The ABCD Model of Crisis Intervention

Crisis intervention helps resolve the immediate crisis and helps restore the victim to a sense of normalcy or level of functioning equal to or higher than prior to the crisis.

### Achieve Contact
- Provide safety and security, restore power and control.
- Introduce yourself, name, role, purpose.
- Assure the victim of emotional and physical safety.
- Ask victim how s/he would like to be addressed (if not known to caregiver).
- As appropriate, collect information regarding residency, health conditions, family member contact, any support systems or friends.
- Use discernment to learn if s/he is taking or needing medication.
- Identify the victim’s feelings, reactions and perceptions.

Possible questions and comments: “You are safe now.” “I am sorry that it happened.” “Are you ready to…?” “Are you able to…?” “Are you ready to give a description now?” “Do you mind if I sit here?” “May I speak with you now?” “Is this all right with you?”

### Boil Down the Problem
- Allow for reactions and interaction as well as ventilation and validation by telling story; determine most pressing problem and help to restore dignity.
- Ask victim to briefly describe what has just happened.
- Encourage the victim to talk about the present (here and now).
- Avoid criticism of the actions of the victim.
- Ask what the most pressing problem is.
- Review and clarify what you heard as that primary and most immediate problem.
- Ask if the victim has ever experienced a similar situation or crisis in the past.
- Review what you heard as the primary problem.
- Transition to “coping with the problem.”

Possible questions/comments (if true and appropriate): “You did the right thing.” “You did nothing wrong.”

### Cope With the Problem
- Help predict and prepare for the future, explore resources and suggest realistic options, accept a “new normal” or “new reality.” What does the victim want to happen?
- Review what is the most important need — the bottom line.
- Explore what the victim feels is the best solution.
- Help the victim formulate a plan of action: needed resources, specific actions and timeline.
- Reaffirm the future and talk in hopeful terms.
- Arrange follow-up contact or visit with the victim.
- Follow through!

### Determine the Meaning of the Event
- Assist in offering opportunities for restoration and hope, and to find meaning in the traumatic event.
- Assist in allowing the victim/survivor to accept the reality and to experience the pain of the loss.
- Reassure the victim that s/he is not alone in suffering or in having fears.
- Assist in accepting a new normal and new reality, and the understanding or appreciation of beliefs and assumptions about our world.
- Allow questions about faith, God, spiritual issues. Address issues of forgiveness and anger. Determine how the trauma fits into the victim’s life.
- It may take some time for the victim to determine the meaning of the event.
- Help the victim/survivor withdraw emotional energy from the loss and reinvest it in other relationships and other aspects of life.

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