**THE IMMEDIATE CRISIS: *A GUIDE***

*Please keep in mind this is a guide, not a check list. The goal is to quickly assess the potential lethality of the crisis to respond appropriately. Review of this guide may spotlight areas where more training is needed.*

*Be mindful that asking for help is scary and difficult, and that once you answer a call you have begun a relationship. Depending upon how we respond, the survivor may or may not call again.*

*No matter what, remain calm.*

###### Assess the level of danger by listening and asking direct questions ...

1. **Listen**

Listen to tone of voice, background noises to help assess threat and danger level.

Many of the questions below may be answered by giving time for her/him to talk.

***Note****: If the offender threatens of suicide, red flags should go up immediately. The majority of offenders/batterers who threaten suicide kill their victims, and often children or others, first. Threats to life are grounds for breach of confidentiality. Program policy and training should guide your response. Know your program policy and laws related to suicide threats. Usually law enforcement is called to provide safety, protective custody and contact with mental health services. This can provide a window of opportunity for survivors to get safe.*

1. **What’s happening?**

**Are you safe to talk?** (if not, ask yes or no questions, provide options to get safe)

Are you in immediate danger?

Are you injured? Head injuries and strangulation can turn deadly later; encourage medical help.

1. **Where are you?**

**Can you tell me where you are?**

**Are you able to leave? Can you get somewhere safe? Do you want to leave?**

1. **Are there children there?**

Where are the kids?

Are they safe?

1. **Where is he/she (offender)?**

Is he/she drunk? Other drugs?

Does he/she have guns or other weapons? When will he/she be home?

Does he /she have other people watching you?

1. **Need police? Need ambulance?**

**Are you able to safely call the police?**

**Do you want me to call them for you?**

1. **How can I help?**

What do you want to do right now?

What would help right now?

Would you like to come in to talk to me?

As appropriate, offer options: Safety plan, Order for Protection, Transportation, Resources, Shelter

Whenever possible, let the caller, your relative, know the violence is not her fault. Acknowledge the courage it takes to call and you’re glad she/he did. Let her/survivor know you support her decisions and she/he is welcomed to call, visit and utilize the program whenever she’d like.

Responding to crisis can be traumatizing. When the immediate crisis is over, take care of yourself and get support. Your relatives need you!

Adapted from the Cangleska Advocacy Manual – 2020

FLOW CHART FOR HANDLING

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CALLS

**Can you leave safely?**

**Are you in immediate physical danger?**

**What’s happening?**

**YES**

**YES**

**Do you have some place to go?**

**YES**

**Neighbors, friends, relatives, cab?**

**Do you have trans-**

**portation?**

**NO**

**NO**

**Do you want me to I call the police/ sheriff?**

**Shall I arrange for emer- gency shelter?**

**NO**

**How can I help you?**

**NO**

**How can I help you?**

**Will there be children with you? How many?**

**Obtain caller’s address, place on hold, call the police.**

**NO**

**YES**

**YES**

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**YES**

**Do you want to leave?**

**Is the he/she (abuser) there now?**

**NO**

**YES**

**YES**

**NO**

**NO**

**Obtain caller’s address, place on hold, call ambulance.**

**Are you in need of immediate medical care?**

**Do you want to come in and visit with an advocate?**

**NO**

**Call police/ sheriff?**

**YES**

**YES**

**YES**

**NO**

**How can I help you?**

**How can I help you?**

**NO**

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