

## WS2 Handout 25 (Slide 141): Elements of Individual Crisis Intervention

1. **Establish psychological contact.**
  - a. Introduce the session.
    - i. Identify self.
    - ii. As indicated, inquire about and address basic needs.
  - b. Express empathy.
    - i. Identify crisis facts.
    - ii. Identify crisis-related feelings.
  - c. Show respect.
    - i. Pause to listen.
    - ii. Do not dominate the conversation.
    - iii. Do not try to smooth things over.
  - d. Show warmth.
    - i. Ensure that verbal communication is congruent with nonverbal behaviors.
    - ii. Consider the use of and provide physical contact, as indicated.
2. **Verify emotional readiness to begin problem identification and problem solving.**
  - a. If the student is not ready, stabilize the student.
  - b. If the student is ready, begin the problem-solving process.
3. **Identify and prioritize crisis-generated problems. Identify the most immediate concerns.**
  - a. Inquire about what happened. Make sure you understand the crisis story.
  - b. Inquire about the problems generated by the crisis event.
  - c. Rank order crisis-generated problems.
4. **Address crisis-generated problems. Encourage the crisis survivor to be as responsible for coping with crisis-generated challenges as is possible.**
  - a. Ask: Inquire about coping attempts already made. Validate adaptive coping strategies already identified by the crisis survivor.
  - b. Facilitate: Help the student explore additional coping strategies. Encourage the crisis survivor to identify his or her own adaptive coping strategies.
  - c. Propose: If necessary, identify alternative coping strategies. Do not hesitate to explicitly direct the crisis survivor toward adaptive coping strategies, as indicated:
    - i. If lethality is low *and* the student is capable of action, then take a facilitative stance (i.e., the crisis survivor initiates and is responsible for coping actions).
    - ii. If lethality is high *or* the student is not capable of acting, then take a directive stance (i.e., the crisis intervener initiates and is responsible for coping actions).
5. **Evaluate and conclude the individual crisis intervention session. Ensure that the individual is moving toward adaptive crisis resolution.**
  - a. Secure identifying information.
    - i. Identify and ensure connection with primary natural social support systems (e.g., parents, teachers).
  - b. Agree on a time for recontact and follow-up.
  - c. Assess whether immediate coping has been restored, as follows:
    - i. Physical and emotional support has been obtained, and any lethality has been reduced.
    - ii. Crisis problems have been identified and adaptive coping has been initiated.

- iii. From the assessed trauma risk level, the student is linked to appropriate helping resources.
- iv. If these goals have not been obtained, then restart the intervention process.
- v. If these goals have been obtained, compliment the student on his or her problem-solving skills, given the expectation that they will cope well with the trauma, and conclude the immediate psychological crisis intervention.