

September 12, 2001

Friends, clients and colleagues,

As you may know, I've also got clinical training plus experience from other disasters. We've noted some generic tips below. Take care.

1. Calm, confident leadership is helpful. If you are a manager, walk around more-- show people by your presence that we will overcome this tragedy. (The members of Congress and NY officials did this.)
2. Give people direction...ambiguity adds to stress and trauma.
3. Communicate, communicate, communicate. Talk to people, tell them what's happening, retell them as they may lose it first time, and LISTEN...
4. Change your voicemail if possible...for example, mine said, " Its Wed., we're all safe. I live and work in midtown, so I'll be here--call if you want to talk. Remember: We're Americans --so we will overcome this!" Thursday, it's a different but again a positive message...important too for people who are calling from Minnesota or Ohio to hear news as they don't know distances in NYC. Don't have access to info.
5. Small things help--buy flowers for your office, etc. I bought coffee for some Red Cross volunteers, not only did I feel good but others started doing same thing.
6. Have people resume normal routines, but expect they will forget, make mistakes, etc. Let them take breaks whenever.
7. Remind people that they're alive (and loved ones if that's true) and that we will overcome this. Recognize that there is evil in the world, but there's more good.
8. If you're outside NY and DC, don't hesitate to write, call, email--the words don't matter, even if you say it wrong, it helps.
9. The images and horror will never totally fade for people, but it will lessen over time. Hug a child, a friend, do something nice until the mental picture goes away...it will get less all the time...
10. Remember that Americans are strong. And New Yorkers are survivors.
11. Be good to yourself, and other people. Little acts of kindness matter now more than ever.

Feel free to send, quote, or pass on advice...hope they help you and others. Dee