CORE COMPETENCIES:

For all crisis helpline specialists, training is required on the following core competencies:

- History of the organization, orientation, and understanding program policies and procedures
- Self-awareness and understanding how bias affects us as helpers
- Listening and communication skills
- Grief, loss, and loneliness
- Understanding crisis
- Suicide awareness, intervention and safety planning
- Understanding mental illness and behavioral healthcare
- Understanding and helping individuals who regularly use your helplines
- Setting appropriate boundaries and handling challenging behaviors
- Addictive and compulsive behaviors
- Violence, neglect, and exploitation
- Accessing community resources
- The importance of self-care and emotional safety in helpline work.

DEMONSTRABLE COMPETENCIES:

The training program focuses on demonstrable attitudes, knowledge and skills, and:

- presents a basic understanding of human personality with its physical, psychological, spiritual, and social needs and attendant problems
- gives knowledge of how to help and care for people in times of distress
- ensures that prospective helpline specialists develop their abilities to help individuals using your helplines, understand the limits of their role, and learn how to make referrals
- ensures that helpline specialists understand and integrate safe, competent practice into the special techniques of helpline work
- includes a period of supervised apprenticeship
- includes a process through which a trainee's competence to serve on the helpline is adequately evaluated, and
- makes service on the helpline dependent upon completion of classroom and apprenticeship requirements and the signing of a pledge to maintain confidentiality.