



LIDLAW  
COLLEGE  
TE WANANGA AMORANGI

# RESPONSE TO CRISIS

Resource Pack

# RESPONSE TO CRISIS

---

## Resource Pack



Counsellors at Laidlaw are beginning to see and hear from community members – in schools, churches, and through private practice - that friends and family are experiencing a range of responses to our recent lockdown. People are now processing and reflecting on their own experiences and the ongoing impact the coronavirus is having on them and their situation. It is common for communities and individuals to notice a spike in the weeks and months after a crisis or traumatic event.

We wanted to develop a resource that might help support church leaders in guiding their communities through this process.

### What happens during crisis or stressful events?

Living through unexpected, stressful, and/or traumatic events is tiring! Our bodies, emotions, thinking, and relationships commonly show evidence of the extra work that 'living through' requires. We are living through a global pandemic and the significant change this has brought and continues to bring to how we do everyday life. We are blessed, so far, to have been spared the huge loss of life which so many countries have experienced. However, it seems the second wave has arrived and we don't yet have certainty about how this stage will play out. Another reality is that our relative success has come at the cost of many lost jobs and businesses which leaves individuals and families in even more vulnerable positions.

In the midst of intense stress our focus narrows to those things which ensure survival. It is often only after a period of intense stress (and possibly trauma) that we begin to process and reflect on how events have had an impact on us and how we have responded. Sometimes this catches us by surprise. It can also be challenging to address both the individual and collective experiences of a group of people. What is the best way to respond when there are so many different stories of lockdown and the effects of the pandemic? How do we notice what is going on with ourselves and how do we support members in our communities?



## Resource Package

This resource package is a combination of story, knowledge and skills/tools for church leaders and your communities. It is meant to support you in navigating responses to crisis – by first noticing yourselves and each other as we move forward together from our lockdown experiences in an environment which is still uncertain. It is designed for church leaders with various ministry teams in mind: pastoral care, prayer ministry teams, welcoming/hospitality teams, small groups or any ministry leaders or leadership teams.

## What's in this package and how can I use it?

### • Links to videos

- Interview with Pastor Reuben Munn on the Church's response to the impact of COVID-19 in our communities <https://vimeo.com/453878598>
- Response to Crisis workshop video <https://vimeo.com/453870919>

### • Conversation Ideas

Reflective questions and discussion points that can be used as you view the Response to Crisis workshop video. This provides space for workshop participants to reflect on their own experience.

### • Active Listening - Six Key Skills

The active listening guide is a practical resource for the skills needed to listen well to others. This can be a helpful reminder to all of us.

## HELPFUL TIPS

- Practice active listening, giving others space to express their thoughts
- Offer tentative responses without the need to give advice, offering a summary of the key things they have mentioned

**Please be aware that this content may evoke emotion or distress for people. While this resource is to support those in pastoral positions it is important to remember that those doing the supporting may also be in need of support themselves. Take breaks while watching the videos, if needed.**

**If you feel yourself or others may need further support, immediate support can be found here <https://1737.org.nz/>, or ongoing support at <https://www.nzcca.org.nz/>**

**Please let us know if you have any questions, or how you found this resource.**



**Jane Hepburn**

Counselling Lecturer  
School of Social Practice

**T** +64 9 836 7805  
**M** [jhepburn@laidlaw.ac.nz](mailto:jhepburn@laidlaw.ac.nz)



**Lisa Spriggins**

Head of Counselling  
School of Social Practice

**T** +64 9 836 7830  
**M** [lspriggins@laidlaw.ac.nz](mailto:lspriggins@laidlaw.ac.nz)



# RESPONSE TO CRISIS VIDEO

## Conversation Ideas



The following questions are intended to stimulate conversations within your team around the material presented in the video. You may choose to stop the video at various points to discuss the material or watch the video in its entirety before engaging in this conversation.

### Screen 3 – RETURN FROM EXILE

Think about your own returning to life after being in Lockdown.

What was it like for you as you went back to work or school or church?

What did you notice was the same? What was different?

What was it like to be out of your “bubble”?

- Did you wildly embrace people in hugs, or were you apprehensive, or perhaps somewhere in the middle?

### Screen 7 – WHAT YOU MIGHT NOTICE

Fear, anxiety, anger, sadness, grief, guilt, numb. Which feelings did you notice about yourself?

Which feelings did you notice in others?

Did noticing any of these feelings surprise you?

### Screens 14 and 15 – SUGGESTIONS FOR HELPING

Jesus said “You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind”. This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself’ (Mt 22:37-39). You and your neighbour are on an equal footing. If your capacities are low, you won’t be much help for your neighbour, and visa versa. A healthier \*you\* is better-equipped to help your neighbour.

#### So, how are YOU?

- How did being in Lockdown impact your thinking, emotions, your body, your spirit, and relationships?
- Were you in a bubble on your own, or were you with others?  
If you were with others, were there times when it seemed out of control?
- Have you had a chance to process your time in exile? Your return from exile?
- What has it been like for you as the Alert Levels have changed?

What replenishes or renews you?

What are some practical ways you can attend to your thoughts, emotions, body, spirit, and relationships?

Name some people or places you can go to for various kinds of support.

How might the discussion you’ve just had help to shape or re-shape your prayers?

**Take some time to offer your reflections and conversations to God in prayer.**

# ACTIVE LISTENING

---

## Six Key Skills



Through the Old Testament we meet a God who listens, hears and responds to his people. Jesus reveals to us this same God in the New Testament as he talks with and listens to the people he meets. God is a God who notices and who listens. Active listening is one way we can image God and notice the image of God in others. Here are six key skills to grow in this practice:

### 1. Pay attention to your own body posture

You can show and practice active listening through your body posture and with your facial expressions. Ask yourself: Is my posture saying I'm open, relaxed, interested? Or that I'm closed, bored, tense, annoyed, shocked, etc? This is about being genuinely present to the other.

### 2. Not interrupting

Exercise patience to allow the person time to express themselves. Try to listen without an agenda – without rushing ahead to come up with a response. Listen to hear and understand.

### 3. Ask open questions

A closed question is one that has a yes or no answer e.g. "Did you find it upsetting when he/she said that?" Ask open questions, which don't make assumptions and which require more than a yes or no answer e.g. "So what was it like for you when he told you that?"

### 4. Showing empathy

As we develop our ability to listen attentively to the other, we will become sensitive to what they feel, as well as to the content of what they are saying. We can offer tentative responses that leave room for them to tell us how it actually is for them e.g. "It sounds like you're feeling quite anxious about having to make this decision?"

### 5. Reflecting back

Reflecting means offering back to the speaker, as accurately as possible, what it is that you have just heard them say. This means entering the world of the person and focusing purely on understanding that person's experience. Using some of their own words to echo back what they have said is a simple way to do this. We refrain from interpreting or judging what they have said.

### 6. Summarise rather than giving advice or problem solving

We can listen carefully and from time to time offer a summary of the key things we have heard the other say. That may help them to clarify what their options are.

**"Being heard is so close to being loved that for the average person, they are almost indistinguishable."**

~David Augsburger



“The load, or weight, or burden of my neighbour’s glory should be laid daily on my back, a load so heavy that only humility can carry it, and the backs of the proud will be broken. It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship...

It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal...

Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbour is the holiest object presented to your senses. If he is your Christian neighbour he is holy in almost the same way, for in him also Christ ... is truly hidden.”

C. S. Lewis, “The Weight of Glory”