

# Crisis Intervention & Advocacy

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A vibrant blue sky filled with fluffy white clouds. Sunbeams radiate from the top center, creating a bright and uplifting atmosphere. The word "Breathe" is written in a dark blue, elegant cursive font across the middle of the image.

*Breathe*

# *Training Objectives*

- Define and Review the Crisis Intervention Process
- Discuss the Importance of a Trauma-Informed Approach to Crisis Intervention
- Introduce Best-Practices for Managing Difficult Situations
- Build and Practice Crisis Intervention Skills

# What is a Crisis?

*An acute emotional upset arising from developmental, **situational**, or social sources and resulting in a temporary inability to cope by means of one's usual problem-solving devices.*





# *Crisis Intervention*

Crisis intervention is when an advocate identifies, assesses, and intervenes with an individual experiencing a crisis.

It is immediate and short-term care that assists an individual in restoring equilibrium to their bio-psycho-social functioning and works to help them restore balance and reduce the effects of the crisis in their life.

# Trauma Informed Approach

*A trauma-informed approach is based on the recognition that many behaviors and responses often seen as symptoms expressed by survivors and consumers are directly related to traumatic experiences that often cause mental health, substance abuse, and physical health concerns.*

**Realizes** the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery

**Recognizes** the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system

**Responds** by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices

Seeks to actively resist **Re-traumatization\***

\*From the SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) website: <http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/trauma-interventions>

# Trauma Informed Approach

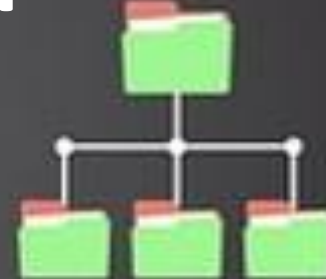
A **trauma-informed approach** reflects adherence to six key principles rather than a prescribed set of practices or procedures. These principles may be generalizable across multiple types of settings, although terminology and application may be setting- or sector-specific:

- Safety
- Trustworthiness and Transparency
- Peer support
- Collaboration and mutuality
- Empowerment, voice, and choice
- Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues\*

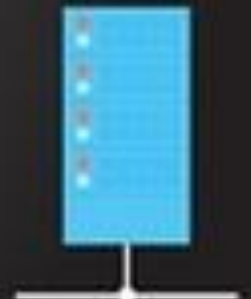
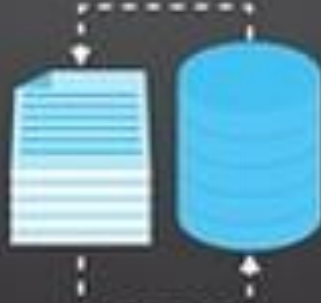
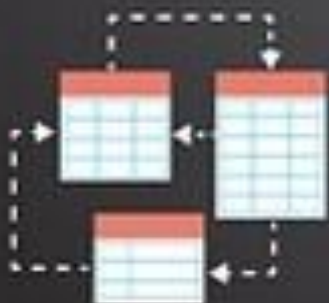
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# Process of



# Intervention





# *Crisis Intervention Process*

**During Crisis Intervention the advocate helps the survivor through the following steps. Listen actively and reflect.**

- Identify the crisis
- Understand available resources and how to access them
- Become empowered to make informed decisions
- Believe in themselves by the advocate providing positive support

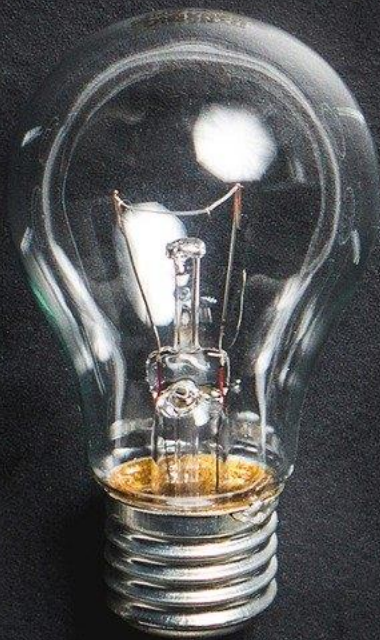
# *Crisis Intervention Process*

- Establish Rapport
- Assess the Situation
- Intervention, Providing Resources and Planning
- Closure for the Survivor



# *Brainstorming*

*Poll Question!*





# *Intervention Tips*

- Provide empathetic support;
- Listen actively;
- Use open-ended and grounding questions;
- Paraphrase and ask clarifying questions (even more important when on the phone);
- Be comfortable with silence;
- Assess for safety and practice cultural humility;

# *Guidelines: “Do”s*

- Recognize the client’s strength, independence, and ability to make decisions;
- Close the session:
  - Define next steps;
  - Go over “action plan”;
  - Provide appropriate referrals based on victim/survivor’s decisions.

# *Intervention Tips*

- Ask victim-blaming questions;
- Disclose your personal information (as much as possible given the circumstances);
- Diagnose (crisis intervention is not the time for diagnosis);
- Tell the survivor that you understand their situation;

# *Guidelines: “Don’t”s*

- Ask questions that are off-topic;
- Lead the survivor or ask “why” questions;
- Focus on reporting;
- Take the survivor’s reactions personally;
- Overwhelm the survivor with unnecessary information.



# Tips for managing difficult situations

- Evaluate the situation [What is making the intervention difficult?]
- Acknowledge the difficulty in seeking help
- Assess their resources
- Provide resources
- Invite survivor to take time to reflect, make decisions, or rest
- Reassess their safety
- Ask grounding questions (if appropriate)

*Focus on Empowerment*



# Grounding

Bringing yourself or someone else into the present moment through physical or mental stimuli

Breathing techniques  
Physically grounding questions  
Mentally grounding questions

# Closure for the Advocate



# Helpline Advocacy

## ***Working with a survivor that calls a Hotline***

- Assessing safety
- Listen to survivor's story
- Provide resources
- Answer questions
- Review information before ending the call
- Invite survivor to call back
- Empower survivor with information

# Hospital or In-person Advocacy

## ***Working with survivors during a Sexual Assault Forensic Exam or Emergency Room Visits***

- Maintain focus on the survivor's needs
- Provide information and answer questions about the SAFE process
- Assist with immediate needs such as transportation, shelter, referrals to services, and clothing
- Ensure that the survivor is not billed for their Sexual Assault Forensic Exam
- Address other injuries or safety concerns the survivor might have
- Develop a plan for following-up with survivor



# Legal Advocacy

**Legal advocates work with survivors to educate them on their legal options and help them navigate the legal process.**

- Provide emotional support and safety planning
- May assist in both civil and criminal court
- May attend hearings or court proceedings to support survivor
- Explain legal terms and support survivors through steps of the legal process
- Provide survivor with information so they can make informed choices
- Know the history of the justice system's biases and its impact on survivors

*Do not engage in the unauthorized practice of law*

# Advocacy During Covid 19 Restrictions

## *Working with a survivor during a pandemic*

- Prioritize survivor's confidentiality
- Use multiple methods of communication during social distancing
- Ensure survivor is comfortable with platforms and software begin used

# Scenarios

# Scenario #1: In Person Advocacy

- You are working as an on-call victim advocate and receive a call from your local hospital that a survivor is requesting an advocate during a Sexual Assault Forensic Exam. When you arrive at the hospital, the survivor, Jane, is clearly distraught and very anxious about the exam. As the exam proceeds, you can see that Jane is visibly uncomfortable as the more invasive swabbing begins. She stops the Forensic Nurse and asks if she could have a few minutes to speak with you as she does not want the exam to continue, but worries if she does not complete the exam she may not have enough evidence to start a case against her perpetrator.
- How would you, along with support from the Forensic Nurse, offer Jane support during this scenario? What options are available to Jane during her Forensic Exam?

## *Scenario #2: Hotline Advocacy*

- You receive a call from a survivor, John, who identifies as a gay man. The survivor is calling because he has been experiencing harassment from his roommate, who identifies as female, and she had recently assaulted him. John tells you his roommate had always made remarks about how she wishes John was straight because she was so attracted to him. One night, as John is walking to his bedroom after a shower, his roommate grabs his towel off and gropes him. John calls the hotline because he is unsure of his options.
- What support would you offer John? What specific resources might he require?



# *Scenario #3: Advocacy during COVID-19*

- You are a legal advocate on a zoom call with a survivor, discussing their upcoming protective order hearing against their former spouse. Now that courts are open, you will be supporting the client in person during the hearing. While discussing what to expect from the hearing, including having to recall details of past abuse in front of a judge, the survivor begins to hyperventilate and turns their video off. You can hear them crying in the background, but they are no longer speaking.
- How would you show the survivor that you are still present and what steps would you take to de-escalate the situation? What additional resources might the survivor need?