
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Emotional and Spiritual Care Offerings

Our programs are responsive to the challenges posed by the effects of natural disasters, the tragedy of mass shootings, and other human caused disasters including the COVID- 19 pandemic. In our programs PDA team members facilitate discussions and offer materials on maintaining self-care and building personal resilience through relationships, story-telling, and spiritual practices. We offer ways to prevent and mitigate burnout, compassion fatigue and secondary traumatic stress, and offer practices that foster compassion satisfaction, joy, and hope. Participants have the opportunity to share their experiences and wisdom with one another.

Please contact Kathy Riley, PDA national staff and Associate for Emotional and Spiritual Care at Kathryn.Riley@pcusa.org for more information or to schedule a program. Our programs are open to teaching elders, ruling elders, deacons and other congregational members. We also offer our programs to non faith-based organizations. For links to our pre-recorded programs and handouts, please go to <https://pda.pcusa.org/page/esc-webinar/>.

In- person Programs

Resilience & Renewal

This program is designed for those who have been immersed in disaster response or who could benefit from a resilience-focused retreat. Participants explore the essentials of healing and resilience-building tools, including story telling, relaxation and self-care techniques, spiritual practices, and strengthening positive connections with others. Our goal is to provide an opportunity to experience respite throughout the day, learn new tools, and take home a personalized self-care plan that can be used in everyday life. It can be offered in a half-or full-day format.

Tools for Building Resilience

This half-day program is designed to increase participants' understanding of their own signs of stress and to teach in-the-moment strategies to handle stress. Those attending will build on their experience while practicing new tools that have been shown to be effective in sustaining an individual's capacity to serve.

Building Hope, Resilience and Compassion in Times of Stress

In this workshop, we explore some of the ways the challenges and stresses of our work can affect us, including compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress and burnout with a focus on enhancing our ability to respond in healthy ways to stress. We'll share strategies that can help in preventing or reducing these effects, including relaxation and resilience-building tools, mindfulness and sharing our story with trusted others. We'll also spend time with compassion satisfaction and the ways our work and other aspects of our lives can bring joy and growth. It can be offered in a half-or full-day format.

Offering Disaster Emotional and Spiritual Care

Although faith community leaders and others are trained to provide quality emotional and spiritual care, the disaster environment presents distinct challenges. PDA offers a program for becoming equipped to offer appropriate and respectful disaster emotional and spiritual care. The program is tailored to the group's needs and can be presented in 2-6 hours, depending on the particular group's interests. We offer this program in "blue sky" times to prepare groups for offering care, or it can be presented shortly after a disaster in an abbreviated format to those who feel called to serve in this way in response to the disaster.

Virtual Programs

Faith Leader Support Discussions

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is continuing to offer virtual, conversational meetings that are tailored to the participants' situation, and we are now offering a 60 or 90-minute option. A panel of PDA presenters offers opportunities for reflection and tools for self-care and resilience and responds to questions and comments from faith leaders. The 90-minute program includes opportunities for small-group breakout conversations.

Resilience & Renewal: A Three-Hour Virtual Retreat

This three-hour virtual retreat is designed to give all who serve others a chance to take a breath and a break in the midst of ongoing challenges of their paid or volunteer work. Participants experience essential healing and resilience-building tools, including story telling, strengthening positive connections with others, and spiritual practices. This retreat, grounded in relaxation and self-care techniques, provides an opportunity to experience a time of respite.

Building Resilience

We can present this 60 or 90-minute *Building Resilience* program virtually to groups, or the recorded version can be viewed at any time. Members of PDA teach in-the-moment tools to engage the relaxation response in body and mind and engage participants in creating a personalized self-care and resilience-building plan. The 90-minute version offers participants time to share their experiences and practices.

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