The Perceived Personal Control Crisis Intervention Model in the Prevention of Emotional Dysfunction for a High Risk Population of Caesarean Birth

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ABSTRACT: The Perceived Personal Control Model (PPC), a novel crisis intervention model for Caesarean Birth (C/B) populations, is used at Rambam Medical Center by medical caregivers trained in the principles of the crisis intervention model. This model tackles risk factors in the environment by manipulating such situational variables as natural and organized support systems, information, sharing the decision making process, and developing task oriented activity geared to enhance emotional, cognitive, and behavioral control. The specific objective of the intervention model is to help the C/B mother to accomplish the specific psychological tasks. The general objective is to develop a prototype model for other high risk populations. The PPC model with respect to a C/B population is discussed.

The Perceived Personal Control Crisis Model

The Perceived Personal Control Model is a theoretical model of crisis. It explains the locus and intensity of crisis as a function of the perceived personal control (PPC) of the individual. PPC is defined as the availability of a response to modify the stressor and/or to modify its threatening characteristics (Averill, 1973). PPC comprises the...
availability of perceived control on the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral levels. These are assumed to be the mediating, buffering factors between the individual's perception of a stressful life event and the quality of the crisis outcome. Hence, the PPC construct provides a generalized measure of resistance, irrespective of the specific threat or the pre-crisis personality of the individual.

The notion of PPC is a synthesis derived from Lazarus' (1968) notion of idiosyncratic perception of the stressor, and Caplan's (1964) notion of availability of a coping response that mediates between the individual's appraisal of the event and his response to it. Thus, implied in the concept of PPC are both the availability of a coping response and the perception of the event as low stress, since its threatening characteristics lend themselves to modification. It is assumed that the beneficial potential of the PPC is derived from the combination of perceived control on the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral levels, with the understanding that individual differences may determine the weight of the various sources of control. The notion of PPC is linked, on the one hand, with success or failure in dealing with similar events in the past and, on the other hand, with the inherent characteristics of the event.

The PPC model has significant implications for crisis intervention. It calls for manipulation of situational variables, such as natural and organized support systems, information, and the person's share in the decision making process, as well as task oriented activity, geared to enhance emotional, cognitive, and behavioral control. The PPC model is designed to tackle high risk factors for populations in key community institutions in order to minimize the emotional sequelae encountered. Furthermore, it is geared to assist individuals in accomplishing specific psychological tasks through the mediating services of natural and organized support systems.

The PPC model adheres to the goals of primary prevention and implies short term and long term intervention on two distinct and yet complementary levels: (1) crisis intervention administered by a network of natural and organized support systems denoted as Personal Interaction; and (2) introduction of changes in policies, structures, and services conducive to positive mental health, denoted as Social Action (Caplan, 1974). In line with these formulations, the PPC model calls for a redefinition of the role of the mental health professional and presents a challenge for the field in setting up innovative action on both counts. In the Personal Interaction realm, the mental health specialist is responsible for studying the specific psychological tasks of high risk