

VERBAL FIRST AID

Seven Important Things To Know In the First Hour Of A Medical Emergency Or Trauma

Based on the book

The Worst Is Over: What To Say When Every Moment Counts
Judith Acosta, LSCW, Judith Simon Prager, Ph.D., Jodere Group 2002)

What You Say Is As Important As What You Do.

When a person is in crisis, in shock or extremely frightened, that person is in an "altered state of consciousness," and whatever he or she hears is automatically and unconsciously interpreted. The words you use have tremendous impact, stimulating the production of chemicals that can harm or move the person toward healing. When carefully chosen, your words can help make the difference between life and death.

Rapport is the Track on Which All Healing Communications Run.

It is clear that gaining rapport is critical. It shows you can hear and understand, that you can be trusted and that your healing suggestions can be accepted. Using the right words and pacing, you can connect with a victim's own healing and belief systems.

Being Centered and Projecting Confidence & Calm Is Critical.

In crisis, all people want and need a strong, sure leader. By maintaining your composure and projecting a compassionate but firm authority, others will be more likely to comply with your suggestions and requests.

You Can Recognize and Utilize Opportunities for Therapeutic Suggestion.

There are specific signs—breathing, eye flutter, muscle movement—that indicate that people may be more receptive to the images they hold their mind. This makes them more sensitive to what you say and the way in which you say it.

You Can Give Healing Directives.

In working with trauma, it is especially important to remember that imagination is more powerful than knowledge. Yet, for a directive to work properly, it not only must be imaginative, it also must be believable, literal and sincerely given. You can use Verbal First Aid to offer a series of suggestions leading to comfort, pain relief, or recovery.

How a Crisis is Handled Can Affect Not Only The Present, But The Future.

The way that at crisis is handled in the moment, the emotional component, helps to determine whether the victim will later suffer Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome. Giving a person a sense of control over the pain and helplessness, can help modify a traumatic memory.

Be At Your Best By Managing Your Own Stress.

Don't overlook the value of a deep breath, a good friend, laughter, writing it all down, getting nourishing food and water, and monitoring your own thoughts.

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