

Pre-Crisis Factors Checklist

There are many conditions or events that might affect the impact of a crisis. Pre-crisis factors might be strengths that help them cope better or might be stresses that make them more vulnerable. By asking the person what was going on in their life before the trauma happened, you may be able to help them understand the context for their reaction.

Factors that will increase vulnerability to coping difficulties:

- Psychological disorder (depression, post-traumatic stress, anxiety disorder)
- Tendency to oversimplify problems or underestimate realities
- Shame or guilt tendencies – related to culture or personal background
- Excessively independent (resisting help from others) or dependent (clingy)
- Destructive habits – overeating, smoking, drinking
- History of team conflict or conflict with leadership
- Medical conditions or health issues
- Hormonal changes: adolescence, pregnancy, menopause
- Parent-child or family issues
- Recent experiences of loss or major change

Factors that can either strengthen the person or make them more vulnerable:

- Previous experience with personal crisis
- Quality and proximity of support system – team members, family, supporters
- Spiritual condition
- Level of energy/exhaustion – level of margin
- Biblical understanding of suffering
- Cultural norms regarding suffering and expression of pain

Key transitions will also affect how the person responds to the traumatic event. Ask if any of these transitions have recently occurred or are anticipated in the near future.

- **Recent Arrival:** Lack of experience or understanding of political climate or implications of events; culture shock, language difficulties, lack of clarity in assignment, undeveloped social support system; lack trust building history with leadership.
- **Change of Assignment:** Move from village to city, new responsibilities, etc.
- **End of Assignment:** Managing goodbyes and closure; feelings of guilt or ambivalence about leaving; re-evaluation of what have accomplished; sense of distance or lessening of investment; questions about return/assignment change; uncertainty about future; loss of friends; re-entry into home culture.