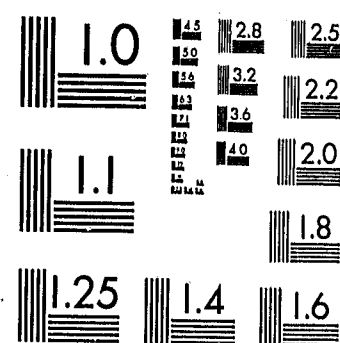


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# Federal Probation

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- [Disclosure of Presentence Reports in the United States District Courts ..... *Philip L. Dubois*
- [Prosecutive Trends and Their Impact on the Presentence Report ..... *Harry Joe Jaffe*  
*Calvin Cunningham*
- [The Right To Vote as Applied to Ex-Felons ..... *John R. Vile*
- [Action Methods for the Criminal Justice System ..... *Dale Richard Buchanan*
- [Administrators' Perception of the Impact of Probation  
and Parole Employee Unionization. .... *Charles L. Johnson*  
*Barry D. Smith*
- [Highlights, Problems, and Accomplishments of Corrections in the  
Asian and Pacific Region. .... *W. Clifford*
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- [Detention Administration: Managing a Political Time Bomb ..... *Robert C. Kihm*
- [Probation Program ..... *Serge W. Gremmo*
- [Probation: A Skills Course—Crisis Intervention in a  
Community-Based Correctional Setting ..... *Margaret R. Savarese*

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MARCH 1981

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All phases of preventive and correctional activities in delinquency and crime come within the fields of interest of FEDERAL PROBATION. The Quarterly wishes to share with its readers all constructively worthwhile points of view and welcomes the contributions of those engaged in the study of juvenile and adult offenders. Federal, state, and local organizations, institutions, and agencies—both public and private—are invited to submit any significant experience and findings related to the prevention and control of delinquency and crime.

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# Federal Probation

A JOURNAL OF CORRECTIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE

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MARCH 1981

NUMBER 1

## This Issue in Brief

**Disclosure of Presentence Reports in the United States District Courts.**—This article is a summary by Philip L. Dubois of a report prepared by Stephen A. Fennell and William N. Hall under contract with the Federal Judicial Center. The author states that, on the one hand, it does appear that a large proportion of Federal districts have achieved disclosure of presentence report in a large proportion of their criminal cases. On the other hand, he adds, although the high rate of disclosure is a positive step, many districts utilize practices that limit the effectiveness of such disclosure.

**Prosecutive Trends and Their Impact on the Presentence Report.**—With Federal prosecutors launching aggressive prosecutions against white-collar criminals, narcotics traffickers, corrupt public servants, and organized crime racketeers, probation officers find they need significant enhancement of their investigation and reporting skills, assert Harry Joe Jaffe and Calvin Cunningham, U.S. probation officers in Memphis, Tenn. For these offenders, a presentence writer can prepare a useful presentencing document by concentrating chiefly upon three significant areas: the official version section, the financial section, and the evaluative summary.

**The Right To Vote as Applied to Ex-Felons.**—While rights are intimately connected to duties, laws disenfranchising ex-felons show that correlations between the two are often drawn imprecisely, writes Professor John R. Vile. While voting is a fundamental right, the Supreme Court has refused to void felony disenfranchising legislation, he reports. The Court's action is normatively questionable, he maintains, especially when applied to those whose incarceration has ended.

**Action Methods for the Criminal Justice System.**—Dale Richard Buchanan, chief of the Psychodrama Section at Saint Elizabeths Hospital in Washington, D.C., tells us that while role train-

ing, role playing, and psychodrama have been extensively used in the criminal justice system, there has been a lack of coordination among these terms and in the ways in which they were used. Action methods will probably continue to gain greater use within the criminal justice field, he asserts, because of their direct applicability to the jobs that are needed to be performed by criminal justice personnel.

**Administrators' Perception of the Impact of Probation and Parole Employee Unionization.**—This article by Professor Charles L. Johnson and Barry D. Smith presents information from a recent survey on the incidence of parole/probation unionization

### CONTENTS

Disclosure of Presentence Reports in the United States District Courts	Philip L. Dubois	3
Prosecutive Trends and Their Impact on the Presentence Report	Harry Joe Jaffe and Calvin Cunningham	9
The Right To Vote as Applied to Ex-Felons	John R. Vile	12
Action Methods for the Criminal Justice System	Dale Richard Buchanan	17
Administrators' Perception of the Impact of Probation and Parole Employee Unionization	Charles L. Johnson and Barry D. Smith	26
Highlights, Problems, and Accomplishments of Corrections in the Asian and Pacific Region	W. Clifford	31
The Demise of Wisconsin's Contract Parole Program	Oscar D. Shade	34
Juvenile Detention Administration: Managing a Political Time Bomb	Robert C. Kihm	44
Parent Orientation Program	Serge W. Gremmo	53
Practical Probation: A Skills Course—Crisis Intervention in a Community-Based Correctional Setting	Margaret R. Savarese	58
Departments:		
News of the Future		63
Looking at the Law (Legal Responsibility Update)		65
Reviews of Professional Periodicals		68
Your Bookshelf on Review		72
It Has Come to Our Attention		80

JUN 5 1981

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and administrators' perceptions of the impact of unionization on the quality, cost, and difficulty of administering services. Some of the critical issues emanating from the increased parole/probation unionization are delineated and discussed as they are reflected in the literature and as a result of the survey.

**Highlights, Problems, and Accomplishments of Corrections in the Asian and Pacific Region.**—The Australian Institute of Criminology recently organized the First Conference of Correctional Administrators for Asia and the Pacific, which was well attended and prepared the ground for joint action. Already this has resulted in the collection of data on imprisonment, some of which are provided in this article by W. Clifford, director of the Institute. In this very broad survey, some of the problems of corrections in the region—and some of the approaches which are different from those in the West—are highlighted.

**The Demise of Wisconsin's Contract Parole Program.**—This article discusses the elimination of an innovative method of paroling criminal offenders in Wisconsin. The State abolished its creative Mutual Agreement Program because budget analysts deemed the program to be an ineffective method of paroling offenders when compared to the traditional method of parole decision-making. Although this program has been eliminated, Wisconsin Parole Board Member Oscar D. Shade says it is conceivable that contract parole is workable and could prove to be a most effective means of managing an offender's parolability.

**Juvenile Detention Administration: Managing a Political Time Bomb.**—Administering a juvenile detention center is one of the most difficult and frustrating jobs in the juvenile justice field,

asserts Youth Services Consultant Robert C. Kihm. Although it is clearly stipulated in idealistic terms how children ought to be cared for while in state custody, the detention administrator must deal with the reality of providing care with very limited resources and little control over who is admitted and discharged from the facility, he states. This article examines how these contradictions proved the demise of four detention administrators' careers, and what lessons can be gained by current administrators facing similar problems.

**Parent Orientation Program.**—Juveniles paroled from a correctional institution are faced with readjustment problems. Community resources are limited and families poorly equipped to offer assistance. To increase the effectiveness of families as resource people, the author, Serge W. Gremmo, has developed the Parent Orientation Program (POP) which orients families toward potential problems in the parole adjustment of their children, acquaints them with the mechanics of parole, disseminates information to assist juveniles during reintegration, and lends support during a difficult period.

**Crisis Intervention in a Community-Based Correctional Setting.**—Despite their widespread use in other practice settings, crisis-intervention theory and techniques have been woefully underutilized in community-based correctional agencies. This article by New York City Probation Officer Margaret R. Savarese is an attempt to help remedy that situation by presenting an overview of crisis theory and techniques and then illustrating their application at a particular crisis point in the criminal justice system—the point of sentencing—via two actual case situations.

All the articles appearing in this magazine are regarded as appropriate expressions of ideas worthy of thought but their publication is not to be taken as an endorsement by the editors or the federal probation office of the views set forth. The editors may or may not agree with the articles appearing in the magazine, but believe them in any case to be deserving of consideration.

## 77621 Crisis Intervention in a Community-Based Correctional Setting

BY MARGARET R. SAVARESE

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Kings Supreme Court, Brooklyn, N. Y.

CRISIS-INTERVENTION theory and techniques have been found helpful and used successfully within a broad range of situations including psychiatric emergencies, natural disasters, and various aspects of police work. However, at the same time, there appears to have been very little or no attempt to apply crisis-intervention concepts to the ongoing work of community-based correctional agencies such as probation and parole departments. This apparent lack of interest in crisis-intervention theory and techniques seems to exist despite the fact that crisis situations and emergencies comprise a large and inescapable part of every probation and parole officer's daily workload. This article will present an overview of crisis-intervention theory and its basic underlying assumptions and will then illustrate their applicability to a particular crisis point in the criminal justice system, namely, the point of sentencing, via two case studies.

### "Crisis" Defined

Throughout the literature, we find that the concept of crisis is intimately tied to the idea of homeostasis or equilibrium. In fact, the simplest

and perhaps most useful definition of crisis is "an upset in a steady state."<sup>1</sup> This definition rests on the assumption that an individual tries to maintain for himself a state of equilibrium or balance. However, during the course of a person's lifetime, many situations occur which upset this balance and which result in a state of stress and temporary disequilibrium. These stress-producing situations can be events that are generally thought of as being joyful, happy occasions such as a marriage, the birth of a baby, a child's first day at school, or graduation from college. Despite the positive connotations of such occasions, it must be remembered that each of them brings with it certain changes requiring the individual to make a readjustment and to face new challenges. On the other hand, the stress-producing situation may be negative or tragic in nature, for example, the loss of a loved one, a medical finding such as a diagnosis of cancer, or a natural disaster such as a flood or earthquake.

Whether the source of the stress is thought of as being positive or negative in nature, as long as the individual or family can mobilize their resources and cope successfully with their situation without experiencing significant distress or disorganization, there is no need for outside help. Outside help or crisis intervention becomes necessary when the

<sup>1</sup> Lydia Rapoport, "The State of Crisis: Some Theoretical Considerations," *Social Service Review*, Volume 36, 1962, p. 24

individual finds himself completely overwhelmed and totally unable to cope with the situation at hand. Or, as one author puts it in a very graphic way:

For some reason, he can no longer wrestle with his problem single-handedly. The 'Anxiety-Overheat' light is flashing on his control panel. It flashes brighter and brighter reminding him that he is out of control. Anxiety, dread, and fear are feeding on themselves. The more his tension soars, the more inadequate he feels and the cycle continues at a maddening rate. His problem might have come on suddenly, like the death of a family member, or it might be a problem that has existed for many years but has recently built up to a crisis level. But, in either case, there is a temporary overload on his psychological circuitry. Whatever circuit-breakers he normally uses to preserve his well-being are not working for him this time and he needs an outside source of assistance to get his wobbling psycho back in order.<sup>2</sup>

A number of other authors point out that a precipitating event is always discernible when looking at a person who is in a state of acute crisis. This precipitating event may be something that exacerbated a chronic problem or ongoing conflict and, in this case, it can best be described as the proverbial "straw that broke the camel's back."<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the precipitating event may be a very sudden, completely unexpected occurrence or a totally new set of circumstances in an otherwise fairly smooth situation. In either case, it is the individual's inability to cope with the situation that results in his being in a state of crisis.

#### *Characteristics of Crisis*

There are several characteristics that are common to most, if not all, crisis situations whatever the precipitating event. First of all, the period of acute crisis is temporary in nature and limited as to its duration. In other words, "All crises must come to an end; none continues indefinitely. Some adjustment is made to the event be it adequate or inadequate."<sup>4</sup> One way or the other, then, the crisis is resolved and a new state of equilibrium is established. However, the nature of this outcome varies as to its being healthy or pathological and the new state of equilibrium may be the same, better, or worse, from a mental health point of view, than the one that existed prior to the crisis.

This particular characteristic has important ramifications for the individual's future adjust-

ment. The person in a state of crisis may deal with his situation in a healthy, adaptive way and, thereby, emerge from the crisis stronger and better able to deal with whatever problems present themselves in the future. Or, the individual may evade the situation and its growth-producing possibilities by denying that it exists or may resort to irrational means of coping such as magical thinking or excessive fantasy. For example, a bereaved person who has just lost a loved one may go on functioning as if the deceased were still alive for as long as he is permitted to do so thus postponing the inevitable necessity of dealing realistically with his loss and coming to terms with it. Either way, then, the crisis represents a psychological turning point, as it were, for the individual and his response to it pushes him further along either in the direction of healthier functioning or increased dependence on maladaptive coping mechanisms in the future.

Another significant characteristic of the crisis state is the fact that the individual experiencing the crisis feels a greater need for help and is more susceptible to influence than he would be ordinarily. As Caplan explains this phenomenon: "He is in unstable equilibrium like a person standing on one leg—a slight push tips his balance to one side or the other. The same push when he is in a state of equilibrium, standing on both legs, would have little effect."<sup>5</sup>

A corollary of this greater susceptibility to influence during a period of crisis is that the amount of help being offered does not have to be extensive in order to be effective. In fact, "a little help, rationally directed and purposefully focused at a strategic time, is more effective than more extensive help given at a time of lesser emotional accessibility."<sup>6</sup> During the acute crisis period, memories of old problems which are symbolically linked to the present problem may be stimulated and may emerge into consciousness spontaneously. These old, preexisting problems are, in a sense, reactivated by the new crisis and "hence are once more accessible for treatment."<sup>7</sup>

#### *The Individual in Crisis*

Most individuals in the midst of a crisis experience share certain feelings in common. These include general feelings of helplessness, upset, and confusion. The individual in crisis may well appear to be looking for advice and may even ask for a very specific solution to his particular problem. However, "what he is really after is his own solution and only his own solution will work for him."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Romaine V. Edwards, *Crisis Intervention and How It Works*, Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 1977, p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Gary A. Crow, *Crisis Intervention*, New York: Association Press, 1977, pp. 29-30.

<sup>4</sup> Richard A. Pawlowsky and Dale A. Albers, "Crisis Intervention: Theory in Search of a Program," *Social Work*, Volume 17, March 1972, p. 73.

<sup>5</sup> Gerald Caplan, *Support Systems and Community Mental Health*, New York: Behavioral Publications, 1974, p. 203.

<sup>6</sup> Lydia Rapoport, "Working With Families in Crisis: An Exploration in Preventive Intervention," *Social Work*, Volume 7, July 1962, p. 49.

<sup>7</sup> Jeanette R. Oppenheimer, "Use of Crisis Intervention in Casework with the Cancer Patient and His Family," *Social Work*, Volume 12, April 1967, p. 60.

<sup>8</sup> Edwards, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.



If a worker insists on offering the person in crisis a ready-made solution to his problem, one out of three results will occur, none of which will be ultimately helpful to him. If the client in crisis takes the advice handed to him and finds that it does not work, he has certainly not been helped and may be even more reluctant to reach out for help again at a later date. If the person in crisis takes the worker's advice and finds that it does work, this simply reinforces his already existing feelings of helplessness and proves to him that he cannot, in fact, cope with life's inevitable crisis. He has, in effect, been deprived of the opportunity of "weathering" the current crisis and learning effective problem-solving behaviors in the process which could then be applied to whatever situations arise in the future. The third possibility when a worker indulges in simplistic advice-giving is that the person in crisis chooses to ignore the advice. In this case, the individual in crisis is back where he started with exactly the same problem and one less place to turn for help.

The goals in crisis intervention are relatively limited and include the following: the relief of symptoms; restoration to one's precrisis level of functioning; some understanding of the precipitating events which led up to the state of disequilibrium; and the identification of steps or measures which the client or family can take or that are available through community resources.<sup>9</sup> It should be noted that the limited goals of the crisis-intervention approach are in direct contrast to those of long-term, intensive treatment which is usually geared toward a complete restructuring of the personality.

#### *Crisis-Intervention Techniques*

Although the specific techniques and procedures used in crisis situations depend, to a great extent, upon the individual practitioner's frame of reference and professional background, traditional casework methods seem to be used most often. Foremost among these, according to Hollis' classification scheme, are "sustainment techniques" which are designed to lower anxiety, guilt, and tension and to provide emotional support. This particular group of techniques includes giving reassurance, particularly, that anxiety is normal in a crisis and that others frequently experience similar reactions; encouragement to

counteract the client's sense of helplessness and hopelessness and to give him confidence to engage in new forms of coping; and sympathetic listening on the worker's part coupled with the encouragement of ventilation on the client's part. Golan stresses the importance of this last technique which results in "getting it off one's chest" as a way of working through bottled-up feelings of anger, frustration, grief, and loss.<sup>10</sup>

Once the client's anxiety level has been somewhat reduced and he is beginning to view the situation more objectively, the worker can engage him in "reflective discussion" of his current situation. This involves focusing on what information the person in crisis has regarding the objective reality of his situation and making sure that it is accurate and full rather than distorted and incomplete. The worker, in doing this, has to ask appropriate questions and has to give correct answers in order to fill the gaps in the client's perception of the situation and in order to replace his forebodings and fantasies with more accurate information. This technique of "reflective discussion" can also focus on the person's interaction with the objective situation. In this way, the worker helps the client look at the options and choices open to him plus the consequences of whatever decisions and actions he might decide to take. Reflective discussion can also focus on the client's feelings and emotional reactions to the crisis situation. By examining these, the person in crisis can become more fully aware of his feelings and the ways in which they are related and contributing to the current situation.

#### *Crisis Intervention in the Criminal Justice System*

With this overview of crisis-intervention theory behind us, let us now explore its practical application within the criminal justice system. It has been pointed out that there are four specific crisis points for those individuals who have become involved with the criminal justice system. These crisis points are arrest and arraignment, sentencing, initial incarceration, and prerelease and parole.<sup>11</sup> At each of these points, the individual defendant and his family may find themselves in a state of acute emotional disequilibrium or crisis. Many of the feelings that they experience and the problems that they face are common to crisis states in general. However, there are some differences and some reactions that are peculiar to finding oneself in the role of a defendant before the criminal justice system. One of these is some feel-

ing or sense of shame. Thus, on top of feeling upset, confused, and overwhelmed, the defendant and his family may also experience feelings of shame and embarrassment.

This feeling of shame or embarrassment stems from the fact that it was the commission of a crime or socially unacceptable act that, initially, brought the defendant and his family into contact with the criminal justice system. However, it should be noted that not all defendants and their families evidence feelings of shame and of those who do, not all experience the same degree of embarrassment. The key in this regard appears to be the "meaning or definition" that the defendant and his family give to the event, in this case, being arrested and charged with a crime. As Hill puts it:

A boy caught stealing in one neighborhood may be ostracized and bring his family shame and disgrace, while a boy in a different neighborhood may very well achieve standing within his family and social group through an identical act.<sup>12</sup>

Despite these differences that can be attributed to social, cultural, and class factors as well as to the individual family's value system, the fact is that many defendants and their families do react to their situation with some feeling of shame in addition to experiencing the usual reactions associated with states of crisis. Added to this is the time lapse that usually occurs between the initial arrest and the actual sentencing. This interval of time can last anywhere from a few months to over a year depending upon the particular situation. Thus, by the time the defendant and his family finally arrive at the point of sentencing, they have probably gone through a whole series of shocks or mini-crises. Schwartz and Weintraub enumerate a few of these "shocks" in their article dealing with prisoners' wives but their observations could just as easily be applied to the families of younger defendants who are still single and living at home. The first of these "shocks" is the initial arrest which often occurs right in the defendant's own home in the presence of other members of his family. Then, since many families assume that hiring a private attorney is preferable to depending upon court-appointed counsel, comes the search for a good lawyer and the pressure around fees which can easily amount to several thousand dollars. Next, the family is faced with having to raise additional money for bail. Even if the defendant is subsequently released on bail, he

often ends up losing his job anyway because he has been arrested or because of time lost from work due to frequent court appearances. Many times, the normal household bills go unpaid during this time because all of the family's financial resources are being channeled into helping the defendant. Schwartz and Weintraub conclude, "A wife usually comes to the day of sentencing completely drained of both financial resources and emotional energy."<sup>13</sup>

In addition to the series of hurdles preceding the point of sentencing, the defendant and his family usually experience a great deal of confusion at the point of sentencing itself simply because they are not receiving even minimal information about their situation. They are rarely made aware of the strength or weakness of the case against the defendant or of the intricacies of plea-bargaining. Negotiations are often carried on out of earshot and it is not unusual for a defendant to enter a guilty plea without knowing what kind of a sentence he can expect to be given. All of this adds to the shock, confusion, and disorientation on the part of the defendant and his family and makes them feel even more helpless and overwhelmed.

#### *Richard L.*

To illustrate the applicability of crisis-intervention theory and techniques in a community-based correctional setting, the remainder of this article will describe two crisis situations recently encountered in this author's practice as an investigating probation officer assigned to Brooklyn Supreme Court. The first involved an 18-year-old defendant, Richard L., who was arrested on December 12, 1979, and charged with having made two separate sales of cocaine approximately 2 months before. He was subsequently indicted by the Grand Jury and appeared before a Brooklyn Supreme Court judge who adjourned the case for 2 months so that a prepleading investigation could be completed and then used as an aid in plea negotiations.

Richard had no other criminal record and no one else in his family had ever been arrested before. He was the third of four sons born to his parents both of whom were now in their mid-fifties. Both parents had been born and raised in Eastern Europe and were still living there when the Nazis came to power. Mrs. L. was not quite 13 years of age when she was plucked off the street on her way home from the store and subsequently shipped off to a concentration camp. She had been sent out for a loaf of bread by her mother and never saw any

<sup>12</sup> Reuben Hill, "Generic Features of Families Under Stress," *Social Casework*, Volume 39, 1988, p. 37.  
<sup>13</sup> Mary C. Schwartz and Judith F. Weintraub, "The Prisoner's Wife: A Study in Crisis," *Federal Probation*, Volume 38, December 1974, p. 21.

<sup>9</sup> Naomi Golan, *Treatment in Crisis Situations*, New York: The Free Press, 1978, p. 71.  
<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99.  
<sup>11</sup> Judith F. Weintraub, "The Delivery of Services to Families of Prisoners," *Federal Probation*, Volume 40, December 1976, p. 28.

member of her family again. Mrs. L. spent the next 6 years of her life in a series of concentration camps ending up in Auschwitz when it was liberated in 1945. She was physically ill during most of this time and very narrowly escaped being gassed on several occasions only because her friends managed to hide her. Mr. L. had been born and raised in Rumania. He was also rounded up and taken away but much later during the war and only spent approximately 1 year in a concentration camp.

Both of Richard's parents lost their entire families during the Holocaust. They were in their early thirties when they met and married in New York City. They, subsequently, had four sons in a 10-year period. Mrs. L. was a full-time homemaker whose physical health was reasonably good. The father was self-employed as a window-cleaner in partnership with another man. He earned enough to support the family but had to work extremely long hours, usually 12 a day, in order to do so. Mr. L. suffered from a variety of physical ailments including high blood pressure, severe asthma, and kidney stones.

All four of the sons in this family had been sent to private religious schools. The parents explained that they had both come from orthodox Jewish families all of whom had died during the Nazi era adding that they were anxious to make sure that their religious and cultural heritage was preserved and passed on. The two oldest sons had both graduated from Yeshiva University High School. The oldest boy had gone on to Brooklyn College and then Ben Gurion University. He was still living at home and was steadily employed as a computer programmer. The second boy was still a college student and also worked part-time. The youngest boy, aged 13, was in the eighth grade at a private religious school in Brooklyn.

Richard had been sent to the same schools as his brothers. However, while he was still in elementary school, he began complaining about the long hours of study and the demands being placed on him for academic achievement. Both parents admitted that they wanted to give their sons the very best education possible as their own formal schooling had been interrupted at an early age. As Richard went along in school and the work became harder, he increasingly pressured his parents to allow him to transfer to the local public school but his parents would not hear of it. He graduated from the eighth grade and began attending Yeshiva University High School, at his parents' insistence, but made no effort there at all, failed all his subjects, and was transferred to the nearest

public high school. Richard continued doing poorly at this school and then stopped attending altogether allegedly because of some racial tension there. At the time of his arrest, Richard was a high school drop-out who was working part-time distributing advertising circulars for a friend of the family.

During contacts with Richard's parents, it became apparent that the situation had assumed crisis proportions and that both of them, but especially Mrs. L., were feeling totally overwhelmed by it. They thought of themselves as being very upright, law-abiding people and their son's arrest for selling drugs was a source of great shame and embarrassment to them. They were trying very hard to hide the fact of their son's arrest from their neighbors and acquaintances and lived in great fear that it would come out eventually.

Mr. and Mrs. L. revealed that they had never really shared their early experiences with their four sons. They explained that when the boys were little, they were too young to be told about anything so horrible and when they grew up, the parents, again, failed to discuss their early experiences because they were afraid that their sons would not believe them. Richard's arrest had reactivated all of these early, unbearably painful memories that his parents had tried so hard to suppress and put to rest. Mrs. L., in describing her son's arrest and the very real possibility of his being given a jail sentence, verbalized feelings of overwhelming fear and terror. She recalled that even prior to her son's arrest, whenever she saw a uniformed police officer just standing on a corner, she would experience palpitations and start feeling weak and faint.

In addition to the overwhelming feelings of fear and terror that Mrs. L. was experiencing, she was also being forced to act as the intermediary between her son and his father. Their relationship had been deteriorating over a period of time ever since Richard had started rebelling against his father's high expectations. Following Richard's arrest, his father refused to speak to him, refused to accompany him to court, and refused to put any money toward his bail or toward his attorney's fee. As a result, Mrs. L. was left with the entire burden and this only contributed to her feeling of being totally overwhelmed. By providing her with emotional support and an opportunity to ventilate her long-buried feelings of fear and terror around the police and the court system plus her anger and resentment toward her husband for withdrawing from the situation, Mrs. L. was able to mobilize her own personality resources and go on functioning

as a wife and mother. She was able to discuss the family situation and to accept the fact that Richard's arrest for selling drugs was just the "last straw" in a pattern of family difficulties that had been developing and escalating over an extended period of time. Mrs. L. was also able to see that the bitter conflict between Richard and his father had been developing over a number of years and would not be quickly or easily resolved no matter what sentence was ultimately handed down. She was very receptive to the idea of referral to a family service agency and definitely wanted to think about this possibility.

#### John A.

John A. was also the product of a physically intact, economically self-sustaining family unit. He was older, 22, at the time of his arrest for armed robbery. He and his codefendant, an older neighborhood acquaintance with a long criminal record and a lengthy history of drug use, had gone into a neighborhood drugstore, armed with a pellet gun, and had robbed the owner of \$45. John was sober but his co-defendant had been "strung out" on drugs at the time. The crime was committed in the middle of the day with two police officers across the street observing the entire incident. The co-defendant's case was handled first and he was sentenced to a prison term of 5-to-10 years. John was subsequently allowed to plead guilty to Robbery in the First Degree, a conviction that carries with it a mandatory prison sentence with no possibility of probation.

During contacts with John's parents, it was learned that he was the oldest of three children. He had never presented any serious behavior problems at home or in the community except for consistent under-achievement in school. Mrs. A. was a full-time homemaker while Mr. A. was self-employed and the owner of a building materials company. John had dropped out of high school at the age of 17 and gone to work with his father. It was interesting to note that this was a re-play of an earlier scenario as John's paternal grandfather had originally owned and operated the business. John's father had gone to work there at an early age, stayed, and finally inherited the business. During the 5 years that John worked with his father, he was paid approximately \$200 a week. The family did not ask for anything in return for room and board although John lived at home, ate all his meals there, and had all his laundry done by his mother. Because he had no expenses, John was

able to buy himself an expensive sports car as well as accumulate a substantial amount in savings.

John was described by his parents as an introverted youth who was very attached to them and, yet, who did not really communicate with them. During the period prior to sentencing, the family was trying very hard, and not at all succeeding, to maintain a facade of normalcy. John referred to his attempts at "being strong" for the sake of his parents while his parents, who were initially interviewed separately, stated, "We're trying to be very strong for John's sake." As a result of this, there was no open discussion or communication of feelings and each one's functioning had started to show definite impairment. Mr. A. had an ulcer which started acting up. The mother started feeling extremely nervous and anxious and was unable to sleep at night. John himself, feeling very despondent and totally isolated, was spending all his time sitting around the house just waiting to be sent to jail.

Like Richard L.'s family, John's family also thought of themselves as being law-abiding citizens and their son's arrest had thrown them into a state of crisis. His subsequent guilty plea and the promise of a prison sentence only intensified their original feelings of shock and dismay and left them feeling overwhelmed and helpless in the situation. Both parents responded readily to the opportunity for ventilation and reflective discussion and used it to sort out their own very mixed-up feelings. Part of them was reluctant to face the impending loss of their son through incarceration while another part of them wanted help in dealing with this inevitability and the strong feelings that it aroused. Their numerous questions about the length of their son's sentence and where he would be sent were answered as fully as possible. At one point, Mrs. A. inquired about what sort of items (toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.) she should pack for John to bring with him on the day of sentencing. She, then, suddenly stopped, in mid-sentence, and caught herself, adding "My gosh, I'm talking as if I'm sending him away to summer camp." John's parents asked many questions about exactly what would happen after their son was sentenced. It was explained to them that their son would go through a period of classification lasting several weeks during which he would be seen for a psychiatric evaluation, psychological testing, and other interviews in order to decide where he would ultimately be sent.

John also responded to the opportunity for ventilation, especially in terms of his own very ambivalent feelings toward his parents. These feel-

ings reflected his total dependence on them, on the one hand, and yet, on the other hand, strong resentment toward them for treating him so well and thus keeping him so dependent. For example, he verbalized dissatisfaction with working for his father while he was still living at home stating that whatever disagreements occurred on the job were then carried home with them at night. At the same time, John verbalized a great deal of fear that he would never be able to find another job because he was without a high school diploma and had no other work experience. His fears around separating from his parents also surfaced during discussion around his impending sentencing. He was encouraged to discuss this fully and to ask as many questions as he wished about what he could expect to face after he was sentenced. John was also encouraged to reach out during his period of incarceration and to become actively involved in whatever programs were made available to him. He responded positively to being told that his experience would not be an easy one but that he could get through it and replied that he believed he really could stand on his own two feet adding that it would be the very first time he ever had to do so.

#### Conclusion

As both case situations described above illustrate, there is a definite need for crisis-intervention work within community-based correctional agencies. As a matter of fact, the crisis-intervention approach, with its requirement of only minimal time and effort, would seem to lend itself particularly well to correctional settings where the pressures of limited time and a steady, heavy flow of cases are among the hard but inescapable facts of daily life. As was pointed out at the beginning of this article, crisis situations are an inevitable part of working within the criminal justice system on a direct-service level. If these situations are not recognized as crisis points and are not handled appropriately, the result can be total immobilization accompanied by a severe impairment in functioning. On the other hand, skillful intervention in these situations can often prevent further deterioration and can, in fact, result in significantly enhanced functioning and an increased ability to cope.

Positive results, however, can only come about if the correctional worker has some grounding in crisis-intervention theory and techniques. The worker must, then, be willing and able to recognize the signs of an acute crisis state, must quickly come to a tentative assessment of the situation, and must immediately move into the situation in an active, purposeful way using a variety of techniques flexibly and differentially. With only minimal formal training, perhaps in the form of an inservice seminar or workshop, crisis intervention could easily become a part of the practice repertoire of every correctional worker to be used selectively whenever the situation called for it. Since clients in crisis are especially open to and motivated for change because of the acute emotional distress they are experiencing, they present a unique contrast to other correctional clients many of whom are seriously lacking in any desire for change and who, therefore, present an often very frustrating challenge to even the most experienced workers. The introduction of the crisis-intervention approach into a typical community-based correctional agency would, therefore, result in not only more effective service for our clients and their families but also a very rewarding professional experience for the individual practitioner.

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