

GOD'S CARE *FOR THE CONGREGATION* IN TIMES OF CRISIS

- A resource manual to train teams within Christian congregations to meet crisis situations.

“Crisis”

from the Greek Krisis...a separating...a crucial time, the turning point when something must soon terminate or suffer a material change...the outcome decides whether growth or negative consequences will follow...a time to begin.

Disasters/Crisis Happen

- Vandalism
- Financial mismanagement
- Clergy sexual misconduct/
Harassment
- Death of a leader/key staff leaving
- Terrorism
- Church burning
- Flooding
- A severe storm

BASIC CRISIS PREPARATION

- Select and train a crisis team.
- Prepare a building plan. What changes or adjustments are needed to meet a crisis?
- Develop a crisis communication system.
 - Signal to stay inside the building or room.
 - Signal to exit the building.
 - Signal to fall to the ground in case of an attack.
 - Communication with the media

BASIC CRISIS PREPARATION

- Develop a flowchart of responsibilities. Who is in charge? Of what?
- Train staff and key people in crisis intervention and defusing techniques.
- Study organizational policies and procedures. Know your basic legal responsibilities!

Important Crisis Concepts

- Crisis reactions are normal reactions to abnormal circumstances.
- Although people are never the same, the goal is to function incorporating our new experiences.
- Healing and growth occurs in epicycles
- People recover in ways characteristic of their age.
- Children and adults process their loss through talk and actions.

NORMAL CRISIS REACTIONS



- Fear of future disasters.
- Loss of interest in day to day activities.
- Sleep disturbances and night terrors .
- Regressive behaviors both academically and behaviorally.
- Anger at God, doubts about faith, questions about death and one's own mortality.
- Typical stress reactions (direct and indirect) in member families and among the staff.



KEY POINTS-

- People are resilient
- Family and church are the first resource for care.

The Crisis Response Key is an adequate support system

To develop this support system, we need to:

- 1. Develop a plan.*
- 2. Develop a support system which exists outside of our family.*

God's Care For the Congregation in Times of Crisis was developed to help Christian congregations provide this support from a perspective of faith and hope.

MANUAL ORGANIZATION

- 1. INTRODUCTION
- 2. DEVELOPING A CRISIS TEAM
- 3. CHURCH/COMMUNITY CRISIS
 - Story, Perspective, Action Plan, HELPS
- 4. DEFUSING/DEBRIEFING
- 5. MEDIA
- 6. FORMS
- 7. ACTIVITIES

SUGGESTED TEAM ROLES

- CRISIS TEAM LEADER
- PASTOR
- LEADER'S ASSISTANT OR DESIGNEE
- MEDIA LIAISON
- POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL TEAM MEMBERS
 - Counselor, Stephen Minister, Lay Administrator, Nurse, D.C.E., Emergency Personnel, Etc.

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Two-Day Crisis Workshop

- Team Development
- Building Preparation
- Crisis Plan Development
- Legal Issues
- Grief and Loss Issues
- Media
- Debriefing/Defusing
- Scenarios
- Team Preparation in
 - death/suicide issues
 - abuse
 - violence
 - natural disaster
 - sexual boundary issues
- Discussion of Individual Congregation Needs

God's Care in Times of Crisis

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