

**EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL CARE MEETING  
MARCH 21, 2005  
LUTHERAN SERVICES FLORIDA  
TAMPA**

**NOTES**

*Welcome by Jody Hill (FIND) with thanks for all the work done in the last 7 months. Danielle Kearney of LSF welcomed and gave housekeeping details. Each person present introduced themselves and gave the name of the group they were representing. An attendance list with contact numbers was distributed at the meeting. Rev. Rick Armstrong gave the invocation. Johanna Olson of Lutheran Disaster Response facilitated the meeting.*

She began by suggesting the reason we came together was really about identifying ourselves to each other, and talking about what we are doing now. However she identified 4 areas of discussion which might be productive for the group going forward:

1. How do we identify ourselves to each other?
2. How do we work together? What is our personal and agency/institutional relationship to each other?
3. How do we know what each other are doing?
4. How will we connect with each other?

**I. WHO ARE WE AND WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW? WHAT IS GOING ON?**

Rick Armstrong began the discussion around the table with the questions what are we doing now? And what are the emotional spiritual care needs now? Various voices spoke on this:

*Lutheran Counseling Services* is serving 2-3 places around the state, working respite retreats with clergy, offering educational pieces around the state on normal reactions to abnormal situations. LCS is recently moving to preparation. They are still hearing anger but there are points of celebration with frustration and helplessness over housing. After the Christmas holidays there appeared a predominant fear about hurricanes coming in 6 months and the beginning of afternoon thunderstorms. Church workers are tired but trying to maintain they are OK. LCS works with the spiritual concept of wilderness and wandering – to see the value in growth. Saw some transformation from retreats.

*Charles Kimber of DCF* did an informal survey. Discovered there is still a lot of stuff need to attend to. Children are a problem with all they have to go through and families still not in homes. Hear teachers confronting behaviors not usually dealt with. There is a need for children to learn conflict resolution. They are still living in temporary situations – trailers parks. Older people, seniors also having difficulty. Perhaps we need to map where they are for education.

*Peggy Garcia of UMCOR* said that case managers are overloaded with cases but can only deal with one at a time with a big backlog. There is frustration because volunteers are starting to dwindle.

*Trudy Rankin of UMC Florida Conference* said they were doing respite retreats for clergy families with 8 people at a time. 25 % of their churches in Florida were affected. Offering a new clergy course.

*Project Hope in Charlotte Co.* offers support groups: asking how is your life different now? Getting people over the fear of joining a group. Outreach workers get a lot of denial. They offer 8 sessions per group.

(Discussion of how we get people into support groups to create resiliency. Get them via canvassing. Cheryl Riciardi said good way was to use terminology of education.

Call groups by educational terms.

*Project Hope in Central Florida* – Marilyn Juengst said emotional reaction is widespread. Parents have been in a prolonged stress and are still in crisis mode focusing on the practical. Massive post traumatic stress. Doing children’s puppet theater.

*Presbyterian Disaster Assistance* stated that caregivers are feeling overwhelmed while having to function without relief. Care for caregivers needs to be intentional – find ways to do this.

*NOVA* – educate on common crisis responses as normal. Cheryl working with educators in Brevard County.

*Ann Eissfeldt with God’s Care in Time of Crisis* working with parochial schools. (Others spoke too but scribe couldn’t record everything!!!)

## **II. HOW DO WE ADDRESS THESE ISSUES? FOCUS GROUPS DISCUSS**

(Focus Groups: Children & Seniors; Process: Care for Caregivers; Resources)  
(Reports from focus groups recorded from newsprint notes.)

### **CHILDREN AND SENIORS:**

**Situation:** Temporary housing areas creating new emotional issues. Also, an increase in school conflicts and violence.

**Assets:** Consideration of educational priorities – basic security needs as opposed to FCAT. Who needs support? Teachers, educational personnel, caregivers, parents, kids. Non-traditional approaches such as Camp Noah, Boy and Girl Scouts, Churches in Sunday School, VBS. TV stations – impact what they do. Children’s discussion group – children learn what parents are going through – communication. Keep groups within ‘normal’ regular channels. Use of web & local resources e.g. weather man. Play and art therapy. One day programs for churches and community centers to provide religious or secular curriculum. Explorer project.

### **PROCESS:**

**Situation:** Need to convince community there is a need to process. How to process when resources and agencies pull out.

**Assets:** Interfaith networking. Project Hope acting as mediator. Churches and agencies working together. Building trust with and between faith-based agencies

and mental health providers. Social events reaching more people builds trust, informal approach to processing, networking, fairs, festivals. Get crowd into events (ie puppet show) to process feelings at events.

**CARE FOR CAREGIVERS:**

**Situation:** Directors of agencies, church leaders etc need to become personally aware of how this affects them and their organization.

**Assets:** Supplying a directory of resources for giving relief to those under them. Educate directors, leaders groups with outside help to process. Networking with other leaders to provide resources for each other. Responding to need outside of chain of command. Setting context – mentoring role, modeling a healing environment, non anxious presence. Dealing with a bigger scope of uncertainty. Dealing with volunteers.

**RESOURCES:**

**Assets:** CISM – caregiving to first responders, referrals for first responders, clients and special needs populations. FEMA – crisis counseling grant. Project Hope. CAMP NOAH – camps for children after disaster. Lutheran, Methodist, UCC and other faith groups providing spiritual care. \$11 million support grant-Children and Family Services. National VOAD printed materials and consulting. Church World Service – consulting and organizing. Foundations – to be researched.

**WEBSITES to consult:**

[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov) (children’s trauma network)

[www.trynova.org](http://www.trynova.org)

University of South Dakota

[www.icisf.org](http://www.icisf.org)

[www.nvoad.org](http://www.nvoad.org)

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

**III. PLANNING What is is?**

**Research**

**Commitment to: time, communication, building relationships**

**Relationships form the response**

#### **IV. CREATING MOU'S (Memorandums of Understanding)**

##### **“Know Thy Agency”**

- Understanding what each other does in providing services.
- What is the protocol for each group?
- What brings an organization to respond?
- How can an organization handle logistics, i.e. housing volunteers?
- What does an organization need to help provide services?
- Have local relationships identified with regional, state and national?
- Commonality in training. Know what training is necessary for what service and be equipped.
- Understand the “languages” used e.g. what is crisis intervention versus psychological first aid?
- Share upcoming trainings with groups other than your own to deepen the volunteer corps and promote fertilization of sufficient numbers of training people across the state. (Some central org or location keep a list)
- Affinity groups – what makes sense in who you partner with to promote a continuum of care.
- What populations are being served, what are those pre-existing relationships?
- Using the same form. Standardizing intake forms.

#### **V. WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

##### **DEVELOPING COMMITTEES OF THIS EMOTIONAL SPIRITUAL CARE GROUP:**

**PLANNING      OPERATIONS      BUILDING      FINANCE**

**Who would want to participate in which committee? To be determined.**

**This group ESC (Emotional Spiritual Care) becoming an expression of FLVOAD.**

**For next meeting develop a mission with FLVOAD.**

**Organizationally, how do we go operational?**

**We have two working areas: mental health and spiritual care**

**Develop a listserv.**

**Identify what the needs are and identify who is doing what.**

**NEXT MEETING 18<sup>TH</sup> OF APRIL IN TAMPA**

**Respectfully submitted by Judith Bunker 4-14-05**

