

## Activity 4—When to Refer to a Mental Health Professional

### Symptoms to Watch

Confused thinking

Prolonged sadness (lasting at least 2-3 weeks)

Extremes highs and lows

Social withdrawal

Not eating and not sleeping

Uncontrollable anger

Delusions (False fixed beliefs)

Hallucinations (False sensory perceptions)

Inability to cope with daily activities

Thoughts of harming self or others

### References

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/family/disaster-recovery/coping-with-stress/coping-with-loss/>

MedicineNet.com

[www.mentalhealthamerica.net](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net)

## WORKBOOK ACTIVITY

**After the Storm: Caring for Others**

**Action Plan for Talking, Doing and Encouraging**

STRONG  
RESILIENT  
POWERFUL  
DEDICATED  
CARING  
COMMITTED  
INSPIRING

Care Others  
grace  
kindness  
mercy  
LOVE  
compassion

**Renata L. Nero, Ph.D.**

**Houston's First Baptist Church**

**October 4, 2017**

*They came to Jesus and woke Him up, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And He got up and rebuked the wind and the surging waves, and they stopped, and it became calm.*

**What is Grief?**

The normal **process** of reacting to a loss. The loss may be physical (such as a death), social (such as divorce), or occupational (such as a job). Emotional reactions of grief can include anger, guilt, **anxiety**, sadness, and despair. Physical reactions of grief can include sleeping problems, changes in appetite, physical problems, or illness.

**Denial**—Pretending the storm hasn't happened

"No, not me."

**Anger**—God is often the target in a natural disaster

"Why me?"

**Bargaining**—Dealing with stress without the depression

"Yes, me, but ..."

**Depression**—Absorbed by the sadness

"There is no hope."

**Acceptance**—Working through preceding stages

**Activity 1—Being a Good Listener**

Next to each statement, check whether it is a **Do or Don't**

"Tell me more about that"

"I can see this bothers you"

"Don't be so emotional"

"That's not worth worrying about."

"I think you should..."

"How can I help you resolve this?" \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity 2—Helping Others Accept Help**

Next to each statement, check whether it is a **What to do or What not to do**

"When can I come over to help out?"

"I'll be over at 3 o'clock to help you paint the living room."

"Call me if you need for me to do anything" \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity 3—Accepting Change**

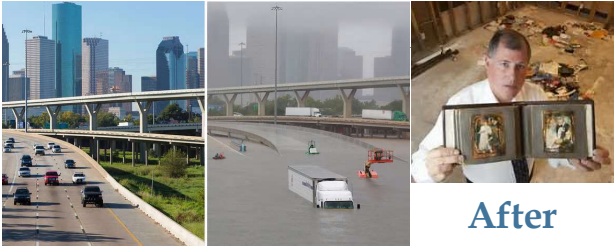
Next to each statement, check whether it is a **Way to encourage or Way not to encourage**

"You can't be serious about keeping that photo album. It's ruined!"

"It must be really hard to think about letting the house go. Let's draw up a list of pros and cons."

"There is a lot to do. What do you have the energy to work on today? I'm free from 4-7 p.m. and can support you anyway that you need."

### Caring for Others



Before

During

After  
**The Storm**

Presentation by Renata L. Nero, Ph.D.

Wednesday, October 4, 2017

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**“The emotional toll that disaster brings can sometimes be even more devastating than the financial strains of damage and loss of home, business or personal property.”**

<https://www.ready.gov/coping-with-disaster>

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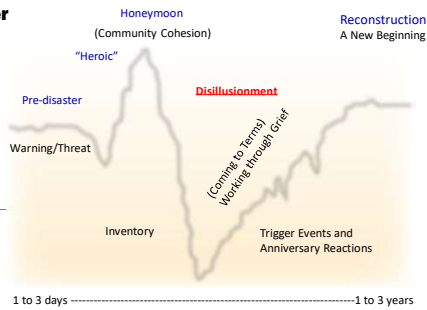
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#### The psychological stages of a disaster

The following chart is a representation of the various stages a person can go through after facing a major disaster.



Source: Zunin/Meyers JASON SMITH / The Courier

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## Coming to Terms with Loss

Loved Ones  
 Faith in God  
 Normalcy  
 Property  
 Safety and Well-being  
 Health  
 Self-Esteem  
 Cherished Possessions

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## Taking Inventory

The recovery process begins when we can  
 acknowledge what has been lost.

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## Caring for others as they work through loss

### A Comforting Presence

**Talking** – Be a good listener  
**Doing** – Help with daily tasks; Help others to accept help; Brainstorm solutions  
**Accepting** – Change those things that can be changed and stop fighting what can't be changed

Pitzer, R.L. & Danes, S.M. (2009). After a natural disaster: Coping with loss

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**Workbook Activity One** - How to be a good listener  
*What to Say and What Not to Say*

**Workbook Activity Two** - How to help others to accept help  
*What to Do and What Not to Do*

**Workbook Activity Three** - How to encourage others to accept change  
*How to Encourage and How Not to Encourage*

**Workbook Activity Four** - Recognizing the signs that it is time to refer to a mental health professional.

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### Customizing help for age and stage of life

“Children and older adults are of special concern in the aftermath of disasters.”



<https://www.ready.gov/coping-with-disaster>

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### SUMMARY

- The storms of life bring loss and change
- Loss and change are inevitable
- Be patient with ourselves and others as we come to terms with loss and change
- The process of recovery may take up to three years
- The **comforting** presence of friends and loved ones can lead to recovery
  - A **comforting presence** points our friends and loved ones in the direction of Our Heavenly Father who changes not and is faithful and with us throughout the storm.
- What to Say, What to Do and How to Encourage

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