MENTAL HEALTH AND SPIRITUAL CARE IN EMERGENCIES

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Territorial Disaster Services Coordinator
Chair: Emotional and Spiritual Care Committee

Our History

1969: National VOAD was founded in 1970. By the end of the 1970's, many other organizations joined.

1970's: National VOAD was conceived after Hurricane Camille hit the Gulf Coast on August 17-18, 1969.

1980's: National VOAD was founded in 1970. By the end of the 1970’s, many other organizations joined.

1980's: During the 1980's many local affiliates of National VOAD members began forming Local, Regional and State VOAD coalitions.

1990's: By the mid-1990's, VOAD became a true national movement.

2000's: 2009: Partnership Program begun

The 4 C’s of National VOAD

Cooperation
Communication
Coordination
Collaboration

Foundation for the 4 C’s

Collaboration
Coordination
Communication
Cooperation

compassion
Mission Statement

National VOAD, an association of organizations that mitigate and alleviate the impact of disasters, provides a forum promoting cooperation, communication, coordination and collaboration; and fosters more effective delivery of services to communities affected by disaster.

NATIONAL VOAD TODAY

- **118 Members**
- **62 National Organization Members**
  - Faith-based, Community-based and other Non-Governmental Organizations
- **56 State and Territory VOAD Members**
  - Representing Local/Regional VOAD’s & hundreds of other Members throughout the country
- **Over 50 people on the Emotional and Spiritual Care Committee**
National VOAD Today

Committees:
• Advocacy
• Communications
• Community Preparedness
• Disaster Case Management
• Disaster Health
• Donations Management
• Emotional & Spiritual Care
• Housing
• International
• Long Term Recovery Groups
• Mass Care
• United States Islands & Alaska
• Volunteer Management

Task Forces:
• Drought
• Training

Committee Documents:

Points of Consensus:
• Disaster Case Management
• Disaster Spiritual Care
• Donations Management
• Mass Care
• Rebuild & Repair
• Volunteer Management
• United States Islands & Alaska

Additional Resources:
• Multi Agency Feeding Template
• Light Our Way
• Long-Term Recovery Guide
• Managing Spontaneous Volunteer
• National Mass Care Strategy
• Drought Response Guide

What Do NVOAD Agencies Do?

- Assessment
- Planning
- Mass care
- Emergency assistance
- Case management
- Cleanup
- Repairs
- Rebuilds

- Advocacy
- Mitigation
- Policy work
- Medical
- Preparedness and training
- Emotional and spiritual care
- And much more!
Emotional & Spiritual Care Committee

- Light Our Way 2006 (Currently being updated)
- “DSC Points of Consensus” 2008-2009
- “DSC Guidelines” 2014
- “DEC Points of Consensus” 2015
- “DEC Guidelines” (In development – 5/2018)
- www.nvoad.org to access these resources

Why Specialized Disaster Training?

While many people naturally have helping skills, they often:

1. Don’t understand the impact of disaster
2. Don’t understand the disaster setting
3. Fail to do an adequate and ongoing assessment
4. Fail to develop a strategically integrated ESC plan within the disaster operation
Why Specialized Disaster Training?

5. Fail to update ESC plan to fit the changes in the disaster cycle
6. Don’t understand what appropriate spiritual care looks like in a shared setting
7. Operate in silos and don’t collaborate with other ESC partners
8. Don’t adequately care for the ESC needs of the team during or after deployment

Presentation Material Resources

Spiritual & Psychological First Aid

Emotional and Spiritual Care in Disasters
### Emotional and Spiritual Care in Disasters

#### Course Outline

**Day One**

**Understanding disasters:**
- What changes

**Disaster’s impact:**
- Psychological, physical, emotional & spiritual

**Disaster resiliency:**
- Coping & growing

**What survivors need:**
- What helps most

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### 10 P’s of PFA

- Presence
- Protection
- Practical Assistance
- Perception
- Problem
- Psychological Resiliency
- Processing
- Purpose
- Preparing
- Passing Off
Emotional and Spiritual Care in Disasters
Course Outline

**Day Two**

Defining ESC:
- Appropriate disaster care

ESC planning:
- Strategic ESC planning

Building ESC teams:
- Competencies

Team care:
- Effective team care

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*Where is ESC?*
Strategic ESC Integration

Where Does ESC Fit?
ESC Strategically Embedded

Key Questions for ESC Integration:
- Where?
- What?
- When?
- How?

Rationale for DSC
- Spirituality is an essential part of humanity.
- Disasters significantly disrupts people’s spiritual lives.
- Nurturing people’s spiritual needs contributes to holistic healing.
- Every person can benefit from spiritual care in time of disaster.
“Appropriate and Respectful Disaster Spiritual Care” Guidelines (Page 57)

- Recognize the right of each individual and faith group
- Refrain from manipulation & disrespect
- Respect the freedom from unwanted gifts, sermonizing speech, forced values
- Avoid exploitation of power imbalance
NVOAD ESC Competencies

Section four of the guidelines discusses several key points:

- Importance of adequate training and skills
- Critical nature of appropriate supervision
- Defining local vs deployed ESC providers
- See workbook for more details

### Table 4.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPETENCY FACTOR</th>
<th>KEY ISSUE</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
<th>PRIMARY METHOD OF DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>DOCUMENTATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal attributes</td>
<td>Who I am</td>
<td>Inherent characteristics and qualities that facilitate healing and help shape others’ perception of who I am</td>
<td>Life experience, personal reflection and guidance, instruction, modeling and mentoring from people and sources that influence me</td>
<td>Personal testimony and recommendation from knowledgeable persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>What I know</td>
<td>Theoretical foundations that provide understanding and direction for assessment and action</td>
<td>Structured learning (courses, workshops, personal study, etc.)</td>
<td>Documentation of successful completion of training program(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>What I do</td>
<td>Practical functions that bring help to persons in need</td>
<td>Structured learning (courses, workshops, supervised practice, etc.)</td>
<td>Documentation of successful completion of training program(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Defining DESC

NVOAD ESC Guidelines define disaster spiritual care as part of the broader crisis intervention process. This process is not psychotherapy, but is an acute short-term helping process designed to accomplish the following:

“Disaster spiritual care is unique; the disaster spiritual care provider engages in concentrated spiritual care during which the waves of critical stress are often so frequent and intense – and of such duration – that the spiritual care challenge is differentiated from that which is usually encountered in the day-to-day life of the local community of faith. Thus, the severity level of disaster events and the context in which this support is provided requires well trained and credentialed disaster spiritual care providers.”
Goals of DSC

1. **STABILIZATION** after the initial impact of trauma
2. **REDUCTION OF SYMPTOMS**
3. **PROMOTE RESILIENCE AND COPING**
4. **RETURN TO ADAPTIVE FUNCTIONING** or **REFERRAL** to continued care by a specialist (e.g. legal aid, mental health, specific religious provider) as appropriate

Disaster Spiritual Care Services

- Training for local spiritual care providers to equip them to provide sustainable services that uplift the religious and spiritual diversity of the community as an asset towards recovery

- Assessment of community spiritual needs (See Appendix E in DSC Guidelines)
Disaster Spiritual Care Services

- Deployment of leadership and management specialists to assist in coordinating appropriate disaster spiritual care in shared settings as requested (See glossary for definition of “shared settings”)

- Programs and curricula designed to serve the needs of special populations (e.g. children)

Disaster Spiritual Care Services

- Guidance and assistance in planning memorial and commemorative observances

- Resources to assist local disaster planners to include direct disaster spiritual care services as part of response activities
Disaster Spiritual Care Services

- Respect for all expressions of belief regarding faith and non-faith
- Respect for each person’s rich diversity of heritage, language and culture
- Commitment to ethical practices that protect the vulnerable

Excellence in Disaster Spiritual Care Includes:

- Commitment to collaboration with all disaster spiritual care providers, local and deployed
- Commitment to confidentiality
- Spiritual assessments to determine perceived and real needs and assets
The incident action planning process is built on the following phases:

1. Understanding the situation
2. Establishing incident objectives
3. Developing the plan
4. Preparing and disseminate the plan
5. Executing, evaluating, and revising the plan
ESC Planning

If everything is a priority, then nothing is a priority!

Just showing up is not necessarily “Doing the Most Good!”