

Abstract

International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organisations (
The dark side of competition: Psychoanalytic Insights.ISPSO)

**When disaster strikes: The impact on involved organisations,
groups and individuals following a train accident.**

Renate Grønvold Bugge

Psychologist

Director of KOL AS (Crisis-Organisation-leadership)

Telephone: +47 38093342

Mobile: +47 95804953

Email: renate.bugge@c2i.net or bugge@kriseledelse.no

When disaster strikes: The impact on involved organisations, groups and individuals following a train accident.

Background:

In 2000 there was a severe train accident north of Oslo, Norway. The train burned and several people were killed. The closest community was far away and this small location had to organise the acute situation and the immediate steps to be taken for taking care of surviving passengers.

In general there is experience that in connection with large accidents and disasters in the Western countries there quickly evolves support groups instituted by aftermaths or involved passengers. Sometimes different organisations of survivors and aftermaths have different interests. The experiences show that very often an antagonistic atmosphere may develop between the “responsible organisation” and the victims` organisations and between the victims` organisations. The process develops often into bitterness and may go on for years. The question about insurance often sharpens this conflict and adds to the competition between and within the organisations involved.

Focus for this paper:

This paper focuses on the dilemmas that arise when organisations are challenged by crisis situation. All parts quickly bring lawyers into the scene. This might complicate the primary task of supporting involved parts to grieve, both on organisational, group and individual level.

Organisations that are spontaneously established by bereaved family members have to establish an organisation where every single one still is in a shock situation. These organisations are temporarily organisations where task and roles have to be created from scratch. They have to represent individuals who are affected by a collective disaster

This is in contrast to the permanent transportation organisation NSB i.e. The Norwegian Railway Company. Being the responsible part for the transportation of passenger, the organisation suddenly had to face a situation where it was responsible for its passengers being killed and hurt. The permanent organisation had to change into a crisis organisation. What consequences did this have within the organisation? How did roles change? How did the organisation and its leaders face the situation in public? How was it accepted in public and how was the “new” profile accepted inward in the organisation? This organisation had most of their infrastructure intact but had to redefine the task in the acute situation. This implemented change of roles within the system or creating a new organisation according to the new task. The situation might create competition between the permanent part of the ordinary organisation and the crisis organisation in both inward in the organisation itself and to the public.

This means that at least different organisations had to start relating to each other on background of a disaster. Mostly there will develop deep conflicts between parts like this. Knowing this there was established a group by professional advisors with focus both on crisis intervention and the organisational consequences. The challenge was to link together all the parts involved. It was helpful to consult by using concepts like function, roles and mandate with the intention to support the containing function within and between the different systems involved.

Theoretical discussion:

The key concepts in the dynamic of this situation is linked to survival, blame, responsibility and how to create an atmosphere to enable cooperation instead of destructive competition that might end in splitting. This case pinpoints the struggle and competition that is evoked by an extreme situation that involved life and death on all levels.

This paper shows the importance of crisis intervention also including emergency consultation to the most effected and involved organisations. It means to give support to the systems involved to strengthen the containing function of the involved parts. When this is done there might be tolerance for different positions and interests without creating splitting mechanisms that might be devastating on all levels.

Equipment needed:

- 1. Overhead projector**
- 2. Link up my computer for power point presentation.**

Bibliography;

1. Bugge RG. **Perspectives on an accident**, Scandinavian Shipping Gazette, Magnusson T, 2004 May 21.(10)
2. Bugge RG. **Hvor forskjellig sørger kvinner og menn. Kjønnsforskjeller i sorgreaksjoner ved plutselig død og suicid.** Suicidologi 2003; 8 (3): 17-21. Klikk [her](#) for å lese. (Dokumentet er laget i Acrobat. Har du ikke programmet Acrobat reader, klikk [her](#) og last det gratis ned.)
3. Bugge RG. **Lessons from working to regenerate services in post-conflict recovery scenarios.** Organisational and social dynamics 2002; 2(1):45-52.
4. Bugge RG. **Å nei - enda flere pårørende!** Akuttjournalen 2002; 10(2):89-91.
5. Dyregrov A, Gilbert M, Bugge RG. **Langtidsoppfølging.** In: Dyregrov A, editor. Katastrofepsykologi (2 ed.). Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2002: 97-125.
6. Dyregrov A, Gilbert M, Bugge RG. **Organisering av psykososialt støttearbeid.** In: Dyregrov A, editor. Katastrofepsykologi (2 ed.). Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2002: 47-63.
7. Dyregrov A, Gilbert M, Bugge RG. **Umiddelbart psykososialt støttearbeid.** In: Dyregrov A, editor. Katastrofepsykologi (2 ed.). Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2002: 65-95.
8. Bugge RG. **La barna vise sin sorg.** Fædrelandsvennen 2002 Dec 11.
9. Bugge RG. **Psykolog - leder - ledelse.** Tidsskrift for Norsk Psykologforening 1996; 33(5):410-413.
10. Bugge RG. **Tillfällig organisation för krisintervention: när et katastrof drabbar ett samhälle.** In: Boëlthius SB, Jern S, editors. Den svårfångade organisationen: texter om medvetna och omedvetna skeenden. Stochholm: Natur och Kultur, 1996: 161-186.
11. Bugge RG. **Barn og unge trenger fritidshjelpemidler.** Handikapnytt 1993;(2):4-5.
12. Bugge RG. **Temporary organization for crisis intervention: when disaster - a hotel fire - strikes a community.** In: Wilson JP, Raphael B, editors. International handbook of traumatic stress syndromes. New York: Plenum Press, 1993: 965-974.
13. Raundalen M. Reaching children through the teachers : helping the war-traumatized child : a manual / Magne Raundalen, Atle Dyregrov, Renate Grønvold Bugge. Cruz Vermelha, Mocambique: Norges Røde Kors, 1990.
14. Bugge RG. **Tverrkulturell oppvekst: psykososiale konsekvenser.** Tidsskrift for Norsk Psykologforening 1989; 26(3):165-172.
15. Bugge RG. **Barns møte med tap, sorg og død.** In: Ramsfjell A, Skeie E, Birkeland K, Bugge RG, Den Braven KR, editors. Barn i kriser : Barnelitteraturkonferanse 1988. Stavanger: Det Norske Misjonsselskaps barne- og ungdomsavdeling, 1988.
16. Bugge RG. Sykehusets møte med mennesker i krise : en helhetsomsorg ved storulykker og ved dagliglivets ulykker. Vest-Agder: Sentralsykehuset, 1988.
17. Bugge RG. **Psykologisk støttetjeneste i forbindelse med en brannkatastrofe.** Tidsskrift for Norsk Psykologforening 1987; 24(3):164-170.
18. Bugge RG. **Tverrkulturell oppfostring: balansegang mellom lojalitetskonflikter og mulighet for modning, vekst og utvikling.** Kristen folkehøgskole 1985; 48(8):16-22.
19. Bugge RG. **Tverrkulturell oppfostring: balansegang mellom lojalitetskonflikter og mulighet for modning, vekst og utvikling.** Prismet 1984; 35(6/7):216-[223].
20. Bugge RG. **Kontrast og inspirasjon: notater fra en reise i U.S.A.** Tidsskrift for Norsk Psykologforening 1982; 19(4):185-190.
21. Bugge RG. **Gjengen : Gjengmentaliteten har utspring i grunnleggende behov.** Vi foreldre 1980; 17(1):12-13.
22. Bugge RG. Gjengen. Oslo: Credo forlag (Lutherstiftelsen), 1967.
23. Grønvold R. Lukket miljø - balanse og spenning. Oslo. Universitetet, 1966.