

## Organization Name

Organization Phone Number  
Organization Street, City, State Zip  
organization website

### Communicating with Someone in Crisis Who Has a Psychiatric Illness

- DO SLOW DOWN**
- DO GIVE THEM SPACE**  
Don't make them feel trapped
- DO BE CALM.** Express support and concern.
- DO SPEAK SLOWLY AND SOFTLY.**
- DO USE SHORT, SIMPLE SENTENCES.**
- DO AVOID** sudden or quick movements.
- DO BE HELPFUL.** Respond to basic needs.  
Be low key. "We are all here to help."
- DO GIVE FIRM, CLEAR DIRECTIONS;**  
One person should talk to the subject.
- DO RESPOND TO DELUSIONS or HALLUCINATIONS** by talking about the person's feelings rather than what he or she is saying.
- DO LISTEN** to their story.
- DO EXPLAIN POLICY,** especially if handcuffed.

Don't Don't Don't Don't Don't

- TAKE CONTROL** if you don't have to.
- ARGUE** or reason with psychotic thinking.
- STARE** at the subject.
- CONFUSE THE SUBJECT.**  
One person should interact with the subject.  
Others should keep their distance.  
Ask casual observers to leave.  
Follow through with directions or commands.
- TOUCH** the subject unless necessary.  
For people with mental illnesses it may cause fear and lead to violence.
- SHOUT.**
- GIVE THEM MULTIPLE CHOICES.**  
This can increase the subjects confusion.
- WHISPER, JOKE OR LAUGH.**
- DECEIVE** the subject. Dishonesty increases fear and suspicion: the subject will likely remember it in any subsequent contact.
- DON'T ARREST A PERSON FOR MENTALLY ILL BEHAVIOR NOT CRIMINAL IN NATURE.**
- JOIN** into behavior related to the person's mental illness
- If a person has to be restrained, DON'T HOGTIE.**  
Immediately raise him/her from prone into sitting position, monitor vital signs, and call for medical aid.

## Crisis Card #1 – Do's and Don'ts Communicating with Someone in Crisis

Also available in Spanish

Cards can be personalized with your organization's name and contact information

Shipping costs are included in the price of the cards.

The card sale site is at [Storefront \(asbaces.com\)](http://Storefront (asbaces.com))