

**Crisis Intervention Handbook:
Assessment, Treatment
and Research,
Third Edition**

*Albert R. Roberts, Ph.D.,
Editor*

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CRISIS INTERVENTION HANDBOOK

Third Edition

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Assessment, Treatment, and Research

THIRD EDITION

Edited by

Albert R. Roberts, Ph.D.

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Acknowledgments

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the authors who contributed their expertise and original chapters to this book. I am also appreciative of the anonymous reviewers' important insights and technical suggestions.

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My wife Beverly deserves special thanks and appreciation for thoroughly editing and proofreading several chapters and co-authoring chapter 19. Most important, Beverly's patience with me for the lost weekends and for the overflowing numbers of books, files, and papers in several rooms of our house went way beyond the call of duty of a marital partner. I am delighted and appreciative of the excellent illustrations drawn by my sister-in-law, Carole S. Roberts.

I dedicate this book to my late parents, Evelyn and Harry Roberts, who gave me unconditional love, emotional strength, and encouragement. They instilled within me a deep conviction to pursue knowledge, overcome adversity, and thrive to set realistic short-term and long-term goals; to aid and support vulnerable groups; and to persevere in all my occupational and family endeavors. I am forever devoted and appreciative of everything they did for me and my brother during our childhood and adolescence.

Both of them demonstrated superior inner strength after being diagnosed with cancer. At a time when women had only a 10% chance of a two- to five-year survival from breast cancer and mastectomy, my mother lived sixteen years. During his two years with the intense pain of prostate cancer, my father rarely complained and bravely persevered. Their quiet fighting spirit, courage, and resilience serve to make them role models for all persons in medical and psychological crisis.

I also dedicate this book to Dr. Viktor Frankl, psychiatrist, author of *Man's Search for Meaning*, and founder of logotherapy. When I was a young adult, his book helped me cope, survive, and master depression in the aftermath of my parents' deaths. His work continues to sustain and motivate many others.

NATIONAL INTERNET RESOURCES AND 24-HOUR CRISIS INTERVENTION HOTLINES

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a 24-hour, toll-free suicide prevention hotline. Persons in crisis can call 1-800-273-8255 and be connected to one of the 115 crisis centers in the NSPI Network located in the city and state nearest to the caller's location. The national hotline network is administered through the Mental Health Association of New York City and is funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Mental Health Services of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The National Disaster Technical Assistance Center of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in Bethesda, Maryland, provides resources and expertise to assist states, territories, and local communities that are preparing for or responding to the mental health needs of natural and man-made community disasters. Website: <http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/dtac> or phone: 1-800-308-3515.

The International Crisis Intervention Network was developed in 2001 and its overriding goal is to provide the latest information on evidence-based crisis intervention protocols, disaster mental health protocols, trauma treatment models, suicide prevention center directories, and domestic violence intervention resources as well as the latest books and peer-reviewed journal article abstracts on crisis intervention. Website: <http://www.crisisinterventionnetwork.com>

The National Domestic Violence Toll-Free Hotline provides crisis telephone counseling and referral to a network of emergency shelters and support groups for survivors of intimate partner violence. In addition to the hotline, the website contains information on teen and dating violence, domestic violence in the workplace, information for victims and survivors of domestic violence, and information for abusers. Website: <http://www.ndvh.org> or phone: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233).

Foreword

Unlike the usual stresses and conflicts that are a part of everyday life at home and at work, acute crisis episodes frequently overwhelm our traditional coping skills and result in dysfunctional behavior, “going to pieces,” intense fears, and a highly anxious state, also known as a state of disequilibrium. This handbook focuses on acute crisis episodes and psychiatric emergencies and the step-by-step crisis intervention strategies used by crisis counselors. Each chapter focuses on a different major crisis-precipitating event, such as turbulent divorces, adolescent suicides, airplane crashes and fatalities of family members, date rape on the college campus, shootings in the public schools, battering of women and their children, polydrug abuse, HIV-positive women, patients in intensive care units, and survivors of community disasters and mass terrorist attacks. This book includes many illuminating case studies that illustrate how best to intervene in the aftermath of a crisis episode or traumatic event.

The acute and situational crises experienced by millions of individuals and families has been escalating in intensity and frequency. Crisis intervention programs and strategies can limit the debilitating impact of acute crisis episodes as they maximize opportunities for crisis stabilization and resolution.

It is a remarkable thing when crisis clinicians, counselors, and researchers from different disciplines collaborate on a major mental health and public health problem. Some practitioners have been concerned about psychiatric disorders, others about life-threatening illnesses, and some others about developmental crises. But, all mental health practitioners and graduate students

have an overriding concern about the impact of community-wide disasters, especially mass terrorist attacks and how to rapidly assess and provide crisis intervention services. What sets this pathfinding and seminal book apart from others on crisis intervention is both the systematic application of Roberts's 7-Stage Crisis Intervention Protocol, the introduction of the Assessment, Crisis Intervention, and Trauma (ACT) Treatment Model, and the copious use of compelling and thought-provoking case illustrations on 60 different types of the most prevalent acute crisis episodes in society today. Disaster mental health teams have proliferated in these important few years since the September 11 terrorist bombings of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Many of the 15 brand new chapters seize on the opportunity to empower, support, and build on the inner strengths of millions of individuals by describing the process and therapeutic techniques of evidence-based crisis intervention. This is the most practical time-limited treatment book I have read in the past 10 years. It is timely, focused, straightforward, comprehensive, empowering, highly readable, and extremely valuable.

Dr. Roberts has always been an innovator and clinical research professor in the forefront of futuristic treatment planning. In 1999, Professor Roberts completed his six-level continuum on the duration and severity of domestic violence based on 501 cases. Now at the end of 2004, Professor Roberts has updated and expanded the second edition of his authoritative handbook. The *Crisis Intervention Handbook* is a masterful sourcebook of practical significance, bridging crisis theory and assessment to evidence-based practice. This book provides well-written, detailed, up-to-date, thorough, and practical best practices. I predict that this authoritative volume will become the classic definitive work on crisis intervention for the important years ahead.

As editor of this volume, Dr. Roberts has selected as the chapter authors an outstanding cast of 50 internationally recognized experts in the rapid assessment and treatment of crisis episodes. Each chapter provides the reader with a comprehensive and practical application of Roberts's seven-stage crisis intervention model to the key components of acute and situational crises. This third edition of 32 specially designed chapters includes 14 brand new chapters and 18 thoroughly revised chapters. This is the first handbook on crisis intervention to incorporate into each chapter a section on resilience, protective factors, and the strengths perspective. Also, 15 of the chapters each apply two or more case studies to the seven stages in Roberts' Crisis Intervention Model.

This all-inclusive resource provides everything mental health clinicians, crisis counselors, healthcare specialists, crisis intervenors, and trained volunteers need to know about crisis intervention. This book is a stunning achievement and landmark work.

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Contents

Foreword vii
Ann Wolbert Burgess

Contributors xiii

Introduction xix

Part I: Overview

- 1 Bridging the Past and Present to the Future of Crisis Intervention and Crisis Management 3
Albert R. Roberts
- 2 Lethality Assessment and Crisis Intervention with Persons Presenting with Suicidal Ideation 35
Albert R. Roberts and Kenneth R. Yeager
- 3 How to Work With Clients' Strengths in Crisis Intervention: A Solution-Focused Approach 64
Gilbert J. Greene, Mo-Yee Lee, Rhonda Trask, and Judy Rheinscheld

- 4 Differentiating Among Stress, Acute Stress Disorder, Acute Crisis Episodes, Trauma, and PTSD: Paradigm and Treatment Goals 90
Kenneth R. Yeager and Albert R. Roberts
- 5 Crisis Intervention for Persons Diagnosed With Clinical Disorders Based on the Stress-Crisis Continuum 120
Ann Wolbert Burgess and Albert R. Roberts

Part II: Disaster Mental Health and Crisis Intervention and Trauma Treatment

- 6 The ACT Model: Assessment, Crisis Intervention, and Trauma Treatment in the Aftermath of Community Disaster and Terrorism Attacks 143
Albert R. Roberts
- 7 Crisis Intervention and First Responders to Events Involving Terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction 171
Vincent E. Henry
- 8 Disaster Mental Health: A Discussion of Best Practices as Applied After the Pentagon Attack 200
Rachel E. Kaul and Victor Welzant
- 9 Innovations in Group Crisis Intervention 221
George S. Everly, Jr., Jeffrey M. Lating, and Jeffrey T. Mitchell
- 10 Crisis Support for Families of Emergency Responders 246
Cheryl Regehr
- 11 An Examination of the U.S. Response to Bioterrorism: Handling the Threat and Aftermath Through Crisis Intervention 262
Sophia F. Dziegielewski and Kristy Sumner
- 12 Crisis Intervention, Grief Therapy, and the Loss of Life 279
Joseph McBride and Eric D. Johnson
- 13 Posttrauma Intervention: Basic Tasks 291
Gary Behrman and William J. Reid

Part III: Crisis Assessment and Intervention Models with Children and Youth

- 14 What He Knew Before It All Changed: A Narrative
From Ground Zero 305
Linda G. Mills
- 15 Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Emergencies:
Mobile Crisis Response 319
Jonathan Singer
- 16 Crisis Intervention With Early Adolescents Who Have Suffered
a Significant Loss 362
M. Sian O'Halloran, Ann M. Ingala, and Ellis P. Copeland
- 17 Adolescent Suicidality and Crisis Intervention 395
David A. Jobes, Alan L. Berman, and Catherine E. Martin
- 18 Crisis Intervention at College Counseling Centers 416
Allen J. Ottens, Linda L. Black, and James F. Klein

Part IV: Crisis Intervention and Crisis Prevention With Victims of Violence

- 19 A Comprehensive Model for Crisis Intervention With Battered
Women and Their Children 441
Albert R. Roberts and Beverly Schenkman Roberts
- 20 Crisis Intervention With Stalking Victims 483
Karen Knox and Albert R. Roberts
- 21 School Crisis Intervention, Crisis Prevention,
and Crisis Response 499
Scott Newgass and David Schonfeld
- 22 Crisis Intervention With Chronic School Violence
and Volatile Situations 519
Chris Stewart and Gordon MacNeil

Part V: Crisis Assessment and Crisis Intervention in Health-Related and Mental Health-Related Crises

- 23 Crisis Intervention in the Hospital Emergency Room 543
Mary Boes and Virginia McDermott
- 24 Crisis Intervention Application of Brief Solution-Focused Therapy in Addictions 566
Kenneth R. Yeager and Thomas K. Gregoire
- 25 Mobile Crisis Units: Frontline Community Mental Health Services 602
Jan Ligon
- 26 The Comprehensive Crisis Intervention Model of Safe Harbor Behavioral Health Crisis Services 619
Yvonne M. Eaton
- 27 A Model of Crisis Intervention in Critical and Intensive Care Units of General Hospitals 632
Norman M. Shulman and Amy L. Shewbert
- 28 The Crisis of Divorce: Cognitive-Behavioral and Constructivist Assessment and Treatment 650
Donald K. Granvold
- 29 Crisis Intervention With HIV Positive Women 682
Sarah J. Lewis and Dianne M. Harrison
- 30 Crisis Intervention With Caregivers 703
Allen J. Ottens and Donna Kirkpatrick Pinson

Part VI: Evidence-Based Practice and Research

- 31 The Crisis State Assessment Scale: Development and Psychometrics 723
Sarah J. Lewis
- 32 Designs and Procedures for Evaluating Crisis Intervention 742
Sophia F. Dziegielewski and Gerald T. Powers

Glossary 775

Internet Website Directory 793

Index 801

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merous peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters, and 26 books. Dr. Roberts's most recent book, *Ending Intimate Abuse: Practical Guidance and Survival Strategies* (Oxford University Press), was published in March 2005 and was co-authored by his wife, Beverly Schenkman Roberts.

Dr. Roberts has 30 years of full-time teaching experience at the undergraduate and graduate levels in both criminal justice and social work. He has conducted eight different national organizational surveys over the past 30 years and has been project director or principal investigator on research projects in Maryland, New York, Indiana, and New Jersey. In 2002, Dr. Roberts completed the first national organizational survey of 39 statewide domestic violence coalitions under the auspices of the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) in Washington, D.C. His recent books include *Evidence-Based Practice Manual: Research and Outcome Measures in Health and Human Services* (co-edited by Kenneth R. Yeager, Oxford University Press, 2004); and *Social Workers' Desk Reference* (co-edited by Gilbert J. Greene, Oxford, 2002). *Social Workers' Desk Reference* has won three national awards from the Association of American Publishers, the American Library Association User's Reference Division, and *Choice*. Dr. Roberts has been listed in *Who's Who in America* since 1992.

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Introduction

The first edition of this book (published in 1990) and the second (published in 2000) were major successes, and the editor has kept the same framework with the five original sections. However, this new edition is basically a new book, with 15 brand-new chapters and an additional section on disaster mental health and crisis intervention. The remaining original chapters were thoroughly updated and revised by the original authors.

Since the publication of the first edition, crisis intervention practices and programs have changed considerably. Professional and public interest in crisis intervention, crisis response teams, crisis management, and crisis stabilization has grown tremendously in the past decade, partially due, no doubt, to the prevalence of acute crisis events impacting on the lives of the general public. The focus of this book is on crisis intervention services for persons who are victims of natural disasters; school-based and home-based violence; violent crimes, such as homicide, aggravated assault, sexual assault, domestic violence, and date rape among college students; and personal or family crises, such as the death of a loved one, incest, life-threatening medical conditions, divorce, suicide and suicide attempts, and drug abuse.

Suicide prevention programs and other 24-hour crisis hotlines provide valuable assistance to callers who are contemplating suicide and related self-destructive acts. These telephone hotlines are operational nationwide, usually staffed by trained graduate students and volunteers. The programs that are accredited by the American Association of Suicidology require all crisis