

Crisis In Christianity
Salem Evangelical Church
Chaplain Todd W. Pynch
Crisis Chaplaincy Services

Week 1: How To Deal With Crisis:

THE FACE OF CRISIS:

1. Shock.
2. Denial.
3. Surrealness/Fog: "This can't be happening!"
4. Fear.
5. Confusion.
6. Indecisiveness.
7. Frenzied Phone Calls.

TEN STEPS OF RESPONSE:

1. Know this: it's not about you, it's all about them.
2. Work in God's strength, not your own.
3. Offer guidance without becoming the center of attention:
4. Work in doses: suggest & pause.
5. Utilize appropriate tools:
 - a) Time.
 - b) Talk.
 - c) Touch.
 - d) Tears.
6. Look for opportunities, don't ask for them.
7. Think practical:
 - a) Food.
 - b) Rest.
 - c) Interference.
 - d) Reflection.
8. If you say you'll be there, then you better be there!
9. Accept the fact that there's not always answers to the tough questions.
10. If you can't talk Christ, live Christ.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

1. ***Tear Soup*** by Pat Schwiebert & Chuck DeKlyen.
2. ***Goodbye for Now*** by Welby O'Brien
3. ***A Grace Disguised*** by Jerry Sittser
4. ***Heaven*** by Randy Alcorn

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Week 2: Dealing With The Loss Of A Spouse:

5.

RECOVERING FROM TRAUMATIC INCIDENTS:

1. The average period of recovery from an expected traumatic incident is 1-2 years.
2. The average period of recovery from an unexpected traumatic incident is 5-7 years.

WHAT RECOVERY MEANS:

1. A sense of normalcy returns to their life.
2. When death occurs in our life, we are instantly robbed of what is normal in our lives.
3. Why? Because normal always includes our (husband or wife).
4. Prior to the death, normal includes:
 - a) Family shared together.
 - b) Friends enjoyed together.
 - c) Activity together.
4. After the death, normal is gone!:
 - a) You have no spouse.
 - b) Your friends still have one another so you're the third wheel.
 - c) You don't have your partner to do activities with.
5. You are now required to redefine normal and that takes time.

SEVEN COPING STRATEGIES:

1. Work to celebrate the life instead of mourning the death.
80 Years of Life:
 - a) 29,200 days.
 - b) 700,800 hours of life.
 - c) 42,048,000 minutes of living.
 - d) Death came in only one of those moments.
2. Cling to the memories you shared.
 - a) The story of falling in love.
 - b) Places you went.
 - c) Silly events that occurred.
 - d) Accomplishments of your life.

3. Take care of **yourself** and your **kids**.
 - a) This is a time to take, not give.
 - b) Make a commitment to stick together.
 - c) Soothing the grief of **others** & creating things for them to do cannot be your concern.
 - d) Establish regular "**check-in times**" with your immediate family.

4. Get up every day and do at least **one** activity.
 - a) Have **lunch** with friends.
 - b) Go to **church**.
 - c) Go **shopping** or **walk** through the mall.
 - d) Take a **trip** somewhere.
 - e) Remember that **laughter** is not a sin.

5. **Prepare** for the 4-6 week heartache.
 - a) **Services** are over.
 - b) People have **gone home**.
 - c) The **phone** is not ringing.
 - d) **Reality** sets in.

6. Get through your year of **firsts**.
 - a) Birthday's without them.
 - b) Anniversaries without them.
 - c) Holidays without them.
 - d) Family events without them.
 - e) Tasks without them.

7. Turn to **God** for comfort in your grief.

But you, God, see the trouble of the afflicted; you consider their grief and take it in hand. The victims commit themselves to you; you are the helper of the fatherless. (Psalm 10:14)

The Lord heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. (Psalm 147:3)

A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy dwelling. (Psalm 68:5)

May your unfailing love be my comfort, according to your promise to your servant. Let your compassion come to me that I may live, for your law is my delight. (Psalm 119:76)

Even to your old age and gray hairs I am He, I am He who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you. I will sustain you and I will rescue you. (Isaiah 46:4)

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Week 3: The Tragedy of Suicide:

SUICIDE STATISTICS:

1. Every year about **32,000** people commit suicide in the United States.
2. An average of **88** people commit suicide every day in the United States.
3. There is a suicide every **16** minutes in the United States.
4. There are approximately **800,000** suicide attempts each year in the United States.
5. About **1,000,000** people kill themselves worldwide each year.
6. These numbers are likely **low**.
7. Every **40 seconds** someone dies by suicide.
8. There's been a **60%** increase in worldwide suicide rates in the last 45 years.
9. For each successful suicide, there are **20 attempted suicides** worldwide.
10. The national average of suicide in America is **10.8** per 100,000 people.
11. The northwest region (OR, WA, ID) has the 2nd highest rate at **14.5** per 100,000.
12. The rate for Oregon is **15.5%** per 100,000.
13. The highest regional rate in America is **16.6** per 100,000. That region includes MT, WY, UT, CO, ND, SD.
14. The lowest regional rate is in the **northeast** (NY, NJ, RI) at 6.2 per 100,000 people.
15. 2/3 of all suicides committed each year are committed by **white men** over 35 years old.
16. Young white males have a suicide rate of about **19%** per 100,000 people.
17. Men that are 70% and older have a suicide rate between **37-45%**.
18. Women attempt suicide **three times** more often than men.
19. Men kill themselves **four times** more often than women.
20. White males account for **73%** of the suicides in the United States.
21. Suicide is the **8th** leading cause of death amongst males.

22. Suicide methods in the USA (2005):

METHOD:	%	#
Firearms	52.1	17,002
Hanging, Strangulation, Suffocation	22.2	7,248
Poisons	17.6	5,744
All Other Methods	8.1	2,643

23. Suicide is the 16th leading cause of death amongst females.
24. Suicide is the 11th leading cause of death amongst people of all ages.
25. Suicide rates are highest among the divorced and widowed.
26. 90% of all people who commit suicide have a diagnosable psychiatric disorder.
27. 54,708 Americans were lost during the Vietnam war.
28. During that same time period, America lost 101,732 citizens to suicide.
29. Suicide rates are currently climbing at a dramatic rate among the people in the military.
30. The rate of suicide attempts amongst 10-14 year old children has increased 150% in the last 15 years.
31. Men will be more likely to use a weapon than women.
32. Women are more likely to take pills.
33. Guns are used in 56.8% of all male suicides.
34. Poisoning is used in 37.8% of all female suicides.
35. 50% of all suicides in America are committed with a gun.
36. In Canada only 39% of all suicides are committed with a gun.
37. Of police officer involved shootings, one in six is suicide by cop.
38. There are always "suicide shrines" that people choose to use.

SEASONS OF SUICIDE:

1. The winter holidays are always a prime time for suicide
2. There are more suicides in the spring than any other time of the year.
3. Reason #1: The contrast between their depressed life and the happiness of others is more prominent.
4. Reason #2: They counted on spring taking away their depression and it hasn't happened.
5. Reason #3: People then decide they don't want to come "back alive".

6. May is usually the month with the most suicides each year.
7. Suicides generally occur during the early morning hours.
8. There are more suicides on Wednesday than any other day of the week.
9. 25% of all suicides occur on Wednesday, 14% on Mondays & Saturdays.
10. More suicides occur on June 11th than any other day of the year.

TRYING TO UNDERSTAND SUICIDE:

1. Suicide is always premeditated.
2. The suicidal person believes they are moving towards a logical solution.
3. Instead, they are moving into a dark corner where one light shines brighter & brighter.
4. The further they move into the corner, the less they can logically reason.
5. Suicide is always a personal choice, not a group decision.

SCRIPTURAL INSIGHTS ABOUT SUICIDE:

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. (John 10:10)

1. Satan is the thief.
2. He comes to steal.
3. He comes to kill.
4. He comes to destroy.

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

1. Satan hates that Jesus is the light of the world.
2. He loves to deceive people by showing them a false light.
3. His light always leads to destruction & death.

WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE:

1. Increased irritability.
2. Depression.
3. Withdrawal.
4. Steps taken to bring closure to things and get their life in order.
5. Tendency to be emotional.
6. Lack of future planning.

7. Multiple attempts.
8. Goodbyes & appreciation.
9. Possession distribution.
10. Sudden peace.

THE IMPACT OF SUICIDE:

1. A suicide almost always causes tremendous guilt for the remaining family members.
2. Suicide usually causes anger and division amongst the remaining family members.
3. A suicide brings about huge "why" questions for the family & friends.
4. A suicide is almost always a precursor to a family playing the "blame game".
5. Suicide often leads to complete family destruction.
6. Suicides often result in people questioning their faith in God.
7. Suicides, especially among young people, will often times result in copycat situations.
8. Suicides often result in families dealing with lifelong shame.
9. Our society simply doesn't know how to respond to suicide.
 - a) If your loved one is killed, you get empathy.
 - b) If your loved one dies, you get sympathy.
 - c) If your loved one commits suicide, you get judgment.

THREE IMPORTANT SUICIDE QUESTIONS:

1. Are you thinking about killing yourself? (Concern)
2. Have you decided how you are going to kill yourself? (Danger)
3. Have you thought about when or where you are going to kill yourself? (Extreme High Risk)

ETERNAL DAMNATION?

1. The only unpardonable sin is the rejection of Christ's salvation.
2. A person's action cannot overpower God's grace.
3. I see absolutely no reference in the Bible that condemns suicide.

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. (John 10:27-29)

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Week 4: Talking About Tragedy:

22 THINGS NOT TO SAY:

1. He passed away.
2. He's gone.
3. He's no longer with us.
4. The Lord took him home.
5. The Lord needed him more than us.
6. God has a wonderful plan and this is just part of that plan.
7. I know why this happened...
8. This is because of God's judgment in his/her life.
9. He's in a better place.
10. Time heals all wounds.
11. You'll get over it.
12. Just give it a little time and you'll be fine.
13. I can't believe you're still struggling with that!
14. You're still moping around?
15. The pain will go away someday.
16. I know just how you feel.
17. I'll be with you every step of the way.
18. I'm glad it's you because I don't think I could be as strong as you are.
19. I know what you need to do, you just need to meet someone new.
20. I know what to do to help you because I took a crisis class at my church.
21. Every cloud has a silver lining.
22. Think of the life insurance you're going to get!

14 THINGS YOU CAN SAY:

1. I'm so sorry this has happened.
2. I can only try to imagine what this must be like for you.
3. You can take all the time you need to grieve.
4. Grief is a journey, not a task to accomplish.
5. Even in the darkest moments, God will never leave your side.
6. Whether you know it or not, God is there with you, wiping away every tear you shed.
7. I want you to be able to regain some control in your life so I'm willing to do as much or as little as you want me to do to help you.
8. I may not always know what to say or do but I promise I will always listen to what God tells me to do or say.
9. You don't have to pretend around me. You don't have to be anything around me but yourself.
10. There is nothing you can say that will cause me to judge you.
11. I would suggest you consider not making a lot of life changing decisions during the first year after your loss.
12. I would encourage you to consider journaling so that you can put down on paper all the things that are happening in your heart and mind.
13. Talk with me about what you are thinking, about what you are feeling right now.
14. If you just want someone to be here with you, we don't have to talk about anything at all.

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Week 5: Dealing With Dementia & Alzheimer's:

LESSONS WE'VE LEARNED:

1. Know when it's time to get help.
2. Unity in family decision making is critical.
3. Communication with the family is important.
4. When choosing a facility, do your research.
5. Treat them with respect!
6. Patience is imperative!
7. As the disease progresses, their age comprehension regresses.
8. Meet them where they are at in their mind.
9. Cater to their likes and provide their likes.
10. Live in the moment and don't expect them to remember things like appointments.
11. Be willing to repeat yourself. Be willing to repeat yourself. Be willing to repeat yourself.
12. Don't allow guilt to stop you from visiting them.
13. Stay involved. Stay involved. Stay involved.
14. Be prepared for drama and remember that home is often not home.
15. Lying is not lying, it's living their truth.
16. Blame someone else!
17. Utilize their long term memory instead of their short term memory.
18. Remember the important stories so that someday you can tell them back to them.
19. Stop correcting them.
20. Prepare yourself for the day when they don't know who you are.
21. Take advantage of the opportunity to provide quality of life for the remaining parent or spouse.

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Week 6: Making Final Arrangements:

FUTURE PLANNING:

1. Make sure your will is up to date and represents your wishes.
 - a) Including an Advanced Directive.
2. Consult and Estate or Elder Law Attorney if necessary.
3. Complete your DNR form and register it with the State.
4. Prominently post your DNR form in your home.
 - a) Without a DNR form, medics must take steps to revive you, even if that's not what you want.
 - b) Make sure your family knows your wishes.
5. Choose between burial & cremation.
6. Choose a Funeral Home.
7. Complete a next-of-kin list and leave in your address book.
8. Add an ICE (In Case of Emergency) contact to your cell phone.
9. Determine your final disposition.
 - a) Will your remains be buried?
 - b) Will your ashes be spread?
 - c) Will your cremains be kept?
10. Be aware of Veteran's benefits.
 - a) Free burial in a National Cemetery.
 - b) Free burial for spouse.
 - c) Provision of Grave Marker.
11. Will you/should you have a service?
 - a) Helps the family accept the death.
 - b) Helps bring closure to the family.
 - c) Gives you a final chance to testify of your faith in Christ.
12. Choose your favorite Scriptures.
13. Choose your favorite songs.
14. Choose the venue for your service.
15. Choose the speaker/pastor for your service.
16. Discuss all your decisions with your family.