

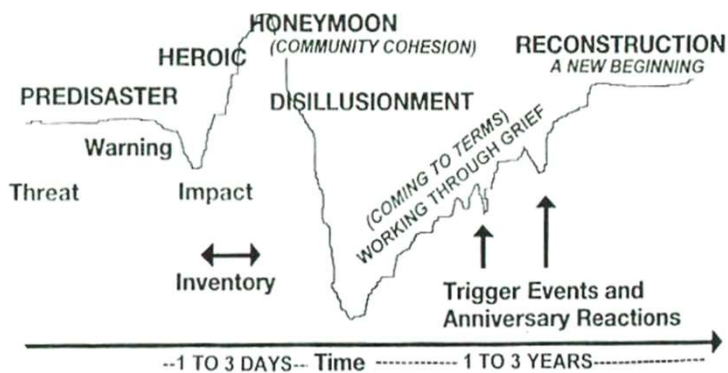


Lutheran Disaster Response
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Introduction to Emotional & Spiritual Care
Alaska Earthquake
December 13, 2018

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Phases of Disaster



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Loss of Security

Disasters are often an assault on our world assumptions.

One may want to believe...

- The world is safe and benevolent.
 - (Bad things will not happen to me.)
- The world is meaningful.
 - (Predictable, fair, and controllable)
- We are good and capable people.
 - (Bad things don't happen to good people.)



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Loss of Security

- The impacted person feels:
 - My world is dangerous and out of control!!!
 - Who can I trust to keep me safe?
 - I am *AFRAID!!!*
- The helpful person:
 - I will be calm.
 - I will care for you.
 - I will accept your fear. You can trust me!



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Normal Crisis Reactions

- Fear of future disasters.
- Loss of interest in day to day activities.
- Sleep disturbances and night terrors .
- Regressive behaviors both academically and behaviorally.
- Anger at God, doubts about faith, questions about death and one's own mortality.
- Typical stress reactions (direct and indirect) in families and among other relationships.



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Important Crisis Concepts

- Crisis reactions are normal reactions to abnormal circumstances.
- The goal is to return to the way we were functioning before the crisis.
- Healing and growth occurs in epicycles
- People recover in ways characteristic of their age.
- Children and adults process their loss through talk and actions.
- People have to tell their story until it makes sense



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The primary need of people is **reassurance** that they will continue to receive love, protection, and care.



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Key Points

- People are resilient
- Family and congregations are the first resource for care



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Common Reactions to Disaster	
<u>Age</u>	<u>Reactions</u>
Birth to 1 years	Thumb sucking, crying, biting Separation anxiety
2 - 6 years	Fear of being alone, separation anxiety Excessively quiet, excessively noisy Generalized fear, somatic complaints Egocentric cause and effect thinking
6-12 years	Difficulty focusing on school work Somatic complaints Age regressive behaviors Talking about the event over and over Worried about personal safety, others safety



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Common Reactions to Disaster	
<u>Age</u>	<u>Reactions</u>
12 years-Adult	Angry about unfairness of the disaster May be blaming of self and others May feel listless, zone-out with television Full grief reactions with broad range of feelings Eating, sleeping disturbances Use of addictive substances Sexually acting out Accident prone
Elderly	Disorientation This occurs if the person must move or the person has lost the major anchors of life – home, photos, keepsakes. May be afraid of the loss of independence if ask for help



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If Cannot Articulate Feelings

What is your predominate emotion at this time?

(Mad, Sad, Glad, Scared?)




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Group Defusing

- Introductory Phase/Guidelines
- Fact Phase
- Feeling Phase
- Teaching Phase
 - Common Reactions
- Closure Phase
 - Summary
 - Prayer




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“Grief is like a train that doesn’t run on anyone else’s schedule. There are no one minute mourners.”

Stages of Grief
Denial
Anger
Bargaining
Depression
Acceptance

From Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross




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Spiritual Resources of the Faith Community

- A safe place to wrestle with spiritual questions
- Worship-Word and Sacrament
- Rituals/Traditions
- Blessing of new beginnings
- Pastors and other spiritual caregivers
- Fellowship and nurturing relationships



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Health

Not the absence of disease, but the
presence of effective antibodies

Resiliency

No matter what happens, I will be O.K.
I am safe in my faith in Jesus Christ

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