

Thoughts of suicide or homicide social work essay



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Crisis intervention is referred to as methods used to offer urgent, immediate, short-term psychological help to individuals who are experiencing an event which produces emotional, mental, physical and behavioural distress or problems. Crisis intervention is to reduce the intensity of an individual's emotional, coping and problem-solving skills that is malfunctioning in the state of crisis and help them to return to their level of functioning. Caplan (1961) explained that when people are facing an obstacle to important life goals, they go into a state of crisis and become insurmountable by the use of customary methods of problem solving. The hotlines which address crisis are usually available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. However, Roberts (2005) stated that not every person can be suitable to perform crisis intervention work since it is very demanding. We shall focus on the difficulty of crisis intervention work and how everyone is not suitable to be a crisis intervention worker. A crisis is a situation which an individual suffered disruption or breakdown of their normal ability to use their problem-solving and coping skills. Criminal victimization, thoughts of suicide or homicide and loss or drastic changes in relationships can put an individual into a crisis which can be considered as life-threatening situations. When crisis is often thought as a cataclysmic event happened to an individual, in Erikson's stages of psychosocial development, crisis is also described sometimes as foreseeable parts in life as well. 'Crisis is universal because no one is immune to breakdown, given the right constellation of circumstances' (James and Gilliland, 2001, p. 5). Thus, crisis intervention worker must possess certain types of professional skills, energy, personality and ideally, with some life experiences. Roberts (2005) explained that the crisis workers have the responsibility of providing assistance to the affected individuals to ensure

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that they get back to their previous states. Life experiences often help the crisis intervention worker to have congruence with the individual whom met with a crisis and may even reassure the individual by introducing new coping skills and eliminating ineffective ways of coping. The worker handles a crisis or not to the extent that he or she is a whole person (Carkhuff & Berenson, 1977, p. 162). Being a crisis worker, they have to remain poised, calm, in control. They need to be attentive to assess the victim and situation with openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. Different situations will demand heavily on the crisis worker's creativity and flexibility in their approaches. During crisis situations, their time management is very important. If a crisis worker does not approach the issue appropriately, the victim will probably offer more resistance making the intervention more difficult. Soyka (2004) explained that not everyone has the ability to probe others in a way that leads to the desired results or responses. The worker is required to provide assistance to people from different cultural backgrounds, with different beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours. Roberts (2005) supported that it is not within everyone's abilities to cope with such situations. Thus, crisis intervention is a very energy demanding and intensive job. Accurate listening and responding skills are essential tools for all crisis workers to help them to define the problem, ensuring safety of everybody in the situation and provide support for the victim. This requires great professionalism which should be sought from appropriate training. James (2008) explained that unsuccessful interventions are due to lack of proper training. Visual assessment will be one of the most reliable tools for the crisis worker when they are facing the victim and situations in person. They must be able to read and recognize any symptoms

displayed by the client. Crisis workers need to have the ability to understand the problem as far as the situation allows them to from the client's point of view. There are situations whereby safety is being compromised by the client. Crisis workers must be able to minimize and recognize any physical danger towards anybody in the situation and this will require the worker to exercise personal safety first. According to Roberts (2005), "Crisis worker should be understanding and never resort to violence under any circumstances". They should provide the victim with support and try to help by connecting with familiar person or environment. Crisis workers will need to examine the alternatives available in the situation before offering them to the client. The alternatives will produce better outcomes when their caring are addressed and are being provided with a comfort feeling. They will need to help the client to explore more coping strategies. The coping strategies which the victim used previously can be enhanced as well. The crisis worker has to reform and enhance the victim's problem-solving skills by thoroughly understanding the problem and desired changes with consideration of the pros and cons of different solutions before developing a realistic plan for the victim. The solutions given can never be a problem to the victim. The crisis worker should allow the victim to make decision to increase autonomy and control. Another technique applied by many crisis workers, is the use of cognitive therapy. This is founded on the belief that a person's thoughts can influence their behaviour and feelings. It is proven to be a very effective for crisis intervention. Crisis worker usually undergo some professional training before they begin working. This training is important since crisis intervention needs to be done in a professional manner. The existence of training for crisis workers in itself shows that it is not a responsibility that can be

undertaken by anyone. The education that one gets from the training helps in being effective while dealing with various clients. James (2008) supported that the training enables the crisis workers to have a picture of the potential challenges that can be faced while working in different settings. Crisis intervention takes place at any settings. An example will be, after a disaster such as a tsunami, there will be victims in the affected area who would require assistances to cope with the crisis they had just encountered. Some of these victims will need help at certain location which require the crisis worker to be physically present. This requires certain level of courage for crisis worker as the situations and environments are unknown and might be chaotic and dangerous. These are examples of some of the tough working conditions that crisis helpers are required to face. Soyka (2004) explained that, individuals who may not have the required courage to work under such conditions are not suitable for crisis intervention work. Crisis workers will also face situations of working with disjointed families. Bringing back together a family is not a simple job. Frequently, family members tend to be uncooperative and sometimes even use violence towards one another or the worker. Convening all the family members together for an intervention session may post as another problem. Working with drug addicts is also another example of a difficult task. There are many reasons for the drug addicts' turning to drugs and the worker must accept the drug addicts and their problem faced. There are individuals who inherently hate people who use drugs. Soyka (2004) stated that such individuals may not be able to intervene in cases of drug addiction. In conclusion, crisis intervention work is very demanding and not everyone is suitable for crisis intervention work. Crisis can take place at any time and settings which demands high level of

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energy from the worker due to unpredictability. The challenges faced by the crisis worker are various and sometimes dangerous. They required appropriate training in order to respond and react to certain situations. The training provides crisis workers with professional skills to intervene and assess the situation and the victim effectively. People with certain life experience are able to assess and respond to some crisis situations better as they are able to provide empathy and address the victim's problem. Crisis workers need to remain calm, patient and understanding at all times during crisis intervention work. Lacking in such abilities poses as a problem in doing crisis intervention work and might cause more harm to the outcome of the intervention. Word count: 1375