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MOOC 1 – Unit 1

History and approaches

Conclusion

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Conclusions

Origins of crisis intervention as a professional help are usually dated back to the 1940's and 1950's and the pioneering work of Erich Lindemann and Gerald Caplan. Major contributions to crisis intervention come from the observation of war trauma – both WWI and WWII. An important contribution to the theory of crises was made by Erik H. Erikson, who emphasized the developmental abilities of the ego to constructively solve the tasks that a person encounters at subsequent stages of life.

Psychological intervention focused primarily on individuals, families, and small groups. This micro-level focus, sometimes must be complemented by macro-level interventions. The psychological aspect of macro intervention relates mainly to ensuring an adequate level of helping relationship. The successful application of macro-social intervention is possible when different strategies are used in complementary ways.

It is possible to distinguish three main ways to conceptualize 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 activity aimed at improving the functioning of individuals and social groups.

Psychological crisis intervention, like other forms of psychological help, is based on a specific type of relationship between the person seeking help and the supported 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.

There are possible different practical approaches to psychological crisis intervention. Helping relation may be conducted according to the main approaches present in psychotherapy and counselling: psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, existential-humanistic, systemic as well as eclectic and integrative approach.