



Crisis Tip Sheet

*We asked families to share their
advice for how to get out of crisis.
Here is what they said.*



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1. If family or friends offer to help, they often say, “let me know if there’s anything we can do.” This tends to be really discouraging because it can be so open ended. **I’ve learned it’s OK to ask for specific things: please drop off a meal, I need help with laundry this week, could you come clean the bathrooms.**
2. Being grounded in my faith is sometimes the ONLY thing that gets me through.
3. How you show up to support your child is essential. If you look at your child as broken, they will be. If you **look at the crisis as an opportunity — an opportunity to heal, learn, grow, expand — that is when you will be successful.** Be curious to find what your child needs. Trust your intuition. And don’t be afraid to leave a practice if they are not a fit.
4. I’m getting help right now with EMDR to learn how to move through and get out.
5. My first line of help is to contact Sylvia Tavares for some **Ask and Receive sessions** that were created by Sandi Radomski and Tom Altafer. Sylvia also is very skilled at using muscle testing to let you know what you need to help with the crisis. Second is to **use homeopathy.** Aconite is great to use in a crisis. “Oh what a fright, use aconite” is a good rule of thumb. Joette Calabrese is my #1 resource for that. **Deep breathing and prayer are also top of list.**
6. Mindful meditation and remaining positive and hopeful. **Leaning on other people’s stories and journeys of healing.** Having a support group to affirm my beliefs when my tank was on empty and to speak healing into my child’s future.
7. We use sensory exercises for a minute or two to reset our mood and increase our stress tolerance as needed.
8. We found **sensory enrichment therapy** which we did at home with household items daily for 2 to 5 mins. It boosted our serotonin and dopamine and helped to repair and grow areas of our brain that needed support. My autistic daughter stopped being violent, her sister healed from the trauma of her abuse, and **I was able to recover from 7 years of burnout and crisis.**
9. Accept help.
10. Pray. Keep trying new interventions, but don’t forget to sleep, exercise, rest, and eat well — for everyone in the family.

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- 11.** When my son was diagnosed with moderate to severe autism at 18 months old, experts told us everything he would never do. They focused on the limitations. And then **I realized that no one gets to limit anyone's potential.** The diagnosis was just a snapshot of one day in time with someone who didn't know my child. They were just guessing as to what the future might be, and their guess was wrong!
- 12.** Focus on today. Because the **time and effort you put into the crisis right now can help determine future outcomes.** I was so worried about the future, that I wasn't focused on the crisis in front of me that was becoming more difficult each day.
- 13.** **Counseling and finding virtual groups of people who are going through the same type of crisis helped me cope during crisis.** You can get help from these groups, and give help. It also helps you feel less alone.
- 14.** Do. The. Self-care. Make time. **You cannot pour from an empty cup.** I found little things that I could do for myself throughout the day to show myself love, and that, in turn allowed me to extend and stretch grace and understanding so much further.
- 15.** **Get help.** Our school social worker threw me a lifeline . . . and saved us all! But that could work the other way. Parents can reach out to teacher or school leaders and ask for school social workers or counselors. It can be scary, but so worthwhile. Our school social worker connected me to county mental health resources that helped us develop a crisis plan. Who to call for help. How to best handle difficult situations. **The county stayed with my family for 8 months to help us until we were out of crisis.**
- 16.** We are through the acute crisis but I imagine our lives will never be the same (for better and for worse). **I think not coping can sometimes be OK.** Sometimes meditation or yoga or prayer will be what helps, sometimes it's screaming louder than you knew you could. Sometimes it's a glass of wine. Learning about polyvagal theory and **knowing that there will come a time when I would need to do the work to get myself out of constant fight mode but maybe right now it's ok to be on fire.** A friend asked me if maybe I should medicate to reduce the anxiety, depression, and anger I sometimes felt but they kept me sharp and fueled and fighting. I needed zero complacency and 100% effort and it has been a hard journey to peace but worth the effort. It's ok not to be a person for a while when you are fighting for your person's health. **There will be time for caring about music, or food, or being able to read anything but journal articles. It will happen again.**

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- 17.** Make a plan of what to do and whom to call BEFORE there is a crisis. **Teach your child self calming techniques when they are calm and practice them.** Learn to live in the moment. Understand that the crisis will pass. **Do NOT project out into the future while in crisis. That will make it worse.** Focus on physical safety and practicing your own calming method while going through the crisis.
- 18.** **Take very good care of yourself.** It sounds very hard to do, but you need a sound mind and a lot more patience to move through crisis. So you have to keep investing in sleep, supplements, nutrition and things that make you happy. **Rest when you need to and set boundaries with others. Protect your energy.**
- 19.** We dealt with crisis level behaviors in my son from his flight/fight episodes that escalated into behaviors that were dangerous to himself and others (usually his younger sister and me). **My first step was to make sure that we were physically safe. My second step was to use a series of calming statements and isolate him from others where he couldn't hurt them or himself.** Often we just had to let the behaviors run their course over about 30-45 min. We had to make sure that he remained isolated in a safe space so that he didn't have any other stimuli aggravating him. **Then I had help to allow myself to spend some time physically away from him.** For processing the emotions of the trauma from on-going crisis, I found a modality called Access Consciousness most helpful. Talk therapy was useless for me. Tapping was somewhat effective. Most effective was the process called BARS from Access Consciousness.
- 20.** Attend therapy, **take breaks,** accept help, **shed all guilt,** do positive affirmations, and recognize your child's behavior is the result of an illness and not them.
- 21.** Finding **other people's stories of healing** gave me the hope to continue on. This gave me the strength to persevere and be better/do better for my child.
- 22.** While I cannot speak to being out of crisis yet, **moving through crisis is sometimes just taking the next best step.** Reaching out for help from other parents, family, and friends and being clear in the ways that your family can be supported. People cannot show up if they don't know how to best show up for you. **Ask. There are loving communities who care about your family.**
- 23.** Prayer and surrender