

SELF-ADVOCACY TOOL #3: WHAT HELPS ME FIND CALM AND SAFETY

The need to feel safe is normal. There are often reasons why we don't feel safe. This tool is designed to help you identify the early signs (sometimes called "warning signs") that your sense of calm and safety is changing.

Early signs might include shifts in emotions, thoughts and behaviors. When we are aware of our early signs, then we are more likely to take steps in order to find a sense of calm and safety. This can help reduce the likelihood that these signs will increase.

Please share this sheet with your team so they have a better sense of what you need. In case you are not certain what to write, you can look at the back of this page for examples.

Signs that I experienced in the past that I would probably notice:

1.

2.

3.

Events or situations that led to early signs for me in the past:

1.

2.

3.

Changes that would signal to others that I am experiencing an early sign.

1.

2.

3.

Changes that may be normal for me or more related to the environment that I don't want other people to see as an early sign.

1.

2.

3.

What a person needs to feel calm and safe is different for each of us and can change over time. Let's explore what you might need to feel calmer or safer in times of distress.

What I think would help me if I am experiencing an early sign:

1.

2.

3.

Who I would like to assist me and what I would like them to do:

1.

2.

3.

Contact information for people I would like to be involved when I am in distress and experiencing early signs:

1.

2.

3.

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EXAMPLES

Signs that I experienced in the past that I would notice:

1. Seeing connections or having beliefs that I usually do not see/have, such as thinking that the color red means danger.
2. Avoiding my friends for more than 3 days.
3. Fixations with people I don't know. Seeing an article about a famous person and thinking it's connected to me.

Events or situations that led to early signs for me in the past:

1. Watching a scary movie involving supernatural or spiritual themes.
2. Being around people who are yelling or angry with one another.
3. Seeing police cars or ambulances with flashing lights.

Changes that would signal to others that I am experiencing an early sign.

1. Talking more about my sensitivities to my surroundings.
2. I have a hard time falling asleep, staying asleep or getting out of bed for extended periods of time.
3. When my daily routines become difficult to remember or complete.

Changes that may be normal for me or more related to the environment that I don't want other people to see as an early sign.

1. Losing sleep for one night
2. Laughing loudly
3. Arguing with my family

What I think would help me if I am experiencing an early sign:

1. Doing something physical like going for a walk with a friend.
2. Expressing my feelings or experiences through a creative outlet like drawing, writing or playing guitar.
3. Eating my favorite food.

Who I would like to assist me and what I would like them to do:

1. Getting a ride from my mom to an appointment.
2. Watch my favorite show with my friend.
3. Knitting with my grandma.

Contact information for people I would like to be involved when I am in distress and experiencing early signs:

1. My best friend usually checks her Facebook Messenger and her phone 503-000-000
2. My stepdad who keeps his phone on 503-000-0001
3. My drama teacher who responds most often to texting; his number is 503-000-0002
4. My therapist at 503-000-0003