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Is It A Crisis Or Does It Just Feel Like One

By Dr. Dorree Lynn

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Part one of a series on psychotherapy

Contrary to the way most of us think about crises, genuine crises are few and far between. Life or death situations such as serious illness, a bad accident, or a suicide attempt are crises that must be dealt with in the moment. An out of control alcoholic spouse, a physically abusive parent, a child swallowing poison, the aftermath of rape, are all crises that require immediate attention. In these situations you will need to call a trusted relative or friend, a crisis hot line, 911, your physician, or go to the local emergency room. You must take action now. Almost all other situations such as a divorce or your child having a behavior problem just make you feel as though you must do something this second. You want to do almost anything to stop the pain, but, in fact, you don't have to do anything in the moment. You have time to think and to find the best help you can.

Ask yourself an important question. Is what you are facing really a crisis or does it just feel like one? Although we live in a culture that demands instant gratification and instant solutions, in actuality there is very little that must be acted on immediately. What most people consider a crisis is simply an overwhelming sense of panic, an intense reaction to a conflict or difficult situation. Since life will always hand us "hard times," it helps to understand that we can learn to manage a situation that feels "out of control." Human beings are remarkably resilient and tend to bounce back even when it feels as though they never will. All cultures understand that upheaval can result in growth. The Chinese symbol for crisis or obstacle is the same one that represents opportunity. This is a notion to which I adhere, as a psychotherapist and as a human being.

Many events that feel like a crisis can be handled with time or may propel you to seek help. For example, your long term lover has suddenly walked out, the school has called to inform you that your child has Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), your sister calls to tell you that she thinks you have never loved her, your boss has reneged on the promotion he promised you, your spouse wants a divorce, or your father is ill and dying. Again, I urge you to remember that these are not crises, they only feel that way. The sense of intolerable pain can usually be tolerated long enough to evaluate your feelings and determine whether or not you need help. You need time to sort out what you feel, what is real, what

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you can or should do, and, possibly, your portion of responsibility in these events. Very little must be done in the moment. Often a little extra time in the short-term can avoid long-term mistakes.

Life is too hard to do alone,

Dr. D.

Dorree Lynn, PH.D.

Dr. Dorree Lynn is co-founder of the Institute for the Advanced Study of Psychotherapy and a practicing clinician in New York and Washington, DC. Dr. Lynn served on the executive board of the American Academy of Psychotherapists and she is on the editorial board of their publication, Voices. She is also a regular columnist for the Washington, DC newspaper, The Georgetown. Dr. Lynn is a noted speaker and well known on the lecture circuit.

Crisis Management Tips

By Colin Ong TS

The term crisis management has different connotations. In this article, I will try to provide pointers that can be used in most situations:

Is It A Crisis In The First Place?:

This question is important to ask, as there are many situations that go wrong because the right person to handle it is not around. You may be in charge of a project until your supervisor comes back and are unable to contact him during a crisis. You have to make your own decisions in his absence and your action is dependent on the level of authority given.

The Big Picture:

It is not easy to handle a crisis if you are not aware of all the facts. If your role is a leader, you have to be detached from the emotional side of the crisis and rationally take stock of how to move on. Again, this is not as easy as it sounds as you may have long-time colleagues who are involved in this crisis.

The Relevant Team:

It is important to be able to meet up with the relevant team to discuss about the situation. This is to ensure that the team is able to analyse and make a united stand about handling this crisis. This team should also comprise of the authorities, if the crisis is serious.

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The Timeline:

You must construct a timeline and ensure that each process scenario is highlighted. This practice will be a check to prevent your team from spending too much time in one aspect of handling the crisis.

Procedural Manual:

Is there an organizational situational manual that you can use for this situation? Are you able to recollect the tips that were given to you when you participated in a mock drill?

External Experts:

You should get external experts to assess the situation if the crisis is totally unanticipated. However, you must have had a close-door meeting with your inner circle. This is essential, as you do not want to unnecessarily reveal confidential information to external parties.

Speaking To The Media:

It is important to prepare a press kit—which provides a full detailed report about the crisis. If you are comfortable to conduct a press interview, you have to ensure that you have the full details first.

Your Communication Style:

You have to ensure that your communication style is in sync with the crisis. Remember to be forthcoming with reliable information and try not to speculate. This will also ensure that the victims' immediate families do not overly worry. It will also not help if you come across as very emotional in the media as you want to communicate that your organization has everything under control.

Beyond Your Control:

If the crisis involves the loss of lives, it is not unthinkable that your credibility and organisation's reputation is put into question. Assuming that the crisis was beyond your organisation's control, you have to stick to your best judgement and not be led into a debate that may open your organisation to possible legal action.

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After a Crisis or Trauma

BE CONSISTENT TO BE SUCCESSFUL!

Confronting Emergency Financial Crisis

The Harmless Lump That Opened My Eyes

Coin Collector Software

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Create Your Own Scrapbook at minimum cost.

Starting a Successful Retail Business

How to keep up the SPICE in your Love Life.



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