

Introduction

BACKGROUND: The author and his environment

For several years, Jim Burtles was Principal Consultant with Safetynet PLC, where he taught business executives how to cope with, and plan for, minor emergencies, disasters and absolute catastrophes. Safetynet was a pioneering disaster recovery and business continuity company which specialized in dealing with business emergencies. Such events might range in scale from a faulty air-conditioning system to the aftermath of major earthquakes or terrorist attacks.

The original concept of Safetynet was centered on the complex computer-based operations of the modern business. However, experience soon taught Safetynet's founders that the whole of the business environment had to be taken into account. Therefore, personnel problems and many other aspects needed to be taken into consideration.

Jim acquired his expertise in disaster recovery and emergency management through direct exposure to dozens of real-life disasters, almost a hundred emergencies and countless problem situations. He also benefited from the indirect experience of many more, gained from talking to, and working with, victims of various crises.

Holder of a Lifetime Achievement award, he is a Founding Fellow and a Board member of the Business Continuity Institute, a Freeman of the City of London and a Knight of Grace within the Military and Hospitaller Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem.

In his current role, as a Director of Total Continuity Management, he is now working with senior executives of international corporations and government departments to help them develop complete emergency response plans and processes which include appropri-

ate counseling and training programs to cope with emergency situations.

A Caution about Words and Study

You will only derive benefit from reading this Guide if you actually understand it. While many of the words will be familiar to you, some of them may not be. Words we understand can expand our knowledge and ability and the opposite also holds true: words we do not understand can diminish our knowledge and ability. Sometimes the problem lies in the way the word is being used, perhaps to express an unusual or unfamiliar meaning.

Words used in a specialized manner are defined in the Glossary (beginning on p. 95). Be very careful that you do not go past any word which you do not fully understand.

Bear in mind that many misunderstood words are commonly used, or apparently simple. Some words in common use have a number of meanings, which can vary according to the context, and we do not always have a clear grasp of all of the possible meanings. Don't be too proud to check out the very simplest of words.

Confusion, or the inability to grasp or learn, comes *after* a word that the reader does not have a full and proper definition for. Their attention gets hung up in the mystery surrounding the undefined word.

If the material seems confusing or difficult to grasp, there will be a word you have not understood. Go back to a point *before* you got into difficulty and find the misunderstood word and get it defined. Use a good dictionary and/or the glossary to blow away the confusion.

Preface

The methods described here were originally developed as a means of handling the way people react after a catastrophic event. However, the resultant technique can be very effective in dealing with the aftereffects of almost any traumatic event, whether it is of a catastrophic nature or not. The technique works for any major personal crisis.

Working as a consultant in the field of disaster recovery and emergency management, I perceived the need to find some way of preventing, or alleviating, the emotional disturbance that appeared to be a common result of people being exposed to a major disaster.

It seemed logical to suppose that those who were exposed to less dramatic emergency situations were probably going to be affected in a similar manner; perhaps to a lesser degree, but nevertheless affected. It is my fondest hope that you will find this method to be useful in your own therapy milieu.