

The Role and Benefit of Including Emotional and Spiritual Care During the Phases of Disasters

Mitigate

Role - Educate responders and religious leaders about improving emotional and spiritual resilience, including strengthening interpersonal relationships, fostering wellness in spirit, mind, and body, finding purpose, and seeking help when needed. Demonstrate what can be done for the community in all phases.

Benefit - Help bring community leaders together before disasters and other traumatic events occur. This process not only provides education, but also helps create connections that can help dramatically in the rebuilding process after an emergency.

Prepare

Role - Identify and include emotional and spiritual care leaders to be a part of emergency response trainings and exercises. Arrange meetings about emotional and spiritual preparedness, understanding protocols, the incident command system, and other important functions.

Benefit - These trainings help ensure preparedness for smooth and productive emergency processes, helping those who need it most.

Respond

Role - Work with community leaders and apply what we have learned in the mitigation and preparedness phases. Provide spiritual and psychological first aid and, where indicated, refer to specialized care. Build trust with responders and survivors that bridge our services to future events.

Benefit - Community leaders and members work together to apply what they have learned in mitigation and preparedness trainings. Leaders, responders, and communities succeed in providing care and support for one another.

Recover

Role - Be present and instrumental in the recovery process by helping with problem solving, promoting positive activities, helping others to manage reactions, and promoting helpful thinking. Help to strengthen and rebuild social connections.

Benefit - Survivors and responders will receive quality recovery support. The community will see and experience the value of emotional and spiritual care. Their experiences and stories will accentuate the importance of these crucial forms of care. Lessons learned through these



phases will help us improve the ongoing inclusion of emotional and spiritual care in the mitigation, preparation, response, and recovery phases.

Reference: NVOAD's "Light our way" publication. (https://www.nvoad.org/wp-content/uploads/light_our_way_2018_final-published-copy.pdf)

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