

## An Open Letter to the Leadership of Crisis Text Line:

We, the volunteers of Crisis Text Line, have come together to take a stand against the systemic racism in this organization that has recently come to light. We may come from many backgrounds, but we all joined the company with one goal: to help people feel loved and supported in their hour of need. Hour after hour, week after week, we dedicated our time to texters who reached out to Crisis Text Line. We have embraced its mission as our own. However, **we are outraged and heartbroken over recent allegations against Founder Nancy Lublin**. We stand united today to demand that there be a change. We cannot tolerate the abuse of staff by one of its leaders. They deserve better, and so do we. **Our texters are not the only ones entitled to a safe space**. We have compiled for you a list of demands. We will be heard. We refuse to sit idly by as this discrimination continues to be perpetuated, in the staffroom and on the platform. **Our voices demand to be heard**.

1. The outward disavowal of Nancy Lublin's actions, and a public apology to all current and former Crisis Counselors and staff, **especially** to those who are of color. This demand for an apology also extends to Ashley Womble, Head of Communications, for silencing supervisors from speaking their truth and reacting about Black Lives Matter.
2. A message or change to the terms of service that must be accepted when going on the platform acknowledging that leadership has not done enough to support the black community and is taking steps to rectify this by donations, promotion of staff and diversity programs, and better run social media positions showing strong support of Black Lives Matter. The change in the terms of service must be accepted by ALL CC's, and must be included in literature during training.
3. A platform where we can openly disavow racism that we see without it turning into a witch hunt. We want to be able to report those who are actively promoting racism and we want it to be taken seriously with visible change. Racism of any kind **will not** be tolerated.
4. A transparent plan with active rescues of particularly at risk texters, especially those of color, including a plan on what will be done with that data to promote policy change in communities who have experienced systemic racism and police brutality.
5. A stronger, more rigorous training program for newbies. We need to be consistent in strengthening the education of baby chicks. New crisis counselors should also have tailored resources if they are BIPOC. Being a Black CC differs greatly from being a white CC.
6. A figurehead on the platform representing management where, if crisis counselors or staff have taken issue with anything of a personal nature, they can be directed to that figurehead for a two-way conversation. We need to have the ability to have active dialogue with management, driving accountability that merely being told we are being listened to, does not.

7. An email sent out by Bob or an **official** communication sent out by Crisis Text Line leadership that acknowledges the mistakes this organization has made and tangible next steps on how they can improve.

8. The network has historically dismissed pain people shared relating to societal injustice, and shamed counselors for feeling bad themselves. We demand to have a course or program that encourages and equips counselors with tools to have respectful, open-ended discussions on culture, history of injustices, etc.

9. Any staff member, whether a supervisor, staff member, or board member who does not agree with the injustices that have been perpetrated by this company and does not stand in solidarity with their colleagues should be fired. You are not an ally if you stand against those who have faced injustice.

We are sending this to everyone employed at Crisis Text Line, and we hope that, at the very least, you respond to it and understand where we are coming from. We know many of you stand with us. PLEASE, make that known to us.

*"First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist.  
Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out— because I was not a trade unionist.  
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew.  
Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me."*

- Martin Niemöller

**We still have our voice. Let us speak out. Our platform is powerful - but only if we use it.**

Signed,

Olivia Leung, David Snoberger, Riley Hughes, Myrna Bell, Amanda Carr, Emily Purcell, Lauren Morris, Kayla Lutz, Kate Jockers, Luke Easterwood, Amelia Blevins, Annalie Rodriguez, Tyler Davis, Brianna Snyder, Ian Elliott, Evan Alexander, Wyatt Ringo, Jeffrey Feldman, Rebecca Collins, Galen Shearn-Nance, Maria Alejandra Silva Afanador, Jasika Bawa, Marielena Peña, Manisha Madikonda, Sahil Patel, Jarvis Lu, Lydia Petrillose, Sage Stevens, Sara Schaller, Sivan Ertel, Lina Tomczak, Rachel Wilson, Hannah Presley, Cassidy Owen, Manju Chenath, Megan Brown, Lura January, Grace Mark, Jessica Tabin, Joelle Dwek, Meg Wolfley , Kaitlyn Francia, Paul Buchalter, Jenna Augenblick, Meghan Callahan, Kate Lisotta, Becca Brann, Varun Reddy, Isabel Bautista, Sophia Bruce, Kelsi-Rae Moreshead, Katherine Connolly, Kelly Bouchard, Isabella Kneider, Sydney Badeau, Brittany Cloyd, Carolina Gokingco, Sarah Farook, Sophie Lee, Gabrielle Carley, Kimberly Olson, Adele Lim, Elyrith White, Divya Daripalli, Sneha Gupta, & Lily Conroy.

June 12th, 2020