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Objectives

Describe

Describe the types of crises commonly experienced by individuals with substance use disorders.

Identify

Identify the role of recognizing and separating treatment providers’ own emotions from the crisis.

Explore

Explore the ways that treatment teams can effectively plan for managing crises when they arise.
Introductions

• Name, role, location
• What is one of your concerns about managing a crisis?
Challenging Situations Facing People in Treatment and Recovery

• Mental health problems
• Trauma
• Physical health comorbidity
• Risky behaviors
• Family instability
• Employment
• Unstable housing
Focus is to minimize risk and maximize safety

Ongoing assessment of self: self-awareness and self-management

Ongoing risk assessment of the individual served

Ongoing assessment of environment

Timely and effective responses to potentially unsafe situations (e.g., de-escalation skills)

Post-crisis follow up and recovery intervention
Preparing for the unexpected

• Strike when the iron is **cold**
• Establish crisis response plans before they are needed
  • With yourself
  • With mentees
  • With teammates
  • With the organization
Crisis Recovery Plans

- What situations lead to my stress?
- What are early warning signs that a crisis may be developing? What do I notice in myself?
- What do other people notice when I am distressed?
- What I have done in the past that has helped?
- What are internal coping strategies that may reduce my distress?
- What could others do that would help?

- What could others do that would make things worse?
- What I can do for myself regularly to reduce distress:
- Who I can call (friend, relative, health professional, crisis line, National Suicide Prevention Line)
- A safe place I can go to:
- How can I make my current environment safe?
- The hospital I feel most comfortable or safe at is _____________. 
Crisis Management

- Self Awareness
- Self Management
- Crisis Management
Crisis Awareness: 4 Questions

1. What am I feeling now?
2. How might this person feel?
3. How is the environment?
4. How do I best respond?
Question 1: What am I feeling now?

Self-Awareness

Awareness helps us:
• Regulate our own emotions
• Control our own behavior
• Communicate clearly
• Choose effective intervention strategies
Managing our Cup

Matt Bennett, Matt’s Mumblings Blog
Remembering the HALT Acronym

• Am I hungry?
• Am I angry?
• Am I lonely?
• Am I tired?
A TRAUMA EXPOSURE RESPONSE

- Guilt
- Sense of Persecution
- Dissociative Moments
- Inability to Listen/ Deliberate Avoidance
- Chronic Exhaustion/ Physical Ailments
- Minimizing
- Inability to Embrace Complexity
- Diminished Creativity
- Hypervigilance
- A Sense That One Can Never Do Enough
- Feeling Helpless and Hopeless
- Grandiosity: An Inflated Sense of Importance Related to One's Work

(van Dernoot Lipsky and Burk, 2009)
Caution Continuum

- Hypervigilance
- Caution
- Dissociation
Question 2: How might this person feel?

• Consider what the person’s long-term goals are
• Think about what they might want out of this situation
• Listen to what they are telling you
• Observe what they are showing you
• Express empathy and use reflective listening skills
Non-Verbal Communication

- Silence
- Facial expressions
- Eye contact
- Tone of voice
- Minimal encouragers
- Door openers
- Closed questions

(Mehrabian, 1971)
When Pain Shows on the Surface

- Impulsive outbursts
- Physical or verbal aggression
- Disengagement from services
- Self-injury
- Inability to regulate emotions
- Trauma re-enactment
- Defiance
Question 3: How is the environment?

- Environmental considerations can increase or decrease risk
- Observe any safety concerns
  - Look for any weapons
- Assess the situation
  - Physical environment
  - Social environment
  - Identify points of exit
“Trauma robs the victim of a sense of power and control; the guiding principle of recovery is to restore power and control to the survivor. The first task of recovery is to establish the survivor’s safety.”

Judith Herman
Question 4: How do I best respond?

1. Best response will depend on the first three questions:
   - What am I feeling?
   - How might this person be feeling?
   - How is the environment?

2. Our response should:
   - Address our own reactions
   - Offset potential triggers
   - Provide emotional support
   - Reduce risk of re-traumatization
Captain Phillips is a movie about a boat captain who gets taken hostage. He escapes the situation alive. Following his rescue, he receives medical attention. The scene is not violent or gory, but he is visibly affected and has blood on his body and clothes.
CAPTAIN PHILLIPS VIDEO:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJMDdT24_98
Captain Phillips Debrief

1. What am I feeling now?
2. How might this person feel?
3. How is the environment?
4. How do I best respond?


**ALGEE Action Plan**

A - Assess for risk of suicide or harm
L - Listen nonjudgmentally
G - Give reassurance and information
E - Encourage appropriate professional help
E - Encourage self-help & other support strategies
Non-Verbal Listening

What are you saying, without saying it?

(Mehrabian, 1971)
Paraverbal Communication

• Tone: pitch, attitude, avoid sounding impatient
• Volume: appropriate to the context
• Cadence: rate, rhythm of speaking
Elicit-Provide-Elicit Framework

Motivational Interviewing technique for information exchange

1. Elicit: ask about prior knowledge, get permission, or gauge interest  
   • Start by exploring the individual’s experience
2. Provide: give small amounts of information, support autonomy  
   • Follow their lead when providing information
3. Elicit: ask for the individual’s interpretation or response
“The secret of crisis management is not good vs. bad; it’s about preventing the bad from getting worse.”

– Andy Gilman
Crisis Management

Provide physical space and time
- Promotes safety
- Allows the person to process what’s going on
- Demonstrates you are not a threat

Remain alert
- Observe what is going on
- Assess the situation (silently)
- Keep an eye on the exits
- If you’re in a car, pull over!
“...the best use of ‘restraint’ isn’t physical—it’s restraining ourselves from reacting instinctively, and instead learning how to talk to people.”

Michael Somers III
De-Escalation

Reducing the intensity of a heated conflict

It takes time, but it will happen

We can support that process through basic strategies: Active listening, Validation, Humility
# Crisis Management: Agitation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move away</th>
<th>Move away from any crowds/audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Focus on non-verbal skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normalize</td>
<td>Normalize and validate feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respond</td>
<td>Respond when appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask</td>
<td>Ask respectful, open-ended questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solicit</td>
<td>Solicit input about solutions and coping strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Crisis Management: Agitation Cont’d.

If you assess it is safe to do so, help the person apply coping skills:

- Movement
  - Take a walk
  - Write/color/draw
  - Play catch
- Distraction skills
  - Tell me about ___________
- Grounding techniques
  - 5-4-3-2-1 senses
  - Progressive muscle
Crisis Management: Aggression

Keep doing what you’re doing, with additional vigilance and assessment
Respectfully set limits, redirect, provide choices
Have your cell phone available
Leave if asked to do so
Be prepared to call for help
Crisis Management: When to Leave

Immediately leave if:

• There is a weapon
• The person becomes violent or threatening
• Other people are posing a threat
• The person asks you to leave

*It is not your job to disarm someone!*
Calling 911

Should be considered a last resort

Use in the event of life-threatening mental health crisis or emergency

When calling in response to mental health crisis, state that is the case and ask for someone from the Crisis Intervention Team, a "CIT Officer"

As calmly as possible, explain the situation to the officer and remain available while giving them space
How Do You Approach De-escalation?

**DO**
- Be nonjudgmental
- Keep calm, *affect is contagious*
- Remove the audience
- Be patient
- Listen to their issue and their feelings
- Give options

**DON’T**
- Tell someone they’re wrong, push back
- Use physical contact, invade personal space
- Make threats
- Ignore the person
- Argue or get in a power struggle
“When people are overwhelmed by big emotions, it’s our job to share our calm, not join their chaos”

– LR Knost
Re-establishing connection after a traumatic event reduces the impact of the event for everyone involved.
Crisis Recovery: Life Space Interview

Isolate the conversation
Explore the person’s point of view
Summarize the feelings and content
Connect feelings to behaviors
Alternative behaviors discussed
Plan developed and new behavior practiced
Enter the person back into the program
Crisis Recovery: Staff and Program

Evaluate and assess
Check in with yourself first
Tend to your immediate needs

Explore what happened
Damage to property, personal injury, psychological injury? To whom?
What are immediate needs of those involved?

Examine your response
What went well?
What could have been done differently?
Do individual/program plans need to be reevaluated?
Debrief

- Identify your biggest takeaway from today and one specific thing you are excited to try out when you go back to work.
- Choose one thing you can do take care of yourself today.
Resources: Who to Call For Help

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Crisis Textline for 24/7 support for those experiencing a mental health crisis: text CONNECT to 741741

Florida’s Child Abuse Hotline is 1-800-962-2873

Trevor Lifeline, suicide prevention for LGBTQ youth: 866-488-7386
Additional Resources

- Mental Health First Aid: https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/
- Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers: https://motivationalinterviewing.org/
- SAMHSA, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCSTN) Resources
- SAMHSA Creating Safe Scenes Training Course
References and Resources


- Unless otherwise noted, all images used in this presentation were provided courtesy of https://pixabay.com/
Questions and Comments
Thank you!