STRENGTH FOLLOWING DISASTER

TRAINER'S MANUAL

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HELPING PEOPLE FIND STRENGTH FOLLOWING DISASTER

TRAINER'S MANUAL

Introduction

This manual has been designed to assist you in offering disaster training to behavioral health professionals. The one-day training curriculum that you will be using is comprised of approximately 100 slides; it represents a substantial reformulation of a previous two-day training program that had been implemented state-wide in 2004.

The curriculum that you will be teaching was designed by the Ohio Department of Mental Health's "University Linkages Committee." This committee is composed primarily of University faculty from across the State of Ohio; these faculties were selected on the basis of their possession of expertise in the behavioral response to disasters. Funding and support for the development of this curriculum was provided by the Ohio Department of Mental Health, the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, OACBHA, Ohio Department of Health, and Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Cooperative Agreement Grant Number #1U3RMC00055

As you can see from perusing the curriculum slides, this training is intended to offer your audience the tools that they will need to provide disaster services. Of course, many of your program participants will already possess a "toolbox" full of clinical skills and knowledge. Your challenge will be to help participants recognize which of their existing tools can be used in disaster work, which will need to be tailored, and which will need to be left behind at the office. It will also be your task to add some tools to their kits—in other words, to furnish your audience with an understanding of “disaster basics” that they may lack. Beyond such goals, the training should assist your audience in attending to their personal needs and feelings. It should aid them in determining whether they are prepared to engage in disaster work; it should also help them to insure that they devote sufficient energy to self-care.

Obviously, the training goals outlined above are extremely ambitious. The degree to which you actually achieve these goals will vary considerably with different audience members. Some individuals will come to your training far more prepared to engage in disaster work than others. Some are likely to leave your training still seriously questioning their preparedness. However, this training program should enable all participants to build upon their existing understanding of disaster work as well as afford them the chance to consider whether disaster relief work is right for them.

This trainer’s manual should be of assistance to you in achieving the above objectives. As you can see, the manual includes a discussion of preparatory activities and general guidelines for delivering the training. You will also find a list of recommended strategies for presenting individual slides. Finally, there is a “trouble-shooting” section to assist you in handling difficult situations that might arise.

The contents of this manual are intended to provide “food for thought” rather than a list of mandates or imperatives. Consequently, trust your personal judgment as to which of the enclosed guidelines will suit you best. Adopt those strategies that are most palatable to you, and also draw liberally from your own past experience with teaching and program facilitation. Above all else, be yourself. By coming across with candor and genuineness, you will be providing a wonderful role model of the very behavior that we expect of disaster responders.

Good luck with your upcoming training!

Questions?

In the event that you should have questions or concerns arise prior to conducting your training session, please feel free to contact any of the following individuals:

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Chapter 1

Preparing to Conduct Your Training Session

Suggested Activities for the Days and Weeks Prior to the Training

Carefully review the slide program, examine the support materials, and read the trainer's manual. As you review each slide, make notes of any ideas that come to mind—ideas such as why a particular slide is important or relevant, what you might say about it, and how you might make the slide's content "come alive" for your audience.

Meet with your co-facilitator to plan the training. In meetings with your co-facilitator, review all of the program slides and determine which of you will assume responsibility for presenting each segment of the training. Work together to establish a timeline so that you stay on-track (rather than end your day with portions of the material not covered). You will also find it helpful to talk with your co-facilitator about the following:

- How do your individual teaching styles mesh with one-another?
- What are the key points (or the "take-home" messages) associated with each slide?
- Which slides warrant the most time and attention?
- Which of the supporting materials do you wish to cite in connection with the slides?
- How would you prefer to handle audience questions and comments that arise?
- To what extent should you "chime in" and share comments during your co-facilitator's portions of the program?

- What information about local resources should be mentioned in the training or included in the support materials?
- How will various logistical matters be handled—such as reserving room facilities, preparing packets of handouts for participants, securing A-V equipment, registering participants, collecting evaluation forms, distributing certificates of attendance, etc.?

Engage in contingency planning. Have back-up plans in place so that you are prepared to deal with problems or setbacks that might arise. For instance, consider how you might handle the following situations:

- Problems with audio-visual equipment
- Problems with the room climate
- Weather-related problems on the day of training
- Participants arriving late or leaving early
- Participants with special needs
- Unexpected absence of one of the trainers

Suggested Activities for the Hours and Minutes Prior to the Training

Arrive early. Attempt to arrive at the training site at least 30-45 minutes early. This will allow you time to:

- check out the room set-up
- test the A-V equipment (e.g., the microphones, Power Point projector, computer, etc.)
- discuss any final details with your co-facilitator, other conference planners, registration personnel, and facilities' staff
- briefly review your notes

Chapter 2

Conducting the Training

Tips for Beginning Your Training Session

Learn about your audience. What is their specific area of training? How many have past experience in providing disaster relief or engaging in crisis postvention? By learning about your audience's base of knowledge and experience, you will be better able to adapt your training to them and personalize your remarks. It will also allow you to draw upon your audience's expertise during the course of the training.

Prepare your audience for what they will experience in the training—both intellectually and emotionally. Several of the program slides will help to orient your audience to the content of the training—i.e., they will provide your participants with a broad overview of the training and apprise them of the program's learning objectives. However, it is important that you go beyond merely sharing factual information about the program content. Inform your audience that preparation for disaster relief work requires doing more than thinking about matters intellectually; it requires that we consider issues from a holistic (experiential and emotional) perspective. Note how the opening video is designed to achieve this result—i.e., to prompt the viewer to begin to get in touch with his or her emotional and visceral reactions to disaster. Acknowledge understanding that this approach could be problematic for some of the audience. For instance, audience members may find that aspects of the training awaken troubling memories or rekindle emotions associated with past traumas in their lives. Should audience members find themselves verging on "re-traumatization," invite them to engage in healthy self-care—e.g., to mentally tune out for a short while, to take steps to "ground" themselves in the here and now, to physically remove themselves from the room if necessary, and/or to process their reactions with one of the trainers or other appropriate parties during a break.

Mention how disaster-relief work will challenge participants to step outside of their traditional role as therapists. Many of the clinical practices that your participants employ in their day-to-day work will not be appropriate when they are engaged in disaster relief efforts. When working out in the field, behavioral health professionals will rarely need to use advanced diagnostic or therapeutic techniques; instead, they will be called upon to establish basic human connections with those who have been impacted by the disaster. Trainers who have first-hand experience in providing disaster relief may wish to comment on the contrast between their conduct in the field vs. in the office.

Provide participants with instructions about asking questions. Let participants know that there will be ample opportunity for them to raise questions and provide comments. Invite them to ask for clarification at any point when they find material to be unclear or confusing. However, to help insure that you stay on schedule, you might request that participants hold any other questions or comments until designated times during the day (e.g., just before or after breaks).

Remember to attend to your participants' most basic needs! Inform your audience of the locations of drinking fountains and restrooms, break times, plans for lunch, etc. Inquire about how comfortable they are with the room temperature, particularly if you have the power to change it. As Maslow has taught us, people's most basic needs must come first—ahead of their cognitive or psychological needs. (Of course, this is also true when working with survivors of disaster.) People who are hungry, thirsty, cold or tired are not going to be very engaged in learning your material.

Suggestions to Keep in Mind throughout the Training

Be flexible. Although it is imperative that you follow the established curriculum (in its entirety), it is also important that you be responsive to the verbal and nonverbal cues that you receive from your audience. Be innovative in how you choose to discuss the information presented on each slide. Do not feel the need to rigidly adhere (verbatim) to a particular "script" or to devote equal amounts of time to all of the slides. Your participants will probably make it clear that certain topics require much more attention than others. Additionally, given that you are likely to have audience members with considerable variability in their experience and training, be prepared to discuss your material at differing levels of sophistication.

When appropriate, say "I don't know." You may receive questions from your audience that happen to lie outside of your areas of personal expertise—or questions that simply have no clear answer. Strive to be comfortable with acknowledging that you do not know the answer to a question; invite your co-facilitator or other members of the audience to share their opinions. You might also wish to comment on aspects of the question which make it particularly challenging to answer. Candidly admitting that you do not have every answer will enable you to be a good role model to your audience. It will allow you to come across as genuine and will help your audience to recognize that they can provide disaster relief without "knowing it all."

Use humor judiciously. Employing occasional humor can help enliven your training and maintain your participants' attention. However, in discussing matters as grave as disaster and trauma, be cautious that you do not come across as making light of human suffering or the loss of life. Given people's differing characteristics and past experiences, what may seem like an innocuous comment to you could potentially be quite offensive to an audience member.

Defuse the sense of threat associated with role-playing. When participants are asked to engage in role-plays, many will experience a bit of performance anxiety. Such anxiety is common even among highly skilled, experienced behavioral health workers. To help ease participants' tensions, acknowledge that it is quite normal for some audience members to feel a little awkward, uncomfortable, or "on-stage" when involved in a role-play. Stress that the overriding goal of the role-plays is NOT to critically judge participants' communication skills but rather to give them practice in utilizing the multiphase model (i.e., connect, ground, support, normalize, and prepare for the future).

Remember the basics of good public speaking. Employ strategies that have been demonstrated to enhance communication:

- Pay close attention to your audience and to the messages that they send you—both verbally and nonverbally.
- Adopt an open, nondefensive posture.
- Strive to ensure that your facial expressions, hand gestures, and voice tone are congruent with your verbal statements.
- Make liberal use of communication techniques such as summarizing, clarifying, reflecting, and paraphrasing.

Tips for Concluding Your Training Session

Allow enough time for wrap-up activities. Make sure to allot sufficient time for handling end-of-the-day activities, such as:

- having participants complete the Self-Assessment Questionnaire, the Training Survey, and the Program Evaluation Form

- thanking those individuals who helped to make the training possible
- discussing follow-up opportunities available to participants who wish to receive further training or to assist with your county's disaster preparedness efforts

Finish strong. Remember that the way you conclude your training is certain to color participants' overall attitude toward their day-long experience. (Think about how much your own opinion of a particular movie or book has been influenced by how it ends.) Provide your audience with a brief, powerful closing statement that summarizes your hopes for what has been accomplished in the training. Don't let your training session just "fizzle out" with a discussion of logistical matters.

Don't run overtime! Your audience is likely to become restless and inattentive if your training session runs past the designated ending time. Remember that participants have just completed a full day of training and will not appreciate the time being extended. Additionally, many are likely to have other plans or commitments that they need to attend to immediately following your program.

Chapter 3

Recommended Strategies for Presenting Individual Slides

Slide #7, Part 1 of Curriculum (Definition of a Disaster):

Highlight key elements of the definition—i.e., emphasize the notion that a disaster results in broad human suffering or creates a collective human need that requires assistance to alleviate.

Compare and contrast the definition of a disaster with the definition of trauma (slide #18). Discuss the distinction between the concept of "disaster" and terms such as "emergency" and "crisis." (Such terms are often used interchangeably, yet "emergency" and "crisis" do not necessarily involve large-scale events or entail broad human suffering.)

Slide #13 and #17 (Individual Trauma Phases Graph):

Note that there is considerable variability among individuals in exactly how they respond to a disaster. Don't expect everyone to fit the model presented.

Slide #21-24 (PCEB Reactions):

Mention that the items on the slides do not represent an exhaustive, all-inclusive listing of every possible reaction. If time permits, consider inviting participants to share other reactions that would fit in each of the categories.

Slide #26-28 (Individual/Community Group Exercise):

To begin this exercise, ask that participants break into groups consisting of 4-5 members. Next, show the participants Slide #27. After participants have had the opportunity to examine this slide, invite them to reflect upon and discuss the disaster that is depicted. Provide them with some questions to help guide their discussion. Although Slide #28 presents some helpful guiding questions, your audience will likely need more direction than what these questions afford. Consider asking the small groups the following questions:

(1) What type of disaster is being depicted?

(2) In attempting to determine the impact of this particular disaster, what are some of the key factors that you would want to consider?

(3) What existing conditions or resources would help to contribute to the recovery process and what might potentially hinder the community's recovery?

(4) What types of PCEB (physical, cognitive, emotional and behavioral) reactions would you expect to see in persons living in this community—including those persons who are at the scene of the disaster and those in the surrounding areas?

(5) What would be some of the most immediate needs of the persons in this community? What individual and community needs might become more evident over time?

After participants have had time to discuss these questions, ask that a representative from each small group share aloud a couple highlights from their discussion.

Here's an alternate approach that you might consider if time should permit:

Again, break your audience into small groups of 4-6 members each. Ask that they imagine themselves to be members of a response team that has been sent directly to the scene of the disaster. (You can determine how much time has transpired since the disaster and the team's arrival on the scene—or you can invite your team to determine the time frame.) As members of such a team, have them again consider the above questions and share their responses with one-another. Have them conclude by considering the following two questions:

(1) How might your team—and you individually—attempt to be of assistance to the individuals and the community in the scenario?

(2) What more would you need to know about this particular scenario in order to respond in a helpful way?

(NOTE: If participants seem to be significantly impeded by lack of details regarding specifics [e.g., whether there were fatalities, whether a hospital was nearby, whether there was forewarning of the disaster, etc.], invite them to fabricate their own answers to these questions—i.e., to "fill in the missing pieces.")

Slide #35 (Common Human Needs):

Point out that certain needs must take priority over others. For instance, unless an individual feels safe, he/she is unlikely to be interested in discussing matters related to self-worth (as is consistent with Maslow's hierarchy).

You might also mention how the human needs cited on this slide have implications for our roles as behavioral health responders.

Slides #36-37 (A Model for Behavioral Health Disaster Responders):

As you initially introduce this model, note how the components of the model are not as separate and discrete as they appear. There is considerable overlap among them, and your efforts to accomplish one task (such as "connecting") may simultaneously be accomplishing other tasks (e.g., "grounding," "normalizing," and "supporting").

Slide #44 (Connecting Strategies):

In commenting on this slide's final point ("…characteristics of the person and/or event will influence what you do"), note that the disaster worker's personal characteristics will also influence his/her actions.

Slide #45 (Connecting Strategies to Avoid):

Consider engaging in a role-play with your co-facilitator in which you use the phrases that are listed. This strategy will prove entertaining to your audience and will make this slide "come alive." It will also effectively demonstrate the inappropriateness of using phrases such as those that are listed on this slide.

Slide #46 (Connecting Strategies—Useful Phrases):

Encourage participants to avoid uttering any pat phrases and to instead use language that feels natural to them. This will enable them to come across more genuinely (rather than sounding stilted).

Role-Play Slides:

Provide your audience with the following instructions for engaging in these role-plays:

(1) Clarify that the goal of the role-plays is not to critically judge one-another's communication skills. Instead, the goal is to furnish participants with practice in utilizing each component of the "Connect/Ground/Support/ Normalize/Prepare for the Future" Model.

(2) Divide participants into groups of three. Ask that each of the groups identify one member to serve as the behavioral health responder, one member to serve as the disaster survivor, and one person to act as the observer. (With subsequent role-plays, you may wish to re-assemble

these same groups of three or have new groups created. In either case, make sure that the same participants are not always assuming the same roles—as survivor, observer, or responder.)

(3) Provide a brief scenario outlining what the nature of the disaster is, who the survivor is, and where you happen to be meeting the survivor. For instance, "A tornado destroyed several homes in one particular community, including the home of this survivor. The survivor is uninjured and is presently in a Red-Cross shelter; the

survivor is not sure of the whereabouts of his/her family." (Feel free to utilize a similar scenario or an entirely new one for subsequent role-plays.) Invite the participants to "fill in the missing pieces" of the story. Give them a few minutes to generate these details before they actually begin the role-play. Also suggest that they take a moment to imagine what they would be thinking and feeling in such a situation and how their thoughts/feelings might impact their behavior. Finally, recommend that the group members review the slides describing the particular segment of the model that they are to be demonstrating. (For instance, for the "connecting" role play, participants should quickly review Slides 40-48.)

(4) As participants then commence with each role-play, circulate the room with your co-facilitator and lend your assistance as needed. (By circulating the room, you will also be in a position to know when the time has come to end the role-play.)

(5) At the conclusion of the role-play, invite participants to briefly process their experience in their small groups. Specifically, suggest that the behavioral health responder begin by discussing his/her experience; invite the responder to comment on what was particularly challenging for him/her and what seemed to work best. Then ask that the survivor and the observer share their observations. Suggest that the three devote a little time to discussing the degree to which the role-play addressed more than one dimension of the model.

Slide #71, Part 2 of Curriculum (Individual Assistance & Recovery Resources):

Include information about your local community resources as well as resources available at the state and federal levels.

Slide #94, Self Assessment:

Invite your participants to take a little time to engage in some reflection and discussion pertaining to their readiness to serve as disaster responders. To help them in this process, you may ask that they complete the "Self-Assessment of Skills/Willingness to Serve" form in the evaluation section of the binder. Clarify that this form will NOT be submitted but is instead intended solely for their personal use. Next, engage your audience in some discussion of key considerations that they should keep in mind when considering the issue of their readiness to serve. Such factors can include the degree to which a particular disaster directly impacts them and their loved ones.

Stress that by completing and submitting the "ODMH Volunteer Identification and Data Information Form," participants are consenting to serve as responders; however, upon submitting this form, **volunteers always retain the right to decide for themselves whether they are in a viable position to respond to any particular disaster.**

Chapter 4

Troubleshooting Guide

What should you do if….

…you have an overly talkative audience member?

Possible responses:

Invite the participant to discuss issues one-on-one with you during a break or after the training.

Alternately, comment on appreciating the level of participation that you're observing but note that: (1) you feel a need to move on in order to insure that important topics get sufficient time; and/or (2) you would like to hear from some members of the audience who have not had the opportunity to share their thoughts.

…you have an audience member who is very vocal in criticizing certain aspects of the training?

Possible responses:

Avoid responding defensively. Instead, acknowledge that people will have different perspectives on the issues that you are addressing. There can be room for disagreement or contrasting viewpoints on many of the matters you are discussing. When appropriate, you might ask whether other participants concur with the concerns or opinions that have been voiced.

…you fall significantly behind schedule during the training?

Possible responses:

In the event that you should fall behind schedule, take a few minutes over lunch or during a break to consult with your co-facilitator. Review the training schedule together and determine ways that you might reduce the amount of time that you devote to the remaining program slides.

…your co-facilitator is ill or otherwise indisposed the day of training?

Possible responses:

The best approach to handling this problem is to be prepared for its occurrence in advance. Prior to the day of training, take the time to talk with your co-facilitator about how you intend to handle each segment of the training. Share your written notes with one-another. If time permits, consider doing a "dry-run" of the program. On the actual day of training, you might wish to identify one or two audience members to assist you with certain aspects of the program (e.g., with sharing personal accounts of disaster response work, circulating the room during role-play exercises, demonstrating Slide #46 [connecting strategies to avoid], etc.). Members of the local ADAMHS Board can help you to identify which audience member(s) might be best suited to assume such roles.

Chapter 5

DVD Operating Instructions

What is included on this disc:

1. DVD based training session.
2. PowerPoint presentation.
3. Quicktime (.mov) files for all the videos.
4. Presentation as PDF note handouts.
5. PDF of the full presentation.
6. This “Read Me” document in text and PDF formats.
7. PDF quick reference information card for the instructors.

Important Information:

The DVD training materials need to be advanced with the DVD player’s Play command found on either the remote or the software interface (normally there is a keyboard shortcut for this command, though it differs between software packages). **Note that the video clips will not play correctly unless this command is used**.

See the **Quick Reference Card** for additional instructions.

(NOTE: This trainer’s manual was written by Craig J. Vickio, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist and Director of the Counseling Center at Bowling Green State University. Input was solicited from the ODMH University Linkages Committee. Editorial feedback and final approval were provided by the Ohio Department of Mental Health.)