

MODULE 2

Reactions and Behavior Changes Through Disaster “Phases”

*IMPACT PHASE RESPONSES

Reactions and Behavior Changes Through Post Disaster “Phases”

Learning Objectives:

- To become *aware* of behaviors, thought processes, and feelings of survivors with the passage of time post-disaster
- To *conceptualize* the sequences of changes as the survivor adapts to different stages of the disaster.

Reactions and Behavior Changes Through Disaster “Phases”

Overview Of Module:

- **Description**: Sets the stage for recognizing the crisis response and adaptive behavior of survivors across post-disaster time phases.
- **Purpose**: To systematically categorize behavior processes through time phases.
- **Content**: Developmental phases of individual reactions to the initial Impact Phase following natural disasters.

Reactions and Behavior Changes Through Disaster “Phases”

QUESTION:

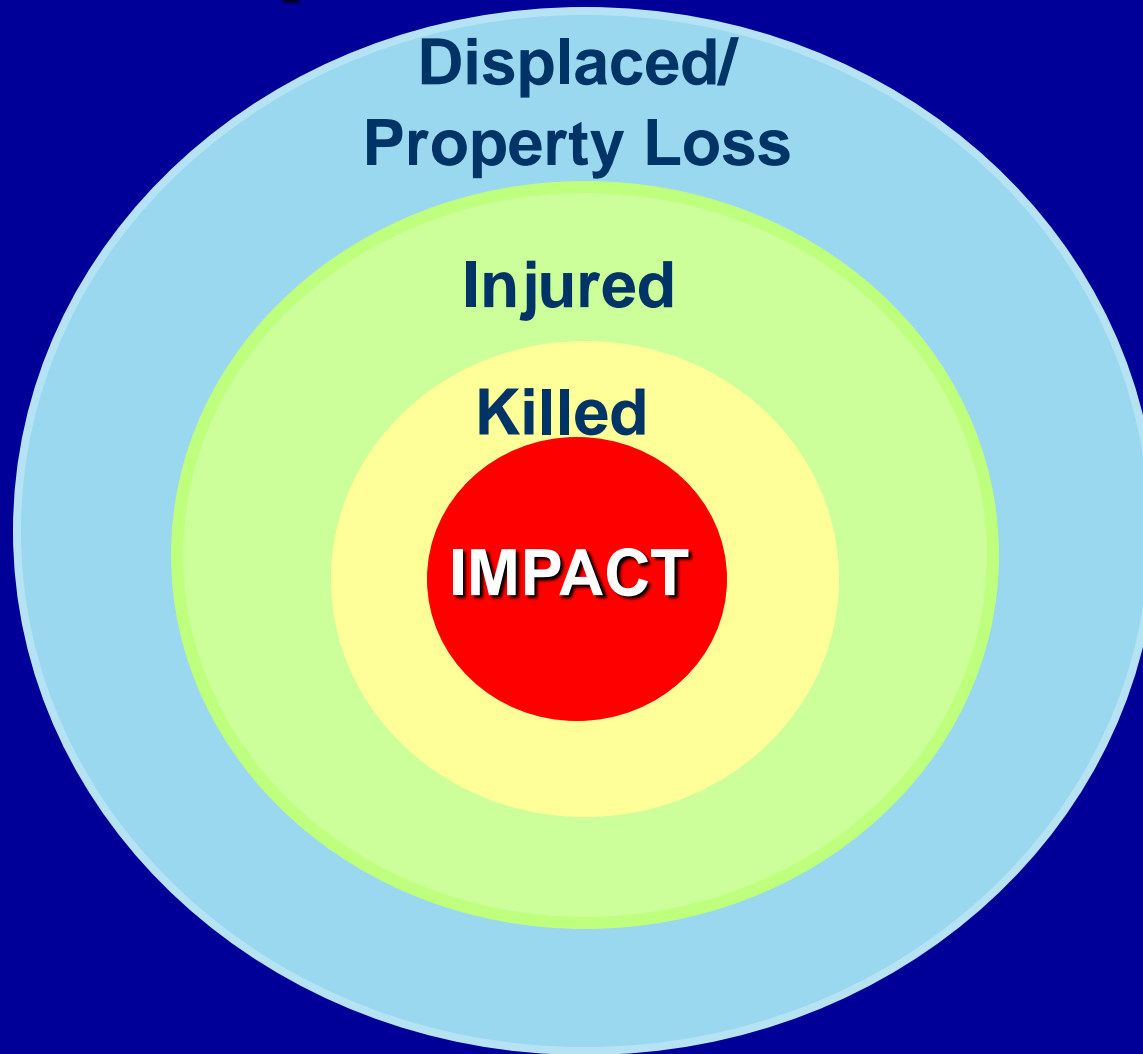
What happens to people and what behavior manifestations can psychosocial workers detect after the initial impact when catastrophic disaster strikes?

Reactions and Behavior Changes Through Disaster “Phases”

Organization and Identification of Behavior Changes:

- Present/focus on key human reactions
 - identified by workers (personal experience)
- According to the passage of time and conceptual perspectives:
 - biological
 - psychological/emotional
 - interpersonal
 - socio-cultural/spiritual.

Direct Impact On Individuals



Direct Impact Victims = Medical casualties (killed, injured) + Physically impacted

Disaster Phases

Phases of reactive behavior in natural disasters

WARNING: Hurricane/Flood

Days in advance of the disaster, individuals' responses vary widely in attention and response to a warning according to:

- Perceptions
- Interpretations
- Implication to self

Phases of reactive behavior in natural disasters

THREAT: Hurricane/Volcanic Eruption

Danger of the disaster to the region known to be imminent 24 hours before landfall...

- People become more likely to comply with emergency public information directives at the threat stage.

Phases of reactive behavior in natural disasters

IMPACT: Earthquake, Tornado, Tsunami

- The impact stage is the entire period of destructive activity by the disaster.
- Individuals became bolted into action for preservation of self, family and those at high risk.

Phases of reactive behavior in natural disasters

PHASE: Impact

- I. Duration:
 - Hours to a few days
- II. Impact period
- III. Plans activated
- IV. Survival behaviors:
 - Seeking Safety
 - Search
 - Rescue
 - Aid

Phases of reactive behavior in natural disasters

PHASE: Impact

V. Responses:

- Shock
- Terror
- Fear
- “Stun” reaction
- “Freeze” reaction

Phases of reactive behavior in natural disasters

PHASE: Impact

- Altruism is common
- Self-assessment of risk may be distorted
- Separation from family members is distressing

Phases of reactive behavior in natural disasters

STAGE: Post-impact & Recoil

- Survivors become aware of the extent of the destruction.
- Unusual strength and drive is exhibited...
 - Individuals contact fellow survivors and search for:
 - who/what has survived
 - what must be done.
- Anxiety, tension and survival guilt appears.

Phases of reactive behavior in natural disasters

STAGE: Early Aftermath

- Outside help and professional mobilization from the community.
- Those in need of the most assistance are treated with medical, physical, and psychosocial support.
- Most individuals begin to exhibit stress and depressive reactions during this time.

Phases of reactive behavior in natural disasters

	THREAT	IMPACT	RECOIL	EARLY AFTERMATH
Bio		Changes in neurochemical levels in the body: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Fatigue •Exhaustion •Over-activity 	Psychosomatic problems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Irritability •Insomnia 	Health aftermath: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Illness •injuries

Phases of reactive behavior in natural disasters

	THREAT	IMPACT	RECOIL	EARLY AFTERMATH
Psycho	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superstition • Rumor • Confusion • Passive-negative • High sense of invulnerability • Humor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centrality • Reversal of behavior • Fear • Anxiety • Cognitive clouding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyperactivity • Underactivity • Grief-Mourning • Depression • Narcissistic sensitivity • Anxiety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to normal function • Less than normal function • Resignation (pathological resolution) • (Fixated in ambivalent emotion)

Phases of reactive behavior in natural disasters

	THREAT	IMPACT	RECONSTRUCTION	EARLY AFTERMATH
Inter-personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Helping •Planning •Shopping •Community activity •“Worry Work” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Helplessness •Self-isolation •Docility •Dependency •Indecisiveness •Scapegoating •Guilt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Easily “hurt” •Difficulty in sharing •Competition •Frustration with bureaucracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Relations with job/ family •Reach different levels of accommodation

Phases of reactive behavior in natural disasters

	THREAT	IMPACT	-RECOIL	EARLY AFTERMATH
Socio-cultural/ spiritual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatalism • Religious activities • Community preparedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Ties • Strengthening of religious feelings • Influence of myths 	Traditional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stronger • weaker • Religious activities 	Anniversary Traditional ceremonies are Attended by many Survivors thankful For their recovery.

Psychosocial Impact of Disasters



Sources: Ursano, 2002; Institute of Medicine, 2003

Immediate Responses

- Fight-or-flight-or-freeze
- Gastrointestinal distress-nausea
- Increased:
 - heart rate
 - blood pressure
 - respiration

Immediate Responses

- Sweating/Shivering
- Dizziness
- Muscle tremors
- Weakness

Immediate Responses

Cognitive

- Emotional numbing
- Self-blame
- Shame
- Change in awareness of one's surroundings

Immediate Responses

Emotional

- Grief/Sadness
 - Fragility
 - Feeling vulnerable
 - Hopelessness
- Emotional Pain
Pervasive Anxiety

Immediate Responses

Emotional

- Shock
- Numbness
- Fear
- Terror
- Feeling unreal
- Feeling out of control
- Disorientation
- Rapidly-shifting emotions

Immediate Responses

Behavioral

- Startle reactions
- Difficulty expressing oneself
- Restlessness
- Constant talking
- Slowed reactions

Immediate Responses Spiritual

- Intense use of prayer

Grateful for being alive

Promising acts of contrition
if loved ones are found

Phases of reactive behavior in natural disasters

Disaster Consequences...

No individual who
experiences a disaster is
untouched by it.

Phases of reactive behavior in natural disasters

Disaster Consequences...

The majority of individuals
exposed to a disaster
return to normal
functioning.