

Risk & Crisis Communication

A collaborative project from

NATIONAL CENTER FOR
FOOD PROTECTION AND DEFENSE
A HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

FAZD CENTER

National Center for
Foreign Animal and Zoonotic
Disease Defense

Donald J. Klingborg
FAZD Center & NCFPD
School of Veterinary Medicine
University of California, Davis



Tommy Thompson

Dec 2004

Secretary, US Health & Human Services

"For the life of me, I cannot understand why the terrorists have not attacked our food supply, because it is so easy to do so."





HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISORY SYSTEM

SEVERE
SEVERE RISK OF
TERRORIST ATTACKS

HIGH
HIGH RISK OF
TERRORIST ATTACKS

ELEVATED
SIGNIFICANT RISK OF
TERRORIST ATTACKS

GUARDED
GENERAL RISK OF
TERRORIST ATTACKS

LOW
LOW RISK OF
TERRORIST ATTACKS



Vulnerable Strategic Infrastructure

Risk and Crisis Communication Impacts

- **Proper communication** can help mitigate individual and collective trauma.
- **Ineffective communication** can exacerbate and accelerate the psychological harm and the economic impact.

First, do no harm

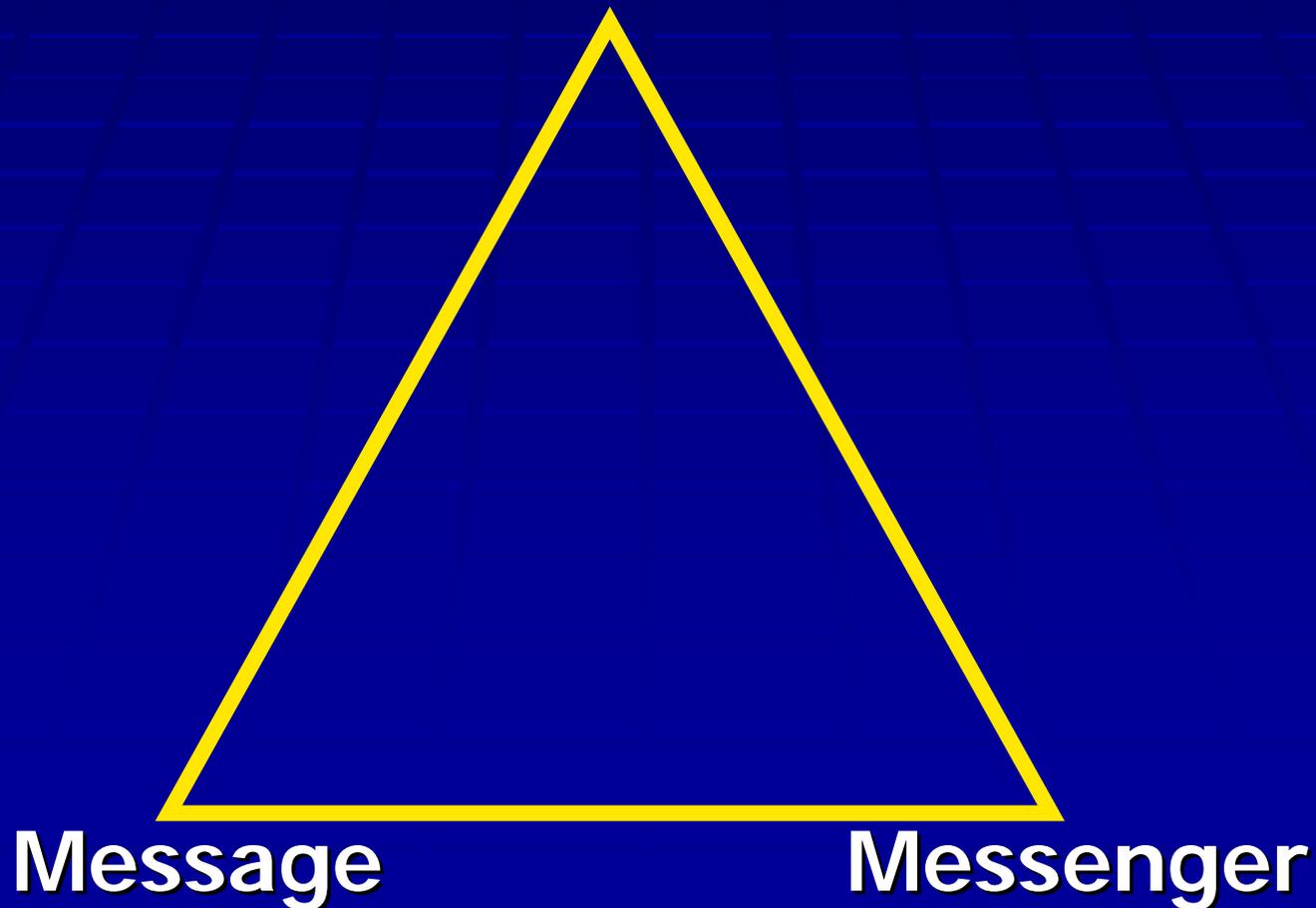
- *Attending to the **psychological** needs of the population is a crucial part of the recovery from a terrorism event (or other crisis), and preparedness and response present a challenge to the nation.”*

The National Institute of Medicine, 2003

**Communication,
Expert Opinion
and
Risk Communication
are different!**

Three Elements of Effective Messages

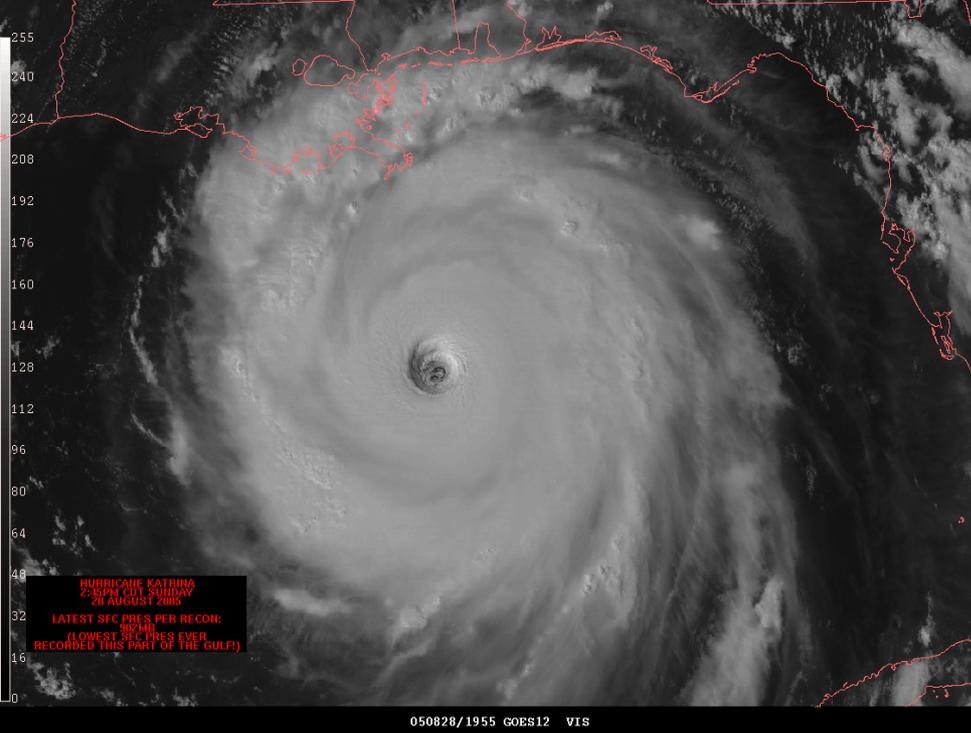
Delivery



Messenger

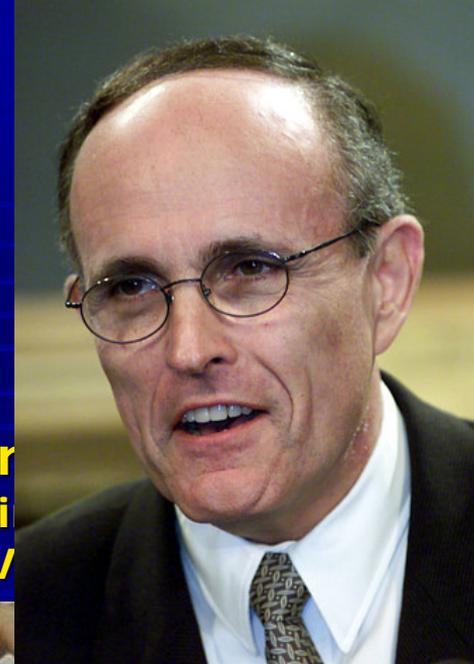


May 1990:
UK Agriculture minister John Gummer attempts to allay public fears about BSE and the safety of beef by publicly feeding his daughter, Cordelia, a hamburger



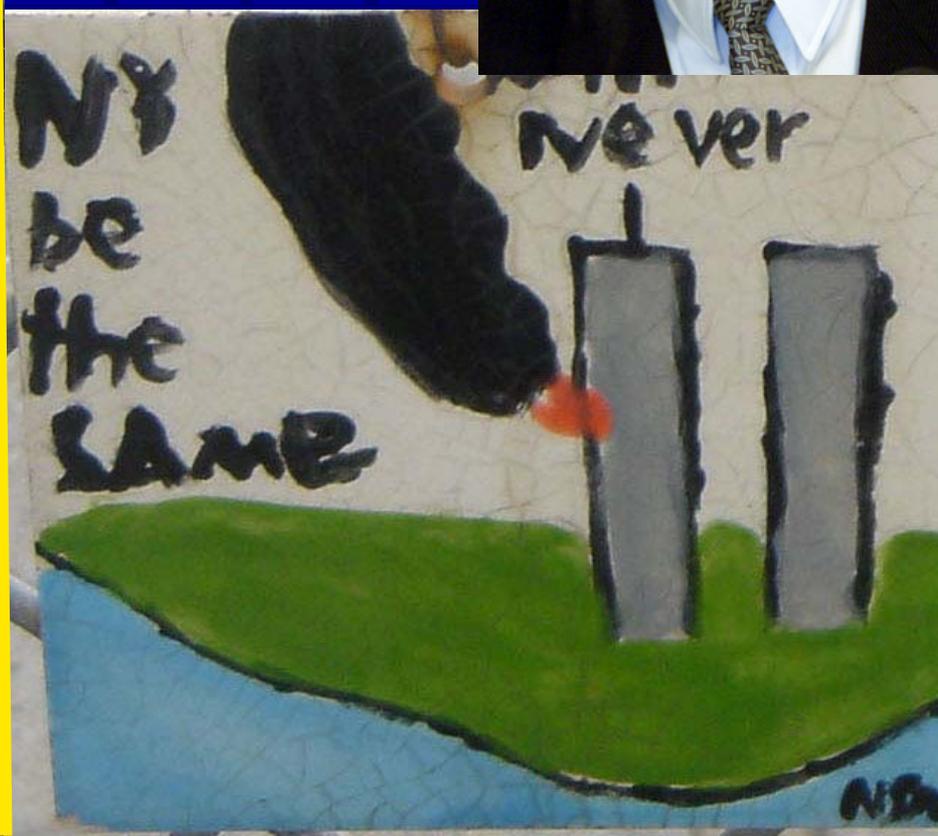
Delivery

9-11-01 Mer
Adjacent to St. Vi
Greenwich V



2-05
ne Katrina

Message

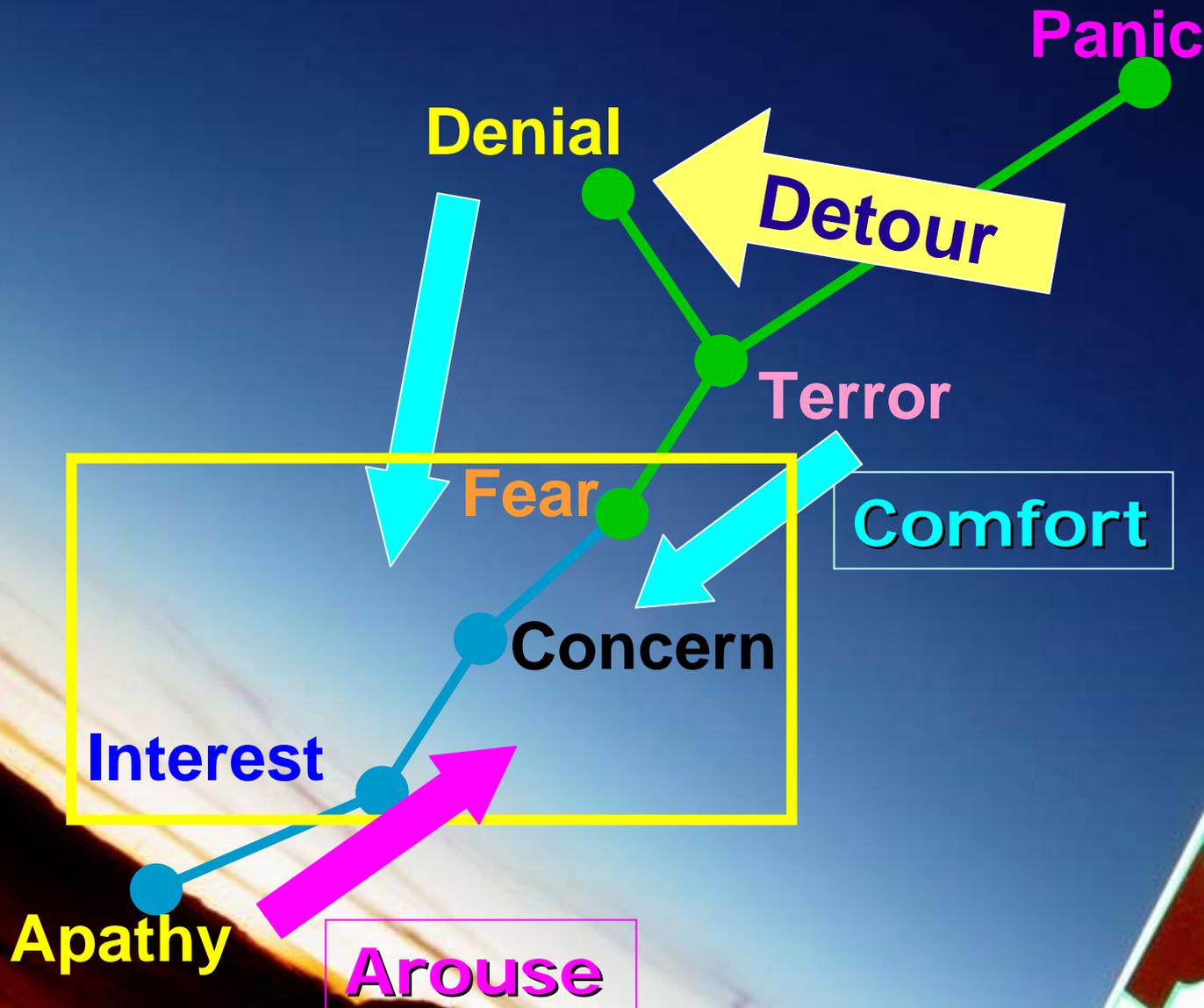


Don't

- Over reassure
- Withhold information
- Fear *fear*
- Panic about *panic*
- Assume your values

Do

- Acknowledge uncertainty
- Fill the information vacuum
- Legitimize fear
- Legitimize misery
- Respect right to one's own values
- Provide things to do
 - Helps tolerate mystery
 - *Must, Should, May*



Best Practices in Crisis & Risk Communication

1

**Risk & crisis
communication is
an ongoing process**



Best Practices in Crisis & Risk Communication

2

Conduct pre-event planning



Best Practices in Crisis & Risk Communication

5

**Meet the needs of
the media & remain
accessible**



Best Practices in Crisis & Risk Communication

7

**Communicate with
compassion, concern &
empathy**



Best Practices in Crisis & Risk Communication

8

**Demonstrate
honesty, candor
& openness**



Best Practices in Crisis & Risk Communication

9

**Accept
uncertainty
& ambiguity**



Best Practices in Crisis & Risk Communication

10

**Provide
messages of
self-efficacy**



Provide messages of self-efficacy

- Give people something meaningful to do
 - Reasserts their personal control
- Activities should be purposeful and meaningful, and pass *“The laugh test”*

- ***“Must, Should, May..”***



10 Best Practices in Crisis & Risk Communication

1. Risk and crisis communication is an ongoing process
2. Conduct pre-event (pre-crisis) planning
3. Foster partnerships with public
4. Listen to public's concern and understand audience
5. Demonstrate honesty, candor and openness
5. Collaborate and coordinate with credible sources
7. Meet the needs of the media and remain accessible
8. Communicate with compassion, concern and empathy
9. Accept uncertainty and ambiguity
10. Provide messages of self-efficacy