

# **Terrorism, Trauma, and Tragedies**

## **A Counselor's Guide to Preparing and Responding**

*Third Edition*

Edited by Jane Webber and J. Barry Mascari



American Counseling Association Foundation

Alexandria, Virginia

**Terrorism, Trauma, and Tragedies: A Counselor's Guide to Preparing and Responding  
Third Edition**

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*For Hart and Sherry Webber, who taught us that life is lived in bringing joy to others.  
We miss your music, your meals, and your love.  
For Joe and Doris Mascari whose tenacity keeps us going.  
For our grandparents who taught us what it was like to be strangers in a strange land.*



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# PREFACE

The American Counseling Association Foundation was honored and pleased to welcome Barry Mascari as co-editor of this new edition of *Terrorism, Trauma and Tragedies: A Counselor's Guide to Preparing and Responding*. He joins lead editor Jane Webber who took the second edition to the next level of excellence after the book was first launched following the September 11 terrorist attacks. Together they have assembled an impressive team of 51 contributing authors—each of whom has a unique perspective and specific expertise to share.

This third edition represents an extensive revision over the first two editions and again brings new attention to the field of disaster mental health. With the dramatic increase of tragic events around the world, this book is more timely than ever. The scope has broadened even further than that of the second edition to include the shocking Virginia Tech shooting, the devastating hurricanes in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast region, as well as the ongoing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the effects on soldiers and their families.

And, as the manuscript was in the final stages of production, the earthquake in Haiti struck—yet another reminder of the need for resources and training in this field. ACA Foundation Chair Howard Smith, EdD, LPC, was part of a response team of the International Services Department of the American Red

Cross that went to Haiti on a special assignment to provide services to American responders who were already in Haiti and those who went immediately after the disaster.

The goal of this edition, like the previous two sold-out editions, remains the same: to share practical strategies and lessons learned from those on the front lines of terrorism, trauma, and tragedies. The sharing of experiences will help to ensure that counseling professionals are well-prepared for the inevitable events that lie ahead.

The ACA Foundation is grateful to Editors Jane Webber and Barry Mascari and all of the contributors who volunteered their time, shared their stories and insights, and opened up their hearts to help those who were in need.

## **The ACA Foundation Board of Trustees (2009-2010)**

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# PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

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Every book begins with an idea, a thought, or a commitment to communicate something that will be of interest or importance to the reader. This publication, *Terrorism, Trauma and Tragedies: A Counselor's Guide to Preparing and Responding*, is no exception.

Conceived as a resource for counselors, teachers, administrators, parents and others, this is a hands-on, practical book that provides useful information and guidance on strategies, techniques, and plans that have worked well. It was not developed as a theoretical or formal text on the root causes of terrorism or tragedy, so much as something that caregivers can pick up and use immediately in their practice with children, adolescents, teens, and adults of all ages who are experiencing the trauma of a tragic event.

This book is a collection of original material, news stories, handouts, and even adaptations of recent conference presentation. As such it includes a variety of writing styles and approaches. In Section 1, for example, you will read straight-from-the-heart moving, personal accounts of counselors who were on the front lines on September 11 and afterward. It is important to hear their stories in their own words.

The Trustees of the American Counseling Association Foundation formulated the idea for this publication

shortly after the terrorist attacks. While they had contemplated some type of resource in the wake of school shootings and other tragedies over the past few years, the events of September 11 dictated that the book move into an accelerated production schedule. This is the first book published by the Foundation.

It is the hope of the ACA Foundation that this book will be a resource to helping professionals as they grapple with how best to work with persons who are facing tragic and traumatic events in their lives, indeed in today's world. Terrorism has become a fact of life in recent months.

## **The American Counseling Association Foundation (2001-2002)**

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This third edition has been the collaborative effort of 51 authors, and we thank all our colleagues who have contributed to this book. We are grateful to those pioneers whose work guided our journey, especially Tom Query, Steve Crimando, Mike Dubi, Charles Figley, Eric Gentry, Eliana Gil, and Bessel van der Kolk.

Our projects have always been a family experience and we are indebted to our children, Julia Runte, manuscript editor; Matthew Mascari, for the cover design; and Janine Mascari and Chris Runte for their assistance and encouragement to keep doing what we love. We are especially appreciative of continued support from Carol Gernat and Tassie and Don Livingston.

We have been privileged to work with Debra Bass of the American Counseling Association whose skill and wit have kept us on track as this volume evolved through three editions. This book would not be possible without the vision and commitment of the American Counseling Association Foundation to respond to the needs of counselors after September 11.

To our graduate students whom we have the honor and privilege of teaching and whose trauma stories have informed our development as trauma counselors, we are deeply grateful.