



# Emotional CPR

## Goal

To train people to assist others through emotional crisis and to make this practice accessible to people around the world.

## What is Emotional CPR (eCPR)?

Emotional CPR (eCPR) is a public health education program designed to teach people to assist others through an emotional crisis by three simple steps: C = Connecting, P = emPowering, and R = Revitalizing.

eCPR was developed by people who have learned from their own experience how to get through an emotional crisis and integrate the experience into a broader understanding of themselves and others. Our approach is based on time-tested, basic common-sense principles of deep listening and interacting in a respectful manner.

The developers of eCPR have learned to view emotional crisis as an opportunity for personal growth. That is, we see how, in retrospect, crisis can provide a valuable opportunity to re-evaluate our thinking or our way of being in the world and to realign our lives to be more in sync with our deepest values and principles.

This approach to assisting someone in an emotional crisis is grounded in the recognition that natural supports play a central role. Natural supports include family, significant others, and all aspects and entities that make up the person's community—either existing or newly-created.

eCPR is based on the values of a healthy community. Members of the community enjoy respectful, trusting relationships. Each person is recognized as a whole human being; experiencing emotional crisis or trauma does not make one "broken." Cultural and traditional practices are viewed as valuable and healing. Emotional expression of all kinds is allowed and even encouraged. Because community members respect and trust each other, they are willing to connect with each other on an emotional level and explore the meaning of feelings, thoughts and behaviors.

## eCPR Training

The skills of eCPR can be used by anyone, in any setting in which the person can communicate freely enough to make a connection. On the reverse of this page is a sampling of the eCPR skills and proficiencies that participants learn through interactive discussions and role-plays.

# Connecting

The Connecting process of eCPR involves deepening listening skills, practicing presence, and creating a sense of safety for the person experiencing a crisis. Connecting skills include:

Be humble, curious and respectful. Avoid assumptions and become interested in what the person in crisis means by their behavior.

Believe in people's resilience. People can overcome all kinds of stress, and trauma. While they may feel confused or frightened in the short term, affirm that you believe in their ability to heal.

Listen with the heart instead of the head. Practice shutting off the stream of thought, and open your heart to the person in distress.

Meet people where they're at. Be mindful of the person's body language, posture and tone. Do your best to remain calm, relaxing your body and opening your heart. In this way, you help the person in crisis begin to relax.

# emPowering

Emotional distress can be an opportunity for growth. Through eCPR, we help people feel safe to begin to make the shift from anger and distress to passion and power.

emPowering skills include:

Entering into a collaborative "power with" as opposed to "power over" relationship.

Exercising mutuality through communicating that the person in distress is helping you by allowing you to help him/her. Facilitating the person's shift from hopelessness to planning for the future.

Some questions to ask:

What do you want your life to look like?

What's the next important thing you can do now?

What support do you need to accomplish that?

Encourage the person to identify self-care in areas including exercise, food, sleep, spirituality, and social activities.

# Revitalizing

Many people who experience crisis realize later that the crisis provided an opportunity to make a change in their lives, to try something new that was more congruent with their life's purpose. In the Revitalizing process, people re-engage in relationships with their loved ones or their support system, and they resume or begin routines that support health and wellness.

Revitalizing skills include:

Helping people to identify the vital center that brings meaning and purpose to their life. Encouraging people to stay hopeful and to move in the direction of their dreams.

Facilitating connections in the community to enhance or re-establish roles, relationships and routines.



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