

***Coping With Crisis: A Counselor's Guide to the Restabilization Process***

Jim Burtles

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Reviewed by Paige Lovitt for Reader Views (10/07)

“Coping with Crisis” is the fifth book in the “Explorations in Metapsychology” series. The author, Jim Burtles, wrote this book to aid counselors in reducing the traumatic aftereffects for others that are caused by crisis situations. Mr. Burtles has a background in training others with how to deal with a range of crisis situations. He worked as a consultant in the field of disaster recovery and emergency management.

Mr. Burtles came up with a four-stage restabilization process for recovery from a traumatic event. He found that the techniques he utilizes can be useful for any major personal crisis; however, they are most effective when offered immediately after the crisis event. He discusses when and where to offer this form of counseling.

Prior to going into the discussion of the restabilization process, he discusses “The Five Discoveries of Stress.” Next he lists the four basic recovery stages of the restabilization process which are: Recap; Review; Repair, and Reinforce. The second and third stages involve using cognitive behavioral analysis. Mr. Burtles puts a positive spin on the crisis event by stating that, “A crisis can be an opportunity for self-discovery, which may lead to self improvement.” The person in crisis can benefit from the insight gained from dealing with the situation.

Part of the process involves assisting the client with recognizing that his current way of dealing with the stressful situations is not working well for him. Once he recognizes this, the counselor is able to teach the client a healthier way. Very interesting, illuminating examples are used to illustrate the key points. A very useful glossary is also included. Session models are included for both one-on-one sessions and group sessions. A Code for Counselors that will benefit all in the counseling profession is also included.

I really feel that all counselors should have this book on hand. It is well written and interesting. By reading this, the counselor will better prepare himself for a catastrophic situation should it occur. Considering the climate in many schools today, I think it is especially important for school counselors to be trained in this method. As a counselor living nearby the fires currently happening in southern California, I really think that this guide would be beneficial in dealing with the thousands of people in crisis. The sooner they are helped, the less likely the chance of serious permanent emotional damage. I highly recommend “Coping with Crisis.”