

Crisis Response
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What is crisis/trauma?

- Traumatic events are extraordinary, not because they occur rarely, but rather because they overwhelm the ordinary human adaptations to life.

-- Judith Herman

Reactions to crisis

- SHOCK

“During the crime I was frightened beyond anything I had ever know. Afterwards, everything was in a fog.”

A robbery victim

• DISORIENTATION

“After I was assaulted, I was afraid to answer my door. I couldn’t sleep at night. I’d cry over the littlest thing.”

A sexual assault victim

• LACK OF CONTROL

“I was overwhelmed with feelings of fear – would I become a victim again? Would I ever be safe in my own home again?”

A burglary victim

• FEAR

“How can I expect to lead a normal life when my friends and neighbors are robbed at gunpoint? I’m afraid to even go outside.”

An elderly victim

• ANGER

"It just wasn't fair. My house was vandalized; my family heirlooms stolen. I'm over the initial shock, but not the anger."

A burglary victim

• DISBELIEF

"I went outside of my house and my car was gone!! I kept thinking someone had 'borrowed' it or I had lost my mind and left it somewhere. It sounds crazy but I was not believing my car was stolen."

Auto Theft Victim

Effects of Crisis

- Physical
- Emotional
- Spiritual
- Financial

NOVA Crisis Response Model

- National Organization for Victim Assistance
- www.try-nova.org

Crisis intervention

- is emotional first aid.
- Crisis intervention is assuring the victim that the crime is not their fault, assuring them of physical safety, expressing regret that the crime occurred, displaying compassion and assisting with basic needs such as medical attention.

NOVA MODEL

- SAFETY AND SECURITY
- VENTILATION AND VALIDATION
- PREDICT AND PREPARE

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Is victim physically safe?
- More importantly is victim *feeling* safe?
- Is defendant nearby? Victim needs this info.
- Can you give victim a choice as to where or when to meet with you? Return control.
- Closed door/open door? Choices!

SAFETY AND SECURITY cont'd

- If on the phone, is victim able to have privacy or does she want to call you back?
- Explain role of courtroom deputies.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Advocate:
You are not a mind reader!

Do not assume.

ASK the victim if s/he is feeling secure in that setting, etc. Just ask!

Physical

- Make victim is as comfortable as possible.
- Offer water. Think of how we perspire & throat gets dry when we are nervous.
- Always have tissues nearby.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Self Actualization
Intellectual and spiritual growth
Love and belongingness
Cognitive functioning
(activities of daily living)
Safety and Security
Basic human/survival needs

SIMPLE STATEMENTS THAT HELP

Can you think of TWO words, just TWO words, that are helpful to say to victims soon after meeting/talking with them ?

I'm sorry.

- I'm sorry this happened to you.
- I'm sorry you have been through such a tough time.
- I'm sorry you had to miss your vacation to come to court.
- I'm sorry about the death of your son.

More simple statements

- I'm glad you are all right.
- I'm glad your called our office (or came in to see us.)
- This was not your fault. (No blame game! Why do we do that anyway?)

VENTILATION AND VALIDATION

Reassure victims their feelings are normal and natural, even though they may seem unusual.

In other words, VALIDATE their feelings. They are not going crazy. Tell them that.

VENTILATION & VALIDATION

- Let victims tell you what happened or what they need in their own words.
- Listen, listen, listen.
- Let them VENT and you VALIDATE.

Speaking of listening . . .

Listen without interrupting.

LOOK at the person who is talking to you.

Focus all your attention on victim (no pecking on computer or shuffling papers)

Listening

For reflecting what you DO understand:

- It sounds like you feel . . .
- I hear you saying . . .
- Let me see if I'm with you so far. . .
- You seem to be wondering about . . .

More Listening/Reflecting

- The part I understand is . . .
- Would it be accurate to say that . . . ?
- So you're saying . . .

For exploring what you don't understand

- The part that isn't clear to me is . . .
- Can you say more about . . . ?
- How is that for you?
- What does that mean to you?

Back to the NOVA model

- SAFETY and SECURITY
- VENTILATION and VALIDATION
- ***PREDICT and PREPARE***

PREDICT and PREPARE

- Help victims sort out their most pressing needs/problems. Today's priority is . . .
- Help THEM problem-solve. Do not rescue, dictate, or control. Discuss past coping attempts.
- Ask victim about his/her resources. Family, church, co-workers?

Predict and Prepare (cont'd)

- Make appropriate referrals. KNOW your referral agencies.
- Know your limits! Maybe victim needs referral to counseling or other professional.
- You cannot do it all and that's okay.

Predict and Prepare (cont'd)

- Prepare victims for their emotions by letting them know what common reactions to stress and trauma are.
- Normalize their feelings.

Predict and Prepare (cont'd)

Prepare victim for criminal justice system.

- Explain next steps in NON-legalese.
- Be honest.
- Expect delays, this is not easy, etc.

Prepare for c.j.s.

- Tell them what to expect. Tentatively.
- Tell what to bring to court, meeting, etc.
- Who will be in courtroom?
- Where will victim park?

Predict and Prepare (cont'd)

Prepare for court:

- It is natural for victim to feel nervous about court. Focus on their behavior, not feelings.
- Visit the courtroom beforehand, meet for pre-trial interviews, wear appropriate clothing, face the prosecutor not the defendant, etc DO WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE. (Morita)

Predict and Prepare

- Ask victim what is coming up in their lives.

After all you've been through, what do you think will happen in next few days or weeks? At home, job?

Predict and Prepare

- How do you think your family has been/will continue to be affected?
- Do you have any concerns about what will happen next?

More predict and prepare

- Explore with victim coping strategies, info seeking, problem solving.
- Give info on helpful web sites, books, articles. Information is empowering!
- Suggest referrals.

Crisis Intervention Techniques

from FBI Law Enforcement Initiatives

Appropriate things to say:

- I am sorry this happened to you.
- You are safe now (if true)
- It was not your fault this happened to you.
- Your reaction is a normal response to an abnormal event.

Appropriate things to say (cont'd)

- It must have been upsetting/distressing to see/hear/feel/smell that.
- You're not going crazy.
- It is ok to cry, to want revenge, to be angry
- Your life has been changed forever. Things can get better, "new normal."

Appropriate things to say (cont'd)

- It is understandable (or natural) that you feel that way.
- I will do what I can to help you through this.
- I am glad you called me (or came in)

Do NOT say to victims or witnesses

- I know how you feel.
- I understand.
- You're lucky you're alive.
- You're lucky you have other children.

Do NOT say

- Get on with your life.
- You can get on with your life/ you can find someone else.
- It was God's will.
- You shouldn't feel that way.

Do NOT say

- Out of tragedies, good things happen.
- Time heals all wounds.
- I promise . . . (can you really promise anything?)

Morita Psychotherapy

Shoma, Morita, Ph.D
Japanese Psychotherapist
1874-1938

Dr. Brian Ogawa
Washburn University

Goals of Morita Therapy

- 1) Accept your feelings as they are (neither good nor bad; they just are)
- 2) Know your purpose.
- 3) Do what needs to be done.

Acceptance, purpose and action!

Morita principles

- Acceptance, purpose and action direct clients toward "constructive living."

Victim advocates are great at practicing Morita principles!

1ST Morita principle

- **ACCEPTANCE OF FEELINGS**

Say "It's normal to feel that way. You are not going crazy. . . Feelings ebb and flow."
"

Do not focus on feelings; focus on doing.

2ND Morita principle

- **PURPOSE**

One of essential elements of recovery from victimization is the return to purposeful living.

May have some new purposes after victimization.

3RD Morita principle

- **DOING WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE**

Live moment by moment. Attend fully to what needs to be done rather than focus on feelings.

Morita

Doing what needs to be done could mean:

- Filling out compensation application
- Getting clothes for court
- Visiting the courtroom
- Calling a counselor or other professional

Morita principles

Action – doing what needs to be done could also mean:

- Getting door locks changed
- Calling about restitution amounts
- Practice talking into microphone
- Taking a self-defense class

Morita

- The ultimate goal in Morita principles is not to feel better to live better but to live *constructively* in each moment, doing each large and small task well.

What victims need from you

- Good, caring compassionate attitudes
- Options
- Honesty
- To be taken seriously
- For you to follow-up. Do what you say you will.

What victims need from you

- Emotional support
- Accurate Information
- Practical suggestions
- Your ability to listen attentively
- Non-judgmental attitude

Remember

- You do great work. You make huge differences in people's lives.
- You cannot do it all.
- Take care of yourself or you cannot effectively help others.

"I have never been especially impressed by the heroics of the people convinced that they are about to change the world. I am more awed by the heroism of those who are willing to struggle to make one small difference after another."
--Ellen Goodman

And from Martin Luther King, Jr:
"Everyone is great. Because everyone can serve . . . You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love."

Thank YOU for your heart full of grace!
And for making one small difference after another in so many people's lives.
