Fear, Crisis, Trauma and Response for Victims: A Workshop

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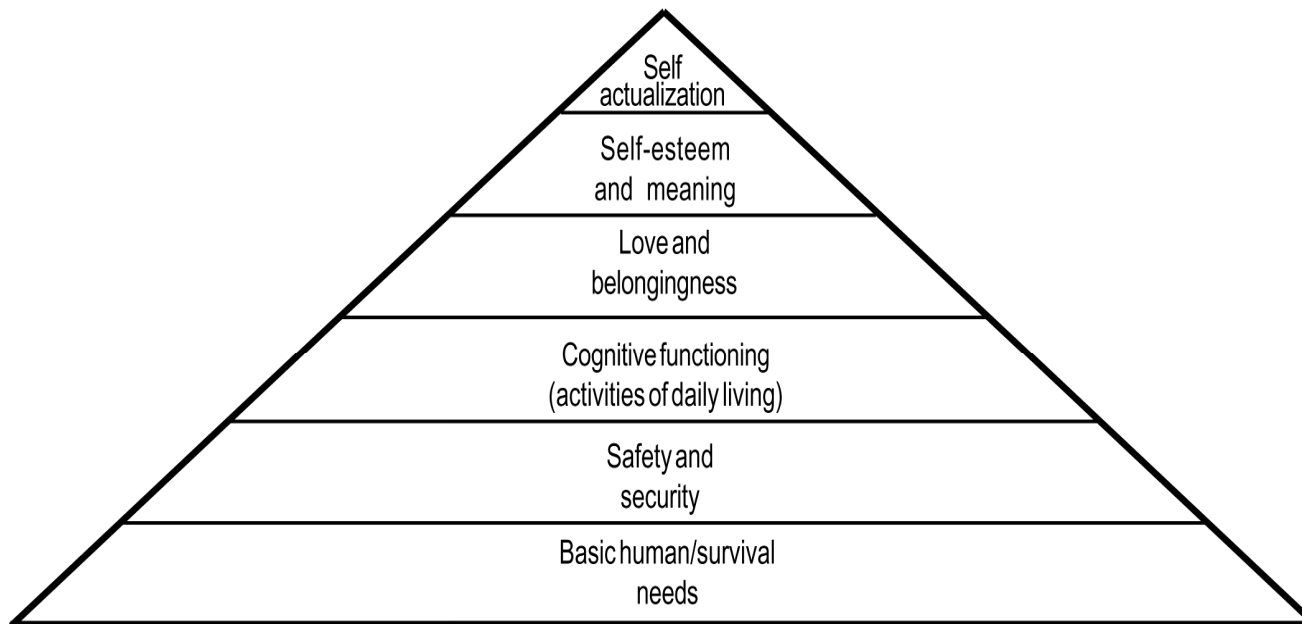**Newberg, OR, USA**

Fear, Crisis, Trauma and Response

"Fear needs to be tamed in order for people to be able to think and be conscious of their needs. A person's bodily response of fear can be mitigated by safety of attachments, by security of meaning schemes."

Bessel Van der Kolk

Fear, Crisis, Trauma and Response

Maslow's "Basic Hierarchy of Human Needs"

Self actualization

Self-esteem and meaning

Love and belongingness

Cognitive functioning (activities of daily living)

Safety and security

Basic human/survival needs

"…there is always a cause for fear. The cause may change over time, but the fear is always with us … we are never without the fear itself. Fear pervades society in all its aspects. Perpetually … Because although we imagine we live in different nations – in fact, we inhabit exactly the same state, the State of Fear."

Michael Crichton in *State of Fear*

"Security … is not about food — it is about fear."

Andrew Ladley in *Justice as a Basic Human Need*

Relationship of Fear and Justice

- Existential terror + possibilities of pain or death = fear and horror

- Fear + horror = need for safety and security

- Safety + security needs = needs for emotional and cognitive attachment to others

- Emotional + cognitive attachments = meaning (spiritual beliefs), relationships, communities and cultures

- Relationships + communities + cultures = creations of justice systems

- Relationships + justice systems = primary and secondary protections

Crisis Reaction

Physical Response

- • Physical shock, disorientation, and numbness
- • Fight, flight, or submission
- • Exhaustion

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Crisis Reaction

The mind's response

- **Shock, disbelief and denial**
- **Regression**
- **Cataclysm of emotions**
  - •   Fear and terror
  - •   Anger, fury, and outrage
  - •   Confusion and frustration
  - •   Guilt or self-blame
  - •   Shame or humiliation
  - •   Grief or sorrow

- **Reconstruction of equilibrium**

Normal Thinking

- **Normal thinking is based on:**
- • Attention
- • Association
- • Response
- • Organization
- • Interpretation

Traumatic Thinking

- **Traumatic thinking is based on:**
- **Association (threat)**
- **Response (fight, flight or submission)**
- **Disorganization**
- **Inability to interpret**

Crime, Violence and Catastrophe Shatter Individual Assumptions of Safety and Rip the Social Fabric of Communities

The essence of victim services is to:

- **Restore victims to successful functioning**

- **Restore the sense of community**

Four Basic Elements to Restoration of Victims

1. Response to immediate crisis needs

    – Basic human needs: warmth, shelter, food

    – Safety, security, justice

    – Integrating what happened

    – Understanding what will happen next

Four Basic Elements to Restoration of Victims

2. Response to the need for relationships

- Spiritual connections

- Social support

- Social activism

Four Basic Elements to Restoration of Victims

3. Response to individual needs for justice

- **Re-establishing protection and safety**

- **Transparent information**

- **Accountability of the process**

- **Opportunity for involvement**

- **Accountability of the offender(s)**

Four Basic Elements to Restoration of Victims

4. Reparations

- Repayment of losses (compensation, restitution, civil actions)

- Symbolic social vindication

- Acknowledgement of harm done

Basic Elements to Restoration of Communities

Prevention of Future Victimization and Violence: Maximizing Social Capital

"Social capital incorporates a number of distinct elements:

(1) participation in interlocking networks of relationships between individuals and groups;

(2) the notion of reciprocity;

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Basic Elements to Restoration of Communities

"Social capital incorporates a number of distinct elements:

[continued from previous slide]

(3) trust;

(4) agreement about social norms;

(5) the idea of shared ownership over community resources; and

(6) the active and willing engagement of citizens within a participative community."

Vimpani, G. (2000) *Child development and civil society: Does social capital matter? Development and Behavioral Pediatrics, 21, 44-47*

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Basic Elements to Restoration of Communities

- **Reducing opportunities for crime**

- **Preventing recidivism**

- **Establishment of a system of inclusive justice that involves victims, offenders and the general community**

- **Victim rights and remedies**

Basic Elements to Restoration of Communities

Victim Rights and Remedies:

1. Prevention/protection

- **Warning system**

- **Youth interventions**

- **Reduction of poverty**

- **Reduction of homeless**

- **Promoting literacy**

- **Building communities**

Basic Elements to Restoration of Communities

Victim Rights and Remedies:

2. Information/notification: accurate and timely
- Court schedule changes
- Pre-trial release
- Bail release
- Plea agreements
- Sentencing
- Final disposition
- Probation revocation decisions
- Parole decisions
- Pardon or clemency decisions
- Work release
- Prison release
- Escape

Basic Elements to Restoration of Communities

Victim rights and remedies:

3. Participation and standing

4. Reparations/compensation/ restitution

5. Dignity/confidentiality/ compassion

Reintegration of Offenders – Restorative Justice

- **Accountability to victims and the community**

- **Admission and apology**

- **Restitution to victims and communities**

- **Non-punitive**

- **Education**

- **Employment**

Community Rights

- **Prevention**

- **Protection**

- **Information/notification**

- **Participation**

- **Reparations**

Final thought

"I believe that man will not merely endure; he will prevail. He is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance."

William Faulkner in his acceptance speech for the Nobel Prize in 1950