

Crisis has different meanings social work essay



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Topic: Not everyone is suitable to do crisis intervention work as it is very demanding for the helper. Do you agree? Support your answers with relevant research. Crisis has different meanings to different person; one person may feel deeply affected from an event, while another suffers little or nothing at all. Because each individual reacts differently, crisis workers need to understand what crisis means to the individual as it is crucial in crisis intervention (Coulshed & Orme, 2012). James and Gilliland (2008) define crises as events or problems which are intolerable difficulty that goes beyond the limit of an individual's resources and coping mechanisms (p. 3). Crisis refers to an inability of an individual to solve a problem, a state of emotional disequilibrium. It refers not only to an individual traumatic situation or event, but also the individual reaction to an event. An individual is in crisis when their important life goals are obstructed by difficulties that they could not resolve within their present available resources. In the event of a crisis most people tend to avoid intervention in order to stay out of trouble, however there are people who would try to intervene out of goodwill but they might not be the right person to help and may even worsen the situation. Crisis intervention is an immediate person to person assistance; it helps people who face crisis to restore determination and confidence (France, 1996). Crisis workers assist people in crisis by exploring alternatives for solutions and regain equilibrium. Augilera (1998, p. 26) stated that the therapeutic goal of crisis intervention is to enable the individual in crisis to regain emotion equilibrium or gain higher level state of equilibrium than before the crisis. James and Gilliland (2008) stated that almost anyone can be taught the techniques of crisis intervention in a book and apply these techniques to some degree of skills, however it takes more than reading up techniques

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through a book and mastering the skills to be an effective crisis worker. Past experiences and the crisis worker's characteristics and personality affects the worker's ability to handle different situations. Although crisis workers do not have the answers to every question, they are expected to be competent in problem solving, guiding and supporting the person in crisis towards crisis solutions (Aguilera, 1998). According to Augilera (1998) in a 1959 address John F. Kennedy stated, " When the word crisis is written in Chinese, it is make up of two characters one represents danger and the other opportunity" (p. 1). Crisis is danger because it threatens to overwhelm an individual, and it may result in suicide or mental illnesses in extreme cases. On the other hand, it is also an opportunity as it provides the client opportunities to learn new coping skills and function at a better equilibrium state than before the crisis. When an individual encounters a crisis and do not have the resources or coping skills to resolve the problem, tensions rises and discomfort is felt, thus disequilibrium occurs. In order to be an effective crisis worker and making intervention effective, some characteristic and personality are needed besides theoretical knowledge and technical skills. Characteristics like life experience, poise, creativity and flexibility, energy, resilience and assertiveness (James & Gilliland, 2008). Life experiences are rich resources for a crisis worker as it comes with emotional maturity. Workers who had overcome crisis in life gain perspectives by learning from those experiences and use their experiences to help people who are in crisis like them before. Although life experience is a rich resource, it can weaken the crisis worker if it influences the worker in a negative way (James & Gilliland, 2008). Crisis situation are often shocking, unpredictable and unexpected, crisis worker needs to remain calm and steady, to provide an atmosphere that is stable

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and rational for people in crisis. James and Gilliland (2008) stated that " an effective crisis worker is as steady and well anchored as a Rock of Gibraltar."(p. 22). Meaning that an effective crisis worker is made of stone, neither afraid, tense nor anxious. Being poise is one of the significant qualities a crisis worker should have. Different crisis requires different methods to resolve. Hence crisis workers need to be creative and flexible when an individual faces problems that are complicated and appears to be unsolvable. Crisis worker need to be flexible as creating solutions for people in crisis is time sensitive. Their job is to attend to the immediate problem. Once the situation is in control and the person in crisis has calmed down, the case will be handed to other professionals as crisis workers do not need to solve the root problem. Crisis workers may sometimes need to employ untraditional approaches to solve difficult situations. How creative an individual is in finding solutions during difficult situations depends on how well they have natured creativity through the course of their lives (James & Gilliland, 2008). Crisis workers need energy as crisis work is very demanding, tedious and intense who often need to assess, organize and direct situation. James & Gilliland (2008) highlighted that crisis workers take care of themselves in both physical and psychologically, and uses wisely of their available energy. Crisis workers also need to have some degree of self-knowledge about their own abilities and understanding, particularly to the extent of being resilience during difficult situations, such as working with offensive or aggressive people (Trevithick, 2005). During crisis, people are hostile and does not talk much, hence crisis workers would need to be assertive and set limits to behavior so as to keep the person stabilize and also to maintain own integrity (James & Gilliland, 2008). As Trevithick (2005)

stated for a crisis worker to make an intervention effective, it involves being able to recommend the right courses of action, the right choice of generalist skills and the specialist interventions connected with a particular practice approach. Besides using knowledge to describe the mandate for involvement, that is, deciding whether we are invited or required to be involved in the situation, crisis worker need to be able to set the intervention in ways that address the needs and expectations of the individual in crisis. To be an effective crisis worker, one needs to learn how to make assessment and deal with people in threatening situations. Practicing a standardized model for intervening in crisis situations can help crisis workers to be aware of the components of an effective response to crisis. James and Gilliland (2008) stated that, it is worth having a model of intervention for crisis workers that is direct and effective (p. 37). A six-step model for crisis intervention is one framework for a crisis worker to have. This model focuses on listening and acting in a systematic manner helping people in crisis to regain back to an equilibrium state. The first three steps, defining the problem, ensuring safety and providing support are focus more on listening while the last three steps, examining alternatives, making plans and obtaining commitment are focused on action (James & Gilliland, 2008). The first step of the model, defining problem, is to understand the issues from the point of view of the individual in crisis. This requires core listening skills, congruence, acceptance and empathy. The second step of the model, ensuring safety, which is necessary by keeping the individual and the crisis worker safe by reducing any possibility of physical and psychological danger. Ensuring safety is a continuous part in the process of crisis intervention. The third step of the model is providing support by communicating care and

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emotional as well as informational support (James & Gilliland, 2008). The fourth step of the model, examining alternatives which is often neglected by the individual and worker, is to explore different options available. Alternatives can be examined from three possible perspectives. The first perspective is situational supports which are people who know the individual presently or from the past that cares about what happens to them. The second perspective is helping the individual in identifying coping mechanisms or actions, behaviors, or environmental resources that might help them get through the present crisis. The third perspective is assisting the individual by examining the thinking patterns and finding ways to reframe the situation in order so that the individual's view of the situation would be changed which in turn lessen the individual's anxiety and stress level (James & Gilliland, 2008). The fifth step of the model is making plans where the individual is supported to make a very detailed plan that outlines everyone that can be contacted for immediate support. Collaboration is important in order to let the individual have a sense of ownership of the plan, as France (1996) had stated that order can come to what has been a chaotic situation as the individual work on a plan; a sense of self-control and enhanced self-esteem can be attained when individual attribute tangible progress to their own efforts and realistic hope can grow as the individual plan courses of action, then experience success (p. 48) The last step of the model, obtaining commitment consist of asking the individual to summarize the plan verbally or in some case where lethality is concern, the commitment may be written down by both parties. The goal is to let the individual to commit to the plan and take definite positive steps designed for them to move towards regaining a pre-crisis state of equilibrium (James & Gilliland, <https://assignbuster.com/crisis-has-different-meanings-social-work-essay/>

2008). In conclusion an effective crisis worker needs to have a strong base of theoretical knowledge, technical skills, characteristics and right traits and personality. Although everyone can learn crisis intervention through reading books and practicing and mastering the skills in intervention, but a good deal of characteristics and the right personality of a crisis worker can make crisis intervention more effectively. People with type A personality are not suitable for crisis work as they are very competitive, impatient and easily aroused to anger. They experience a constant urgency struggling against the clock. They become impatient with delays and unproductive time and would do many things at a time (Mcleod, 2011). People with such personality are not suitable for crisis intervention work as they do not have the patience to listen and understand the situation. Although speed is essential, crisis workers must have the patience to communicate with the person in crisis and not aggravate it by getting angry themselves when the problem is not solved.