

**University of Pennsylvania**  
**School of Social Policy and Practice**

**SW 726: Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention**  
**Fall 2021**

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Office Hours: By appointment  
Course Location: TBD

**Course Purpose:**

This course focuses on the theory and practice of planned brief treatment in social work practice, with individuals, couples, families and other groupings. The course will cover the history of and different approaches to brief treatment. Treatment issues such as criteria for selection of clients, understanding the importance of time in the treatment relationship, the use of history, the importance of focusing, the process of termination, and other issues related to the Brief Interventions will be examined.

The course presents Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention, which often overlap, as frameworks for intervention rather than as intervention theories in their own right. Both Brief Intervention and Crisis Intervention may be done within a number of theoretical orientations and within a number of practice approaches. In terms of this overlap, particular attention will be paid to the use of Brief Treatment Approaches in Crisis situations. Crises may involve psychological, social, and economic factors as well as reactions to natural and man-made disasters such as floods, earthquakes, accidents, wars and more.

Assessment of individuals' responses to crises, various ways of helping clients to mobilize their strengths, to utilize both their customary methods of coping and learned new ways of coping will be examined. This approach will aid in preventing future events from becoming crises and point out that crisis can provide the opportunity for new learning and new ways of coping.

This is an advanced social work practice course that both complements and enriches other offerings such as Social Work Practice, Marriage and Family Intervention, Social Work Practice with persons with Anxiety and Depression, and other elective classes. The course builds upon previous practice courses and enriches the practice course, including Field Work, which are usually taken simultaneously. While many interventions in Social Work are brief, and often conducted in crisis situations, this course systematizes what is known, and what is not known, about brief treatments and crises.

All interventions covered in this course will be examined to assess their consistency with the foundation of the values and ethics of sound social work practice. The course will also focus on diversity and will include examining the factors needed to make interventions sensitive to the issues of diversity and to examine how the issues of race, poverty, gender, and social and economic justice impact both the worker and the client. There will be an in depth exploration of

the risk factors of poverty, mental illness, racism, lack of economic opportunity, lack of adequate health care and substance abuse and how these contribute to the placing of certain populations at risk and the consequences of this on the day-to-day existence of individuals and their families.

### **Educational Objectives:**

Demonstrate an understanding of the role of the planned brief treatments in both generalist and advanced clinical practice and in crisis situations and become aware that both the Brief Treatments and Crisis Interventions are frameworks for practice and interventions can be done within a number of theoretical orientations and with a variety of multiple methods.

Be able to intervene quickly, to establish contracts and working agreements with clients, to support and sustain clients, to help clients modify their reactions to stress and to crisis, and to learn new ways to coping, to specify specific tasks and interventions to re-establish equilibrium, and when to withdraw from the situation.

Be aware of the impact of cultural variation and diversity, of sociocultural and natural phenomenon (such as race, ethnicity, social class, age, gender, and natural disasters) on the utility of Brief Treatments, particularly in crisis situations.

Become aware that crises, while always disruptive-especially in the short run-can also present opportunities for new learning, particularly learning new ways of coping with stresses throughout the life cycle.

Understand the client in the community as the appropriate context of the planned brief treatments, particularly in crisis situations and be able to assess the impact of crises upon clients, including individual, families, communities, and larger social groupings.

Be sensitive to the ethical and legal issues and dilemmas that arise from people's temporary conditions of impaired responses to crises.

Understand the impact of recent policy changes that have resulted in the increased use of the planned brief treatments; in particular, the issues around Managed Care.

Understand that the use of the planned brief treatments rests on the results of empirical investigation and necessitates ongoing evaluation of one's practice.

### **Required Texts:**

1. Yeager, Kenneth (Editor) and Roberts, Albert (Editor) (2015) Crisis Intervention Handbook, Assessment, Treatment and Research, Fourth Edition, New York, Oxford University Press.
2. Required readings in addition to the textbook are available on Canvas. Because of the complexity of these approaches, and the emphasis throughout the course on the variety of client groups to which these principles may be applied, a deliberate decision was made to use one textbook and a collection of articles and book chapters.

### **Course Assignments:**

Students will be responsible for three written assignments. Late papers will be graded accordingly. A half grade will be deducted for each day a paper is late. For example, an A paper received a day late will receive a grade of A-. All assignments are to be submitted via email and will be due at 11:59pm on the date listed.

### 1. Crisis Paper

Explore a crisis that occurred in the life of a fictional character of your choosing or in the life of a client. It is not necessary that the crisis has been successfully resolved; sometimes an "unsuccessful" resolution may have great learning value. In your description of this crisis, and the consequences of this crisis, discuss the following issues:

- A bio-psycho-social-spiritual assessment of the client or character that offers pertinent contextual information.
- What was the nature of the increased stress or stresses? How long had these stresses been operating? Were these new stresses or had they experienced and handled these stresses successfully at an earlier time? Was there a specific hazardous event or a number of them?
- If the person had experienced these stresses before, what made it a crisis this time? In what ways was the balance, the homeostasis of the individual upset?
- How did the person attempt to deal with this increased stress (or stresses?) What coping efforts were successful and which ones were not successes?
- At what point did the stress turn into a crisis? What made it a crisis?
- What was the emotional state, and what were the emotional responses, of the individual at the peak point of the crisis?
- Did the person seek help from anyone? In the family? Outside resources? Social agency? Friends? etc.
- How was the crisis resolved? What were the immediate outcomes (after six weeks) and, if you know, what were the "long-term" consequences of the crisis and the person's attempts to deal with the crisis?
- Utilizing the material discussed in this course so far, what would have been a more successful resolution of this crisis? What might have been done differently?

3-5 pages – Minimum 4 references required.

Due Session 5: 9/30/21

### 2. Annotated Bibliography/Literature Review

Select 3-5 articles (all can be from the class readings) and analyze these articles and how the information and ideas in these can be used to inform your own practice. You can use this assignment to research your final paper or to increase your knowledge in a selected area. The information should indicate a thorough reading and understanding of the concepts presented and a critique. You can contrast the articles read or discuss them in relation to class discussions and your field experience.

Articles should cover one or more of the following areas: theory or intervention approaches, crisis intervention, or brief treatment. You can focus on one or all of these areas in relation to your topic.

Format should include the APA formatted reference and the analysis and synthesis after the citation. Then another APA reference followed by analysis and synthesis, and so forth. If you choose to compare and contrast articles, you may put 2 references, followed by your comparison/contrast.

4-5 pages

Due Session 9: 10/28/21

### 3. Final Paper

This paper will cover some aspect of Planned Brief Treatment and Social Work Practice. The following are some suggestions for the paper.

*Choose one the following:*

a. Select one of the approaches to Brief Psychotherapy, and analyze it along several dimensions, such as the following:

- Philosophy of the approach;
- Interventions emphasized in this approach;
- Problem definitions unique to this approach;
- Goals of intervention, as specified in this approach;
- Role of the worker and role of the client;
- View of "pathology" and "health";
- Specification of the role of therapeutic relationship
- Beliefs about change, type of change the model seeks
- Identify in your opinion the positives, negatives, and the unsolved issues of this approach.

b. Compare and contrast two approaches to Brief Treatment utilizing the concepts listed above in option a.

c. Select a client from your fieldwork practice in which you used brief intervention. Discuss the initial presentation of the client, the assessment and diagnosis, and the process of the case. Describe the process of the case and relate it to the theory of the worker. Termination, if relevant, of the case may have been planned or unplanned. The case need not have had a "positive" outcome.

8-10 pages Bibliography required; minimum 6 references.

Due Session 14: 12/2/21

### **Format for Written Assignments:**

All papers must be typewritten using Times New Roman 12pt font, double-spaced, page-numbered, with 1" margins at the left, top, and bottom, and at least 1/2" margin at the right. The

first page should include the heading and the title of the paper per APA title page guidelines. Please proofread all papers carefully for spelling, punctuation, and other similar errors as these errors will result in point deductions. All citations must be in APA (American Psychological Association) style, including in text references, reference list, and quotations. All ideas of others should be credited and Penn Academic Integrity policy must be followed. The instructor will gladly answer any questions regarding format.

According to the Policies and Procedures Handbook of the University of Pennsylvania, using the ideas, data, or language of another without specific and proper acknowledgement constitutes plagiarism. If you are at all unsure about the appropriate form of acknowledgement in a particular situation, it is your responsibility, as stated in Penn's Code of Academic Integrity, to consult with the instructor to clarify any ambiguities. Plagiarism in any assignment will result in a failing grade for that assignment, and may result in further disciplinary action, which may include receiving a failing grade for the course.

### **Statement on Academic Integrity:**

Students are expected to conduct themselves consistent with the University of Pennsylvania's Code of Academic Integrity, which presents standards regarding plagiarism, multiple submissions and other actions. Students are expected to be familiar with the Code, which can be found at <http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity>.

### **Grading Policies:**

Grades will be based on:

Class attendance, professional behavior, participation & preparedness: 20%

Crisis Paper 25%

Annotated Bibliography 20%

Final Paper 35%

The final course grade is based on the student's performance in both class and in their written work. Please refer to the MSW Student Handbook for the School's grading policy. Students whose performance is minimal or failing at midterm will be notified in writing. At the end of the course, the student's performance will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Quality of written assignments: papers should be of graduate-level quality, well documented, and submitted on time.
2. Class participation: attendance and quality of oral participation, and participation in experiential exercises.
3. Demonstration of having done assigned readings and having understood course concepts. Students are encouraged to provide on-going feedback to the instructor regarding the quality of the course content and instruction.

### **Class Participation:**

Students are expected to participate substantively in class discussions by being prepared having read assigned material.

**Attendance:**

Classroom learning is a fundamental component of your professional education. Students are therefore expected to attend each class, arrive to class on time, and be in attendance for the full class. In the event that you are unable to attend class for any reason, you must notify your instructor by writing in advance and learn how you are to make up the content you missed. Excessive absenteeism (i.e., missing more than two classes) is considered a serious problem that instructors will handle by meeting with the student and determining whether the student's educational adviser should be notified. Excessive absenteeism could result in course failure. Continued and/or excessive lateness will result in significant loss of participation points and lateness beyond 30 minutes will be counted as an absence.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**1. Thursday 9/2

Topic: The Place of Planned Brief Treatment in Social Work Practice: Strengths and Limitations

Readings: None

2. Thursday 9/9

Topic: Process in Planned Brief Treatment

Readings:

McGuinty, et al (2015). Redefining Outcome Measurement: A Model for Brief Psychotherapy. *Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy* 23, 260-270.

Hoyt, Michael, F. (1990). On Time in Brief Therapy. In R.A. Wells, R. A. & V.J. Giannetti, V.J. (Eds.), *Handbook of the Brief Psychotherapies* (pp. 115-138). New York: Plenum Press.

Epstein, L. and Brown, L.B. (2002) Features of Brief Treatments. In L. Epstein and L.B. Brown. *Brief Treatment and a New Look at the Task- Centered Approach*. ed. Pp. 68-90, pp. 68-90. New York: MacMillan.

Dulmus & Wodarski (2002). Six Critical Questions for Brief Therapeutic Interventions. *Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention*. 2(4), 279-285.

3. Thursday 9/16

Topic: A Case of Time-Limited Intervention

Readings:

Messer, S.B. (2001). What Allows Therapy to Be Brief? Introduction to the Special Series. *Clinical Psychology Science and Practice*, 8(1).p.1-4

Budman & Gurman (1988). Initiating brief therapy. In S.H. Budman and A.S. Gurman (Eds.) *Theory and practice of brief therapy* (Ch. 2 pp. 27-61). New York: Guilford Press.

#### 4. Thursday 9/23

Topic: Introduction to Crisis and Crisis Intervention

Readings:

Westefeld, J.S. & Heckman-Stone, C. (2003). The Integrated Problem Solving Model of Crisis Intervention: Overview and Application. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 31(2), p. 221-239.

Medeiros da Silva, J.A., Siegmund, G., Bredemeier, J. (2015). Crisis interventions in online psychological counseling. *Trends in Psychiatry and Psychotherapy*, 37(4).

Roberts – Chapter 1

Dulmus, C. & Hilarski, C. (2003). When stress constitutes trauma and trauma constitutes crisis: the stresstrauma- crisis continuum. *Brief treatment and crisis intervention*. 3: 27-35.

DeJong, P. & Berg, I. K. (2002). Interviewing in crisis situations. In DeJong & Berg *Interviewing for Solutions*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

#### 5. Thursday 9/30 ASSIGNMENT ONE DUE

Guest Speaker: Andrew Ramsaran, LPCMH

Topic: Situational Crises and Crises Throughout the Life Cycle; Telephonic Assessment

Readings:

Buzawa, E., Hotaling, G.T., & Byrne, J. (2007). Understanding the Impact of Prior Abuse and Prior Victimization on the Decision to Forego Criminal Justice Assistance in Domestic Violence Incidents: A Life-Course Perspective. *Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention*, (1), p 55-76.

Anastasia, T.T., Humphres-Wadsworth, T., Pepper, C.M., & Pearson, T.M. (2015). Family Centered Brief Intensive Treatment: A Pilot Study of an Outpatient Treatment for Acute Suicidal Ideation. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 45 (1), pg 78.

Roberts – Chapters 3 and 5

Halderman, B., Eyman, J. Kerner, L. & Schlacks, B. (2009). A paradigm for the telephonic assessment of suicidal ideation. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*. 39(6), 639-647.

#### 6. Thursday 10/7

Topic: Time Limited Psychodynamic Therapy

Readings:

Anderson, T. & Strupp, H.H. (2015). Training in time-limited dynamic psychotherapy: A systemic comparison of pre- and post-training cases treated by one therapist. *Psychotherapy Research*, 25(5), p595-611.

Weiss, P.A. (2010). Time-Limited Dynamic Psychotherapy as a Model for Short-Term Inpatient Groups. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, 40:41-49.

Boyd-Franklin, Nancy (2003). The Therapist's Use of Self and Value Conflicts (with Black Families). In N. Boyd-Franklin *Black Families in Therapy: Understanding the African American* Ch. 9, pp. 177-203). New York: The Guilford Press.

Lemma, A., Target, M. and Fonagy, P. (2010). The development of a brief psychodynamic protocol for depression: Dynamic Interpersonal Therapy (DIT). *Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy*. 24(4), 326-346.

### 7. Thursday 10/14

Topic: Interpersonal Therapy

Readings:

Swartz, H. A., Grote, N. K., & Graham, P. (2014). Brief Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT-B): Overview and Review of Evidence. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 68(4), 443-462.

Mufson, L., Yanes-Lukin, P., Gunlicks-Stoessel, M., & Wickramaratne, P. (2014). Cultural Competency and Its Effect on Treatment Outcome of IPT-A in School-Based Health Clinics. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 68(4), 417-442.

Gellis, Z. D., McGinty, J., Horowitz, A., Bruce, M.L. & Misener, E. (2007). Problem solving therapy for late life depression in home care: a randomized field trial. *American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 15(11), 968-978.

### 8. Thursday 10/21

Topic: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in Brief Treatment; Solution Focused Brief Treatment;

Readings:

Bannink (2007). Solution-Focused Brief Therapy. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, 37(2), 87-94.

DeJong, P. and Berg, I. K (2001). Co-Constructing Cooperation with Mandated Clients. *Social Work* 46(4), 361-374. Seidman, L. J. (2014).

Neuropsychologically Informed Strategic Psychotherapy in Teenagers and Adults with ADHD. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America*. 23(4), p 843-852

Hoyt, M. (2009). Everyday Constructivism. In M. Hoyt *Brief Psychotherapies* (Ch. 5, pp 109-137). Phoenix, AZ: Zeig, Tucker, & Theisen, Inc.

Roberts - Chapter 18

### 9. Thursday 10/28 - ASSIGNMENT TWO DUE

Topic: The Use of Self in Brief Treatment

Readings:

James, R.K. and Gilliland, B. E. (2001) Human Service Workers in Crisis: Burnout. In James and Gilliland *Crisis Intervention Strategies* (Ch. 13, pp. 609-646). Pacific Grove CA: Brooks/Cole.

Collins, S. & Long, A. (2003). Too tired to care? The psychological effects of working with trauma. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 10, 17-27.

National Association of Social Workers (2008). Professional Self Care and Social Work. Washington DC.

Fahey, A. (2007). The unbearable fatigue of compassion: notes from a substance abuse counselor who dreams of working at Starbuck's. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 35, 199-205.

### 10. Thursday 11/4

Topic: Critical Incident Stress Debriefing

Readings:

Roberts – chapters 4 and 14

Vernberg et al. (2008). Innovations in Disaster Mental Health: Psychological First Aid. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 39(4), 381-388.

American Red Cross ACFASP Scientific Review (2010). Critical Incident Stress Debriefing. Retrieved August 2012 from [instructorscorner.org](http://instructorscorner.org).

Ansgar T.& Ingenhoff, D. (2011) Safeguarding reputation through strategic, integrated and situational crisis communication management : Development of the integrative model of crisis communication. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 16:1 , 8-26.

## 11. Thursday 11/11

Topic: Managing Disasters

Readings:

Roberts – Chapters 7 and 10

Smid, G.E., Kleber, R.J., de la Rie, S.M., Bos, J.B.A., Gersons, B.P.R., & Boelen, P.A. (2015). Brief Eclectic Psychotherapy for Traumatic Grief (BEPTG): toward integrated treatment of symptoms related to traumatic loss. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, (6).

Rosen, C., Greene, C., Young, H., & Norris, F. (2010). Tailoring disaster mental health services to diverse needs: an analysis of 36 crisis counseling projects. *Health & Social Work*, (35)3, 211-219.

Naturale (2007). Secondary traumatic stress in social workers responding to disasters: reports from the field. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 25, 173-181.

## 12. Thursday 11/18

Topic: Selected Issues in Brief Treatment

Readings:

Harper-Jaques, S., & Foucault, D. (2014). Walk-in Single Session Therapy: Client Satisfaction and Clinical Outcomes. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 33(3), p29-49.

Acker, G. & Lawrence, D. (2009). Social Work and Managed Care; Measuring Competence, Burnout, and Role Stress of Workers Providing Mental Health Services in a Managed Care Era. *Journal of Social Work*, 9(3), 269.

Rapp, R.C., Otto, A.L., Lane, T.D., Redko, C., McGatha, S, Carlson, R.G. (2008). Improving linkage with substance abuse treatment using brief case management and motivational interviewing. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 94, p172-182.

NASW stance on Parity Act [http://www.socialworkers.org/practice/behavioral\\_health\\_behavioral.asp](http://www.socialworkers.org/practice/behavioral_health_behavioral.asp)

## 13. Tuesday 11/23 \*\*\*Class meets on TUESDAY this week!\*\*\*

Topic: Organizational Crisis

Readings:

Bloom, S. L. (2007). Loss in human service organizations. In A.L. Vargas and S.L. Bloom *Loss, Hurt and Hope: The Complex Issues of Bereavement and Trauma in Children*. (pp. 142-206), UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

#### 14. Thursday 12/2 - FINAL ASSIGNMENT DUE

Topic: Termination

Readings:

Davies, J. (2005). Transformations of desire and despair: Reflections on the termination process from a relational perspective. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 15(6), 779 – 805.

Silverman, S. (2010). Will you remember me? Termination and continuity. In J. Salberg (Ed.), *Good enough endings: Breaks, interruptions, and terminations from contemporary relational perspectives*, (pp. 167-189). New York: Routledge.