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**Crisis and Safety Policy**

**Effective Date:** January 1, 2023

At Jackson ILyas Therapy Solutions, we are committed to providing a safe, supportive, and effective therapeutic environment for all clients. It is important for clients to understand the procedures and protocols for handling crisis situations that may arise during therapy or between sessions.

This Crisis and Safety Policy outlines the steps and resources available in the event of a crisis, as well as the measures we take to ensure client safety and well-being.

**1. Definition of a Crisis**

A crisis is any situation in which a client may experience a significant emotional, psychological, or behavioral disturbance that could pose a threat to their well-being, the safety of others, or interfere with their ability to function in everyday life. This includes, but is not limited to:

* Suicidal thoughts or behavior
* Self-harm or threat of self-harm
* Homicidal thoughts or behavior
* Severe emotional distress that significantly impairs functioning
* Substance abuse crises (e.g., overdose or intoxication)

**2. Immediate Crisis Intervention**

**During Office Hours:**

* **If a client presents with immediate safety concerns during a session, the therapist will prioritize ensuring the client’s safety and stability.** The therapist will assess the level of risk and take appropriate action, including developing a safety plan, involving emergency contacts, or referring to a higher level of care (e.g., emergency services, hospital, or crisis intervention teams).
* **If a crisis situation requires immediate intervention and the therapist is unavailable, clients are encouraged to contact emergency services at 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.**

**After Hours Crisis:**

* If a crisis arises when the therapist is not available, clients should contact the appropriate emergency services:
	+ **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**: 988 (for suicidal ideation and crises)
	+ **Crisis Text Line**: Text HOME to 741741 (for mental health emergencies)
	+ **Local Emergency Services**: Dial 911 or visit your local emergency room

**Therapist Availability:**

* Clients will be informed of the therapist’s regular office hours and how to reach out in case of a non-urgent matter. Please be aware that the therapist may not be available outside of these hours, and responses to calls, texts, or emails may be delayed.

**3. Safety Planning**

If a client experiences suicidal ideation, self-harm behaviors, or other high-risk situations, the therapist will work with the client to create a personalized **Safety Plan**. This plan may include:

* Contacting emergency contacts (family members, close friends, or support network)
* Referral to a higher level of care (e.g., inpatient treatment or crisis centers)
* Developing coping strategies to manage distress and prevent harm
* Contacting a 24/7 crisis hotline

**4. Confidentiality and Limits of Confidentiality**

In crisis situations, confidentiality may need to be broken to ensure the safety of the client and others. The therapist will make every effort to inform the client about the limits of confidentiality and the steps that may be taken in case of a crisis. This may include:

* Contacting emergency services
* Reaching out to a family member or emergency contact
* Referring the client to a hospital or psychiatric unit if necessary

These actions are only taken when there is a clear and imminent risk to the client’s safety or the safety of others.

**5. Client Responsibilities in a Crisis**

* **Immediate Action**: Clients experiencing a crisis are encouraged to take immediate steps to ensure their safety, including reaching out for help from the therapist or emergency services.
* **Emergency Contact Information**: Clients are asked to provide up-to-date emergency contact information at the outset of therapy. This information will only be used in situations where safety is at risk and with the client’s consent, unless required by law.

**6. Therapist Responsibilities in a Crisis**

* **Assessment and Intervention**: The therapist will assess the situation, provide appropriate crisis intervention, and take necessary actions to ensure the client’s safety.
* **Referral to Appropriate Services**: If a client’s needs exceed the scope of therapy services, the therapist will provide appropriate referrals to psychiatric professionals, hospitals, or other crisis intervention resources.
* **Documentation**: The therapist will document any crisis intervention and actions taken in the client’s records, following all ethical and legal guidelines.

**7. Emergency Resources**

Here is a list of additional resources that clients can access in times of crisis:

* **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**: Call or Text 988 (24/7 support)
* **Crisis Text Line**: Text HOME to 741741 (24/7 support)
* **National Domestic Violence Hotline**: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
* **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline**: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)
* **Local Emergency Services**: Dial 911

**8. Review and Updates**

This policy will be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary to ensure that it reflects best practices, legal requirements, and the evolving needs of clients. Clients will be informed of any significant changes to the policy.

**Acknowledgment of Crisis and Safety Policy:**

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have received, read, and understood the Crisis and Safety Policy and agree to the procedures outlined above. You also understand that the therapist may be required to break confidentiality in the event of a crisis to ensure your safety and well-being.

**Client Name**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
**Signature**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
**Date**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Therapist's Signature**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
**Date**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This policy should be shared with your clients at the start of therapy and periodically reviewed to ensure they are informed about crisis procedures. Feel free to adjust the specifics to better suit your practice’s protocols.