Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Workshop

Agenda

- **What is CISM?**

- **Signs to look out for.**

- **Examples of work related Critical Incidents.**

- **Crisis communication techniques and reminders.**

What is CISM?

CISM

WHAT IS CISM?

Critical incident stress management is a system of crisis intervention meant to prevent psychological damage associated with unusual and stressful events, also called critical incidents. CISM is intended to support those who are prone to trauma exposure as well as those who have experienced an intensely traumatic event.

It is a system of support that is meant to do the following:
- Lessen the impact of the critical incident
- Normalize instinctive reactions to the incident
- Encourage the natural recovery process
- Restore the adaptive functioning skills of the person
- Determine the need for further supportive services or therapy

CISM

- **Critical Incidents**

Critical incidents are unusually challenging events that have the potential to create significant human distress and can overwhelm one's usual coping mechanisms.

- **Crisis Intervention**

- A short-term helping process

- Acute intervention designed to mitigate the crisis response.

- Not Psychotherapy.

Examples of work related Critical Incidents

- Death of an employee off the job
- Death of employee family member
- Workplace violence
- Robberies/ Crime
- Downsizing/layoffs
- Chronic job related stress
- Inadequate stress management skills
- Work related incidents
- Natural Disasters: fires, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes

Signs and symptoms of distress

PHYSICAL

- Fatigue

- Chills

- Unusual thirst

- Chest pain

- Headaches

- Dizziness

COGNITIVE

- Uncertainty
- Confusion
- Nightmares
- Poor attention
- decision making ability
- Poor concentration, memory
- Poor problem solving ability

EMOTIONAL

- Grief
- Fear
- Guilt
- Intense anger
- Apprehension and depression
- Irritability
- Chronic anxiety

CISM signs

BEHAVIORAL

- Inability to rest

- Withdrawal

- Antisocial behavior

- Increased alcohol consumption

- Change in communications

- Loss/increase in appetite

Crisis communication techniques and reminders.

Non verbal behavior sends a powerful message.

Often, the first impression you make is based upon how you look. The challenge is to make that impression useful in the service of crisis intervention.

IMPORTANT !

Crisis intervention targets

the RESPONSE not the EVENT.

The failure to understand that the event is NOT the crisis, can easily lead to over intervention , and the potential to interfere with natural recovery mechanisms.

Crisis Intervention applications can be made easier by the utilization of simple models. The SAFER-R model is nothing more than a step-by-step model for working with individuals in crisis.

The SAFER-R Model

- **S**tabilize(Introduction, meet basic needs, mitigate acute stressors)

- **A**cknowledge the crisis(event, reactions)

- **F**acilitate understanding (normalization)

- **E**ncourage effective coping (mechanisms of action)

- **R**ecover or **R**eferral (facilitate access to continued care).

CISM techniques.

Technique	Purpose	Comment
Silence	- To promote speech - To encourage continued uninterrupted speech	Careful ! May inadvertently communicate non-caring, lack of interest.

Technique	Purpose	Comment
Non Verbal Attending	- To encourage continued uninterrupted speech. - To probe. - To show interest	Nodding of the head and Facial expressions are good examples.

Technique	Purpose	Comment
Restatement	- To show you are listening. - To check for accuracy. - To clarify semantics. - To probe.	Careful! Used too frequently you can sound like a mindless parrot.

Technique	Purpose	Comment
Paraphrasing	- To communicate interest, understanding, empathy. - To check for listening accuracy to allow speaker to "hear" own thoughts. - To probe for further content.	Use more frequently than restatement. Easier and more natural than restatement. A powerful behavior change technique.

Examples of paraphrasing; "So, in other words….", "Sounds like….", "What I'm hearing you saying is……."

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Technique	Purpose	Comment
Reflection of Emotion	- To identify the speaker's feelings based on verbal and/or nonverbal cues. - To encourage discussion of feelings and remove emotional blocks to communication.	Important to allow feelings to be expressed, otherwise they block problem solving and tend to escalate. But be careful not to overuse this technique.

Example of reflection of emotion; "You seem really angry…."

Technique	Purpose	Comment
Open-end questions	- To provide maximal response options. - To question without restricting answers.	Good to use in early phases when you get stuck.

Technique	Purpose	Comment
Closed-end questions	- To direct or focus responses. - To provide structure.	Good when pursuing a specific target. You only learn what you know to ask.

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AVOID !

- "I know how you feel"
- "Its not that bad"
- "This was God's will"
- "Others have it much worse'
- "You need to forget about it"
- "You did the best you could"
- "You really need to experience this pain"
- Psychotherapeutic Interpretation
- Confrontation.

Thank You