



Intervening Circumstances: Effective Pathways For Colleagues Who Are Hurting

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Frank Johnson, MD
CMO St. Luke's

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Learning Objectives

- Understand the 5 things Healthcare workers need from leaders in a crisis
- Recognize the difference between “Being safe” and “Feeling safe”
- Identify early, middle, and late interventions for colleagues who are hurting

What Healthcare Workers Need From Leaders in a Crisis

- Hear me
- Protect me
- Prepare me
- Support me
- Care for me

From Shanafelt et al, JAMA vol 323 no 21

Feeling Safe vs. Being Safe

- Being safe: Free from the threat of physical or mental harm
- Feeling safe: Free from the perception of potential harm
- Being with a person who is trustworthy helps downregulate our defensive systems

Mull, Atlantic, October 2020

Porges, Polyvagal Safety, October 2021

Early Interventions

- Be visible
- Be grateful
- Build trust
- Be human

Middle Interventions

- Be supportive
- Be consistent
- Be clear
- Be human

Late Interventions

- Be courageous
- Be firm
- Be human

References

- Shanafelt et al: Understanding and Addressing Sources of Anxiety Among Healthcare Professionals During the COVID-19 Pandemic. JAMA, June 2, 2020. vol 323 #21
- Mull, Amanda: The Difference Between Feeling Safe and Being Safe. Atlantic, October 26, 2020.
- Porges, Stephen: Polyvagal Safety: Attachment, Communications, Self-Regulation. WW Norton & Co, October 5, 2021.