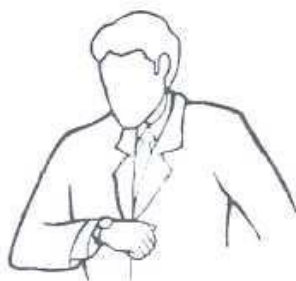

CRISIS



Crisis is an internal and external response that may occur following a stressful event which is perceived as a threat to the individual. A crisis response may be painful, as powerful emotions are experienced. An unexpected death may move one to a point of crisis. Living through battle, life as a prisoner, life on a base in the states or abroad, or life on a ship or submarine would suggest some daily crisis of various magnitudes. You have lived through "crises" if you are reading this booklet. Some crisis responses are more difficult to overcome than others. Your individual response to crisis is unique to you and the training, or lack of it, in your life.

You may at times feel out of control with what may seem a small everyday crisis when compared to the crisis of combat or a training mission. Your pulse may race, face flush, head pound, and feelings of panic may ensue. Where you once commanded hundreds of troops you now are in crisis over picking up the kids on time! What is this all about? You suddenly feel vulnerable and out of control.

The Vet Center staff is uniquely qualified to help you review how the crisis you experienced while serving your country has affected you and now your family. The counselors will assist you with diagnosing post trauma after meeting with you. This service is free.

When one has symptoms of post traumatic stress, your threshold for crisis is lower. You need support and communication with people who understand. Because of this 4th edition you can also easily plug into the MOPH and other supportive resources.

You can learn to spot triggers to anxiety that cause you to become susceptible to a crisis response. You can learn positive coping skills to use when triggers occur, such as rhythmic breathing and calling a specific support person. Once you have learned effective coping skills, problem solved to use them and have seen the positive results, you can better face any crisis.

The counselors at the Vet Center, VA Medical Center or other therapists trained to work with those who have experienced trauma, know how to help veterans develop skills necessary to cope with crisis so that you can live with less fear. You will develop a sense of hope and self-confidence in your ability to handle a crisis.

You will learn to talk about how you respond to anxiety because of experiences of the past, and you will make a safety plan to use every day. An effective safety plan includes names and numbers of support people to call who will be there for you immediately should any crisis arise.

If you are having thoughts of hurting yourself or others, this is a crisis. Please, do not wait, seek treatment. Why put off the opportunity to feel better?