

# SOS Détresse

## Crises - turning points in life

### Do you know this feeling?

Actually it would have been a “normal day” with getting up, waking the children, driving to work. But then everything turns out differently. Your employer dismisses you through no fault of your own. After a harmless check-up, the doctor will give you a diagnosis that will pull the rug out from under your feet. The phone rings and you get the message of the death of a loved one: From one moment to the next, it can feel as if your heart stops beating and everything around you seems blurred, nothing more seems real. Your world goes to pieces.

Or your pubescent son rebels. Your wife leaves you out of the blue. You realize that nothing really fits anymore in your life. You feel empty and useless after you have cleared your desk and retired.

... Then, whether you like it or not, you are in a situation in which everything is out of control. You are in a crisis. Sometimes it is possible to sort crises out with ourselves or to solve them with the help of family and / or friends. Sometimes, however, crises are so existential that we need professional help and support to steer back to “calmer waters”.

The good news is: crises are temporary.

The bad: there is no effective protection against crises.

And yet you can do something to steer well through times of crisis.

The following text would like to invite you to understand the crises and critical turning points in life - knowing that every crisis has its own rhythm, triggers individual feelings and creates different approaches to solutions. The text attempts to describe crises that ultimately lead to growth.

***“Help, I’m stuck! Everything is going round in circles and my head is spinning!”***

The beginning of the crisis has a tight grip on you: at high speed still more confusing thoughts are rushing into your mind and you are not able to sort these out - as

usually. The mountain, which is usually easy to climb, becomes a Mount Everest. And in spite of this strain, you try to master your everyday life and not to let show that something is different. Simple emotions turn into excessive thoughts and leave chaos and an inner whirlwind of emotion. You are forgetful and your otherwise well-functioning intuition leaves you in the lurch. You cannot sleep, you are nervous and cannot concentrate on your tasks. Or you are withdraw from your social environment.

This is a condition that can cause anxiety or panic and is gruelling. And how could it be different: in addition to your daily smaller and larger challenges, you are burdened with something outside the ordinary. It is all too clear that this could wear you down both physically and mentally.

If this is the case, or if you simply cannot feel at ease with yourself, it might be helpful to reduce the size of the mountain which appears so high.

We would like to give you some suggestions that might be helpful. Maybe you might well know, maybe it will take some time to find out what is good for you:

- **It may be helpful to write down what worries you**
  - **or to consider what support you would need**
  - **perhaps it would be helpful to confide in a person you trust**

And being your own “crisis manager”, you may find other things that might be helpful.

### ***“I have always functioned well, why does it not work now?”***

You ponder a lot and think about what you could have done differently. Or you are mad at yourself and others. Maybe you are ashamed or feel guilty that you “fail” and nothing works out anymore. Aggressions, panic, anxiety or depressive moods may plague you. Or turning to addictive substances should perhaps alleviate what body and soul want to say: it does not work anymore! There is turmoil inside and out. It could feel like in a tunnel, oppressive, with no views to the right or left, just looking straight ahead and functioning.

Feel what might be helpful to you in this situation:

- **is it a relief speaking to a person in your close environment**
- **might it be helpful to contact a telephone advisory service**
- **would you dare to do something you may never have done before like asking for help**
- **contact your family doctor if you experience physical symptoms that bother you and / or that persist for a long time.**

### ***“It cannot go on like this. I have to do something.”***

You have mobilized all the forces available to you in this situation, but you do not feel fundamentally better and you doubt yourself. It’s all too tight - like a skin that does

not fit anymore.

You have run out of steam, your thoughts which have turned much around past and no longer changeable events, are paralyzed. You have ceased struggling and you are realizing that it cannot go on like this, discovering at the same time that something else can grow out of it. You gain hope that you will be able to find a new way!

Do you know how it is, after an almost sleepless night, to feel the twitching and relaxing of the muscles, if sleep can still set in and you nevertheless wake up the next day refreshed and cheerful? Or you can feel for yourself what it is like to relax after being under pressure. Perhaps, at that moment, many keyed-up tears will flow.

Now hope will give you strength and courage for a different approach. Perhaps the following suggestions may help you at this moment:

- **maybe you feel like following a ritual by which you want to say goodbye to something in a certain way**
- **Think about what you can contribute to your well-being in this situation**
- **Or is it a person of trust with whom you might want to spend time now**
- **Is it perhaps a conversation with a telephone counseling service that would do you good now.**

***“I need time and space for myself. Thank you for giving me this.”***

You have more confidence in yourself, you have activated yourself and other functions, you are considering what is good for you and have already made some adjustments in your everyday life – much is still strange and leads to irritation for you and people around you. You may ask yourself what or which convictions and “old family values” you would like to throw overboard. Perhaps family, housework, job and social obligations are getting too much for you and you are considering whether it would be okay to deliberately opt out.

It is not easy to break out of old patterns and it is a good decision to take your time thinking about it! Take the time that it takes. Sometimes this can be quite a lengthy process in which not only you but also your surroundings are challenged. And ultimately everyone will grow along with it.

**Take the time to deal with yourself and your questions:**

- **Do not be afraid to ask others for assistance.**
- **Stick to the point in spite of irritations and when it gets a little harder!**

***“My strengths and I - What is good for me.”***

Gradually you will gain more zest for life and discover yourself from a different side. Layer by layer you are coming to your own and will realize that it is worth changing something: you will become aware of a strength you might have thought lost forever.

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You will develop a new feeling for what is important to you. You will do things you have never dared to do before and say goodbye to old ballast. Imagine yourself as an uncut diamond which takes on contours layer by layer and becomes more radiant and more beautiful!

**The efforts and your commitment are worth it:**

- **The feeling confirms that new paths open up for you.**
- **You will discover your strengths and what does you good.**
- **You can be proud of what you have achieved**

***“My life goes on, but differently.” ?***

You feel a new strength and vitality, and drive to reach “new shores”. You have said good-bye to the old, thrown off ballast and feel lighter again. Once again, or for the first time, you have found access to your feelings. You are getting along better with people around you because are centered. You dare to do something that you have only dreamed of so far. You make decisions. Your commitment to your own cause and your tenacity were worth your while.

The crisis has shaken and destabilized you. You have worked hard on yourself and you are now taking over the helm again. Now you can celebrate yourself!