

How the Disaster Experience Affects People

What People Affected by the Disaster Experience

There are several emotional phases people affected by a disaster may experience. These phases can extend for several years after the initial event. Immediately following the disaster some may experience shock fear and confusion and may also have unrealistic expectations about their recovery. The reality of their losses and the impact the disaster has on their lives and community may occur weeks after the disaster. It's important to consider the client's behaviors and the way we interact with each of them.

Staff Engaged in Disaster Relief

ARRIVAL	DURING ASSIGNMENT	LEAVING
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initial adrenaline rush• Excitement• Get to job• In-process/orientation• Ready to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long hours/many days• Overwhelmed by how much has to be done• Pressures of community expectations• Constant exposure to clients and their loss• Staff turnover• Problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preparations to return home• Feel good about contributions• Re-enter their "other" life• Out-process