

Crisis Debriefing Model

Begin by noting how horrible this time has been for everyone and that this session is only the starting point of the healing process. Whomever is leading your group, remember this whole process is **confidential**. Nothing you say in this session will leave this room.

- Group members need to both begin and end the session together.
- Everything said is confidential.
- Everyone is divided into small, equal sized groups of 4-6. A group with one less member than the others can sit or talk quietly and then move to the next question.
- One person from each group is selected to go first with each question, and there is a specific allotted time for each question (6 – 8 minutes/question; 60 – 90 seconds/person). This gives us time to get through all 6 members, plus a minute or two for the facilitator to summarize after each question.
- Each person is invited to take a turn to speak, and rotation is in clockwise order.
- Each group member is asked to listen attentively.
- If someone does not use all her/his allotted time, the group members are encouraged to sit in silence to process what their group member said.
- Facilitator may say something like, “Thank you for sharing,” after each person answers.

Processing Questions (*Summarize for your group after each question, with emphasis being placed on the commonality of what everyone has experienced and that no one is alone*):

1. Please introduce yourself to the group and tell where you were when you first became aware of the tragedy and specifically what were your initial sensory perceptions? What did you see, hear, taste, touch or smell?
2. What thoughts or reactions have you been having since the tragedy?
3. What is your biggest concern or worry about the immediate future?
4. What would help you feel safer right now?
5. What has helped you cope when you have had to deal with difficult things or losses in your life before? What can you do to help yourself cope now?

It is emphasized that this session is only a starting point and that those who would like more assistance are invited to stay for additional assistance. A follow-up activity that works well is to have the students write a letter to the principal and/or counselor stating their answers so we have an important overview of what the students have gone through and to plan additional support for the entire student body as well as those who need individual help. The leader should close his or her comments with each participant by asking if there is anything else that s/he wishes to say and by stating, “I am so sorry this happened (to you).”