

People in Crisis – Practical Exercises

FG Supplemental

The class is usually taken outside, or in the auditorium for terrible weather.
The class is then divided in half (into groups one and two).

1st Scene:

Set-up: The primary officer on the call has tasked you with dealing with a six-year old. The scene is an overturned vehicle. The child just saw “Daddy” get arrested. The only other occupant, “Mom,” is gravely injured and en-route to hospital. The child is frightened but unhurt. Auntie May is en-route from home; her ETA 20 minutes.

Group 1 is the Officers. The primary fatality officer (the instructor) just wants the kid to stay out of his/her scene. The primary officer has already contacted Aunt May, the only duty is to keep the child occupied.

Group 2 plays the child. Explain not to overact, but try to keep it real, and keep down so the officer has to get to their level.

Debrief: Usually let the scene go for approx 5 minutes. Then during debrief, ask how long the officer thought it was. Explain it will be at least 4 to 5 times longer than that, sometimes longer.

Suggestions offered at scene debrief:

- Pass time by using handcuffs to entertain child
- Stuffed animals for kids
- Feed/touch the kid – careful keep in view
- Be truthful, but appropriate & reasonable given child’s maturity

2nd Scene:

Set-up: Officers are dispatched to contact a victim of a vandalism (rock thrown through window).

Group 1 plays an elderly person who lives alone and is very lonely. Someone threw a rock through your window and you have called the police. The last thing you are worried about is the rock. You have no family closer than Wisconsin. You are glad they are coming because you really want someone with whom to talk. When the officer arrives you are eager to show the officer photos of your grandchildren. Your loneliness makes you difficult but you are unaware of this fact. You would rather chat than get down to business. Have cookies and coffee ready for the officer when they arrive. Also, extend your hand in friendship, and act offended if the officer doesn’t take it without a good explanation, (recent injury, bio hazard on hands, etc...)

Group 2 plays the officer sent to the vandalism call.

Debrief: Ask the students to share how they handled this situation.



People in Crisis – Practical Exercises

FG Supplemental

3rd Scene:

Set-up: Multiple calls are coming in referencing a person behaving “oddly.” The person appears to be hallucinating & has delusions of being the Crown Prince/Princess of Bulgaria, is convinced the Americans have wire-tapped his/her thoughts.

Group 1 plays the officer sent to a subject “acting strangely in the park”. No threats, no complainant available for contact.

Group 2 plays the subject. No threats to officers, anyone else, or self, you are just out for a walk, acting eccentrically . You have a home nearby, with the ability to take care of yourself.

Debrief: Suggestions offered at scene debrief:

- Don't agree with delusions
- Don't argue
- How to do both at once
- I understand you want to be called XXX, so I will call you that.

4th Scene:

Set-up: An Alzheimer's patient is lost, confused, afraid, & paranoid wandering around downtown.

Group 1 plays the Alzheimer's patient. They are at a bus station. If the officer lowers their guard too much, maybe act a little aggressive, NOT A DT SCENE! Do not know any relative or contact info, and don't know where they live.

Group 2 plays the officer sent to a suspicious person.

Debrief: Suggestions offered at scene debrief:

- Officer safety – don't underestimate MI people. Never turn you back.
- Can't do an invol on someone with Alzheimer's – it's not a mental illness – MHP can't do anything for them.

