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# **MOOC 1 – Unit 1**

## **History and approaches**

### **Chapter 2**

### **Conceptualization of**

### **Psychological Crisis**

### **Intervention from Different**

### **Perspectives**

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## **Chapter 2**

# **Conceptualization of Psychological Crisis Intervention from Different Perspectives**

The multitude of types of crises, their diverse nature and diverse individual and social context have resulted in a large number of models and forms of intervention.

Over the years, crisis intervention has been defined in different ways, referring to different contexts or emphasizing slightly different goals and tasks. There are at least three main ways to conceptualize crisis intervention:

1. Intervention as individual help, mainly of a psychological nature.
2. Multilateral help and care in the face of various difficult situations and threats.
3. Social, systemic and political activity aimed at improving the functioning of individuals and social groups.



## 2.1. Individual Perspective

Crisis intervention, from an individual perspective, takes the form of specific impact on a person in crisis, mainly based on the relationship of emotional and social support. The intervention consists of providing psychological help and taking action to solve the problem underlying the crisis.

Individual impact on a person can take the form of general support, as well as the focus on an individual and their unique ways of experiencing a crisis. Intervention measures are tailored to the client's characteristics (not the type of crisis).

Individual aid can also be categorical - intervention measures are tailored to the crisis category. Intervention techniques and strategies vary according to the diagnosis of the type of crisis.

The individual perspective is a classic approach to crisis intervention and refers to the classic definitions of crisis.



## **2.2. Socio-Environmental Perspective**

The socio-environmental perspective relates the client to their environment, involves integrating them into a social support network, and means modifying the client's environment and/or referring them to specialist help.

In this case, individual psychological help is implemented together with the multi-track activity for the benefit of the client in their environment. This approach includes the activation of social support for the environment, family therapy, organization of daily life, as well as legal assistance and protection.

In this model, an interdisciplinary approach is important. It increases the effectiveness of the intervention.





## 2.3. Sociocultural Perspective

From a sociocultural perspective, the problem of an individual client is transferred to the level of general solutions. The intervention initiates changes that take into account other people from risk groups with similar problems. Solutions are sought that will apply to the entire community in which an individual has experienced a crisis.

Crisis intervention - in the broadest sense of the term - is therefore a socio-political and systemic activity for the health of the community. Individual crises make us look for precedent solutions – not only legal, but also axiological and ideological.



# Summary

There are three main ways of conceptualising crisis intervention:

- Intervention as individual help, mainly of a psychological nature.
- Multilateral help and care in the face of various difficult situations and threats.
- Social, systemic and political activities aimed at improving the functioning of individuals and social groups.





## **2.4. Ethical Aspects of Psychological Early Intervention**

Psychological crisis intervention, like other forms of psychological help, is based on a specific type of relationship between the person seeking help and the assisting person. For this reason, the process of helping is integrally related to ethical issues, because providing help not only gives rise to certain obligations, but also carries the risk of errors and abuse.

Psychological help is a relationship between people and for this reason alone, it cannot be considered in isolation from ethics.

Ethics, as a science of morality, refers to philosophical anthropology and reflection on human nature, and thus to philosophical thought. This means that ethical decisions always have a certain system of thought, worldview, assumptions about the world and the human beings behind them.

The use of ethical assessments is never neutral in terms of worldview. This also applies to professional ethics. Using categories such as the good of man or dignity always implies the existence of a way of thinking, a philosophy of life, a worldview in which these concepts are justified. The worldview or philosophy underlying ethical judgments is not always fully recognized and accessible for intellectual reflection.

Every day people do not define what exact philosophical system underlies their ethical thinking, but derive the criteria of moral evaluation from the social ethos in which they participate. Usually, only dilemmas or conflicts of values lead to a deeper reflection on the foundations of these assessments. In the European cultural circle, ethical thinking was mostly influenced by Greek philosophy, Roman law and Christianity. It is from this circle that the concepts of a person, personal freedom and human rights come from.





In this approach, the main source of the ethical duty arising in the helping relationship is the meeting of people itself, because the relationship between a person and a person is always related to the category of good. Therefore, both people are in some way responsible for each other in this relationship. They are bound by the dignity of the person: they must not do anything that would violate this dignity.

The praxeological assessment (e.g. whether something is effective) cannot therefore be separated from the ethical assessment (e.g. whether it is worthy of a person). This applies to various forms of helping, including psychological crisis intervention.

Only after discussing the broader ethical context we can begin to consider the ethics of the intervener profession. It is therefore necessary to define the ethical and professional responsibilities of the intervener towards persons in crisis. The codes of professional ethics serve this purpose.



Despite the diversity, the codes are of a similar nature. Usually, respect and responsibility towards people are postulated (e.g. the principle of professional confidentiality). The main goal is the well-being of the people in therapy (not using the patient for personal gain).

The codes also require professionalism - caring for competences and professional development. Regarding the relationship with the supported person, codes generally recognize that such relationships should not be social or business in nature and cannot be transferred outside the area of therapy / intervention. The client's dependence on the helper cannot be used emotionally or materially.



Learn more: Examples of professional codes of ethics –

American Counseling Association –

<https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/library-archives/archived-code-of-ethics/codeethics05.pdf>.

Australian Counselling

Association–[https://www.theaca.net.au/documents/ACA%20Code%20of%20Ethics%20and%20Practice%20Ver15.p](https://www.theaca.net.au/documents/ACA%20Code%20of%20Ethics%20and%20Practice%20Ver15.pdf)

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Ethical issues in the area of psychological help are also important because the helping relationship is very sensitive to abuse. It is about both the susceptibility to abuse of the client / patient and the serious consequences of such abuse for the therapy process.

This is related to other areas but is particularly applicable here because the specialist usually has a significant advantage over the client. This applies to the knowledge they have, but also to the certain power they have. In many cases, the client depends on the therapist. The therapist is responsible for the session and the way it is conducted. It is they who can determine whether the client's behaviour is mature or immature, and sometimes even indicative of health or illness.



Learn more: Disaster mental health: Ethical issues for counsellors.

[https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/ethics/ethics-columns/ethics\\_january\\_2018\\_disaster-mental-health.df?sfvrsn=ba25522c\\_4](https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/ethics/ethics-columns/ethics_january_2018_disaster-mental-health.df?sfvrsn=ba25522c_4).



## Remember

## CODE OF ETHICS



- Ethics as a science of morality refers to philosophical anthropology and reflection on human nature, and thus to philosophical thought. This means that ethical decisions always have a certain system of thought, a worldview, assumptions about the world and the people behind them.
- Usually, respect and responsibility towards people are postulated (e.g. the principle of professional confidentiality). The main goal is the well-being of the people in therapy (not using the patient for personal gain).
- The codes also require professionalism - caring for competences and professional development. Regarding the relationship with the supported person, codes generally recognize that such relationships should not be social or business in nature and cannot be transferred outside the area of therapy/intervention.



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