**6 Kinds of crisis**

*Taken from Effective Helping by Barbara Okun*

1. **DISPOSITIONAL CRISES:** These crises can ensue from a lack of information, such as not knowing which job to take, what type of medical referral to seek for a particular symptom, what one’s options are about living arrangements, whom to ask for what.
2. **ANTICIPATED LIFE TRANSITION:** These are normative, developmental crises that are fairly common in our society. They may result from midlife career changes, getting married, becoming a parent, divorce, the onset of chronic or terminal illness, or changing schools.
3. **TRAUMATIC STRESS:** These crises result from externally imposed stress situations that are unexpected, uncontrolled, and emotionally overwhelming. Examples are rape, assault, sudden death of a loved one, sudden loss of job status, sudden onset of illness, accident, war.
4. **MATURATIONAL/DEVELOPMENTAL CRISES:** Most of us experience these general crises as we pass through our life stages. They may reflect issues of dependency, value conflicts, and sexual identity, or our capacity for emotional intimacy, our response to authority, or our level of self-discipline. Usually, these crises surface in relationship patterns or at crucial transition points in our development. Examples are the repeated loss of jobs because of an inability to get along with supervisors, the intense homesickness or depression of college students away from home for the first time, and midlife crises.
5. **PSYCHOPATHOLOGICAL CRISES:** These are emotional crises precipitated by pre-existing psychopathology. In other words, one’s psychopathology significantly impairs or complicates the way one deals with a situation, inflating it to crisis proportions.
6. **PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCIES:** These are crisis situations in which one’s general functioning is severely impaired and one is rendered incompetent or unable to maintain responsibility for oneself; in other words, one is dangerous to oneself and/or others.

***As we look at this classification scheme, we see that crises fall into one of two major categories: they are either developmental, in that they have to do with growth and passing through various life stages; or they are situational, in that they are the result of internal and/or external stresses. In addition to helping us understand the nature of crises, the classification scheme helps us to put crises in perspective so that we can determine the best means of immediate crisis intervention.***