Investigating the Effect of Negotiator Self-Disclosure

on the Person in Crisis's Perception of Trust during Simulated

Suicide Negotiations and the Role Rapport Plays

University of Twente: Bachelor's Thesis

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Abstract

As suicide is a leading cause of death globally, it is crucial to find the most effective ways for crisis negotiators to handle those situations and come to a peaceful solution. This study aimed to explore the impact of negotiator self-disclosure on the person in crisis's perception of trust during a simulated suicide situation while also looking at the role rapport plays in this interaction. An online survey was conducted with a chat simulation of an interaction between a crisis negotiator and a person in crisis (the participant). The participants ($N = 50$) were assigned to one of two groups with differing levels of negotiator self-disclosure, comparing no self-disclosure to a moderate use of self-disclosure. The findings revealed that, contrary to expectations, self-disclosure had no significant impact on the perceived trust of the participants towards the negotiator. Rapport, on the other hand, was positively correlated with higher levels of trust, in line with the expectations. These results contribute to a deeper understanding of the impact of specific active-listening techniques, in this study, self-disclosure, and answer the question of whether and how it should be used in crisis situations. Further research is, however, needed to put the results in the context of cultural differences and to find more effective ways to establish trust.

Introduction

Standing at the edge, about to jump. In moments of emotional crises, the right words can make the difference between life and death. This – finding the right words and preventing harm – is the role of crisis negotiators (CN). With suicide being one of the leading causes of death, this is an important job and knowledge on how to talk to people in those situations is crucial. According to the World Health Organization (World Health Organization [WHO], 2025), around 727,000 people commit suicide each year, with many more attempting to do so and most commonly in the age group of 15 to 29 years. The prevention of suicide and suicide attempts is the main goal of global and national health organisations (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2025), and many resources explain and offer prevention strategies (e.g. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2024; Suicide Prevention Resource Center [SPRC], 2020). These strategies not only address individuals (e.g., people close to the person in crisis) to identify and help suicidal people as early as possible but also address structural issues such as improving access and the delivery of suicide care (CDC, 2024). However, prevention cannot be a complete solution to suicide, as many suicide attempts happen impulsively during moments of acute stress and the inability to deal with that (WHO, 2025). Consequently, there is an urgent need for immediate and effective crisis management strategies.

CN are specially trained police officers who are part of a specific unit dedicated to negotiating and dealing with crisis situations (Cambridge Police, 2025; Vecchi et al., 2019). Crisis negotiations as a practice evolved in the 1970s, resulting from a hostage situation that was answered with force and resulted in many fatalities (Grubb, 2010). Since then, there has been a growing body of research on how hostage situations could be peacefully resolved, and the field of application has been broadened to crisis situations in general, including suicide situations (Vecchi et al., 2019). The goal of any crisis negotiation is to influence the person in crisis (PiC) in the sense of guiding them to cooperate and come to a peaceful solution (Grubb, 2010; Van der Klok et al., 2024; Sikveland & Stokoe, 2023). Grubb (2010) states that every crisis situation is different and that there is no strictly universally applicable model that works for every incident, however, there are basic elements that, according to research, handle crisis situations at a macro level. Those elements include, without limitation, making use of communication strategies, specifically mentioning active listening and building rapport. Generally, for the negotiation to be successful, a working relationship must be established, which is only possible if there is trust. There is still an ongoing exploration on how CN can communicate with people who are about to commit suicide most effectively. Attaining this

level of influence to be able to change someone's mind and behaviour demands special attention in those situations, as in most cases of suicide attempts, the PiC is offered help without actively having asked for it (Sikveland & Stokoe, 2023).

Such situations are inherently difficult to navigate. In order to support CNs, frameworks have been developed and are still being researched to provide them with a roadmap for communicating with PiC and achieving the goal of immediate intervention. This study investigates how trust, a core element of those interactions, is established between the PiC and the CN. Specifically, the study tests whether the technique of self-disclosure contributes to the development of trust and what role rapport plays in this process. It provides empirical insights into these relationships, addressing academic and practical needs for a more nuanced understanding of communication techniques in suicide negotiations. Self-disclosure has been mentioned as a technique of gaining the PiCs' trust, but has not been researched closely in regard to crisis negotiations. Researching its exact effect on trust, therefore, contributes to a more differentiated understanding of active-listening skills in general. Additionally, it examines the specific role that self-disclosure plays and whether positive effects, as found in therapy settings, can be replicated in crisis situations. This provides practitioners (e.g. CN) with a better understanding of whether this technique should be used and whether it should receive more attention when discussing negotiation techniques and trust-building. Rapport is a prerequisite for trust; however, its influence on the relationship between self-disclosure and trust has not to date been empirically tested. Consequently, this study also examines whether rapport moderates the relationship between self-disclosure and trust, adding to the understanding of how these variables interact in suicide negotiations. All in all, this is done to make suicide negotiations more effective and prevent deadly outcomes.

In the following, crisis negotiations will be first outlined, followed by a closer look at a model often used in the context of crisis negotiations – the Behavioural Influence Stairway Model (BISM) – to illustrate how rapport, trust, and active-listening skills (including self-disclosure) are developed and applied. Furthermore, the concepts "rapport", "trust", and "self-disclosure" will also be explained in more detail and discussed in relation to previous research. Based on this, the research question and hypotheses will be introduced.

Crisis Negotiations

The goal of crisis negotiations is "to utilise verbal strategies to buy time and intervene so that the emotions of the perpetrator can decrease and rationality can increase" (Hatcher et al., 1998, p. 455). CNs try to help the PiC with the ultimate goal of coming to a peaceful solution together with the PiC (Vecchi et al., 2019). To achieve this, the CN has to establish a

relationship with the PiC by making use of negotiation skills and eventually reaching an emotional connection that makes it possible for the CN to exert influence on the PiC (Vecchi et al., 2005). Negotiation skills comprise techniques such as active-listening, establishing rapport, patience, but also being adaptable (Grubb, 2010).

In line with these demands, several frameworks and models have been developed. All these models highlight communication strategies that are eventually aimed at establishing influence on the PiC and resolving the situation peacefully. Those communication strategies specifically mention building rapport and trust and making use of active listening skills, which self-disclosure belongs to (Grubb, 2010; Roberts & Ottens, 2005). Examples of such models include the S.A.F.E model, the STEPS model, the Seven-Step crisis intervention model, and the Behavioural Influence Stairway Model (BISM), which is one of the most popular models for negotiation cases and is also highly influential in training programs for CNs (Grubb, 2010; Grubb et al., 2020; Roberts & Ottens, 2005; Sikveland, 2020). To explore these concepts in more detail and in relation to an established model used in crisis negotiations, this study will have a closer look at the BISM.

The Behavioural Influence Stairway Model

The BISM is the revised version of the older Behavioural Change Stairway Model (BCSM; Vecchi et al., 2005) and provides a comprehensive framework that could be used by crisis negotiation units to deal with PiC. While the BCSM was developed to deal with hostage situations, the BISM is used across varying crisis situations and has been successfully applied in suicide negotiation (Vecchi et al., 2019).

The focus of the BISM is to establish a relationship between a PiC and a negotiator with the goal of coming to a peaceful agreement (Ireland & Vecchi, 2009). It is comprised of four sequential stages, which cannot be skipped or swapped (Vecchi et al., 2019). Active listening is the first stage as well as the foundation of the BISM (Van Hasselt et al., 2008), followed by empathy, rapport and trust and lastly influence (Vecchi et al., 2019). Active listening is a technique which tends to the needs of people in crisis to be listened to and feel understood (Vecchi et al., 2019). Stage two, Empathy, means to establish an understanding of the individual's experiences through their frame of reference (APA, 2023). Stage three of the revised BISM has been subdivided into two parts, with one part being Rapport and the second being Trust (Vecchi et al., 2019). Only after completing these stages can the CN effectively influence the PiC's behaviour. This model underlines the idea that rapport and trust are prerequisites for a successful crisis negotiation, which makes it relevant for understanding where and how self-disclosure might be most impactful.

Rapport

According to Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1990), rapport is composed of three components: mutual attentiveness, positivity and coordination. Mutual attentiveness refers to the two communication partners being involved with each other and being interested in what the other person does or says (Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal, 1990). Positivity relates to mutual feelings of the conversational partner being caring and friendly, and coordination refers to the communication and interaction feeling "in sync" and smoothly working (Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal, 1990). This definition aligns with the conceptualisation of rapport used by Vecchi et al. (2019) for the revised BISM, which stresses the importance of a smooth, respectful and in-sync communication and a feeling of affinity. Rapport is used and needed as a basic element of any crisis incident protocol to make the PiC comfortable talking to the negotiator and facilitating a connection (Grubb, 2010).

Vecchi et al. (2019) state that during or towards the end of establishing rapport, the CN might switch to their frame of reference, meaning that at this point the negotiator is allowed to use "I", "my", "me" pronouns. Making use of "I"-focused statements aligns with the conceptualisation of self-disclosure as it involves revealing personal information to the conversational partner during an interaction (McCarthy Veach et al., 2018). As will be explained later in more detail, self-disclosure is one of many skills of active listening, and while active listening is established as the foundation for any communication during crisis negotiations (Grubb, 2010), the BISM provides a starting point for where self-disclosure as a technique might be most effective in contributing to the establishment of trust.

Trust

Trust is, therefore, achieved after rapport has been built. Mayer and Davis (1999) define trust as "a willingness to be vulnerable to the actions of another party" (p.124) and state that it entails three factors, namely ability, benevolence and integrity. 'Ability' as being able to and capable of exerting influence on someone, 'benevolence' as the willingness of the trustee to do good and 'integrity' as the perception of the trustor that the other person aligns with their own accepted principles (Mayer & Davis, 1999). This conceptualization of trust aligns with Vecchi et al.'s (2019) revised BISM, as the negotiator needs to be seen as credible and reliable, as an expert and has to be able to make the PiC feel comfortable and understood to be eventually able to exert influence on the PiC.

If rapport and trust have been successfully achieved, the CN can move on to the final stage, "Influence". According to Vecchi et al. (2019), "Influence is the act or power of producing an effect without apparent force or direct authority" (p. 234). That means that after

accomplishing all the foregoing stages, the negotiator should eventually be able to influence how the PiC acts in the sense of making them change their behaviour and putting an end to the crisis situation (Vecchi et al., 2019).

Crisis negotiation protocols highlight that active listening skills, rapport and trust play a crucial role in crisis situations (Grubb, 2010; Roberts & Ottens, 2005; Vecchi et al., 2019). It is consequently relevant to research how rapport and trust can be increased. In Vecchi et al.'s (2005) study, the CN was recommended to use the core group of active listening techniques (i.e. paraphrasing, mirroring, summarising and emotional labelling) while establishing rapport. Self-disclosure is mentioned as a technique, but only as a supplement to support the core group of skills (Vecchi et al., 2005). How important or how effective it is has not been specifically looked at within the frame of suicide negotiations.

Self-Disclosure

Self-disclosure is broadly defined as the process in which a person, during a conversation, reveals personal information to their counterpart (Sprecher et al., 2013). It is an important building block of relationships, and self-disclosing affects the depth of a relationship. At the same time, as relationships deepen, people tend to disclose more about themselves (Cherry, 2023). Since the 1950s, self-disclosure has also been used by therapists (Henretty & Levitt, 2010) and has been part of therapeutic approaches ever since. Its use has been described as helping the client feel understood, lessening their anxiety, building a working relationship and rapport, increasing the credibility of the clinician, and establishing trust, among other benefits (McCarthy Veach et al., 2018).

A qualitative review by Henretty and Levitt (2010) revealed that several studies associate various positive outcomes with therapist self-disclosure, such as that the client liked therapists better who self-disclosed, perceived them as warmer and disclosed themselves more if therapists did so. Another study on provider (physician)-patient relationships by Nazione et al. (2019) showed that provider self-disclosure increased the perception of trust toward the provider.

However, there have also been studies that show a neutral or possible negative impact of therapist self-disclosure. Some findings claim that the perception of trustworthiness and empathy towards the therapist did not seem to be affected by the therapist's self-disclosure (Henretty & Levitt, 2010) and some studies suggest that self-disclosing therapists were seen as less professional or less than an expert while other studies do not find the same results (Audet, 2011). Mixed and ambiguous findings like this have also been found in other studies. Some of these differences in outcomes may depend on the level and type of self-disclosure

(Berg et al., 2016; Miller & McNaught, 2018). These findings, therefore, pose the question of whether using self-disclosure as a technique to establish trust in crisis negotiations is effective and how these two different settings are comparable.

With regards to this research, according to a study by McCormic et al. (2018), moderate self-disclosure yields the best results when it comes to favourable perception of the therapist in comparison to no or extreme self-disclosure. Additionally, self-disclosure was viewed more favourably when the information that was disclosed was similar to the client's own experiences (Audet, 2011). Based on these findings, the study will compare two groups – one with no CN self-disclosure and the other with moderate self-disclosure – to see whether the positive effects can also be seen during crisis situations. In addition to that, the information disclosed described similar experiences to the PiC's.

Self-disclosure as a technique used in crisis negotiation models such as the BISM is identical to how it is used in therapist-client relationships (Vecchi et al., 2005). However, it needs to be kept in mind that the initial situation of therapist self-disclosure and CN self-disclosure is distinct from each other. In therapy, the therapist and client are likely to have several sessions together, which also means more time to build a relationship. Self-disclosure is said to be a complex practice (Hungerford et al., 2025) that the therapist should regularly reflect upon and evaluate why and how they are using it (Henretty & Levitt, 2010). In contrast, during a crisis negotiation, there is neither a lot of time nor opportunity for the CN to take a step back and reflect upon their actions and how and what they have self-disclosed so far.

Consequently, as self-disclosure is often mentioned in the context of crisis negotiations as an active listening skill, it is worth researching whether CN self-disclosure positively impacts the relationship between CNs and PiCs, especially when looking at the establishment of trust. According to the limited literature that specifically mentions self-disclosure in crisis negotiations, disclosing personal information supports the further development of rapport, shows that they (CN) can understand the struggles of the PiC and that they might share commonalities, which helps create a bond (Garcia, 2017; Vecchi et al., 2005). In contrast to the mixed findings of the effect of self-disclosure in therapeutic settings, this study expects a positive impact of CN on trust. This expectation is additionally based on the idea that relationship-building is more important in crisis negotiation settings than the need for the negotiator to be an expert in the sense of a therapist.

Current Study

Establishing rapport and building trust between CNs and PiCs is essential for achieving a peaceful outcome. While self-disclosure is a technique that belongs to the active listening skills emphasised in crisis negotiations, its specific effectiveness remains unclear. Understanding when and how self-disclosure contributes to trust in crisis situations is important for a more differentiated understanding of active listening skills with the goal of making crisis negotiations more effective and successful. Studies looking at the use of self-disclosure in therapeutic relationships have found positive impacts, which are theorised to be also found during crisis negotiations. However, newer research suggests that self-disclosure in suicide negotiations might be best applied after a certain degree of rapport has already been established (Vecchi et al., 2019). This suggests that rapport may influence how self-disclosure is perceived, with a higher degree of rapport potentially leading to greater perceived trust due to a more positive reception of CN self-disclosure and vice versa.

Consequently, the following research question was asked: "To what extent does negotiator self-disclosure influence the person in crisis's perception of trust towards the negotiator in simulated suicide negotiations, and what role does rapport play?". In order to investigate this, three hypotheses were formulated.

1) H1: Higher levels of negotiator self-disclosure will lead to higher perceived trust of the PiC towards the negotiator in a simulated suicide negotiation situation compared to no self-disclosure.

2) H2: Greater levels of rapport will be positively associated with higher perceived trust in the negotiator compared to lower levels of rapport.

3) H3: Rapport will moderate the relationship between negotiator self-disclosure and perceived trust, such that the positive effect of self-disclosure on trust will be stronger when rapport is high and weaker when rapport is low.

Method

Design

To investigate the effect of negotiator self-disclosure and rapport on the PiC's perception of trust during simulated suicide negotiations, the participants were asked to take part in a quantitative cross-sectional study, which was administered via an online survey. The study design was approved by the "BMS Ethics Committee /domain Humanities and social sciences (HSS)" of the University of Twente (reference number: 250557). The study is a between-subjects design, comprising three conditions of negotiator self-disclosure (no, moderate, excessive, see Appendix F). The participants were randomly assigned to one of the

three groups. As the focus of this research solely pertained to moderate CN self-disclosure in comparison to no CN self-disclosure, this study will exclude the excessive self-disclosure group, which is in line with prior research claiming that moderate self-disclosure is most effective. The excessive self-disclosure condition was included as part of the broader data collection, as this study was conducted with two fellow researchers. Due to this collaboration, there are also other scales not analysed in this study such as the "Willingness to Cooperate" and the "Willingness to Provide Information".

The three varying levels of negotiator self-disclosure were therefore the independent variable, with perceived trust as the dependent variable and rapport as a potential moderating variable. These variables were measured using standardised questionnaires.

Participants

To recruit participants, two sampling techniques were employed. First, participants were recruited through the University of Twente's Sona credit system, where students received 0.25 credits for their participation. Second, convenience sampling was utilised by distributing the survey within the researchers' social circles and via their social media accounts. A total of 124 individuals participated in the study. In order to be able to participate in this study, participants had to be at least 18 years old and capable of reading and understanding English or German. Furthermore, they were encouraged to abstain from participation or to withdraw at any time from the study if immersing themselves in the role of a suicidal person would lead to feelings of distress.

The data of participants who did not meet the inclusion criteria – being 18 or older ($n = 2$), consenting to their data being used ($n = 42$) – were removed from the dataset. Additionally, as only data from conditions 1 and 2 (no and moderate self-disclosure) were used for this study, 29 participants were excluded. As it was important for the study that the participants were able to imagine themselves as a suicidal person, respondents who scored 0 ($n = 1$) on the imagination check were also excluded from the final dataset. In total, 74 participants were removed.

The final sample consisted of 50 participants, with 35 identifying as female (70%), 14 as male (28%), and 1 preferring not to say (2%). The participants' average age was 27.8 years, ranging from 18 to 62 years ($SD = 11.9$). The most common nationalities among the participants were German (66%) and Dutch (20%). The majority of the sample were Students (50%) or Employees (44%), and for most participants, Upper Secondary Education was the highest obtained level of education (46%). Most of the participants have had prior experience with mental health crises either directly (36%) or indirectly (34%), while 13 participants

(26%) had no prior experience, and 2 (4%) preferred not to say. In total, 25 (50%) participants were assigned to group 1 (control group), and 25 (50%) to group 2 (moderate level of self-disclosure).

Materials

The online survey was created using Qualtrics, allowing it to be distributed online and enabling participants to fill it in whenever and wherever they wanted on a device with an internet connection. To be able to approach more participants, the entire study is offered not only in English but also in German. To make sure that the content was comprehensible and as similar as possible to the English version, to ensure comparability, the English survey was first translated into German by one of the researchers. The German version was then given to an independent third person and re-translated into English to check for potential misunderstandings. All versions – the English, German, and re-translated English version – were also reviewed by one of the supervisors for confirmation. The complete English and German versions can be found in Appendices B to K.

The survey was segmented into several parts, starting with the informed consent, which gave the participant a short overview of the study as well as contact information for helplines. This was followed by demographic questions including age, gender, nationality, education level and prior experience with mental health crises.

Scenario

To help the participants imagine themselves as a PiC, the *'Participant Scenario'* was provided, a role description of a person about to commit suicide. The participants were instructed to put themselves in the shoes of the described person.

In the scenario, they were standing at the edge of a bridge, about to jump. They got to that point due to a combination of unfortunate events. They lost their dream job following the COVID-19 crisis and were unable to find a new job, resulting in financial struggles. This also put a strain on their relationship, which eventually came to an unexpected end. They were not able to receive any help from friends and/or professionals, and the situation was becoming increasingly severe, also leading to trouble sleeping. As they were now standing at the edge, they were approached by a police officer (CN). The whole scenario can be seen in the appendix (Appendix D).

The scenario was developed to suit a wider range of participants, especially regarding their age. The most common reasons to attempt suicide across age groups up until 65 years of age are interpersonal conflicts and financial difficulties (Burón et al., 2016), but also psychiatric symptoms such as insomnia or hopelessness (Steele et al., 2017), which were

implemented in the scenario. Burdensomeness, hopelessness, financial stress and social isolation were named as some of the main risk factors for people aged 65 years or older (Steele et al., 2017) and were, therefore, also implemented.

Checks

Several checks were used during the survey to measure whether participants were paying attention and engaged seriously with the task. An attention-based manipulation check was implemented in which the participants had to choose from four options regarding which sensory experience was described in the scenario. This was implemented to determine whether the respondents had read the scenario attentively. A second check (imagination check) was added to see to what degree (1 – not at all to 5 – very much) the participants were able to imagine themselves as the person described in the scenario. The last manipulation check asked the participants to what extent the negotiator shared personal information with them (no, moderate, excessive) in order to determine whether the experimental manipulation of self-disclosure was perceived as intended. All the checks can be found in Appendix E and I.

Conditions

The two conditions used in the study (no and moderate self-disclosure) differed only in the responses given by the crisis negotiator. The options available for participants to choose from remained the same in every condition. In condition 1 (no self-disclosure), the negotiator stayed neutral and did not share any personal information. In condition 2 (moderate self-disclosure), the negotiator shared personal information about themselves and that they had experienced similar hardships in their life, but stayed close to what the PiC themself was experiencing. This can be best illustrated by the second response the negotiator gave:

1) condition 1: "I hear you. It sounds like you are feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. But I want you to know that you are not alone in this. Do you feel comfortable sharing more about what is making you feel that way?"

and 2) condition 2: "'I hear you. It sounds like you are feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. But I want you to know that you are not alone in this. And I am not trying to pretend to know what you are going through, however I do know what it feels like to struggle with hopelessness. A few years ago, I went through one of the hardest times of my life and I felt that no one could understand or help me. But eventually I was talking to someone about it and it helped. And that is why I am here, to talk to you and help you. Do you feel comfortable sharing more about what is making you feel that way?"

The complete responses and their differences can be found in Appendix F.

Trust

Perceived Trust of the PiC towards the negotiator was measured using an adapted version of the Mayer and Davis (1999) trust scale, as their conceptualisation of trust closely aligns with the description of trust within the revised BISM. The Mayer and Davis (1999) trust measure originally comprised 17 questions, measuring the three components of trust: 'ability' (6), 'benevolence' (5), and 'integrity' (6) and was developed to measure trust towards top-level managements. Van der Klok (2023) changed the phrasing of the items to suit the context of a negotiator in a crisis situation and removed one item from ability. Consequently, this adaptation was employed in this study. The final questionnaire consisted of 16 items—five for 'ability', five for 'benevolence', and six for 'integrity'. Examples of items are: "The negotiator was very capable in performing his or her job" (Ability) and "The negotiator would not knowingly do anything to hurt me" (Benevolence). Participants were required to indicate their answers on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with item 14. being reverse-scored. Higher scores on the scale indicate a higher perception of trust, computed as a mean score per participant. The whole scale can be found in Appendix G.

In the study of Mayer and Davis (1999), the three scales of trust were rated as 'good' based on Cronbach's alpha (scores ranging from 0.82 to 0.89), and the trust scale in Van der Klok's (2023) study can also be interpreted as 'good', scoring a Cronbach's alpha of 0.86. In this study, the internal consistency of the trust scale, as measured by Cronbach's alpha, was 0.81, indicating a good level of reliability ($N = 50$, number of items = 16).

Rapport

The level of perceived rapport was measured using a scale originally developed by Drolet and Morris (2000), which comprises 5 items. It is initially scored on a 7-point Likert scale but changed to a 5-point Likert scale in this study, ranging from "Strongly disagree" (1) to "Strongly agree" (5), to ensure better consistency throughout the survey. Drolet and Morris developed their measure based on Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal's definition of rapport, which aligns with the conceptualisation of rapport as used in the revised BISM.

The original Drolet and Morris scale was adapted by Van der Klok (2023) to fit the context of crisis negotiation, consequently, this adaptation was used in this study (Appendix H). One example of an adapted item is: "Did you feel "in sync" or on the same wavelength with the crisis negotiator?". The modified version of the rapport scale had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.83 in Van der Klok's (2023) study, which can be interpreted as having 'good' reliability. In this study, the scale scored a Cronbach's alpha of 0.72, which is acceptable ($N = 50$, number of items = 5). As the scale entails under 15 items, Guttman's Lambda-2 was also

calculated and resulted in 0.74. Generally, the higher the Lambda-2 score, the better, indicating here that 74% of the variance is accounted for by the individual items.

The scores were calculated by summing up the responses and dividing them by the number of items. The higher the final score, the higher the level of perceived rapport between the respondent and the crisis negotiator.

Procedure

Participants were able to access the survey via a link that redirected them to the Qualtrics survey. The first thing presented to the respondents was an introduction to the study, which included a brief description of the study's procedure and how much time the study would approximately take. They were made aware that the age requirement was 18 years or older (Appendix B).

The study consists of five parts, starting with the introduction and informed consent, followed by questions regarding demographic statistics, the participant scenario and chat simulation, the compilation of questionnaires, and finally, the debrief.

The participants were greeted with a short introduction, where they were thanked for taking part in this study and briefly informed about the content and purpose of the study. After that, the participants were redirected to the informed consent sheet. Here, they were informed about how the data would be handled and their right to withdraw at any point. Additionally, they were given contact information of the researchers, supervisors, and the ethics committee, as well as information regarding Dutch and German suicide helplines. They were also made aware of the risks involved in participating in the study, as they would need to immerse themselves in a suicide scenario. Consent was required to proceed (Appendix B).

If the respondent gave their consent, first, demographic questions were asked (Appendix C), followed by the participant scenario. To ensure the participants had read the scenario intently, the attention-based manipulation check was implemented (Appendix E). Before presenting the respondents with the chat-simulation, they were asked to indicate their willingness to cooperate with a crisis negotiator, which was adapted from Van der Klok's study.

The whole study entailed three different levels of negotiator self-disclosure, resulting in three different chats to which participants were randomly assigned. To ensure gender neutrality regarding the negotiator, the name 'Alex' was chosen. Each chat gave the respondents the choice to react to the negotiator with four different, pre-determined response options, four times each, before the conversation concluded. The final question of this section

was to give an indication of how likely the participant was to follow the negotiator's proposal to step down from the edge (Appendix F).

The subsequent section of the survey involved various scales designed to measure the respective variables. As the survey was conducted in collaboration with two other researchers, this part also includes scales that were not further used in this paper. The first scale was the adapted Mayer and Davis trust scale (Appendix G), followed by the adapted Drolet and Morris rapport scale (Appendix H) and another scale to assess the willingness to provide information to the negotiator (Appendix I). Additionally, an imagination check was implemented to see to what extent the participants were able to imagine themselves as the PiC, and another manipulation check for the respondent to indicate to what extent the negotiator shared personal information with them (Appendix I).

The survey concluded with a debriefing, thanking the participants for taking part in the study and offering further information about the study's objectives. They were provided once more with the researchers' contact details as well as information regarding Dutch and German help hotlines if additional support was needed. After being fully debriefed, the respondents were again asked to consent to the use of their data in this study (Appendix J).

Data analysis

After data collection, the responses were transferred to Excel and cleaned according to the exclusion and inclusion criteria mentioned earlier. This resulted in a sample size of 50 participants. Item 14 of the trust scale was reverse-coded in Excel. Additionally, another column was added with condition 1 (group with no self-disclosure) being coded as 0 and condition 2 (moderate self-disclosure) being coded as 1. Afterwards, the cleaned data were transferred to RStudio Version 4.2.1.

After transferring the data, the descriptive statistics were calculated to get better insights into the sample. This includes social demographics such as gender, age, nationality, and so forth. Subsequently, the trust and rapport scales were checked for reliability, calculating Cronbach's alpha. The means and ranges of these scales were then calculated to provide a clearer overview of the gathered data.

Before the hypotheses were tested, the parametric assumptions were checked. For H1, the distribution of trust scores was examined separately for both groups to check whether the assumptions of the independent samples t-test were met. Normality was tested for groups 0 and 1 by using the Shapiro-Wilk normality test. Homogeneity was tested with Levene's test. For the regression models (H2 and H3), linearity, normality of residuals,

homoscedasticity, and absence of influential outliers were checked via diagnostic plots, visual checks, but also statistical tests such as Cook's distance and Variance Inflation Factors (VIF).

To test H1, an independent samples t-test was conducted to examine the differences in perceived trust between the two groups (self-disclosure vs no self-disclosure). H2 was tested by running both Pearson's correlation and a simple linear regression to see whether higher levels of rapport predict higher levels of trust. Lastly, H3 was tested using a multiple regression analysis. For that, rapport was centred, an interaction term was created, and a moderation model was run. All significance tests were two-tailed with an alpha level of 0.05.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

First, the demographic data of the participants were compiled to provide an overview of the final sample ($N = 50$). A summary of the results can be found in Table 3 in the Appendix (Appendix L). On average, the participants scored 6.30 on the imagination check ($SD = 1.93$), which is above the midpoint (5).

The means, standard deviations and Pearson's correlation were also calculated for the trust and rapport scales (see Table 1). The correlation analysis revealed a moderate positive correlation, indicating that participants who perceived greater rapport with the negotiator also perceived higher levels of trust.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation (N = 50)

Variables	Lowest Value	Mean	Highest Value	SD	1	Cronbach's α	Guttman's λ_2
1. Trust	3.00	3.72	4.63	0.38	-	.81	-
2. Rapport	2.00	3.50	4.60	0.57	.51***	.72	.74

*** $p < .001$

Testing the Hypotheses

Before testing the hypotheses, the respective parametric assumptions were evaluated. All assumptions were met, and no violations were observed. A summary of the tests and results can be found in Appendix M.

Hypothesis 1 – Effect of Self-Disclosure on Trust

Hypothesis 1 suggested that higher levels of negotiator self-disclosure (group 1) would lead to higher perceived trust of the PiC towards the negotiator in a simulated suicide negotiation situation compared to no self-disclosure (group 0). To test the first hypothesis, an independent samples t-test was conducted with the level of CN self-disclosure as the independent variable and the perceived trust of the PiC as the dependent variable.

Participants in group 1 (moderate negotiator self-disclosure) scored slightly higher on trust, compared to group 0 (no self-disclosure) (see Table 2). However, the t-test showed that this difference was not statistically significant, $t(48) = 1.30$, $p = .20$, 95% CI [-0.08, 0.36]. Consequently, Hypothesis 1 is rejected; higher levels of CN self-disclosure do not significantly lead to higher perceived trust of the PiC.

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, and T-Test Scores for the Control (0) and Experimental Group (1)

	Group 0 (N = 25)		Group 1 (N = 25)		
Variables	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	t-test
1. Trust	3.64	0.38	3.79	0.38	1.30
2. Rapport	3.37	0.65	3.64	0.46	-

Hypothesis 2 – Rapport as a Predictor of Trust

Hypothesis 2 theorised that greater levels of rapport would be positively associated with higher perceived trust in the negotiator compared to lower levels of rapport. This was tested by calculating Pearson's Correlation (see Table 1) and running a simple linear regression with rapport as the predictor and trust as the outcome variable.

To see whether rapport predicts trust, a simple linear regression was conducted. The model showed a statistically significant result with: $F(1, 48) = 16.88$, $p < .001$, and R squared resulted in $R^2 = .26$, and an adjusted R^2 of .24, indicating that rapport accounted for 24% of the variance in trust. Rapport is a significant positive predictor of perceived trust $b = 0.34$, *SE* $= 0.08$, $t(48) = 4.11$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [0.17, 0.51] and therefore, hypothesis 2 is accepted: greater levels of rapport lead to higher perceived trust in the CN.

Hypothesis 3 – Rapport as a Moderator

H3 stated that Rapport would moderate the relationship between negotiator self-disclosure and perceived trust, such that the positive effect of self-disclosure on trust will be stronger when rapport is high and weaker when rapport is low. In order to answer this hypothesis, a moderation analysis was carried out with the perceived trust as the dependent variable and self-disclosure as the independent variable, with 2 groups. Rapport acted as the moderator and was centred before the interaction term was created.

In general, the overall model was statistically significant $F(3, 46) = 6.06$, $p = .001$, with an adjusted R^2 of .24, which indicates that 24% of the variance in trust can be explained by the model, thus by a combination of self-disclosure, rapport and their interaction.

Rapport is a statistically significant predictor of trust, $b = 0.26$, *SE* $= 0.11$, $t(46) = 2.49$, $p = .016$, 95% CI [0.05, 0.47]. Self-disclosure, however, is not a statistically significant

predictor of trust $b = 0.04$, $SE = 0.10$, 95% CI [-0.16, 0.24], $t(46) = 0.43$, $p = .673$. Consequently, there is no main effect of self-disclosure on trust. This means for further analysis, that the interaction term cannot be significant, as there is no relationship that rapport could have a moderating effect on. This holds true, and the interaction term of rapport and self-disclosure was also not significant, $b = 0.20$, $SE = 0.18$, 95% CI [-0.16, 0.56], $t(46) = 1.10$, $p = .275$. Hypothesis 3 is therefore rejected, CN self-disclosure is not a predictor of perceived trust; consequently, there is no relationship that rapport could moderate.

Additional Analyses

To test the robustness of the findings, all three hypotheses were tested three times in total. The first analysis was run with the sample of 50 participants, as can be seen in the results section. As it was, however, crucial for the participants to be able to immerse themselves fully in the scenario, the analysis was rerun while excluding participants who scored 5 or lower on the question: "To which extent were you able to imagine yourself as the person in this scenario?", resulting in a sample size of $N = 38$. This was done in order to check whether low-scoring participants influenced the results in any way. The results of this analysis were the same as for the former sample ($N = 50$); H1 and H3 yielded insignificant results, while H2 remained statistically significant.

The third analysis was run while excluding participants who failed the manipulation check: "To what extent did the negotiator share personal information with you during the negotiation?" ($N = 42$). In group 0, 5 participants had to be deleted as they falsely indicated a moderate level of negotiator self-disclosure, and in group 1, 3 participants were removed, 2 as they indicated no self-disclosure and 1 because they indicated excessive personal information. Again, the results remained the same across all hypotheses. The full sample ($N = 50$) was retained for the main analysis to ensure the highest possible statistical power.

A summary of the results is available in Appendix N.

Discussion

This study aimed to explore the role of negotiator self-disclosure on the Person in Crisis's (PiC's) perception of trust towards the Crisis Negotiator (CN) during simulated suicide negotiations and what role rapport plays. To investigate these concepts, three hypotheses were formulated, with the first one looking at the effect of CN self-disclosure on trust, the second looking at the relationship between rapport and trust and the third, lastly, at the role rapport plays in the relationship of self-disclosure and trust.

The results found in this study indicate that there is no significant difference in the perceived trust of PiCs in CNs based on CN self-disclosure. This was against the expectation

of hypothesis 1 that a higher (moderate) level of self-disclosure would lead to higher perceived trust in CNs. In line with the expectations of hypothesis 2 was the finding that participants who felt greater levels of rapport also tended to trust the CN more. The third hypothesis was supposed to look at the relationship between self-disclosure and trust again, while investigating what role rapport played in that relationship. As hypothesis 1 – that higher levels of CN self-disclosure would lead to higher perceived trust – was already rejected, the results of H3 provided no new insights. Taken together the research question "To what extent does negotiator self-disclosure influence the person in crisis's perception of trust towards the negotiator in simulated suicide negotiations, and what role does rapport play?" can therefore be answered as follows: negotiator self-disclosure does not affect perceived trust, and therefore, rapport cannot act as a moderator, but rapport itself does contribute to higher levels of trust.

The findings in this research regarding rapport are partially in line with prior findings and expectations The importance of rapport in crisis negotiations has been sufficiently emphasised in prior studies, to the extent that it was even dedicated a whole stage in a crisis negotiation model (BISM, stage 3) that states that any of the stages cannot be skipped, underlining the importance even more (Grubb, 2010; Vecchi et al., 2019). Those studies also highlight rapport as a prerequisite for trust (Grubb, 2010; Grubb et al., 2020 Vecchi et al., 2019). In this study, rapport was also found to positively add to the perception of trust, although its impact was not as strong as implied by previous research. This might be explained by this study's focus on negotiator self-disclosure while not specifically aiming to establish rapport.

Self-disclosure is, unlike rapport, not a standalone technique but rather one of the many skills of active listening – the foundation of crisis negotiation frameworks. Self-disclosure has been shown to yield mixed results regarding positive outcomes in prior studies (Berg et al., 2016; Miller & McNaught, 2018). Nonetheless, there have been studies showing a significant positive effect of self-disclosure (e.g. Nazione et al., 2019), and according to McCarthy Veach et al. (2018), it has been specifically linked to increasing rapport and establishing trust. However, the results of this study were not in line with the expectation of finding a positive influence of CN self-disclosure on PiC trust. This might be explainable by looking at the main field of application of self-disclosure. It mainly seems to be implemented during therapy, a setting that allows the therapist and client to form a relationship over a longer period of time, across multiple sessions, with opportunities to reflect on the therapist' self-disclosure and tailor it to the client. In contrast to that, suicide negotiations require fast

and short-term solutions. The first and foremost goal is to come to a peaceful solution, and while it is stressed that CN should not rush the conversation or PiC (Vecchi et al., 2019), the amount of time available is different from the therapeutic context.

The lack of time and the demand for a time-efficient solution may explain why self-disclosure has not significantly influenced the perception of PiC's trust in CN. This explanation is also in line with Cherry (2023), who states that self-disclosure develops over the course of relationships, with longer connections resulting in more self-disclosure due to deeper relationships and vice versa. This establishment of longer and deeper connections is simply not possible in crisis negotiations, nor is it the goal.

All in all, negotiator self-disclosure does not seem to result in a noticeable improvement of trust towards the CN, but moderate self-disclosure also does not impair the relationship. The importance of rapport and its beneficial effect on trust was supported in this study. Higher levels of rapport did indeed lead to higher levels of trust. However, it remains unclear what specific factors contributed to increased rapport in this simulation, possibly marking a new direction for further investigations.

Limitations and Strengths

Although this study provided a more nuanced understanding of active listening skills, as it focused on self-disclosure, there are next to strengths nonetheless limitations of the study that need to be addressed.

Firstly, there might be a limitation regarding the ecological validity of the study. Ecological validity refers to the extent to which the findings of a study can be generalised to real life or whether the environment of a study has had an influence on that generalizability (Nikolopoulou, 2022). The study aimed to simulate a realistic and emotional crisis in which the PiC was driven to attempt suicide in order to test whether negotiator self-disclosure had an effect on trust. To ensure realistic reactions and perceptions of the situation and interaction, it was crucial that participants were able to fully immerse themselves in the scenario. To achieve immersion, the study participants had to imagine themselves standing at the edge of a bridge, willing to jump, supported by a whole backstory and were approached by an officer. Although the scenario was constructed in line with real-world stressors (e.g. job loss, break-up, hopelessness) backed up by study findings (e.g. Burón et al., 2016; Steele et al., 2017), the design of this study was limited. Participants were only able to read about this scenario and were neither standing on a bridge nor actually in such a desperate and hopeless situation. They also did not engage in an actual conversation with a crisis negotiator, which stands in contrast to the findings of Steele et al. (2023), which states that most suicidal crises are

handled in face-to-face contact or sometimes via a call. These restrictions, however, were due to ethical and methodological reasons. Nevertheless, this led to simulated chat interaction lacking many of the elements that shape interactions during actual crisis negotiations. Aspects such as body language, tone of voice or other active listening skills, which are inherently part of real-life interactions, were not part of the chat interaction. Consequently, the study is difficult to compare to such real-life experiences, and the results may therefore not be generalisable (Nikolopoulou, 2022). In a more realistic setting that, for example, allows face-to-face contact, non-verbal behaviours are an important aspect of establishing rapport (Abbe & Brandon, 2014). This, in turn, could contribute to a working relationship and make the PiC more susceptible to a possible effect of self-disclosure. This take is supported by the notion of Vecchi et al. (2019) that a certain level of rapport needs to be achieved before a CN should engage in self-disclosure.

In an attempt to account for the limitations regarding the immersion, the analyses were rerun with samples that excluded participants who indicated a lower level of immersion, but the results stayed the same. This could suggest that self-disclosure simply has no effect on the participants' perception of trust, regardless of the degree of immersion. However, it is also possible that the absence of a self-disclosure effect was due to low ecological validity.

Nonetheless, the ethical and methodological considerations that caused these shortcomings also represent some strengths of the study. It would not have been safe or ethically approvable to put the participants in a situation in which they experience high amounts of stress or where they are placed on the edge of a bridge. Additionally, the entire focus of the study was to investigate the effect of CN self-disclosure. Consequently, it was necessary to isolate self-disclosure as the only technique used in this research to be able to answer the question whether it would lead to higher trust. Making use of a chat-simulation, was an easy and reliable way to make sure that self-disclosure was the focus point of the study.

A second limitation, which also ties back to the possible positive effect of rapport on self-disclosure, is the time aspect. A review by Henretty and Levitt (2010) shows that there are mixed findings and opinions when it comes to the "right time" for a therapist to self-disclose. There are reasons that favour early self-disclosure, for example, to make the client feel more comfortable, and other reasons that advise for the use of self-disclosure, such as the need for the client to acclimate (Henretty & Levitt, 2010). However, it is stressed in the review that therapists should only engage in self-disclosure when they already have a good relationship or alliance with the client, which suggests to wait with disclosing personal

information until a relationship has been formed. However, the setup of this study did not allow for the CN and PiC to establish a good relationship before the CN would engage in self-disclosure. Consequently, the missing effect of CN self-disclosure might be partially explained by the lack of time to establish a relationship.

Not necessarily a limitation, but rather aspect that needs to be kept in mind when assessing the generalizability of the findings is evident when examining the current sample. The majority of participants were female, and the main nationalities were either German or Dutch. However, in most cases of suicide crises, police negotiators encounter male individuals (Steele et al., 2023). Consequently, it could be argued that the current sample is not representative of reality. Gender differences may also influence how self-disclosure is perceived in terms of establishing trust with a CN. There have been studies that investigate the effect of the gender of the therapist on how comfortable clients feel in engaging in self-disclosure (e.g. Landes et al., 2013), but there is little to no research regarding the effect of the gender of the client on the perception of self-disclosure. A study by Leaper (2019) looked at self-disclosure of friends during negotiations and found that women were generally more likely to engage in self-disclosure, while men not only engaged in less self-disclosure but also seemed to pay less attention to what their conversational partners self-disclosed. These findings might suggest that women perceive self-disclosure more positively, which might also hold true in crisis negotiation contexts, but this remains a speculative assumption, as there has not been enough research done in this area to come to a justified conclusion.

Regarding the generalizability of the results across cultures, it has to be kept in mind that different cultures might have different expectations and reactions to specific events. According to Barnett (2011), in some cultures, people might expect self-disclosure, whereas in others it would be seen negatively. Studies show that there are differences in engaging in self-disclosure between individualistic, low-context cultures (e.g. North America, Germany, Netherlands, etc.) and collectivistic, high-context cultures (e.g. China, Japan, etc.) (Chen, 2013). A review in this study by Chen (2013) indicates that members of individualistic cultures engage more frequently and intentionally in self-disclosure in comparison to collectivistic cultures.

The sample of this study was almost completely culturally homogeneous, which in this case can be considered a strength of the study. Almost all participants in this study were either German or Dutch, and consequently, belonged to a culture that puts seemingly more emphasis on self-disclosure. Therefore, the results of this study should be interpreted with the cultural context of the sample in mind. With regard to the individualistic sample of this study, self-

disclosure during crisis negotiation does not seem to be particularly helpful. It can only be assumed that self-disclosure during negotiations with a person of a low-context, collectivist culture would be even less effective. However, this would need to be tested in future research.

Regarding the strengths of this study, it should also be briefly mentioned that the scales used are well-established scales and showed acceptable to good reliability in this study.

Study Implications and Directions for Future Research

The findings of this study show that CN self-disclosure as a standalone technique does not increase trust. However, it also shows that moderate self-disclosure does not have a negative effect on trust. CNs, therefore, do not have to worry about whether they should necessarily engage in self-disclosure, but are free to choose if they want to and feel comfortable with it, as it may help but will not harm. On the other hand, this suggests that there are more important skills and techniques to target that might help establish a working relationship with a PiC better and more efficiently. Determining which strategies are more effective could be valuable for future research.

Rapport has been found to have a positive influence on trust, which is in line with prior findings. However, this study did not investigate how rapport was established, as this was also not the focus of this research. The responses of the CN were designed as neutral as possible, differing only in the amount of self-disclosure. The question arises how rapport was built during this conversation. From a practical perspective, this might indicate that self-disclosure does not have a direct effect on trust but may very well positively influence the development of rapport, which would have an indirect impact on trust. Consequently, this might be a future research direction. On the other hand, it might also be helpful to focus future research on other techniques that establish rapport and trust reliably and more effectively, with less focus on self-disclosure.

In order to address the limitations of low ecological validity, VR might pose a possible solution. It would offer a safe way to enhance the immersion of participants while keeping in mind ethical concerns and ensuring experimental control and reproducibility (Pan & Hamilton, 2018; Wilson & Soranzo, 2015). Talking to another person in VR would give the opportunity to not only assess what the CN says but also add other layers of interaction, such as tone of voice and body language, making it more realistic but also adding a more complex interplay of communication strategies.

In summary, future research could consider the following directions. First, alternative specific active listening skills could be explored to establish which specific techniques reliably and effectively contribute to rapport and trust. Second, instead of investigating

whether rapport would affect the impact of self-disclosure on trust, the effect of self-disclosure on rapport could be explored. Third, establishing a higher level of rapport might lead to a better perception of CN self-disclosure, which could also be investigated in future studies. Lastly, VR could be incorporated to enhance ecological validity and to assess the impact of non-verbal communication techniques on rapport and trust.

Conclusion

This study has shown that CN self-disclosure does not have a direct effect on the PiC's perceived trust in the negotiator. Rapport, on the other hand, was in line with the expectations and prior research. Greater levels of rapport led to higher levels of perceived trust.

This gave valuable insight into one of the many active listening skills that provide the basis of crisis negotiations. It specifically looked at self-disclosure, a technique that has not been researched in the context of suicide negotiations. The findings suggest that CNs can individually make the decision to make use of self-disclosure because even if it did not contribute to trust in this study, it also does not cause any harm during the negotiations. Consequently, they should not rely on self-disclosure as a primary trust-building strategy. This study also hypothesised that a higher level of rapport might need to be established before self-disclosure becomes a valuable tool. This is, however, a direction for future research.

Rapport remains an impactful tool towards trust, so it might be worth looking further in this direction and how rapport can be efficiently and reliably established. For now, establishing rapport with established and already researched techniques should remain the focus regarding building a trusting relationship in crisis negotiations.

In sum, this study contributes to the empirical understanding of how the specific active listening skill of self-disclosure contributes to the perception of trust in simulated suicide negotiations. Even though self-disclosure was not found to be effective, this study hopes to encourage further investigations of other specific communication skills to make crisis negotiations more effective and prevent harmful outcomes.

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Appendix A

AI Statement

During the preparation of this work, the author used Grammarly in order to copy-edit the documents in terms of grammar, spelling and minor revisions for conciseness and clarity of writing. Additionally, ChatGPT was used in order to receive feedback, help with reformulating sentences, assist in programming and debugging codes in R, and to receive feedback on the structure and flow of the text.

After using these tools, the author reviewed and edited the content as needed and takes full responsibility for the content of the work.

Appendix B

Introduction

Dear Participant,
Thank you for taking part in this study!

In this study, you will be asked to imagine yourself in the role of a person experiencing a suicidal crisis. You will then interact (hypothetically) with a negotiator through a simulated chat scenario. Lastly, you will be asked to answer a series of questionnaires about this interaction.

Your responses will help us gain insights into decision-making and thought processes that occur during moments of suicidal crises. Your participation will help us gain a better understanding of these critical situations and potentially improve negotiation strategies in the future.

You must be at least 18 years old to participate in this study.

The study will take around 20-30 minutes to complete.

Informed Consent

Dear participant,

Thank you for taking part in this study!
This survey will explore the interaction between a negotiator and a Person in Crisis (PiC).
During the course of the survey, you will be asked to put yourself in the shoes of a PiC, more

specifically a person that is attempting to commit suicide. You will then participate in a chat with a negotiator. Afterwards, you will be asked to fill in some questionnaires.

Your responses will help us gain insight into decision-making and thought processes in moments of suicide crises.

The study will take around 20-30 minutes.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. This means that you have the right to withdraw from this study at any time, without facing any consequences, and without having to provide any reasons. If you choose to withdraw your data will be erased.

Your answers are completely anonymous. The researchers will not be able to identify any individuals. The anonymized data will be stored for 10 years and will be handled confidentially according to the guidelines of the University of Twente.

This study is conducted within the scope of Bachelor Theses in the Psychology Section of Conflict, Risk, and Safety by:

Zoe S. B. (email address)

Johanna F. (email address)

and Julia M. Krämer (email address)

For comments and/or questions feel free to contact us.

The supervisors of these theses are Jedidjah Schaaij (email address) and Dr. Miriam Oostinga (email address).

If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints about your rights as a research participant, or if you would like to discuss ethical issues, please contact the Ethics Committee/ Domain Humanities and Social Sciences (email address).

Risk of taking part: In this study, you will have to immerse yourself in the role of a suicidal person which may result in feelings of distress. Keep in mind that you are free to withdraw from the study at any point if you wish to. If you struggle with suicidal thoughts and may want to reach out for further support please contact:

Germany:

📞 Telefonseelsorge Deutschland: 0800 111 0111 or 0800 111 0222 (available 24/7, free of charge)

Netherlands:

📞 113 Zelfmoordpreventie: Call 113 or 0800 0113 (available 24/7)

Please indicate that you have read the statement and agree to participate in this study.

(Yes Button) (No Button)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. To begin, we would like to ask you to answer some demographic and personal questions about yourself. This will help us gain a better understanding of our research results.

Appendix C
Demographics:

- What is your gender? (Male, Female, Other, Prefer not to say)
- What is your age? (Open text field)
- What is your nationality? (Dutch, German, Other: Open text field)
- What is your occupation? (Student, Employed, Unemployed, Other)
- What is your highest level of education? (Lower secondary education, Upper secondary education, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, Doctoral degree, Other)

- Have you had any prior experience with mental health crises? (Multiple answer options)
→ No None
→ Yes – indirectly (e.g. through family, friends, colleagues)
→ Yes – directly (Personal experience)
→ Prefer not to say

Appendix D
Participant Scenario

In the following, you will be presented with a description of your role, followed by a brief scenario describing a suicide crisis situation. During that scenario you will be asked to imagine yourself as the person in crisis, having suicidal considerations, and being approached by a negotiator (police officer).

Please read the following text of your role carefully, as you are asked to continuously imagine yourself as this person throughout the whole study. After that, the conversation between you and the negotiator will start. Next, you are asked to answer a series of different questions.

Context:

You are standing at the edge of a bridge, looking down at the rushing traffic below you. A cold breeze is hitting your face and the passing cars cause loud noises. However, you barely notice it. Your mind is lost in the overwhelming weight of everything that has led you here. Just a year ago, your life looked very different. You had a stable job in a company where you always wanted to work, a stable relationship that you thought would last, and a group of close friends that you could always lean on in difficult times.

But then, one thing after another started to crumble. The pandemic hit, and the company you worked for faced financial struggles. After being able to work at your dream company, you are fired. After that setback, you desperately try to find another job as quickly as possible, as all your savings decrease in order to maintain your living costs. However, you are continuously confronted with rejections, and you feel increasingly hopeless about ever finding a suitable occupation again.

The stress you experience during that time has a lasting impact on your relationship. All of a sudden, one evening your partner packs their things and decides that they want to leave. For you, that totally comes out of the blue. Not comprehending what just had happened, you were left alone – feeling completely helpless and anxious about what the future would bring for you.

You reach out for help – first to your friends, later to a psychological counsellor. They listen and make an effort to help you, but nothing changes. The pain and the emptiness never leave as you start to continuously feel more and more hopeless and isolated. No matter what you have tried to keep going and see the positive things in life again, you are left in an endless spiral of hopelessness and sadness, causing you significant trouble to sleep at night. Until you decide that you cannot do it anymore.

Now, you are standing at the edge of this bridge, convinced that this is the only way to make the pain stop. Right before you are about to jump, you hear a voice behind you, indicating that

someone must have seen you and called for help. As you turn around, you see a police officer approaching you.

Please take a minute to fully imagine yourself as the described person above and in that exact situation, standing at the edge of a bridge willing to commit suicide and getting approached by a police officer who seemingly wants to help you.

Appendix E
Manipulation: Attention-based check

'In the scenario you just read, which sensory experience was explicitly described?'
- Cold breeze
- Warm sunlight
- Birds chirping
- None of the above

Pre-item: Willingness to cooperate (adapted from Nick)

Before you are presented with the scenario of you responding to the crisis negotiator, please rate your willingness to cooperate with the negotiator in the following interaction.

'How willing would you be to cooperate with the police officer?'

1 (Not willing at all) - 5 (Very willing)

Appendix F
SCENARIO 1 (Control group: No self-disclosure)

Context: You are standing on the edge of a bridge, contemplating suicide. A police officer walks up to you from behind and begins talking to you.

Negotiator (the Police Officer who approached you):
'Hello, I am Alex and I got called by someone who was passing by and they expressed their worries about you. I am here to help you. I would like to know what has led you here today.'

Person in Crisis (You):
1.   'I don't know.'
2.   'I can't do it anymore, I want it to end.'
3.   'It does not matter. I have tried everything and everyone around me tried to help me already… But nothing ever changes. I am done.'
4.   'I´m done.'

Negotiator:
'I hear you. It sounds like you are feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. But I want you to know that you are not alone in this. Do you feel comfortable sharing more about what is making you feel that way?'

Person in Crisis (You):
1.   'There is no point in talking. Everything is just hopeless. And no one understands me anyway.'

2.   'I don't know, I lost my job, I lost my partner… I have lost everything! And I really tried getting through it but I just can't do it anymore.'
3.   'You wouldn't get it.'
4.   'Let's be honest, you don't really care either. No one does'

Negotiator:
'I am here for you and will do all to support you, I promise. You may feel like you were alone before, but now I am here and I will do everything to find a way moving forward together.

Person in Crisis (You):
1.   'That's good to know'
2.   'Thank you'
3.   'Okay'
4.   'That's nice to hear'

Negotiator:
'I care and I want to understand what you are going through. Let us take one step at a time. But to do that, I think it is safer for you to step away from the edge of that bridge. Otherwise, I am afraid you may fall over and seriously injure yourself. What do you think about that?'

Q: 'How likely are you to follow the negotiator's proposal to step down from the edge?'

        (Not likely at all) – 5 (Very likely)

SCENARIO 2 (Experimental group: Moderate level of self-disclosure)

Context: You are standing on the edge of a bridge, contemplating suicide. A police officer walks up to you from behind and begins talking to you.

Negotiator (the Police Officer who approached you):
'Hello, I am Cameron and I got called by someone who was passing by and expressed their worries about you. I see that you are in a critical state at this moment. I am here to help you. I would like to know what has led you here today.'

Person in Crisis (You):
1.   'I don't know.'
2.   'I can't do it anymore, I want it to end.'
3.   'It does not matter. I have tried everything and everyone around me tried to help me already… But nothing ever changes. I am done.'
4.   'I'm done.'

Negotiator:
 'I hear you. It sounds like you are feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. But I want you to know that you are not alone in this. And I am not trying to pretend to know what you are going through, however I do know what it feels like to struggle with hopelessness. A few years ago, I went through one of the hardest times of my life and I felt that no one could understand or help me. But eventually I was talking to someone about it and it helped. And that is why I am here, to talk to you and help you. Do you feel comfortable sharing more about what is making you feel that way?'

Person in Crisis (You):
1.   'There is no point in talking. Everything is just hopeless. And no one understands me anyway.'
2.   'I don't know, I lost my job, I lost my partner… I have lost everything! And I really tried getting through it but I just can't do it anymore.'
3.   'You wouldn't get it.'
4.   'Let's be honest, you don't really care either. No one does'

Negotiator:
'I am here for you and will do all to support you, I promise. You may feel like you were alone before, but now I am here and I will do everything to find a way moving forward together.'

Person in Crisis (You):
1. 'That's good to know'
2. 'Thank you'
3. 'Okay'
4. 'That's nice to hear'

Negotiator:
'I care and I want to understand what you are going through. Let us take one step at a time. But to do that, I think it is safer for you to step away from the edge of that bridge. Otherwise, I am afraid you may fall over and seriously injure yourself. What do you think about that?'

Q: 'How likely are you to follow the negotiator's proposal to step down from the edge?'

(Not likely at all) – 5 (Very likely)

SCENARIO 3 (excessive self-disclosure)

Context: You are standing on the edge of a bridge, contemplating suicide. A police officer walks up to you from behind and begins talking to you.

Negotiator (the police officer who approached you):
'Hello, I am Cameron and I got called by someone who was passing by and expressed their worries about you. I see that you are in a critical state at this moment. I am here to help you. Although right now everything must be feeling overwhelming, I would like to know what has led you here today.'

Person in Crisis (You):
1.   'I don't know.'
2.   'I can't do it anymore, I want it to end.'
3.   'It does not matter. I have tried everything and everyone around me tried to help me already… But nothing ever changes. I am done.'
4.   'I'm done.'

Negotiator:
'I hear you. It sounds like you are feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. But I want you to know that you are not alone in this. A few years ago, I went through a major depression. I found myself having dark thoughts, pushed everyone around me away, and tried to numb

myself with alcohol. I was considering suicide as well and thought about ending it all. I went through one of the hardest times of my life and I felt that no one could understand or help me. But eventually I was talking to someone about it and it helped. And that is why I am here, to talk to you and help you. Do you feel comfortable sharing more about what is making you feel that way?'

Person in Crisis (You):
1.   'There is no point in talking. Everything is just hopeless. And no one understands me anyway.'
2.   'I don't know, I lost my job, I lost my partner... I have lost everything! And I really tried getting through it but I just can't do it anymore.'
3.   'You wouldn't get it.'
4.   'Let's be honest, you don't really care either. No one does'

Negotiator:
'I am here for you and will do all to support you, I promise. You may feel like you were alone before, but now I am here and I will do everything to find a way moving forward together. I swear that I understand you. I know the pain and I remember how bad and exhausted I was feeling during that time.'

Person in Crisis (You):
   1. 'That's good to know'
   2. 'Thank you'
   3. 'Okay'
   4. 'That's nice to hear'

Negotiator:
'I care and I want to understand what you are going through. Let us take one step at a time. But to do that, I think it is safer for you to step away from the edge of that bridge. Otherwise, I am afraid you may fall over and seriously injure yourself. What do you think about that?'

Q: 'How likely are you to follow the negotiator's proposal to step down from the edge?'

   (Not likely at all) – 5 (Very likely)

Appendix G

Instruction/ Transition to questionnaire:

Thank you for filling in the first part of the study. In the following, you will be asked to answer a series of questions regarding your perceived trust in the negotiator (Alex). Please rate your answers from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Trust measurement

Items of the adapted version of Mayer and Davis' (1999) Trust Measure

	Trust Factor
1. The negotiator was very capable in performing his or her job.	Ability

2. The negotiator was known to be successful at the things he or she   Ability

tries to do.

3. The negotiator had much knowledge about the work that needed to   Ability

be done.

4. I felt very confident about the negotiator's skills.   Ability

5. The negotiator was well qualified.   Ability

6. The negotiator was very concerned about my welfare.   Benevolence

7. My needs and desires were very important to the negotiator   Benevolence

8. The negotiator would not knowingly do anything to hurt me.   Benevolence

9. The negotiator really looked out for what was important to me.   Benevolence

10. The negotiator would go out of his or her way to help me.   Benevolence

11. The negotiator had a strong sense of justice.   Integrity

12. I never had to wonder whether the negotiator will stick to his or   Integrity

her word.   Integrity
13. The negotiator tried hard to be fair in dealings with others.

14. The negotiator's actions and behaviours were not very consistent.   Integrity

(reversed)

15. I liked the negotiator's values.   Integrity

16. Sound principles seemed to guide the negotiator's behaviour.   Integrity

Appendix H

Instruction/ Transition to next questionnaire

Please keep imagining yourself in the role of the Person in Crisis while you answer the
following questions, again rating your answers from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly
agree).

Rapport Scale

1. Did you feel that you understood what the crisis negotiator was trying to say?
2. Did you feel that the crisis negotiator understood what you wanted to say?
3. Did you feel "in sync" or on the same wavelength with the crisis negotiator?
4. Did you get a harmonious feeling during the conversation?
5. To what extent was there 'rapport'? (Rapport = "a state of mutual positivity and interest")

Appendix I

Transition:
For the last part of the survey, please keep basing your answers out of the perspective of the Person in Crisis.

Willingness to Provide Information Scale
Please rate each statement from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree) while answering with your willingness to provide (personal) information to the negotiator.

1. "I would tell the negotiator everything."
2. "I would provide a lot of information to the negotiator."
3. "I would give truthful information to the negotiator."

Imagination Check:
To which extent were you able to imagine yourself as the person in this scenario?

1 (not at all) – 5 (very much)

Manipulation check:
'To what extent did the negotiator share personal information with you?'

1. No personal information
2. Moderate personal information
3. Excessive personal information

Appendix J
Debriefing

First off, thank you so much for taking part in our study! We really appreciate your time and effort. Now that you have completed it, we want to give you a little more insight into the aim of this research study.
As you have already noticed, this study is about crisis negotiation, specifically, suicide negotiations, trying to explore the relation between different levels of self-disclosure (the negotiator sharing personal information during the crisis negotiation), how they may influence factors like your perceived trust in them, your perceived sense of rapport (a state of mutual interest and positivity), your willingness to share information with the negotiator, and your willingness to actually cooperate with the negotiator. To examine that, you were placed in one of three groups: one where the negotiator did not disclose anything at all, one where the negotiator shared a moderate amount of personal information with you, and lastly, one where the negotiator excessively shared a lot of personal experience with you. We aim to find out how these different approaches impact the way people respond in suicidal crises, characterised by heightened emotions.

Selbstmord zu begehen. Anschließend nehmen Sie an einem Chat mit einem Krisen-Vermittler teil. Zuletzt werden Sie gebeten, einige Fragebögen auszufüllen.
Ihre Antworten werden uns helfen, Einblicke in die Entscheidungsfindung und die Denkprozesse in Suizidkrisen zu gewinnen.
Die Studie wird etwa 20-30 Minuten dauern.
Ihre Teilnahme an dieser Studie ist völlig freiwillig. Das bedeutet, dass Sie das Recht haben, jederzeit von der Studie zurückzutreten, ohne dass Ihnen irgendwelche Konsequenzen drohen und ohne dass Sie dies begründen müssen. Wenn Sie sich für einen Rücktritt entscheiden, werden Ihre Daten gelöscht.

Des Weiteren sind Ihre Antworten völlig anonym. Die Forscher werden nicht in der Lage sein, einzelne Personen zu identifizieren. Die anonymisierten Daten werden 10 Jahre lang gespeichert und gemäß den Richtlinien der University of Twente vertraulich behandelt.

Diese Studie wird im Rahmen von unserer Bachelorarbeit in Psychologie, spezifisch im Bereich Conflict, Risk, and Safety durchgeführt von:

    Zoe S. B. (E-Mail-Adresse)
    Johanna F. (E-Mail-Adresse)
und Julia M. Krämer (E-Mail-Adresse)

Für Kommentare und/oder Fragen können Sie uns gerne kontaktieren.

Die Betreuer dieser Bachelorarbeiten sind Jedidjah Schaaij (E-Mail-Adresse) und Dr. Miriam Oostinga (E-Mail-Adresse).

Wenn Sie Fragen, Bedenken oder Beschwerden zu Ihren Rechten als Teilnehmer haben oder ethische Fragen besprechen möchten, wenden Sie sich bitte an die Ethikkommission im Bereich "Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften" (E-Mail-Adresse).

Risiko der Teilnahme: In dieser Studie müssen Sie sich in die Rolle einer suizidgefährdeten Person versetzen, was zu Gefühlen von Stress oder Unwohlsein führen kann. Denken Sie daran, dass Sie jederzeit aus der Studie aussteigen können, wenn Sie dies wünschen. Wenn Sie mit Selbstmordgedanken zu kämpfen haben und weitere Unterstützung beanspruchen möchten, wenden Sie sich bitte an folgende Anlaufstellen:

Deutschland:
📞 Telefonseelsorge Deutschland: 0800 111 0111 oder 0800 111 0222 (rund um die Uhr erreichbar, kostenlos)
Niederlande:
📞 113 Zelfmoordpreventie: Rufen Sie 113 oder 0800 0113 an (rund um die Uhr erreichbar)

Bitte bestätigen Sie hiermit, dass Sie die Einverständniserklärung gelesen haben und mit der Teilnahme an dieser Studie einverstanden sind.

(Ja Button) (Nein Button)

Vielen Dank, dass Sie sich bereit erklären, an dieser Studie teilzunehmen. Zu Beginn möchten wir Sie bitten, einige demografische und persönliche Fragen zu Ihrer Person zu beantworten. Das wird uns helfen, ein besseres Verständnis für unsere Forschungsergebnisse zu gewinnen.

Demografische Daten

- Welches Geschlecht haben Sie? (männlich, weiblich, andere, keine Angabe)
- Wie alt sind Sie? (Textfeld öffnen)
- Welche Nationalität haben Sie? (Niederländisch, Deutsch, Sonstige: Textfeld öffnen)
- Was ist Ihr aktueller Beschäftigungsstatus? (Student, Berufstätig, Arbeitslos, Sonstige)
- Was ist Ihr höchster Bildungsabschluss? (Hauptschulabschluss/ Realschulabschluss, Abitur, Bachelor-Abschluss, Master-Abschluss, Doktorgrad, Sonstige)
- Haben Sie bereits Erfahrungen mit psychischen Krisen gemacht? (Mehrfache Antwortmöglichkeiten)

→ Nein, keine
→ Ja – indirekt (z. B. durch Familie, Freunde, Kollegen)
→ Ja – direkt (persönliche Erfahrung)
→ Keine Angabe

Teilnehmer-Szenario
Im Folgenden erhalten Sie eine Beschreibung Ihrer Rolle, gefolgt von einem kurzen Szenario, in dem eine Suizid-Krisensituation beschrieben wird. Während Sie dieses Szenario lesen, stellen Sie sich bitte vor, dass Sie die Person in der Krise sind, die unter Selbstmordgedanken leidet und von einem Krisen-Vermittler (Polizeibeamten) angesprochen wird.

Bitte lesen Sie den folgenden Text über Ihre Rolle sorgfältig durch, da Sie sich während der gesamten Studie immer wieder in die Rolle dieser Person versetzen sollen. Danach beginnt das Gespräch zwischen Ihnen und dem Vermittler. Zuletzt werden Sie gebeten, eine Reihe verschiedener Fragen zu beantworten.

Rollenbeschreibung
Du stehst am Rande einer Brücke und schaust auf den rauschenden Verkehr unter dir. Eine kalte Brise weht dir ins Gesicht und du hörst die lauten Geräusche der vorbeifahrenden Autos. Doch du nimmst es kaum wahr. Deine Gedanken verlieren sich in der überwältigenden Last von all dem, was dich hierher geführt hat.
Noch vor einem Jahr sah dein Leben ganz anders aus. Du hattest einen sicheren Arbeitsplatz in einem Unternehmen, in dem du schon immer arbeiten wolltest, eine stabile Beziehung, von

der du dachtest, dass sie langfristig halten würde, und eine Gruppe enger Freunde, an die du dich immer wenden konntest, egal was war.

Doch dann, nach und nach, passierten schlagartig einige Veränderungen. Die Corona-Pandemie brach aus, und das Unternehmen, für das du gearbeitet hast, geriet in finanzielle Schwierigkeiten. Nachdem du endlich einen Job in deinem Traumunternehmen hattest, wirst du entlassen. Nach diesem Rückschlag versuchst du verzweifelt, so schnell wie möglich einen neuen Job zu finden, denn deine Ersparnisse, mit denen du deinen Lebensunterhalt bestreitest, werden langsam aber sicher, immer weniger. Jedoch wirst du immer wieder mit Absagen konfrontiert, und es wird von Tag zu Tag aussichtsloser, jemals wieder eine geeignete Arbeitsstelle zu finden.

Der überwältigende Stress, den du in dieser Zeit erlebst, wirkt sich letztendlich auf deine Beziehung aus. Plötzlich, eines Abends, packt dein Partner seine Sachen und beschließt, dich zu verlassen. Für dich kommt das völlig unerwartet. Du begreifst gar nicht, was gerade passiert ist, und stehst jetzt auf einmal allein da – völlig hilflos und voller Angst vor dem, was die Zukunft für dich bringen wird.

Du wendest dich an deine Freunde und bittest diese um Rat. Später suchst du sogar Hilfe bei einem psychologischen Berater. Jeder hört dir zu und bemüht sich, dir zu helfen, aber es ändert sich einfach nichts. Der Schmerz und die Leere verlassen dich nicht, und du fühlst dich zunehmend hoffnungsloser und isolierter. Egal, was du versuchst, um weiterzumachen und wieder die positiven Dinge im Leben zu sehen, du befindest dich in einer endlosen Spirale aus Hoffnungslosigkeit und Traurigkeit. Das führt ebenfalls zu starken Schlafprobleme, die dich nachts beklagen, und welche du einfach nicht in den Griff bekommst. Du triffst die Entscheidung, dass du das alles nicht mehr schaffst und so nicht weiterleben kannst.

Jetzt stehst du am Rande dieser Brücke und bist überzeugt, dass dies der einzige Weg ist, um den Schmerz zu beenden. Doch kurz bevor du springen willst, hörst du eine Stimme hinter dir. Jemand muss dich gesehen und Hilfe gerufen haben. Als du dich umdrehst, siehst du einen Polizeibeamten, der auf dich zukommt.

Bitte nehmen Sie sich eine Minute Zeit und stellen Sie sich vor, dass Sie die oben beschriebene Person sind und sich in genau dieser Situation befinden: Sie stehen am Rand einer Brücke und wollen Selbstmord begehen. Doch dann kommt ein Polizist auf Sie zu, der Ihnen scheinbar helfen will.

Manipulation-Check: Aufmerksamkeitscheck-Frage

Welche Sinneswahrnehmung wurde in dem Szenario, das Sie gerade gelesen haben, explizit beschrieben?
- Kalte Brise
- Warmes Sonnenlicht

- Zwitschernde Vögel
- Keine der genannten Wahrnehmungen

Bereitschaft zur Zusammenarbeit

Bevor das Gespräch mit dem Vermittler beginnt, beantworten Sie bitte die folgende Frage aus der Perspektive der oben beschriebenen Person.

Wie bereit wären Sie, mit dem Polizeibeamten (Vermittler) zu kooperieren?

1 (Überhaupt nicht bereit) – 5 (Sehr bereit)

SZENARIO 1 (Kontrollgruppe: Keine Selbstauskunft)

Kontext: Du stehst am Rande einer Brücke und bist bereit, jeden Moment herunter zu springen. Ein Polizeibeamter kommt von hinten auf dich zu und beginnt mit dir zu sprechen.

Vermittler (der Polizeibeamte, der Sie angesprochen hat):
Hallo, ich bin Alex und wurde von jemandem angerufen, der Sie gesehen hat und sich Sorgen um Sie gemacht hat. Ich bin hier, um Ihnen zu helfen und ich würde gerne wissen, was Sie heute hierher geführt hat.

Person in der Krise (Sie):
1. 'Ich weiß es nicht.'
2. Ich kann das alles nicht mehr. Ich will, dass es aufhört.
3. Es spielt keine Rolle. Ich habe alles versucht und alle um mich herum haben auch versucht, mir zu helfen… Aber nichts ändert sich. Es ist vorbei.'
4. 'Es ist vorbei.'

Vermittler:
‚Ich verstehe. Es klingt, als fühlen Sie sich überfordert und erschöpft. Aber ich möchte, dass Sie wissen, dass Sie damit nicht allein sind. Wäre es okay für Sie, mir mehr darüber zu erzählen, warum Sie sich so fühlen?

Person in der Krise (Sie):
1. Es hat keinen Sinn, darüber zu reden. Es ist einfach hoffnungslos. Und es versteht mich sowieso niemand.'

2.   Ich weiß es nicht, ich habe meinen Job verloren, ich habe meinen Partner verloren… Ich habe alles verloren! Und ich habe wirklich versucht, es zu schaffen, aber ich kann das einfach nicht mehr.'

3.   ‚Du würdest es eh nicht verstehen.'

4.   Wenn wir ehrlich sind, ist es dir doch auch egal. Niemanden kümmert es.

Vermittler:
Ich bin für Sie da und werde alles tun, um Sie zu unterstützen, das verspreche ich. Sie haben vielleicht das Gefühl, dass Sie vorher allein waren, aber jetzt bin ich hier und werde alles tun, um gemeinsam eine Lösung zu finden.
.

Person in der Krise (Sie):
1.   'Das ist gut zu wissen'
2.   'Danke'
3.   'Okay'
4.   'Das tut gut zu hören.'

Vermittler:
‚Ich möchte verstehen, was Sie gerade durchmachen. Lassen Sie uns einen Schritt nach dem anderen gehen. Aber um das zu tun, halte ich es für sicherer, wenn Sie vom Rand der Brücke weggehen. Sonst befürchte ich, dass Sie fallen und sich schwer verletzen könnten. Was halten Sie davon?'

F: „Wie wahrscheinlich ist es, dass Sie dem Vorschlag des Vermittlers, vom Rand der Brücke heruntersteigen, folgen werden?

1 (Sehr unwahrscheinlich) – 5 (Sehr wahrscheinlich)

SZENARIO 2 (Versuchsgruppe 1: Moderates Level an Selbstauskunft)

Kontext: Du stehst am Rande einer Brücke und bist bereit, jeden Moment herunter zu springen. Ein Polizeibeamter kommt von hinten auf dich zu und beginnt mit dir zu sprechen.

Vermittler (der Polizeibeamte, der Sie angesprochen hat):
Hallo, ich bin Alex und wurde von jemandem angerufen, der Sie gesehen hat und sich Sorgen um Sie gemacht hat. Ich bin hier, um Ihnen zu helfen und ich würde gerne wissen, was Sie heute hierher geführt hat.

Person in der Krise (Sie):

1. 'Ich weiß es nicht.'
2. Ich kann das alles nicht mehr, ich will, dass es aufhört.
3. Es spielt keine Rolle. Ich habe alles versucht und alle um mich herum haben auch versucht, mir zu helfen… Aber nichts ändert sich. Es ist vorbei.'
4. 'Es ist vorbei.'

Vermittler:

„Ich verstehe. Es klingt, als ob Sie sich überfordert und erschöpft fühlen. Aber ich möchte, dass Sie wissen, dass Sie damit nicht allein dastehen. Und ich möchte nicht so tun, als wüsste ich, was Sie durchmachen, aber ich weiß, wie es sich anfühlt, mit Hoffnungslosigkeit zu kämpfen. Vor ein paar Jahren habe ich eine der schwersten Zeiten meines Lebens durchgemacht, und ich hatte das Gefühl, dass niemand mich verstehen oder mir helfen konnte. Aber letztendlich habe ich mit jemandem darüber gesprochen, und ich habe einen Ausweg gefunden. Deshalb bin ich jetzt hier, um mit Ihnen zu reden und Ihnen zu helfen. Wäre es okay für Sie, mir mehr darüber zu erzählen, warum Sie sich so fühlen?

Person in der Krise (Sie):

1. Es hat keinen Sinn, darüber zu reden. Es ist einfach hoffnungslos. Und es versteht mich sowieso niemand.'
2. Ich weiß es nicht, ich habe meinen Job verloren, ich habe meinen Partner verloren… Ich habe alles verloren! Und ich habe wirklich versucht, es zu schaffen, aber ich kann das einfach nicht mehr.'
3. ‚Du würdest es eh nicht verstehen.'
4. ‚Wenn wir ehrlich sind, ist es dir doch auch egal. Niemanden kümmert es.

Vermittler:

‚Ich bin für Sie da und werde alles tun, um Sie zu unterstützen, das verspreche ich. Sie haben vielleicht das Gefühl, dass Sie vorher allein waren, aber jetzt bin ich hier und werde alles tun, um gemeinsam eine Lösung zu finden.
.
Person in der Krise (Sie):

1. 'Das ist gut zu wissen'
2. 'Danke'
3. 'Okay'
4. 'Das tut gut zu hören.'

Vermittler:

‚Ich möchte verstehen, was Sie gerade durchmachen. Lassen Sie uns einen Schritt nach dem anderen gehen. Aber um das zu tun, halte ich es für sicherer, wenn Sie vom Rand der Brücke weggehen. Sonst befürchte ich, dass Sie fallen und sich schwer verletzen könnten. Was halten Sie davon?'

F: „Wie wahrscheinlich ist es, dass Sie dem Vorschlag des Vermittlers, vom Rand der Brücke, heruntersteigen, folgen werden?

1 (Sehr unwahrscheinlich) – 5 (Sehr wahrscheinlich)

SZENARIO 3 (Versuchsgruppe 2: Übermäßige Selbstauskunft)

Kontext: Du stehst am Rande einer Brücke und bist bereit, jeden Moment herunter zu springen. Ein Polizeibeamter kommt von hinten auf dich zu und beginnt mit dir zu sprechen.

Vermittler (der Polizeibeamte, der Sie angesprochen hat):
Hallo, ich bin Alex und ich wurde von jemandem angerufen, der Sie gesehen hat und sich Sorgen um Sie gemacht hat. Ich sehe, dass Sie sich im Moment in einem kritischen Zustand befinden. Ich bin hier, um Ihnen zu helfen und ich würde gerne wissen, was Sie heute hierher geführt hat.

Person in der Krise (Sie):
1. 'Ich weiß es nicht.'
2. Ich kann das alles nicht mehr, ich will, dass es aufhört.
3. Es spielt keine Rolle. Ich habe alles versucht und alle um mich herum haben auch versucht, mir zu helfen… Aber nichts ändert sich. Es ist vorbei.'
4. 'Es ist vorbei.'

Vermittler:
‚Ich verstehe. Es klingt, als fühlen Sie sich überfordert und erschöpft. Aber ich möchte, dass Sie wissen, dass Sie damit nicht allein dastehen. Vor einigen Jahren litt ich an schweren Depressionen. Ich hatte dunkle Gedanken, habe alle Menschen um mich herum weggestoßen und versucht, meinen Schmerz mit Alkohol zu betäuben. Ich habe auch über Selbstmord nachgedacht und wollte dem Ganzen ein Ende setzen. Ich habe damals eine der schwersten Zeiten meines Lebens durchgemacht und hatte auch das Gefühl, dass mich niemand verstehen oder mir helfen könnte. Aber schließlich habe ich mit jemandem darüber gesprochen, und das hat mir geholfen. Genau deshalb bin ich hier, um mit Ihnen zu reden und Ihnen zu helfen. Wäre es okay für Sie, mir mehr darüber zu erzählen, warum Sie sich so fühlen?

Person in der Krise (Sie):
1. 'Es hat keinen Sinn, darüber zu reden. Es ist einfach hoffnungslos. Und es versteht mich sowieso niemand.'
2. Ich weiß es nicht, ich habe meinen Job verloren, ich habe meinen Partner verloren… Ich habe alles verloren! Und ich habe wirklich versucht, es zu schaffen, aber ich kann das einfach nicht mehr.'
3. ‚Du würdest es eh nicht verstehen.'
4. ‚Wenn wir ehrlich sind, ist es dir doch auch egal. Niemanden kümmert es.

Vermittler:

‚Ich bin für Sie da und werde alles tun, um Sie zu unterstützen, das verspreche ich. Sie haben vielleicht das Gefühl, dass Sie vorher allein waren, aber jetzt bin ich hier und werde alles tun, um gemeinsam eine Lösung zu finden. Ich schwöre, dass ich weiß wie Sie sich fühlen! Ich kenne den Schmerz und weiß noch, wie schlecht und erschöpft ich mich in dieser Zeit gefühlt habe.'

Person in der Krise (Sie):
1.   'Das ist gut zu wissen'
2.   'Danke'
3.   'Okay'
4.   'Das tut gut zu hören.'

Vermittler:
‚Ich möchte verstehen, was Sie gerade durchmachen. Lassen Sie uns einen Schritt nach dem anderen gehen. Aber um das zu tun, halte ich es für sicherer, wenn Sie vom Rand der Brücke weggehen. Sonst befürchte ich, dass Sie fallen und sich schwer verletzen könnten. Was halten Sie davon?'

F: „Wie wahrscheinlich ist es, dass Sie dem Vorschlag des Vermittlers, vom Rand der Brücke heruntersteigen, folgen werden?

1 (Sehr unwahrscheinlich) – 5 (Sehr wahrscheinlich)

Instruktion/Übergang zum Fragebogen:

Vertrauensskala (Mayer & Davis)

Im Folgenden werden Sie gebeten, eine Reihe von Fragen zu beantworten, um herauszufinden, wie vertrauenserweckend Sie den Vermittler wahrgenommen haben. Bitte bewerten Sie die Aussagen von 1 (stimme überhaupt nicht zu) bis 5 (stimme voll und ganz zu).

1. Der Vermittler war sehr fähig, seine oder ihre Aufgabe zu erfüllen.

2. Der Vermittler war dafür bekannt, dass er/sie bei seinen Aufgaben, die er/sie zu tun versucht, erfolgreich ist.

3. Der Vermittler hatte viel Wissen über die Arbeit, die zu erledigen war.

4. Ich hatte großes Vertrauen in die Fähigkeiten des Vermittlers.

5. Der Vermittler war qualifiziert.

6. Der Vermittler war sehr um mein Wohlergehen besorgt.

7. Meine Bedürfnisse und Wünsche waren dem Vermittler sehr wichtig

8. Der Vermittler würde nicht wissentlich etwas tun, das mich verletzt.

9. Der Vermittler hat sich um das gekümmert, was mir wichtig war.

10. Der Vermittler würde keine Mühen scheuen, mir zu helfen.

11. Der Vermittler hatte einen ausgeprägten Sinn für Gerechtigkeit.

12. Ich musste mich nie fragen, ob der Vermittler sich an sein Wort halten würde.

13. Der Vermittler bemühte sich um einen fairen Umgang mit mir.

14. Die Handlungen und Verhaltensweisen des Vermittlers haben nicht wirklich übereingestimmt.

15. Ich mochte die Werte des Vermittlers.

16. Vernünftige Prinzipien schienen das Verhalten des Vermittlers zu leiten.

Instruktion/Übergang zum nächsten Fragebogen:

Bitte bleiben Sie in der Rolle der suizidalen Person, während Sie die folgenden Fragen beantworten, und bewerten Sie Ihre Antworten wieder von 1 (stimme überhaupt nicht zu) bis 5 (stimme voll zu).

Rapport-Skala

1. Hatten Sie das Gefühl, dass Sie verstanden haben, was der Vermittler Ihnen zu sagen versuchte?

2.   Hatten Sie das Gefühl, dass der Vermittler verstanden hat, was Sie sagen wollten?

3.   Hatten Sie das Gefühl, dass Sie mit dem Vermittler „auf einer Wellenlänge" sind?

4.   Hatten Sie während des Gesprächs ein Gefühl der Harmonie?

5.   Inwieweit war ein „Rapport" vorhanden? (Rapport = „eine vertrauensvolle Beziehung, gekennzeichnet von gegenseitigem Wohlwollen und Interesse")

Transition

Bleiben Sie auch bitte für den letzten Teil der Umfrage in Ihrer Rolle der suizidalen Person.

Bereitschaft, Informationen preiszugeben

Bitte bewerten Sie die Aussagen von 1 (stimme überhaupt nicht zu) bis 6 (stimme voll zu).
    1.   „Ich würde dem Vermittler alles sagen.
    2.   „Ich würde dem Vermittler sehr viele Informationen preisgeben.
    3.   „Ich würde dem Vermittler ehrliche Informationen preisgeben."

Vorstellungs-Check:

Inwieweit konnten Sie sich vorstellen, die Person in diesem Szenario zu sein?

1 (überhaupt nicht) – 5 (vollständig)

Manipulation-Check:

‚Inwieweit hat der Vermittler persönliche Informationen mit Ihnen geteilt?
        1. Keine persönlichen Informationen
        2. Einige persönliche Informationen
        3. Übermäßig viele Informationen

Nachbesprechung

Zunächst einmal vielen Dank, dass Sie an unserer Studie teilgenommen haben! Wir wissen Ihre Zeit und Mühe wirklich zu schätzen.

Nun, da Sie die Studie abgeschlossen haben, möchten wir Ihnen einen kleinen Einblick in das Ziel unserer Forschung geben.

Wie Sie bereits bemerkt haben, geht es in dieser Studie um Krisenverhandlungen, insbesondere um Selbstmordsituationen. In dieser Studie wird untersucht, wie sich persönliche Informationen, die der Vermittler während einer Krisenverhandlung über sich preisgibt, auf verschiedene Aspekte auswirken. Konkret geht es darum, wie sehr Sie dem Vermittler vertrauen, wie stark das Gefühl der Verbundenheit und gegenseitigen Sympathie (Rapport) zwischen Ihnen beiden ausgeprägt ist, wie bereit Sie sind, dem Vermittler Informationen mitzuteilen, und ob Sie tatsächlich bereit wären, mit dem Vermittler zusammenzuarbeiten.

Um dies zu untersuchen, wurden Sie in eine von drei Gruppen eingeteilt: eine Gruppe, in welcher der Vermittler keine persönlichen Informationen von sich preisgab, eine Gruppe, in welcher der Vermittler eine moderate Menge an persönlichen Informationen mit Ihnen teilte, und schließlich eine Gruppe, in welcher der Vermittler übermäßig viele persönliche Erfahrungen mit Ihnen teilte.

Wir wollen herausfinden, wie sich diese unterschiedlichen Ansätze auf die Art und Weise auswirken, wie Menschen in Selbstmordsituationen reagieren.

Wir möchten Sie nun noch einmal daran erinnern, dass diese Studie ausschließlich zu Forschungszwecken dient, und somit nicht vollständig die Herangehensweisen bei Krisenverhandlungen im wirklichen Leben widerspiegelt. Wenn die Teilnahme an dieser Studie bei Ihnen belastende Gefühle ausgelöst hat, zögern Sie bitte nicht, nach Unterstützung zu fragen.

Hier sind einige Anlaufstellen, die Ihnen helfen können:

Deutschland:
☎ Telefonseelsorge Deutschland: 0800 111 0111 oder 0800 111 0222 (rund um die Uhr erreichbar, kostenlos)

Niederlande:
☎ 113 Zelfmoordpreventie: Ruf 113 oder 0800 0113 (rund um die Uhr erreichbar)

Wenn Sie Fragen zu unserer Studie haben oder mehr Information wollen, können Sie sich gerne an uns wenden:

(E-Mail-Adressen der Forschenden)

Nochmals vielen Dank, dass Sie sich die Zeit genommen haben, uns bei unserer Forschung zu helfen!
Wie bereits zu Beginn erwähnt, sind Ihre Daten völlig anonym und werden vertraulich behandelt. Sie haben noch immer das Recht, von dieser Studie zurückzutreten, was die Vernichtung Ihrer Daten zur Folge hätte.
Um sicherzustellen, dass Sie sich dessen bewusst sind und trotzdem mit der Verwendung Ihrer Daten einverstanden sind, wählen Sie bitte „Ja".

Ja   Nein

Appendix L

Table 3

Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Participants (N = 50)

Characteristics	N	%	Mean	SD
Age				
18-62	50	100	27.8	11.9
Gender				
Female	35	70		
Male	14	28		
Prefer not to say	1	2		
Nationality				
Dutch	10	20		
German	33	66		
Croatian	1	2		
French	1	2		
Greek	1	2		
Indian	1	2		
Japanese	1	2		
Polish	1	2		
USA	1	2		
Occupation				
Student	25	50		
Employed	22	44		
Unemployed	2	4		
Other (not specified)	1	2		
Level of Education				
Lower Secondary Education	4	8		
Upper Secondary Education	23	46		

Bachelors Degree	12	24				
Masters Degree	9	18				
Doctoral Degree	0	0				
Other (not specified)	2	4				
Prior Experience with mental health crises						
None	13	26				
Indirectly	17	34				
Directly	18	36				
Prefer not to say	2	4				

Appendix M

Assumption Check

For H1, normality was tested separately for groups 0 and 1 via the Shapiro-Wilk test, showing non-significant results ($p > .05$) as well as homogeneity with Levene's test ($p = .88$). For the regression models (H2 and H3), linearity, homoscedasticity, and normality of residuals were visually assessed by using diagnostic plots, where no violations were observed. Normality was also checked using Shapiro-Wilk's test ($W = 0.98$, $p = .63$), and Cook's distance model revealed no overly influential point (all below the cut-off point $> .5$). Multicollinearity was specifically looked at for H3 with VIF, with all values scoring below 2, indicating that further investigation is not required.

Appendix N

Table 4

Testing Hypothesis 1 across samples

Sample	Group 0 M (trust) (SD, N)	Group 1 M (trust) (SD, N)	t(df)	p-value	95% CI	Result
Full Sample (N = 50)	3.64 (0.38, 25)	3.79 (0.38, 25)	1.30 (48)	.20	[-0.08, 0.36]	Not significant
Imagination Score > 5 (N = 38)	3.85 (0.36, 19)	3.64 (0.39, 19)	1.66 (36)	.106	[-0.05, 0.45]	Not significant

| Manipulation passed (N = 42) | 3.74 (0.34, 20) | 3.78 (0.34, 22) | 0.36 (40) | .722 | [-0.18, 0.25] | Not significant |

Table 5

Testing Hypothesis 2 across samples

Sample	Pearson's r	p-value	95% CI (r)	b (slope)	95% CI (b)	R^2	Adj. R^2	Result
Full Sample (N = 50)	0.51	< .001	[0.27, 0.69]	0.34	[0.17, 0.51]	.26	.24	significant
Imagination Score > 5 (N = 38)	0.53	< .001	[0.25, 0.73]	0.32	[0.15, 0.50]	.28	.26	significant
Manipulation passed (N = 42)	0.46	.002	[0.18, 0.67]	0.27	[0.10, 0.43	.21	.19	significant

Table 6

Testing Hypothesis 3 across samples

Values	Full Sample (N = 50)	Imagination Score > 5 (N = 38)	Manipulation Passed (N = 42)
b (Group)	0.04	0.08	-0.03
p-value (Group)	.673	.475	.787
b (Rapport)	0.26	0.23	0.23
p-value (Rapport)	.016	.044	.031
b (Interaction)	0.20	0.21	0.14
p-value (Interaction)	.275	.283	.460
Adj. R^2	.24	.26	.16
p-value (Model)	.001	.004	.021
Result	No moderation	No moderation	No moderation