

# **Chapter Seventeen: Practice Group Crisis Intervention Sessions**

**Practice groups should focus on the following things.**

**Facilitators:**

- Introducing the group process
- Eliciting from participants the six key crisis reactions and providing validation
- Helping participants to focus on the future and re-viewing crisis issues with them
- And summarizing the session and closing it.

**Scribe:**

- Identifying and writing down precise phrases that give words to the crisis reaction.

## **Working Group A**

### **Group Crisis Intervention with Air Force Disaster Survivors**

#### **Session 1**

The group is made up of security troops. It includes Captain Tom Jersey, deputy to the supervisor who was killed; Bill Smith, one of the troops who confronted Lloyd Small; John Laing, one of the troops who saw Small kill himself; and Terry Neal, a troop member who had been posted as guard at the first building Small had entered after the massacre.

Captain Jersey is 38 years old. He is married and has two kids. Prior to the shooting, the Captain has been having some problems in his marriage and had been planning to move to an apartment this week. He is a Viet Nam vet.

Bill Smith is 23 years old and has never been involved in a shooting before. He has been engaged for six months and is planning to be married in June. He was recently assigned to this Air Force base and didn't know anyone well.

John Laing is 27 years of age. He was a good friend of one of the troops who had confronted Small at the first building. John is single and is very much a tough guy. He is a superb athlete.

Terry Neal is 33 years of age. He has been working with the security troops for 12 years. He's always been a team player and is very popular with most of the troops. He is married but has no children.

## **Session 2**

This group is made up of Senator Smith's staff. The debriefing will take place in his Washington, D.C. office. His administrative assistant, Dan Burke, is 42 years old. He's worked with the Senator for the last six years. He would have been with the Senator in South Dakota but his wife had been unwell and so he stayed back.

Mary Kay is a legislative aide. She's quite attractive and is 25 years old. She is single. She and the Senator have carried on an innocent flirtatious relationship for the last three years. Just before he went to South Dakota, the Senator had dropped by her desk to tease her about one of her recent dates.

Ann Ring is a press aide and has been handling dozens of telephone calls about the Senator's death. She's had to tell the story repeatedly. She is 30 years old and has worked on the Hill for the last nine years. While she has been in the Senator's office for only a year, previously she worked for one of his close friends and was asked to call him to let him know about the murder.

Susan Knight is the Senator's state liaison officer and handles most of the critical constituency calls. She was responsible for making the death notification to the State office staff. She is engaged to be married but her fiance is overseas at this time. She is 28 years old.

### **Session 3**

This group is made up of staff from one of the school systems in Rapid City. Gregory Lucas is the school system Superintendent. He is 45 years old, married, and has three children. He has lived all of his life in Rapid City and has friends everywhere. He has long been concerned about the nuclear facilities in the area.

Karen Fields is 32 years old. She is married and a mother of two. She serves as a teaching aide in a local school. Her home is near the Air Force base and her husband is a member of the Air Force. They've lived in the area for two years. They expect to be transferred in the next six months.

Patty Stark is a secretary at the same school as Karen. She, too, is married and has three kids. She had been driving past the base just after the shooting took place. She had seen a number of ambulances leaving the base with sirens wailing. She is 35 years old.

Morton Keys is a janitor at the school. He is 25 years old and engaged to be married. Many of his friends are in the Air Force. He participates on a community-wide softball team that has an annual tournament with a base team. Many of the security troops play on the base team.

#### **Session 4**

The group is made up of children and adolescents whose parent(s) are in the Air Force stationed in Rapid City. Their parents have requested that they attend a group meeting.

Billy is 8 years old. He has been having nightmares since the shooting. He doesn't talk about the incident but has become unruly and mean on the playground. When reprimanded by his teacher, he shook his finger in her face and yelled, "Don't push me around or I'll kill you!"

Nancy is Billy's older sister. She is twelve. She's been moody recently — alternating between tears and giggles. She has been particularly moody with her father, a Lieutenant in the Air Force. She has been talking about running away from home because no one understands her.

Mary is a friend of Nancy's and goes to the same school. They used to walk to school every day together. She is the clown of her class. Lately when anyone does something wrong at school or gets mad, she runs up to them and yells "This is for you! I can't stand to live in this school. I can't stand for anyone else to live! Middle School is to blame!" She dissolves into laughter along with all of her classmates, except for Nancy.

John is a friend of Billy's. He is 10 years old. Since the shooting, John won't play with anyone, including Billy. Most of the time he watches T.V. His grades have slipped dramatically. The only thing that seems to interest him is his father's collection of hunting guns. They are kept in a locked case, but John seems to enjoy just looking at them.

## **Working Group B**

### **Group Crisis Intervention with CosmosAir Disaster Survivors**

#### **Session 1**

These four individuals are CosmosAir flight attendants. Two are those attendants who were uninjured on the flight and two are good friends of all the attendants on board this flight. All four are women.

Mary has been flying for five years. She had asked Ann, one of the critically injured attendants, to take her place on this flight so that she could go to a special event at her daughter's school. Ann and Mary are both based in Pittsburgh and often help each other out with family matters. Mary is assigned to fly on Flight 23 for the next month.

Jennifer has been flying for ten years. All four of the flight attendants who were on board had done apprenticeships under her. Beth, whose neck was broken in the crash and suffered severe head injuries, was injured when an overhead compartment (supposedly limited to 40 pounds of storage but had contained a 50-pound box) flew open, and the box was thrown on Beth's head. Beth may be paralyzed for life.

Kay was on the flight. She is vivacious and outgoing. She had kept a rolling patter of conversation with three male passengers who were traveling together. Two were killed and one injured in the crash. The two who were killed had been teasing their friend about his fear of flying just before landing. In jest, Kay had given him toy airplane wings as a good luck charm.

Sandy was on the flight as well. She had a fight with her boyfriend the night before they left Los Angeles and had been in a bad mood the whole flight. She didn't talk much to any of the passengers and had been rather curt with several who asked for blankets and extra attention. She was also irritated when one of the French passengers who died had been upset with her because she didn't have a special meal for him. Sandy and Beth are very close friends and Beth had tried to cheer her up.

## **Session 2**

The individuals in this group are four teachers from the high school the barber shop quartet attended. John teaches biology. Glenn teaches mathematics. Karen teaches English, and Beth teaches music.

All of the teachers have taught the four boys, Eric, Tom, Larry, and Phil, who died on the commuter plane. The kids were well liked in school and in the community. They had performed at community functions numerous times over the last three years. They also were all best friends. All four were juniors.

Glenn had a special relationship with Larry because Larry excelled in mathematics and had recently won the district-wide mathematics contest.

Eric was John's nephew.

The teachers all knew the choir leader, Jack, as well, although Beth knew him best because they worked together on all musical functions. Beth and he had won school-wide acclaim with their rendition of the musical score to "Damn Yankees" just before Christmas.

Karen and Beth are best friends. Karen has just gone through a divorce and has a boy who is a junior in another high school. Karen also had Tom and Phil in her English class this year.

### Session 3

This group is a you-all-come group that was in the airport terminal when the nose of the plane crashed through the wall.

Betsy was waiting for her husband to arrive from Detroit. His plane was not allowed to land because of the crash. It was diverted to Dulles Airport. No one in the terminal knew which plane had crashed when the crash occurred. Betsy's husband had been away on a business trip for two weeks. They have been married for five years and have two small children. Both children (ages 2 and 4) were with Betsy at the airport and saw the crash, although they didn't see the death and injury of anyone in the terminal. Betsy was preoccupied with the care of her children after the crash.

James is a businessman who was waiting to board a plane to Cleveland. The flight was cancelled but his boss had him rescheduled on a flight tomorrow. He remembers hearing a tremendous boom just seconds before the plane came through the wall. He saw the gate attendant crushed by the nose of the plane and saw another waiting passenger hit by a plane part and his arm cut off. James was immobilized in the aftermath of the crash.

Tim is a college student in pre-med, who was waiting to board a plane to fly to Raleigh to visit his parents. His father is ill and he wanted to get home to see him over the weekend. He was taking time out from classes for the visit. His flight was cancelled, but he will be able to get on a plane tomorrow if he decides he still wants to go. He wasn't in the same area of the terminal as the crash when it happened, but ran to the site when he heard the noise. He immediately began to comfort and aid people in the terminal who were injured or in extreme distress.

Arnold was a passenger who had just landed after a flight from Atlanta. He was purchasing a magazine at the news counter when the crash occurred and so did not see it. He thought the airport was being blown up so he immediately ran out the front door and across the street. After watching the scene for five minutes or so, he decided that it was safe and attempted to go back in the airport to find out what happened. He was prevented from returning by security officers who were trying to keep all non-rescuers away from the site.



#### **Session 4**

This group is composed of students who were friends of the teenagers who were killed.

Sarah was Eric's girlfriend. They had been going together since they met in the first month of their freshman year. They were planning to go to college together and after graduating from college they planned to get married. Their friends often teased them about being the "old married couple" in school.

Karen is a good friend of Sarah's and they had become especially close after Karen had played Lola in "Damn Yankees." Tom had played Shoeless Joe and Tom and Karen had begun to date. They were the latest "item" at school.

Ray is Eric's brother and a year younger. He has become especially protective of Sarah since the accident. He and Eric had always been close and now he feels that Sarah is his responsibility. Ray has broken up with his own girlfriend since the incident.

Dan was good friends with all four boys because he sang with the school's entire barber shop group. The four boys who were killed were selected for the national event after a school-wide competition, followed by state and regional competitions. Dan was one of two alternates who would have gone to the nationals if anything happened to any of the lead singers.

## **Working Group C**

### **Group Crisis Intervention with Hurricane Harold Disaster Survivors**

#### **Session 1**

The group is made up of individuals who are evacuees and are being debriefed in a shelter.

Judy is a 28 year old single woman who works as a manager of the lady's dresses section of a local department store that was wiped out in the mall area. She rents a two bedroom apartment that she has heard was also destroyed. She evacuated early enough to have time to take her valuables. Judy moved to St. Petersburg five years ago from California because she was afraid of earthquakes.

Sarah is a 34 year old married mother of 2 children who works outside the home as a substitute teacher. Her two children are at the shelter with her. They are 5 and 7 years old. Her husband is in California on a business trip and she has not heard from him. Their home was in the central area of damage and she saw on television that it was completely submerged in water. She and her husband had just purchased the house after 13 years of saving money for the downpayment. It was their first home of their own.

Carl is a 30 year old single teacher who teaches social science at the elementary school that was destroyed. He lives in a house that was ripped apart by the wind. He purchased the home when he first moved to St. Petersburg after graduate school seven years ago. He didn't bring much with him when he evacuated, but he did remember to bring his cat.

Dave is a 67 year old widow whose wife died a year ago. His house is completely flooded. He has lived in the house since he and his wife were married 46 years ago. His son and his family live in Texas now and Dave hasn't been able to communicate with them since the Hurricane. Dave retired two years ago from a small business where he had been a bookkeeper for 40 years.

## Session 2

This group of individuals are rescue workers who just got off duty.

Ron is a volunteer fire fighter/rescue worker. He has been a volunteer for the last eight years. In his regular work he manages a small grocery store. He lives outside the area of immediate destruction. He has been searching for the injured and the survivors for a straight 20 hours without rest. He found two people on the rooftop of their home and helped them get to safety, but he also was one of the two rescuers who found the 7 year old's body. He has a 7 year old girl named Suzie.

Ralph is also a volunteer fire fighter/rescue worker. He has been on the rescue squad for five years. He worked with Ron throughout the last 20 hours. In his regular work he is a dentist. He moved to the St. Petersburg area five years ago and has become an active member of the Chamber of Commerce. His house was not affected by the storm and his wife, who is 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> months pregnant, is safe at home.

Ellen is a Red Cross volunteer and nurse. She has worked with the Red Cross for three years. She has been working on a rescue team with George in the area that the wind destroyed. They have been sifting through the rubble for the last 15 hours. In the remains of one home they found an elderly couple who had no way to evacuate. They were both very frail and quite cold, but had survived the storm in each other's arms, even while their house collapsed around them. They found a mother with two small children crushed beneath a wall. The mother was alive as was one of the children, but the other had been smothered by the weight of the mother's body.

George has been a Red Cross volunteer for fifteen years. He has responded to over 20 disaster areas during that time, including 7 other hurricanes, 8 floods, 4 small plane crashes, and a major explosion at a manufacturing plant. George is a restaurant owner and he has learned that one of his waitresses was killed in the hurricane.

### Session 3

This is a neighborhood group in an area of St. Petersburg that was not hit hard by the storm, and most residents did not evacuate. There was some storm damage to trees, and a few cars were crushed by falling debris, but the houses are standing.

Keith was home with his family during the storm because he had the day off. When the winds hit, he gathered them all together in the basement with a radio and waited until storm warnings were over. His house suffered little damage but a tree that was hundreds of years old was toppled in the back yard and its branches destroyed the roof of his garage. His car windows were also shattered. His mother lives in an area of St. Petersburg that was badly damaged but she had left her house to be with him when the first storm warnings came. Her house is partially under water.

Matty was at home with her husband and two pre-school children when the storm hit. Her husband left as soon as the winds and rains subsided in order to help with the rescue efforts. He is a member of the volunteer firefighters. Matty set about assessing the damage to their home and found several trees down, one of which had killed the family dog when it fell. The winds had taken some shingles off the roof and left some holes where water leaked into the children's bedroom.

Albert and Vicki are a couple in their early sixties. Albert was working in his shop in the garage when the storm hit, and Vicki was baking in the kitchen. Albert rushed to the house just before a large tree crashed into the garage, destroying the shop area he had just left. Vicki hadn't seen Albert leave the shop but glanced out the window in time to watch the tree go over. She didn't know where Albert was until he burst in the kitchen door seconds later. Some of their windows burst and their electricity went out.

#### **Session 4**

This group is made up of second grade children from the elementary school that was destroyed. The 7 year old little girl who was killed was from this grade.

Linda is the daughter of one of the female rescue workers who has been working around the clock to help find those who are stranded, wounded or dead. Her daddy has been at home with her since yesterday, but they live in an area that was not flooded and he is expected to go on a business trip tomorrow. She follows him around constantly.

Martha's home was destroyed. She and her family are in a shelter. She was able to take her teddy bear with her but she doesn't know if anything else will be saved. At first she thought the shelter was fun, but now she thinks it's horrible and she has become very clingy.

Garth's home was not destroyed and his family was not directly involved in the storm. He does not know why he feels so bad. His sixteen year old brother keeps talking about how they all triumphed over the hurricane.

Bob is the son of Garth's father's best friend, Karl. But he and Garth have never been close. Bob is a close friend of Martha's. Garth had never liked Martha before the hurricane. Now, Garth stays close to Martha, and Bob feels cut out.

## **Working Group D**

### **Group Crisis Intervention with Horizons Hotel Fire Disaster Survivors**

#### **Session 1**

The group is made up of the following individuals: the President, Bob (male), Executive Director, Henry (male), Vice-President, Sheila (female) and Treasurer of NAMA, Joe (male).

The first three individuals were all in the President's Suite at the time of the fire alarm. Joe was in the lobby because he had gone downstairs to find Sam, Secretary of NAMA, and bring him back to the Suite. Joe had been detained by another colleague and so had been gone about an hour when the fire alarm sounded.

None of the group had been physically injured. Sam was killed in the fire. Joe had stayed in the hotel while the fire was burning in order to help others escape. He managed to save three individuals who suffered from smoke inhalation but were among many who witnessed from the ground the fiery deaths of several individuals on the middle floors who jumped out of windows. Bob, Henry and Sheila all escaped via the roof. They were the last three to be picked up by helicopter, having stayed until the end to help with the rescue. Sheila fainted from fright as she was airlifted to safety because of her profound fear of heights. Bob had a number of drinks before the fire alarm went off and had joked about the alarm interrupting a good time. All four have spent the day visiting members of NAMA in area hospitals or calling surviving family members of those who died. Bob has also been calling the employers of those who have died.

## Session 2

This group is made up of surviving hotel employees who were at the hotel that morning. There are two front desk clerks, Sherry and Pearl (females), one room service waiter, Everett (male), and a porter, Dale (male).

Sherry and Pearl stayed remarkably calm after the fire alarm, and even after the fire was visible. They worked as a competent team in helping people through the lobby and getting as many people as possible out of the hotel. In fact, they have already been recognized in the press as heroes. The Fire Chief has given them a public commendation. Once they were forced out of the hotel they helped to keep other survivors calm even as many were witnessing violent death. They were good friends with all the hotel employees working that night since they regularly worked the night shift together.

Everett was not killed in the fire because he had left the kitchen to deliver an order just before the fire broke out. He didn't realize there was a fire until he returned to the lobby. By that time it was impossible to get into the kitchen, although he tried. Everett fell completely apart when he couldn't reach his friends and was sedated by a doctor at the scene.

Dale had just returned from an airport run, in which he picked up two late arrivals to the conference. He had just brought their bags in from the van when he heard the alarm and saw the flames shooting from the kitchen into the bar. Dale immediately turned and wheeled the bags back outside. The new arrivals quickly followed. He spent some time talking with them about how lucky they were before he realized that the fire was consuming the hotel and that people were screaming for help. He began to rush back into the hotel to help but was prevented from doing so by the firemen who had arrived at the scene.

All of the surviving employees had gone to their respective homes after the fire because there didn't seem to be anything else to do. None of these four employees has heard much of anything about the fire except that seven of their friends have been killed. The manager of the hotel has been so involved with the survivors of the seven that he has had little time for anything else. These employees don't know if they will have a job, when their friends will be buried, or what they should do next.

### Session 3

This group is made up of four NAMA members who escaped from the fire through the lobby. They were in their rooms in bed on the 5th floor and responded instantly to the fire alarm by following the prescribed evacuation route.

Dora is 43 years of age and is a volunteer with a mutual aid program in Kentucky. She has been a NAMA member for ten years. She has a number of close friends at the conference. There is no final count on the number who have died or have been injured. In addition, there has been no final identification of the dead. Several of Dora's friends are missing, but since most of the survivors were dispersed to six different hotels, Dora doesn't know whether they are dead or alive. Dora was a victim of an accident twenty years ago in which a fire ignited in her kitchen and she was burned on her arms and hands. Dora is married and has three children. She saved her purse but no luggage.

Janet is 22 years old and a graduate student in psychology. This is her first time at a NAMA conference. She met a lot of people in the first few days of the conference even though she can't remember all of their names. She was having a great time and enjoying herself immensely. She comes from Sacramento, and drove to the conference. She could return home but doesn't want to, so chose to go to one of the designated hotels. She hadn't met Dora before this group session. Janet saved most of her luggage and her purse when she fled.

Ann is 36 years old. She is a staff person at a local NAMA related program. She has been a member of NAMA for six years. She has been conducting a secret love affair with Don over the last couple of year at various NAMA meetings. Ann is single, but Don is married. They were sleeping together at the time of the fire. They separated in the escape and Don is at another hotel. They haven't talked since the fire but Ann has heard that he intends to go home tomorrow. Both escaped with only the clothes on their backs and all their luggage was destroyed. Ann has no money or credit cards because her purse was left in the fire.

Florence is 30 years old. She is a director of a social service agency that is a member of NAMA. She has been in



that job for three years, but has been a member of NAMA for five years. Florence had brought three of her staff members to the conference. Two were rooming together on the 12th floor. One is critically injured and hospitalized and the other is dead. The final staff person was rooming with Florence and is safe, but didn't want to come to this group meeting.

#### **Session 4**

This is a group of children whose parents were employees at the Horizons Hotel. None of the children have known each other prior to the group session.

Dean is 11 years old. He is precocious and tries to anticipate what adults around him are thinking. He is worried about his father, who is the manager of the Horizons Hotel. He looks up to his father and believes his father knows what he is doing. But Dean also knows that his father drinks a lot whenever things go wrong.

Shawna is 10 years old. Her mother is a cocktail waitress and two of her mother's friends died in the fire. Her mother was supposed to work tonight but her shift has been cancelled until further notice. Her mother has been crying since she received the telephone concerning the fire.

Katy is 12. Her uncle was the cook who was killed in the fire. Her father is also a hotel cook. Her father is renowned for his cooking and has already received a call from another hotel offering him a job. He says he is going to take the job because he never wants to be associated with Horizons Hotel again. Katy thinks that her father should stay at Horizons to honor her uncle.

Carl is 11. His mother is the secretary to the catering manager. She was not at the hotel but she has been deeply upset over the fact that "her employees" have been hurt and some have died. Carl is a favorite with all of the catering staff, from the cooks to the busboys. He comes and goes after school and is always helpful.