

CRISIS RECOVERY PROGRAM

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CRISIS RECOVERY PROGRAM

What happens when a crisis occurs?

All people have crises throughout their lives. They can range from seemingly small events to catastrophes which effect large numbers of people. However, not all people respond to these events in the same way. Some people will experience stress in the short term and nothing more, and others will experience psychological trauma as a consequence of the crisis. Some people may eventually experience a post traumatic stress disorder which seriously affects the person's ability to cope with life. We all react differently to challenges in life; it is learning how to cope with these stresses with confidence and trust that develops true character and enables us to support those around us.

A crisis becomes a traumatic experience when it completely overwhelms the individual's ability to cope or integrate the *ideas* and *emotions* involved with that experience. Common characteristics of trauma are a sense of confusion, insecurity and sometimes a sense of betrayal by people who have previously been trusted, people in authority, or even God.

The good news is that reseach into people recovering from a crisis, even when it becomes a trauma, indicates that if they put a conscious effort into dealing with it, they come out of it a stronger person.

“People who fully engage in recovery from trauma discover unexpected benefits. As they gradually heal their wounds, survivors find that they are also developing inner strength, compassion for others, increasing self-awareness, and often the most surprising – a greater ability to experience joy and serenity than ever before.”

- Dr Patti Levin Trauma Centre Boston, United States.

To recover from the crisis, we firstly need to change the way we think.

The Way We Think

The reason why people respond differently to the same events is because of the different ways people think about the events. These thoughts then lead to the emotions they experience, the body feelings they experience and any actions they take.

This becomes clear with one of Psychology's most famous 'models of thinking'.

ABC Model of Thinking.

A Activity	B Belief/thought	C Consequences -emotions -body feelings -actions
An Example:		
Donate \$50 to a cause	Helping someone; Doing something useful	Feel good, feel in control Feeling of lightness, energy Will donate again
Donate \$50 to a cause	They will think I am stingy if I do not;	Feel resentment Knot in stomach Avoid situations of charity collection

When an activity or circumstance arises which is noticed by someone, it creates a thought about the activity which in turn leads to three types of consequences. The first consequence is the creation of an emotion associated with the interpretation of the event, the second consequence is a body feeling that is created at the same time as the emotion, and the third consequence is the action or series of actions we decide to take in response.

This happens every time we notice something, or a thought or event comes into our awareness. ALL OUR EMOTIONS, BODY FEELINGS AND ACTIONS ARISE DIRECTLY FROM THE WAY WE THINK. If we want to change what we are currently experiencing in our lives, the way to do this is to change the way we think, change our interpretation of good or bad in relation to what is happening.

Examples of the different types of beliefs and consequences we may have resulting from a large loss of money could be:

Activity	Beliefs	Consequences	
Large Loss of Money	Bad: I have made a terrible mistake, what an idiot I am, I have ruined us all	<i>Emotions</i> <i>Body Feelings</i> <i>Actions</i>	Dread, despair, shock Numbness Self loathing, punishing myself in different ways
	Bad: My life is over	<i>Emotions</i> <i>Body Feelings</i> <i>Actions</i>	Despair, guilt Knot in stomach, numbness Potential self harm
	Bad: Those bastards have to pay	<i>Emotions</i> <i>Body Feelings</i> <i>Actions</i>	Anger, resentment Tension in body Potential harm to others
	Bad: What impact is this having on my loved ones	<i>Emotions</i> <i>Body Feelings</i> <i>Actions</i>	Concern, worry, love Tightness in chest Talk to loved ones, identify issues
	Good: How can I help others who are even worse off than me	<i>Emotions</i> <i>Body Feelings</i> <i>Actions</i>	Concern, love, hope Energised Formulation of solutions
	Good: How can I help myself	<i>Emotions</i> <i>Body Feelings</i> <i>Actions</i>	Concern, love, hope Energised Formulation of solutions
	Good: There must be a solution	<i>Emotions</i> <i>Body Feelings</i> <i>Actions</i>	Determination, hope Energised Seeking Solutions, problem solving
	Good: I have to move on and cut my losses	<i>Emotions</i> <i>Body Feelings</i> <i>Actions</i>	Determination Energised Identify strategies, put into action
	Good: What is the lesson I am meant to be learning from this	<i>Emotions</i> <i>Body Feelings</i> <i>Actions</i>	Curiosity, hope Neutral Seek meaning, talk to others, analysing

This is the first key principle for recovering from a crisis quickly. Change the way you think (by seeking a positive aspect in your experience) and you will change the emotions and body feelings you have, and you will also start acting positively.

The second key principle for recovering from a crisis quickly is to be conscious of the energy we attract to ourselves by the way we think and the way we act.

Briefly, everything is made up of atoms; atoms are comprised of smaller bits such as electrons and protons. At its most basic level, everything in the universe is made up of energy. All energy vibrates at different frequencies. The reason why a biro looks like it does is because all the atoms that comprise it are vibrating at a certain frequency. The reason why we all look the way we do is for the same reason. The combinations of atoms which form to make each one of us are vibrating at unique frequencies which give us our physical form.

Thoughts also, emit their own measurable vibrational frequencies. Energy is attracted to other energy vibrating at the same or very similar frequency. This occurs continuously, whether we are aware of it or not.

What is important here, is that thoughts which come from our mind are being projected into the universe and are attracting energy of a similar frequency. This is called the Law of Attraction.

It has been observed by just about everybody, that people who think negatively all the time, attract negative things. They seem to have more bad luck than others, they get themselves into all sorts of trouble because of the way they interpret events and the way they react to them. When we say ‘they attract negative things to themselves’ we mean that literally. We attract energy to ourselves which reinforces the quality of our thoughts, positive or negative. After a crisis we are particularly vulnerable to thinking negatively.

This is the second key principle for recovering from a crisis quickly. The more quickly you start thinking in a positive way, the more quickly you will start to attract positive energy into your life. This is fundamental to moving into a brighter future.

The Way Forward

Time heals. Most people survive the crises in their life and move on. The intensity of the emotion associated with the crisis lessens over time and we start to ‘put our life back together’. However, many people do this in a random, haphazard way and it takes *much longer* to move on than it needs to. There are several strategies readily available to make the recovery process faster and more effective. There is a logical order in which these strategies can be best used. They are:

- A. Identify what the actual trauma means to you.
- B. Build a framework to help you through this quickly
- C. Actively look for resources to assist you

A. Identify What the Actual Trauma Means to You (Impact Analysis)

We need to focus our full attention on what the crisis really means for each of us personally.

- ❖ What impact does it have on my self image or what I believe about myself?
- ❖ What emotions am I experiencing?
- ❖ What impact does this have on me physically?
- ❖ What impact does it have on other parts of my life?

BELIEFS ABOUT MYSELF, MY SELF IMAGE	Tick if true for you
This is unreal, cannot be happening, blank mind	
I will lose everything, I do not know what will happen	
Where did I go wrong?	
What is the threat this time?	
Leave me alone I am in pain	
Life is out of my control	
I am a victim, I am helpless	
I am under attack	
This is happening to me because of the things I have done in the past	
It is all my fault	
I am worthless	
I am powerless	
I will be disgraced	
Who can I blame?	
Life is a constant struggle	
It may be better to end it all	
People will think I am an idiot, I believe I am an idiot, my family will think I am an idiot	
I am humiliated, what a fool	
I cannot pay the bills	
If only I had	
I will get over this	
There is a silver lining, I just have to find it	
Others are worse off than me	
We should help each other	
What can I do to help this situation?	
What can I learn from this?	

EMOTIONAL REACTIONS, HOW I FEEL	Tick if true for you
shock and disbelief	
fear and/or anxiety	
grief, disorientation, denial	
hyper-alertness or hyper-vigilance	
irritability, restlessness, outbursts of anger or rage	
emotional swings – like crying and then laughing	
worrying or ruminating – intrusive thoughts of the trauma	
nightmares	
flashbacks – feeling like the trauma is happening now	
feelings of helplessness, panic, feeling out of control	
increased need to control everyday experiences	
minimizing the experience	
attempts to avoid anything associated with trauma	
tendency to isolate oneself	
feelings of detachment	
concern over burdening others with problems	
emotional numbing or restricted range of feelings	
difficulty trusting and/or feelings of betrayal	
difficulty concentrating or remembering	
feelings of self-blame and/or survivor guilt	
shame	
diminished interest in everyday activities or depression	
unpleasant past memories resurfacing	
loss of a sense of order or fairness in the world; expectation of doom and fear of the future	

PHYSICAL REACTIONS	Tick if true for you
Lump in throat	
Tightness in chest	
Knot in stomach	
Tension in the shoulders	
headaches	
aches and pains backaches	
Loss of appetite	
Loss of interest in sex	
Changes in sleep patterns	
sudden sweating and/or heart palpitations	
constipation or diarrhea	
easily startled by noises or unexpected touch	
more susceptible to colds and illnesses	
increased use of alcohol or drugs and/or overeating	

IMPACT ON DIFFERENT PARTS OF MY LIFE		
<p>How will this effect different parts of my life? The degree of impact is a rating of : 1= no impact 2=little impact 3=medium impact 4=major impact</p> <p>The description of the impact is designed to help you see what the negative and positive aspects have been e.g. the crisis has brought us closer together as a family; the crisis has meant we must have our holidays locally and not overseas.</p>		
Area of Life	Degree of Impact 1-4	Nature of Impact - describe the nature of the impact
Partner/ relationship		
Other Family		
Friends		
Career/ Business		
Remaining Wealth level		
Physical environment		
Health		
Sleep		
Recreation activities		
Community Service Work		
Spiritual Life		

B. Build A Framework To Help Me Through This Crisis Quickly

An effective crisis recovery framework has several elements;

1. *Summary of the impact of the crisis on all areas of my life, listed in order of priority*
2. *Changing the way we think about each of the issues identified in the Impact Analysis*
3. *Removing the emotional intensity associated with each issue*
4. *Developing new goals in all areas of our life*
5. *Developing a 'Mind Management' framework to increase positive thoughts and reduce negative thinking*
6. *Developing good habits, which translates into an easy daily routine to ensure the powerful changes you experience have a lasting, life long effect*

1. Summary of the Impact of the Crisis on All Areas of My Life Listed In Order of Priority

A number of things usually become evident in the Impact Analysis:

Some parts of our lives are affected strongly, some mildly, others are not affected at all. Many parts of our life may be left intact and can be a source of strength whilst we deal with the problems.

The impact of a crisis can be both positive and negative. Crises for example, often bring people closer together. This can be of long last lasting value. People can also have deep spiritual experiences from a crisis, and can experience an increased sense of self worth through helping others out.

The summary basically forms a list of detailed challenges to address. It is also excellent information for future life planning.

2. Changing the Way We Think About Each of the Issues Identified in the Impact Analysis

Earlier in this paper we gave examples of how different interpretations of activities or events lead to entirely different emotions, body feelings and actions.

Each issue can be turned around so that a positive or a silver lining in the black cloud can be found. Some examples could be:

Activity	Negative thoughts about issue	Positive side
No longer have an overseas holiday	Will not see these places I have dreamt of for so long Everyone else has been, I always miss out; nothing else will be good enough	It may be possible to go later, only the timing has changed; We can still have a holiday, we can go camping; the best part of a holiday is being together, we can still do that; maybe we are meant to have a new set of adventures
Cannot give the gifts I was going to give	I waited for years to be able to give the gifts I really wanted to, without financial constraints	Maybe I can give more of my time, I can make something. The point of giving is to see the joy on their face, how else can I bring that joy?

It is particularly important to do this on every issue which brings up strong emotions.

3. Removing the Emotional Intensity Associated with Each Issue

The best way to remove the intensity of the emotions associated with crises and traumatic events is to encourage forgiveness of, or 'letting go' of the issue. This may be accompanied by some body based therapy, primarily tapping energy meridians in the body (as practised in Chinese medicine). Two popular therapies are Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) and Be Set Free Fast (BSFF).

I prefer BSFF because it is easier to learn and people can use it on themselves for any issues which arise in the future. This was developed by Doctor Larry Nims, an American psychologist and as the title implies, it works very quickly. This is a spectacularly successful, yet extremely simple therapy and a GREAT TOOL for a quick recovery.

BSFF is better learnt in a workshop setting and will be taught at the live seminars to be held shortly. For those who want more information on it, go to www.besetfreefast.com.

4. Developing New Goals in All Areas of Our Life

Once you are aware that your thoughts attract energy of a similar frequency, it becomes important to *plan what it is in life that you really want* because you know that when you start to focus your thoughts on it, you will start attracting energy to make it happen. Think positively; create a happy outcome.

MY LIFE PLAN			
Area of Life	Degree of Impact 1-4	Nature of Impact - describe the nature of the impact	New goal/s to set in this area of my life
Partner/ Relationship			
Other Family			
Friends			
Career/ Business			
Remaining Wealth level			
Physical environment			
Health			
Sleep			
Recreation activities			
Community Service Work			
Spiritual Life			

Developing A 'Mind Management' Framework to Increase Positive Thoughts and Reduce Negative Thinking

The Mind Management framework involves a number of techniques which help to keep us in a positive frame of mind. Positive thinking works because it attracts positive energy. Positive thinking stimulates our creativity, is outward looking, is energetic, is infectious and is also observant. We start to notice opportunities around us, which could have always been there, but which we may not notice when we are in a negative frame of mind.

Negative thinking, as we have said before, attracts negative energy. Negative thinking is constrictive; it is an energy drainer rather than an energy giver; it sees the problems in things rather than the opportunities.

Some positive thought management strategies include:

Affirmations - are positive statements or thoughts about some new desire we have . They are a useful mechanism for focussing our attention on the things we really want in life, helping to formulate our goals and redirecting our attitudes .

Affirmations are also a very effective way of replacing negative self talk (delete) which is often higher than normal after a crisis.

Affirmations need to be said frequently and with feeling to be effective. They can also be said silently to yourself or out loud. The more you focus on the content of the affirmation, visualizing it and injecting emotion into it, the more powerful it will be.

Two popular affirmations are presented below. You can also make up your own.

"My life in every way, is getting better every day."

"All is well. Everything that is happening is only for my highest good"

Gratitude Attitude - Developing a 'gratitude attitude' of focussing on the things you have, rather than the things you never had or no longer have. Gratitude contains the emotion of joy and by systematically being grateful; we systematically inject joy into our life.

Generating gratitude is easy to do. We can imagine the world without things that we really love (and often take for granted) and become aware of just how fantastic the world is. Imagine a world where there was only one gender, a world without music, dancing, water, birds, other animals, sports, trees, mountains and so on.

Imagine a world without our loved ones. The presence of these people and things is truly a reason to be grateful. Joy leads on to other positive emotions such as love, optimism, enthusiasm, acceptance and peace.

A glass of wine	Making faces	MORE THINGS THAT MAKE ME HAPPY
A great foot massage	Meals with the family	
Animals	Movies	
Antiques	Music	
Art, painting, drawing	My family	
Being kind	My Space	
Being organised	Nature walks	
Being warm	New recipes	
Bird watching	Novels	
Boating	Perfume	
Butterflies and dragonflies	Pets	
Camping	Photography	
Clear night sky	Playing with Babies	
Coffee table books	Problem solving	
Collecting things	Radio	
Comedies	Reading	
Cooking	Self Improvement books	
Crafts	Running	
Cultural activities	Singing	
Dancing	Spending time with friends	
Doing a clean out	Splashing in puddles	
Eating well	Swimming	
Facebook	Swimming in the ocean	
Fishing	Swimming in the river	
Flowers –smelling/arranging them	Taking road trips	
Gardening	Taking the dog for a walk	
Getting a massage	Talking on the telephone	
Going for a drive	The smell of lavender	
Dining with my friends	The sound of rain falling	
Going to the market	Using my laptop	
Great sex	Volunteering	
Helping someone because I can	Walking in sand	
Hot shower	Walking in the sunshine	
Internet	Watching/listening to the rain	
Karaoke	Watching the sunrise	
Laughing and Giggling	Watching the sunset	
Live music	Writing poetry	

Some negative thought management processes include:

Stop Sign -When you have constant or recurring negative thoughts, an effective way to shift your thinking is to imagine a STOP sign. By visualizing a STOP sign, your mind has automatically shifted from the negative thoughts. You then breathe through the diaphragm twice (by pushing out the stomach when you breathe), this automatically relaxes the body and completely breaks the negative thinking cycle. You can do this as many times a day as you need to. Deep breathing creates more life flow in the body.

Thought Shifters -This is similar to the STOP sign technique. When you have constant or recurring negative thoughts (e.g. I'm ruined, I'm ruined), an effective way to shift your thinking is to imagine something you really love. It could be a person, a place or an activity, as long as it has some emotional pull, it will stop the negative thinking cycle. This is also called breaking the pattern of recurring negative thoughts.

Progressive Relaxation - This involves tensing your muscles and then relaxing them. You start from your toes, flexing them for ten seconds and then relaxing them. You then do your calves in the same way, then your thighs and so on. The point of flexing is that it helps to identify what the relaxed state is like compared with a tense state.. You continue this process systematically from the toes to the top of the head and then you imagine doing the same thing internally, relaxing behind the eyes, behind the nose, etc, working your way down to the genital area and then up to the heart and lungs and out through the arms and hands.

Developing An Easy Daily Routine So That Your Good Habits Are Life Long

When good ideas become good habits, the changes you are seeking for yourself will come very quickly. An effective daily routine usually starts in the morning, it is a great way to begin the day. Whilst you are doing the physical exercise, you can be going through your mind management program at the same time.

An effective daily routine covers the following:

1. Exercise for an hour – run, walk, stretch, do weights, do yoga
2. Focus on the things in your life that you are grateful for
3. Go through your list of affirmations covering all aspects of your life. Make a decision that you are going to have a fantastic day. Plan something special for yourself.
4. Concentrate on the key goals you have set for yourself visualize you having already achieved delete them, express your gratitude and act on them.
5. Examine potential blocks to success, eliminate negative thoughts
6. Talk to someone during the day who is positive and supportive of your goals
7. Be on the look out for good books, DVDs, people and role models who can inspire you
8. Use the progressive relaxation exercise to help you have a good night's sleep.

REMEMBER: THE SECRET TO SUCCESS IS TO BE CONSISTENT

C. Actively Look for Resources to Assist You

The most magnificent resource we all have is our own mind. We have talked at length on how we can use this more effectively. Other resources to call upon to help us through the crisis include:

Supportive People

The people we mix with can have a huge influence on us. Students wanting to get good results should hang around studious types, sports people who want to improve performance should hang around like minded people. Business people looking to be successful need to find other people with similar dreams and expectations, or preferably, those who are already successful. *People wishing to recover from a crisis quickly, need to find people who can help them do it.* This includes people going through a similar crisis who want a quick recovery and have a positive attitude of “what can we learn from this”.

It also includes people with specialist information and knowledge to deal with specific issues (e.g. financial, legal) and others who offer emotional support. They need to be actively sought out and engaged. These are the people who are interested in your recovery and growth and will rejoice in your success. It does not include people who make hints that you were in any way to blame; you do not need that type of negative relationship at all.

Supportive people can be found among family, friends, work colleagues and common interest groups. They can also come in the form of counselors, coaches, mentors and teachers. Sometimes paid professionals can give an objectivity that friends and family cannot. Whatever the source, spending time with positive, supportive people is crucial.

Inspiration

Everyone enjoys the experience of being inspired. It gives us energy and can be a powerful motivator to achieve. Inspiration may come to us unexpectedly, but it can also come to us in a systematic way if we plan for it.

Inspiration can be found in all aspects of our lives. It can be found in other people overcoming their hardships and sharing their story. You may be an inspiration to someone else in the course of your day, because of your positive attitude and encouraging outlook.

Inspiration can come from children, other parents, peers, people who work in similar fields, sports people, artists, spiritually oriented people, business people, famous people and unsung heroes. We can be inspired by bravery, kindness, generosity, thoughtfulness, creativity and cleverness, just as we can be intimidated by selfish acts and negative emotions.

It is an ongoing absurdity in our society that the most popular pastimes revolve around watching videos, movies, the daily news and television programs which have negative messages, portray violence and create fear rather than inspiration. The amount of time spent with these could be redirected to actively pursuing inspiration.

Crisis Recovery Summary Points

When you shift the way you think about yourself from negative to positive, you will feel uplifting emotions, your body will feel energized and you will act with clarity and cheerfulness.

The more quickly you start thinking in a positive way, the more quickly you start to attract positive energy into your life. This is fundamental to moving into a brighter future.

Identify what the trauma actually means to you, because when you know this you can plan solutions.

- ❖ What impact does it have on my self image or what I believe about myself?
- ❖ What emotions am I experiencing? How do I feel?
- ❖ What impact does this have on me physically?
- ❖ What impact does it have on other parts of my life?

Build a framework to help you through this quickly

- ❖ *Summarize the impact of the crisis in all areas of your life and prioritize them*
- ❖ *Find a positive possible outcome raised by each of the issues identified*
- ❖ *Remove the emotional intensity associated with each issue using Be Set Free Fast – attend the workshop*
- ❖ *Develop new goals in all areas of your life*
- ❖ *Develop a 'Mind Management' framework to increase positive thoughts and reduce negative thinking*
- ❖ *Develop an easy Daily Routine so that your good habits are life long*

Actively Look for Resources to Assist You

- ❖ Seek Supportive People
- ❖ Seek Inspiration
- ❖ Smile until it becomes easy and the natural thing to do!

Whatever the gravity of the present crisis may be, whatever its impact, it will pass, and you will grow from the experience. And maybe one day you will tell the story to your grand children or great grand children!