

## LESSON THREE: UNDERSTANDING CRISIS

### WHAT IS CRISIS?

Crisis in the world of psychology can be defined as "... a perception experience of an event or situation as an intolerable difficulty that exceeds the person's current resources and coping mechanisms."<sup>1</sup>

There are four key circumstances that define a crisis:

- **Unique** to the person experiencing it.
- **Perceived** as being threatening to the individual's health or well-being.
- Current **coping strategies** no longer work.
- A **turning point** in the life of the person experiencing it.

#### **An unexpected pregnancy can be a crisis experience.**

A woman may perceive the people or circumstances in her life to be so threatening that abortion may be perceived as the best or only way to cope with the situation. Effective crisis intervention in this situation can assist the woman in dealing with the problematic circumstances.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF A PERSON IN CRISIS

People experiencing a crisis, including women facing an unexpected pregnancy, may exhibit some or all the following:

- Ambivalence
- Guilt
- Dependence on others
- Loss of self-esteem
- Fear
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Helplessness
- Inability to cope
- Detachment



## STEPS TO CRISIS INTERVENTION

PCC provides extensive training in the steps of crisis intervention and how to best support a client during and after a crisis.



## CONNECTING: THE ULTIMATE GOAL

Successful communication occurs when pregnancy care centre staff connect with a client. Connecting is being willing, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to let go of personal desires and expectations in order to meet pregnancy care centre clients at their point of need. It is a process that builds mutual understanding and involves concentrated listening to the client.

The PCC Training Manual for Client Care provides further details.

## **SUCCESS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S CALLING**

Many people enter pregnancy care work with a preconceived idea of what "success" in their role will look like. For example, a client choosing to carry a pregnancy to term, choosing to leave an abusive relationship, or parenting in healthier ways.

It is important to realize though, that our success is not dependent on the client's choices, but rather on obedience to God's calling. Our goal is to love God with all of our being and to love others with the outflow of that love between God and ourselves. God has given each individual free will. The client has the freedom and the legal right to make her own choice.



