someone to give us some support with this."

"I'm concerned about you. Let's get some help."

“I’m worried about your safety. Let’s get some help”

Things to keep in mind:

- The student may choose not to share. This is NOT a failure on your part
- There is no single "right" way to respond
- Avoid making promises you cannot keep
- Seek out consultation and support

## **Tier 1**

**Urgent, requires immediate action**

Someone threatening to hurt or kill themselves or others  
Someone talking or writing about death, dying or suicide  
Indication of not being able to identify a way to live

## **Tier 2**

Hopelessness  
Rage, anger, seeking revenge  
Acting recklessly or engaging in risky activities  
Feeling trapped  
Withdrawing from family and friends  
Anxiety, agitation, inability to sleep

What resources are available?

## **Tier 1**

**Urgent, requires immediate action**

CMHC Crisis Line 512.471.2255  
EAP Crisis Line for Staff & Faculty 512.471.3399  
Suicide Prevention Hotline- 988  
Crisis Text Line- 741741  
UTPD 512.471.4441 ext. 0, 911 or the LiveSafe app, **if means are present**  
<https://police.utexas.edu/services/livesafe-ut-austin>

## **Tier 2**

BCAL-Behavior Concerns & Advice Line 512.232.5050  
CMHC Main Line 512.471.3515  
Counselors in Academic Residence Program (CARE)  
EAP for Staff & Faculty 512.471. 3366