

On Site

Upon Arrival

The team leader will check in at the Incident Command Post. The team leader will be provided with the details concerning your stay such as sleeping arrangements, meals, showers, team assignments, etc. These details may change if the situation is in flux. Note: a team should work within the response command structure.

DO:

- Represent Jesus Christ in word and deed always
- Be flexible!
- Listen to victims
- Keep victim's information in confidence
- Respect the victim's property
- Ask permission before photographing
- Be sure of your information
- Refer to qualified person if necessary
- Make adjustments as needed
- Understand your limitations
- Pray without ceasing and rely on God

DO NOT:

- Tell YOUR story or think it is about YOU
- Use careless words or actions or spread rumors
- Accept financial contributions
- Speak to the media without unit leader's permission
- Exceed your training
- Expect favors
- Expect to work only with your group
- Whine or complain!!

Bukal Life Care & Counseling Center
www.bukallife.org

Disaster Response Volunteer Guide

**For
Religious Crisis Counselors in the
Philippines**

**Adapted primarily from Disaster Relief guidelines
from Ohio, Maryland, and Virginia Baptists**

2013

Preparation

Think About Before You Go:

1. If employed or a student, discuss your situation with your employer/school. Be sure your absence for disaster response is fully approved. Do not jeopardize your employment or education.
2. Ensure your family are supportive of your decision to join.
3. Look over the "What to Take" checklist and have on hand basic items. Add any items that you know you might need for health, safety, comfort and efficiency.
4. Keep Emergency Contact and Insurance information,
5. Make arrangements with family, church, civic clubs, etc. for someone to cover for you while you are away.
6. Keep phone numbers and e-mail addresses related to your team/organization relief network.
7. Participate in as much training, drills, and demonstrations as you can avail of.
8. If you have any questions, ask **before** you commit.

Questions You Should Ask

1. Why do I want to help?
2. Am I able to handle the stress of helping others?
3. How stressful is it to my family that I give time to helping others?
4. Do I give myself time and permission to grieve about the losses in my life? Or do I stay so busy that I overlook this important part of my own recovery?
5. Do I eat right and get plenty of rest so I can remain healthy?
6. Do my spouse and children still have proper priority in my life or am letting volunteer work edge them out?
7. Is what I'm doing in accordance with God's will for my life?

You Should Be Prepared To:

1. Recognize stress in yourself.
2. Participate each day in the team debriefing during the disaster response.
3. Monitor your own...frequency of rest, length of work time, personal food needs, shelter and privacy, and personal support system.
4. Work as part of a team, not be a "lone ranger."
5. Say "No!" You cannot say "Yes" all of the time and survive.

Safety Guidelines for Volunteers

- Stay in good health and physical condition, as much as possible. Have regular physical examinations. Consult your physician about your involvement in disaster relief.
- Get recommended inoculations: ex: hepatitis A and B, tetanus.
- Take medications as prescribed by your physician. If possible, have a backup prescription order for medications.
- Work within your strengths and limitations--physical (strength and health), emotional (stress management), and mental (knowledge and skills).
- Take along personal health items which you have found helpful to your comfort and health.
- Take and wear clothing, foot wear, and special equipment suited to the task and conditions: moisture, standing, heavy work, rough terrain, nails and glass, danger areas, etc.
- Avoid extended sitting or standing in the same position, sun exposure, water exposure, heat and cold areas (especially where it's damp).
- Eat regularly & increase water intake according to heat & work load.
- Rest when you can. Some people can work longer, some not. Gauge yourself. Don't be intimidated by what others do if it affects your strength and usefulness.
- Sleeping may be difficult. Try to arrange what is best for you.
- Use caution in danger areas: electricity, traffic, broken glass, nails, etc.
- Avoid constipation and diarrhea.
- Report all cuts, burns, bruises, abrasions, strains, etc., to the first aid coordinator.
- Complete personal and medical information prior to or immediately after arriving on the disaster site.
- Become familiar with policy and procedures for on-site illness & injuries.

Additional Thoughts

Basic Listening Skills

1. Look at the person, giving him/her your complete attention.
2. Give occasional responses to let the person know you understand—nod head, change expressions, make oral response, ask questions.
3. Paraphrase and ask for clarification. Do not put words in the victim's mouth. Don't shut off valuable conversation with yes/no questions and cliché's.
4. Don't pretend that you understand what they are going through (you don't), but make it clear you are trying your best to understand.
5. Avoid interrupting, if possible, unless there is real confusion.
6. Be tolerant and be willing to accept new ideas. Don't moralize or condemn.

As a Spiritual Healer

- Give hopeful truth. Do not tell what is false (not only is it wrong, but it will make the victim not trust you). But sprinkle truth with hope. No matter how bleak things appear, there is always hope. Let them understand this.
- Some will be angry at God, and as a representative of God, some will be angry at you. You don't need to defend God or yourself. Usually, this is just part of their process of recovery.
- Deep questions are usually rhetorical. When someone asks "Why did this happen to me?" they are not looking for you to give them an answer. That's good, since you don't really know.
- This is not the time to dust off your theology books and start trying to give your theories on human suffering or divine sovereignty.
- Don't proselytize (unless asked to by the victim) *This is a touchy issue. Some feel that crises are perfect times to push for someone to convert. There are several reasons not to. First, people undergoing trauma rarely have the ability to make a real major life change (you are seeking spiritual conversion not just a mumbled prayer). Second, if the victim believes you care more about your church's statistics than himself, your testimony of actions is lost. Third, your team may not be welcome to help if it is seen simply as an evangelism ministry. But, please share Christ's love through your action and make it clear who you are and who you truly represent.*
- Your role is not just spiritual. Be prepared to help in questions about getting food, medical care, locating loved ones, etc. If you don't know these things, find out.

Things to Bring

Devotional Materials:

- _____ Bible
- _____ Notebook for Journaling with pen/pencil
- _____ Daily devotional book (optional)

Identification:

- _____ Disaster relief ID
- _____ Personal ID
- _____ Insurance info
- _____ Medical care guidelines (if you have special needs)

Health, Safety & Hygiene:

- _____ Medicine—prescription and nonprescription
- _____ Allergy kit (if needed)
- _____ Sunblock (SPF15+)
- _____ Soap (body and laundry)
- _____ Deodorant
- _____ Antibiotic ointment
- _____ Towel/washcloth
- _____ Tooth brush/tooth paste
- _____ Shampoo
- _____ Comb/brush
- _____ Chap stick/Lip balm
- _____ Razor/shaving cream
- _____ Antacids
- _____ Insect spray
- _____ Antifungal medication
- _____ Vitamins

Food Drink:

- _____ Snacks
- _____ Special Diet foods (if necessary)
- _____ Drinking water

Supplies and equipment:

- _____ Flash light (extra batteries or hand winding)
- _____ Watch/alarm clock
- _____ Clear water bottle (for drinking and solar disinfection)
- _____ Bedding/tent (if needed)

Clothing:

- ☐ 4-7 days supply of clothing (practical, comfortable, condition appropriate)
- ☐ Hat
- ☐ Work gloves
- ☐ Sleepwear
- ☐ Work shoes/waterproof footwear
- ☐ Raincoat or other wet weather gear
- ☐ Duffle bag
- ☐ Laundry bag (for dirty clothes)

Other:

- ☐ Cash Money (perhaps P500 to P1000 per day on travel)
- ☐ Inexpensive Camera (use with caution and respect)
- ☐ Inexpensive Cellphone (with adequate load)

Heart inventory "Am I..."

- ☐ Ready to really help?
- ☐ Going only out of duty?
- ☐ Ever resentful of demands made on me?
- ☐ Willing to take directions from others?
- ☐ Part of the team?
- ☐ There to help people in need?
- ☐ Willing to work wherever/whatever needed?
- ☐ Willing to get special training?
- ☐ Suspicious of people who ask for help?
- ☐ Picking and choosing who is deserving of help?
- ☐ Willing to be Christ's hands, feet, and voice?

Team Considerations

- A team is crafted, not thrown together. Willingness to go is not enough.
- Team should have an overall team leader... a mature and organized person to ensure safety and effectivity of the team. The leader should be able to make difficult decisions but should have the self-confidence to listen to team members.
- Team should also have someone to handle the first aid kit with at least basic skills in first aid.
- Team should have someone willing and able to provide counseling for team members.
- Team should have group devotions together if possible.
- Teams should meet before the trip for planning, meet during the trip for monitoring/conversation, and meet after for evaluation/debrief.
- It is okay to have one or two non-Christians on the team as long as they agree to appropriate conduct. Seeing mature Christians serving God faithfully SHOULD be a good testimony to them.

Scriptures to Consider

1. How did God deal with Elijah's personal crisis in I Kings 19?
2. What are some ways we serve Jesus in Matt. 25:31-46?
3. How might God's attitude be different from ours when it comes to people who are different than ourselves (by race, nationality, faith, etc.) based on Jonah ch. 4?
4. What are some aspects of true religion and worship based on Isaiah 58?
5. How are some ways we care for those in crisis based on Luke 10:25-37?
6. How might a Biblical understanding of love, as described in I Cor. 13, have bearing on disaster response?
7. What is God's priority based on Luke ch. 15?
8. What can we learn about the church and Christian teams from Acts 4:32-37.

These are just a few. Times of crisis often give us a fresh perspective on passages of Scripture that we have ignored or, conversely, have read to the point that they have lost their freshness for us. Use this time to wrestle, creatively, with God's word, your relationship with God, and your role as a servant of Christ.