

GFSC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUPPORT TO COMMUNITIES IN SOCIAL CRISIS

By Miriam Castillo P., María Francia Utard, Laura Salvador P.
& Ximena Combariza E. – October 2019

The authors of this article, as Volunteers of GFSC, consider that the main elements of the post-crisis and psychosocial recovery model of Global Facilitators Serving Communities - GFSC, are also applicable to other situations, such as those recently lived in Ecuador, Chile, Bolivia, Venezuela and Nicaragua, following the marches and popular manifestations of discontent and the reactions of local governments to them.

To start, it would be helpful to help people who are facing social crises to:

1. Express and accept their feelings about what is happening in their country, their city and/or community, in a calm, controlled, respectful and confidential environment.
2. Understand how people in general react to crises, how they can affect us in all areas of our lives.
3. Think of effective strategies to move forward (Accept, Assimilate, Act and Associate) versus non-effective "strategies" (such as escaping, giving up, stalling and imposing oneself on others).
4. Strengthen their personal resilience, through simple strategies at their reach, such as those that allow each one to generate endorphins and reduce unnecessary cortisol production, summarized in the following graphs:

Endorphins are generated...

Physically

- Exercise
- Massages/touching
- Have loving sex
- Breathe deeply
- Balanced diet



Mentally/Emotionally:

- Laugh and smile more
- Cultivate positive thoughts
- Relax, unwind
- Be creative/learn something new
- Be flexible



Socially:

- Talk with others
- Functional family networks
- Group participation & consensus
- Cultivate friendships
- Recognition

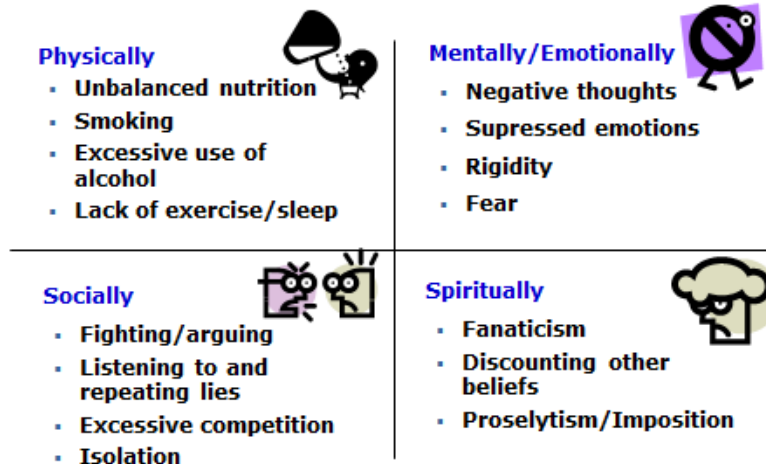


Espiritualmente:

- Pray & meditate
- Connect with Nature
- Sing & dance
- Help others
- Live according to your own values



Cortisol is generated...



Within emotional self-care, in situations like these, recommendations such as:

- Do informative "diet" (not overloading with negative news)
- Resume family and daily activities as soon as possible
- Recognize what I can influence and what escapes my possibilities (what is my circle of influence).

On the other hand, it is also very important to strengthen community resilience, through the following strategies:

- Stimulate in the members of the group the sense of community and the strengthening of the links between people, that is: to propitiate the use of "us" instead of "I"
- Teach them to use more effective communication, based on **listening**, to understand the other and to be able to act effectively together
- Encourage them to develop small projects that benefit everyone as a community and help them solve specific problems and move forward, especially in relation to the crisis. And, of course, advise them to design and manage these projects appropriately.

Finally, the GFSC model considers it essential to teach the community leaders the basic principles of Situational Leadership: leading according to the situation and "maturity" of the community. Leadership should be more directive in the early stages of the crisis and more coordinator or advisor as the community restores its balance and ability to act.

In the following video, Laura Salvador presents a clear and simple explanation on how these social crises can affect people, especially children, along with practical recommendations to help them in these situations:

<https://youtu.be/bXgu9RncSjA>

About the authors:

- Laura Salvador Puig, Psychologist, GFSC volunteer in Ecuador
- María Francia Utard, Ontological Coach, GFSC volunteer in Chile and Costa Rica
- Miriam Castillo Perdigon, Psychologist, GFSC volunteer in Venezuela
- Ximena Combariza Echeverri, Psychologist, GFSC volunteer in Colombia and member of the management team