To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Deborah Jean Persell entitled “The Experience of Faith-Based Disaster Response: A Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis.” I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Nursing.

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(original signatures are on file with official student records)
Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Dave Persell, my children, Micah Persell and Nathan Persell, the faith-based organization’s staff and volunteers, and residents of New Orleans whose experiences have inspired and challenged me.
Acknowledgments

I wish to thank the doctoral nursing faculty and fellow students in the College of Nursing at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, for their dedication and commitment to excellence in nursing. I owe a special debt of gratitude to the members of my dissertation committee: 1) to Dr. Susan Speraw for her unfailing support, guidance and countless hours in assisting me with data analysis. My thanks to her goes beyond the dissertation to include her advising and mentoring in homeland security nursing; 2) to Dr. Jan Witucki-Brown for support and guidance in the ethnographic portion of this dissertation. Her experience and willingness to work with me was invaluable; 3) to Dr. Linda Mefford for her support and guidance in the quantitative methodology of the dissertation. She was always willing to take the time to meet with me and discuss the statistics; 4) to Dr. Jan Lee for her support and guidance in reviewing and polishing the finished product; and 5) to Dr. Rosalind Hackett for her unfailing dedication to my learning and guiding me in the discipline of Religious Studies. Her expertise provided insight, a broader perspective and collaboration.

I would also like to thank Dr. Mike McDaniel for his review of the statistical analyses, Julie Linnstaedter for her editorial help, and to my colleagues at Arkansas State University College of Nursing and Health Professions. They sacrificed their time and energy to accept additional responsibilities so I would have more time to devote to my doctoral education. That kind of support is immeasurable.

Lastly, I would like to thank Wiley-Blackwell for permission to include Figure 1, Elements of the Betty Neuman Systems Model.

Funding for this dissertation from Arkansas State University Research Committee, the office of the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Professions and the Vollman Family Fund is gratefully acknowledged.
Abstract

After hurricanes Katrina and Rita, faith-based organizations were among the most trusted and efficient organizations responding in New Orleans. The primary purposes of this study are twofold: 1) to understand the experience of faith-based disaster response for those charged with organizing and executing such a massive, grassroots effort, those delivering direct service, and the survivors who seek and receive assistance; 2) to understand the impact of the disaster event and levels of hope in the lives of those who provide and receive assistance. These research purposes were achieved by using a mixed methods research design that included ethnographic participant-observer field experience, existential phenomenology interviews, and the administration of the Herth Hope Index, the Hope Visual Analogue Scale and the Impact of Event Scale – Revised. Study participants included faith-based disaster response staff and volunteers as well as the New Orleans residents they assisted. All research findings were triangulated. The qualitative contextual ground for the experience was “Divine Agency.” The figural themes were “Decision Point,” “Social Suffering,” “ Stranger-to- Stranger Interactions,” “Communitas,” “Transformation,” and “Reflection.” With a possible maximum of 48, the scores for the Herth Hope Index included a mean of 42.5 for the staff, 41.5 for the volunteers and 46 for the residents. The scores on the Impact of Event Scale – Revised, among all participant groups, revealed almost all of the participants experienced significant emotional impact. The mean Impact of Event Scale – Revised score was 34.22 for the staff, 37.63 for the volunteers and 47.5 for the residents of New Orleans. Implications for nursing education and practice were identified with emphasis on the emerging nursing specialties of faith-community nursing and homeland security nursing. Future research should incorporate intervention studies treating faith-based disaster response and strategies to encourage hope as interventions. Potential areas for public policy development related to faith-based disaster response discussed include reallocation of public funds to faith-based disaster response, encrypted case management systems, and fee for service disaster response activities.
Executive Summary

The executive summary provides a broad overview of the findings of the research. The purpose of this study was to explore the experience of faith-based disaster response for the administrative and paid staff of the faith-based organization (FBO), volunteers providing FBO services, and the New Orleans residents receiving FBO services.

Background and Significance

There is a long history of FBO disaster response in the United States and around the world. Their services supplement existing government and non-government (NGO) services, including meeting basic public health needs of food, water, shelter and clothing. Hundreds of FBOs exist and operate at a local, regional and national level. Most FBOs offering services throughout the U.S. belong to one of two umbrella organizations for FBO Disaster Response: National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster and/or Church World Service. The work of FBOs after 9/11 resulted in the government including them in the National Response Plan under emergency support function number six (Government Accountability Office -03-259, 2002; Government Accountability Office -06-297T, 2005; National Response Plan, 2004; Pipa, 2006).

The American Nurses Association Code of Ethics admonishes nurses to collaborate with the public and other professionals in meeting health care needs. This would include collaborating with FBOs in disaster response (American Nurse Association, 2001).

Research Design

This was a non-experimental, descriptive mixed methods design. Qualitative methods included ethnography and phenomenology. Quantitative methods employed the administration of three assessment scales and utilization of FBO existing databases.

I assumed the FBO of interest and their programs would reflect the tenets of their faith and that participants would willingly engage in the study. One limitation of the study is the use of a single FBO.
IRB approval was sought and obtained. I participated in a bracketing interview to address potential bias. The final sample included 9 administrators and paid staff, 8 volunteers and 5 residents.

**Review of Literature**

The literature reviewed was extensive and included research on FBOs and disaster response, formal reports and associated literature from the various disciplines associated with faith-based disaster response.

**Ethnographic Participant-Observer Experience**

The ethnographic data was analyzed as described by Roper & Shapiro and the phenomenology data analyzed as described by Thomas & Pollio. The databases and assessment scales were analyzed using descriptive statistics as the data did not lend itself to other analysis such as correlation of means and ANOVA. Ultimately the qualitative and quantitative data were triangulated and presented as one cohesive analysis.

For the ethnographic participant-observer (P-O) experience I became a member of one volunteer team in New Orleans during the month of July, 2007. I lived at a volunteer village that housed multiple FBO volunteers, NGO volunteers and displaced citizens of New Orleans. I was comfortable with and familiar the denominational and faith language of the FBO. I witnessed team cohesiveness and their spiritual connectedness. At the conclusion of the experience, I checked with team members to assure my interpretations were correct.

During the formal P-O experience I kept a record of specific experiences and activities. This required informed consent from team members, residents, staff, and adult volunteers with other teams whom I observed. This formal record ended when the P-O experience ended.

Informal field notes were kept from the end of the P-O experience until the end of data collection. In addition to my personal journal, these notes include a power point presentation the team made to their local congregation upon their return, another team’s
Internet blog to which they gave me access, a letter I received from a resident and photographs.

**Existential Phenomenology**

In nursing, themes in phenomenology are commonly reported in the participant’s words. It is common in other disciplines, such as anthropology, to use scholarly language to frame the participant’s experience. Recognizing these findings are applicable to multiple disciplines, I have included both research reporting traditions.

“**It Was a God Thing**” (Divine Agency)

Regardless of participant group, the research participants spoke of their experience against a background of God’s provision and care for them. They believed God acted on purpose in their behalf, whether that was to prepare them for a time of service or send a person, church or angel to give them the assistance needed. Some stated they believed their entire lives were led by God for this moment in time. This is consistent with the concept of divine agency:

Staff #6: Deep River church is not a large church and yet they began to on their own start a feeding operation and they just started feeding in their community and it became just something that was a God thing because [they] were feeding over 1,000 people a day. And, when you have, have 50-75 volunteers feeding over 1,000 people a day for over three weeks it’s just amazing

Resident #4: …It’s God, you know. He put these people in our [path], it’s no other way it could have come but through God. That’s how He works through people. That’s how he worked through a lot of people… and I’m just so blessed that He chose me.

“**I Will Go**” (Decision Point)

For every participant there came a time when they had to decide to either provide or ask for assistance. Against a ground of divine agency, there were times in which the conditions were just right to facilitate this, such as the trip was paid for or it was part of
their job. Participant’s believed that God’s love would be demonstrated through their acts of service and that the people they were providing assistance to were worth saving.

Staff #2: “I marked it February 12, 2006. Today I said I would go”… it was just like a phrase… I said “I want to go and serve in however way you want me to and there was more to that but I just, I ended it with “I will go.”

P-O note: He quit his job to come with us. His work was not going to give him the time off but he said he knew God was asking him to do this so he quit his job.

“The Eyes of New Orleans Are in Pain” (Social Suffering)

Once the decision to provide or seek assistance was made the participants came face-to-face with suffering. It was described as pain. The pain was visible, palpable; visceral. There was physical pain, emotional pain, pain from conflict, pain at loss of control. Sometimes the pain was perpetrated by dangerous conditions or hostile situations. It left some feeling hopeless.

Volunteer #1: I can remember… a lighter skinned older woman [with] eyes that were really really light green and they reflected the sun; she had beautiful eyes but you can just tell there is so much hurt behind them, it doesn’t matter if they’re smiling or anything like that, when I think of the eyes of New Orleans they are in pain.

Volunteer #4: One place, where we were gutting a home the mother went into one specific bedroom; she spent about 20 minutes in the bedroom… [when] she came out she stood in the middle of the street crying. She said that her oldest son was 10 years old [and] the only thing he wanted for Christmas was for her to salvage something out of his bedroom. She was crying because she couldn’t find anything to take home to her son for Christmas.

“They Were Strangers” (Stranger-to-Stranger Interactions)

All of the participants started out as strangers. The staff did not know each other, the volunteers, the residents or the government officials with whom they worked. The same is true for the other participant groups. Yet these strangers came together to provide or receive assistance. For the residents it was the help they received, for the staff and volunteers the assistance is in the form of work.
The work required administrative ability. Most of the staff began their experience as skilled administrators. Volunteer teams also required administrative capability. They had to finance their trip, collect supplies, determine roles and complete the work. The process of working and receiving help required nearly constant flexibility. In the words of one staff participant, more than flexibility is needed, you need to be Gumby.

The following quotes support the naming of this figural theme.

Resident #2: Faith Disaster Response has been a blessing to me… They were strangers. So good that they could come out [of] their busy schedule and help us, when no one else would come to help us.

Volunteer #4: I think that is the major lesson, being, just being there, being of service to people, to strangers. It’s easy to be of service to your family members and your friends, but when you’re of service to total strangers that is the lesson God wants us to learn.

“You Form a Family” (Communitas)

Participants came together as strangers and transitioned to family. As they worked and sweated together, strong relationships transcended hierarchical and social structure. They spoke of being family and of continuing relationships beyond the official time limits of the experience. This is known in anthropology as communitas.

Denominational lines among FBOs became so blurred as to be non-existent. Participants describe having fun as an important component of their relationships with each other. They experienced fun doing something for someone and engaged in fun activities.

Some participants described instances in which volunteers became disenchanted with the work or disaster response situation and did not function with the same cohesion as other team members. A similar observation was made by participants familiar with FBO response in Mississippi and Louisiana. Some believe residents of Mississippi were more engaged in the work of rebuilding than in Louisiana.

The following quotes demonstrate support for the figural theme “You form a family”
Staff #2: **you form a family** and I think that’s why it’s been hard [for me] to watch the different long-term volunteers go [home]

Resident #5: So, you know, **it was all like family.**

**“There Was Change Happening Within” (Transformation)**

As participants’ experience unfolded they experienced change. For some their outlook on life changed completely and included a challenge to now encompass service as a lifestyle. Mentoring occurred on purpose and serendipitously among and between participant groups. Participants experienced hope and blessing.

As time passes, there is also a change in the city of New Orleans and its neighborhoods.

Staff #7: I think I had to learn it was OK to be me. I used to get up wondering what I was going to get yelled at for that day. But, **now I get up knowing that it’s OK to be me.** Whatever I do, if I make a mistake, God is still going to love me.

Volunteer #6: I have a good number of emails saved from the parents from that first trip saying **I don’t know what you did with my kid down there but this is fantastic,** you know, I’d like to send them to New Orleans every year

**“You Just Start to Wonder” (Reflection)**

The impact of their experience is very visible in the questions participants asked themselves during and after their experiences. They asked hard questions to which they will most likely never know the answers. For some, their questions haunt them still.

Volunteer #1: As soon as you start driving down certain streets and you see the big ‘X’ on the house… **It’s like all these things start to run through your head, like, who was dead in that house, who’s body was it. You just start to think about people’s faces…[you think of] the people you talked to that said they had 3 of their friends just float away in the flood and die because they couldn’t swim, and it’s like maybe it was one of their friends [in that house] or something like that; you just start to wonder.**

Staff #2: I think it’s very easy to say we’re the hands and feet of Jesus or the Lord’s in control, we’re here to restore hope to these people and **I’ve really, really thought about when we say this do we feel it? Do we believe it ourselves?**
Model

A model or visual representation of the experience of faith-based disaster response was developed. A placeholder titled awareness is included to acknowledge the *apriori* awareness participants had of the disaster before engaging in faith-based disaster response.

The contextual ground is represented by the black box from which everything else stands out. The decision to go stems from awareness for the staff and volunteers. The decision to seek assistance comes from their pain and suffering for the residents. Strangers and suffering were inextricably linked and through their work and relationships communitas was formed. From the moment the experience began transformation and reflection occurred.

Quantitative Findings

Scores for the Herth Hope Index (HHI), the Hope Visual Analogue Scale (HVAS) and the Impact of Event Scale – Revised (IES-R) did not have a normal distribution and were severely skewed. The hope scales were positively skewed and the impact of event scale was negatively skewed. None of the scales were correlated with each other. The scales appear to have measured what they were designed to measure but their utility for concurrent validity in this study was not realized. The existing databases provided a description of the volunteer and resident populations.

Answers to Research Questions

*Research Question #1: How did they, the staff and volunteers of FBOs, stand up and put into action a massive response so quickly, and sustain their efficacy over many months?*

This FBO’s disaster response was a grassroots effort that began by local congregations feeding the hurricane victims and grew as volunteers began to come even without an official FBO presence. As the FBO established an official presence in New Orleans there was minimal chain of command with the staff and administrators given the
power to make decisions as needed. Each FBO administrator had extensive administrative skill, not in disaster response, but in administration. The FBO was supported through donations and a grant that targeted the utilization of volunteers.

Staff and administrators were willing to learn as they went and make necessary adjustments in the delivery of services. They lived in the areas they served and at the same location volunteers stayed. They deliberately networked with community and government leaders, serving on and chairing rebuild committees. The staff and volunteers sacrificed time and personal resources to provide assistance to those in need.

**Research Question #2: How did their efforts impact the lives of the people they sought to serve?**

There were both positive and negative impacts on the lives of the people they served, including themselves. Many spoke of their lives being forever changed as they became more confident in who they were, what they had to offer and what they wanted to do. They mentored and were mentored and saw themselves as being blessed by their experience. From their blessing flowed a desire to express their gratitude.

However, for some the degree of social suffering they experienced or witnessed left them wondering about their work and the people they interacted with. All were shocked at the scope and magnitude of the devastation.

**Research Question #3: Were the FBOs as on target, efficient, and effective as they seem?**

The FBO was effective in part because of their leadership and involvement with the rebuild committees of New Orleans. This placed them in a position of knowledge regarding city ordinances and the rebuilding of New Orleans. They used this information to focus their efforts in areas where their work would be perpetuated. Because they knew rebuilding was risky in terms of investing resources, they initially specialized in deconstruction. Most homes, whether they were going to be rebuilt or torn down still needed to be gutted before anything else could be done. This FBO specialized in gutting
or deconstructing houses. Their entire mission was to restore hope to the citizens of New Orleans. This was included in their name, in their training and their logo. Every volunteer, staff member and resident knew this was a goal.

As New Orleans began to transition to rebuilding, the FBO was not as equipped. This was not their specialty. They did not have the expertise or money to support rebuilding and ultimately left the city without one of their rebuilding projects completed.

**Research Question #4: How did their services and the ways in which those services were delivered, impact individuals and communities?**

Both individuals and communities or neighborhoods were impacted by the FBO services. Relationships based on mutual respect, dignity and trust were formed among the participants. They mentored each other. It was particularly meaningful to the residents when entire families would work on their home as they saw parents teaching their children about service. Residents spoke of the relationships that were formed as they worked and sweated together with the volunteers. They were not passive recipients of service but co-providers.

As yards in a neighborhood were mowed, parks built or restored a sense of normalcy returned. Children had a safe place to play; street lights could actually illuminate the homes and sidewalks rather than have them hidden by weeds many feet tall. This provided a sense of security and safety for the neighborhoods. And, FBO administrators provided valuable leadership on government committees during the recovery process.

**Research Question #5: If successful, how did they do it without the infrastructure, training and funding sources that governmental agencies have at their disposal?**

The administrative staff of the FBO were skilled administrators prior to coming to disaster response. Many were business owners or high-level executives in national companies. Despite their administrative experience, they would not have qualified for disaster response positions in the government. They lacked disaster experience. These
administrators attribute divine agency as the reason they were able to transition their skill to the disaster situation.

They were faithful to account for all the money. They wanted to be accountable. They also would loan the organization personal money in the event of cash flow problems. They knew the money was there, it just hadn’t made it from denominational headquarters to New Orleans. Sometimes, this was thousands of dollars. Their explanation: its God’s money, not mine.

The staff and administrators also worked independently. Each was the only staff person responsible for their area. There was no room to delegate. They were given the power to make decisions affecting their area. They collaborated when necessary.

There was a loosely structured office format in that a formal office did not exist. As one staff member said, “We were the office.” They kept their laptops and cell phones with them; they lived on site. If consultation was needed they were immediately available and willing to make decisions.

Research Question #6: What is the impact of the disaster on those who serve and receive assistance?

The impact of the disaster on these participants was staggering. Whereas the residents bore the brunt of the loss, staff and volunteers also experienced social suffering. This is evident in their stories and in the impact of event scale revised scores.

The scoring range for the IES-R is zero to 88. Scores above 24 indicate the person is experiencing some symptoms of post-event stress, scores 33 or above represent significant post-event stress and scores of 37 or above represent an impact significant enough to suppress the immune system’s functioning even 10 years after the event.

Fifty percent of the volunteers’ scores reflected significant post-event stress with two of them having a score greater than 37. All of the residents’ scores reflected significant post-impact stress. With three of the four completing the scale having scores greater than 37. Fifty-six percent of the staff has scores consistent with significant post-impact stress with three scoring greater than 37.
Research Question #7: Is the impact of the disaster reflected in their stories?

The participants’ stories reflected the impact of the disaster as found in multiple figural themes: “I Will Go,” “Social Suffering,” “Stranger-to-Stranger Interactions,” “Communitas,” “Transformation” and “Reflection.” Phenomenology was the utilized to answer this research question.

The impact began as people witnessed it on their televisions and read about it in the papers. The journey began with a decision to go, continued as participants came together as strangers and resulted in a transformative experience. Their experience was so profound that they continue to have really vivid memories that are reflected in their stories.

Research Question #8: What is the level of hope for those who serve and receive assistance?

The scores for the HHI and the HVAS were all high, indicating a significant amount of hope. Even though these scores are not correlated with each other, the qualitative data supports the high scores. Participants spontaneously spoke of hope. All the elements of the conceptual definition of hope were found in the qualitative data.

Research Question #9: Do the Impact of Event Scale – Revised, Herth Hope Index and the Hope Visual Analogue Scale effectively measure the impact of the disaster and the level of hope?

The scales utilized in my research did appear to measure what they were supposed to. However, their utility as concurrent validity cannot be supported. Nor can the HVAS be supported to be used in the future in disaster situations as a quick hope assessment. The hypotheses were not supported as none of the scales were correlated with each other or with the degree of loss experienced by the residents. Despite the fact that the scores descriptively appear to move in the directions hypothesized, they were not significantly correlated.
Either the sample was too small to detect statistical significance or this was an inappropriate use of the scales. I am unable to support or refute the use of the HVAS as a concurrent measure of the HHI.

**Implications for Nursing Education**

There are educational implications for all disciplines associated with faith-disaster response, not just nursing. Education and practice go hand-in-hand. In order for the practice implications to be acted on, nurses must first be educated. Faith-disaster response is an important component of public and community health and therefore its inclusion in the didactic and clinical education of nurses should not be left to chance.

As the newer nursing specialties of faith community nursing and homeland security nursing proliferate, the utilization of faith-disaster response is an important inclusion in their curricula. Faith, spirituality and hope have long been represented in nursing literature. A more explicit inclusion in education and practice will facilitate nurses understanding and utilization of faith-based disaster response.

Many nurses volunteer with FBOs or NGOs for disaster response. Increased knowledge and understanding of FBO disaster response will allow these nurses to facilitate and maximize the FBO contribution to recovery efforts.

**Implications for Nursing Practice**

Whether nurses practice with FBOs or practice in traditional health care settings, in a disaster they will likely interact with FBO staff and volunteers either in the provision of care or with staff and volunteers as recipients of nursing care. Understanding the safety concerns and populations associated with faith-based disaster response will allow nurses to engage in primary, secondary and tertiary prevention. Nurses can become leaders in faith community education and preparedness efforts.

Many of the staff and volunteers with the FBO were disabled, youth and/or had chronic illnesses. These individuals are accustomed to coping with their disabilities on a daily basis and many did not think about how a disaster situation may complicate their
coping strategies. Nurses must appreciate the added risk of disaster response for these vulnerable populations and be ready to provide care and prevent injury.

**Implications for Nursing Research**

Faith-based disaster response is an intervention and should be studied as such. This would require longitudinal studies with a much more sophisticated design than my current research. Along with this, facilitating hope is an intervention and discovering how hope is facilitated in faith-based disaster response is a worthy research goal.

It would be informative for policy and future disaster response to compare FBO disaster response with NGO and government response. Best practices could be identified and perhaps facilitated. It is also important to identify barriers that prevent FBOs and government collaboration as well as the pathways that would remove those barriers and facilitate that collaboration.

That children and disabled volunteers were present in New Orleans during the disaster response was an unexpected finding in my research. Both of these are vulnerable populations. Research is needed to identify ways these populations can safely contribute without putting themselves or others at risk for injury.

**Implications for Public Policy**

My findings support and expand the need for policy development related to faith-based disaster response previously identified in the literature. FBOs make a valuable contribution but they cannot replace government response nor should they be expected to do so. Their resources are limited and they have been added to many response plans without consideration of their resources.

Lack of case management by FBOs has been previously identified in the literature as problematic. This is supported by my findings. Few solutions have been suggested. Perhaps research can identify successful case management strategies that are ultimately beneficial to the recipients of care, FBO programming and government response efforts.
To preserve the dignity of residents and honor their gratitude, it is important to identify acceptable ways in which those receiving assistance can express their gratitude, if they so desire.

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Abbreviations

ANA American Nurses Association
ANOVA Analysis of One-Way Variance
CDC Centers of Disease Control and Prevention
CINAHL Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature
CSM College Student Ministries
CWS Church World Service
ERIC Educational Resources Information Center
FBO Faith-Based Organization
FDR Faith Disaster Response
FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency
GAO Government Accountability Office
HHI Herth Hope Index
HVAS Hope Visual Analogue Scale
IES-R Impact of Event Scale - Revised
IRB Institutional Review Board
MANCOVA Multiple Analysis of Co-Variance
NGO Non-Government Organization
OSHA Occupational Safety and Health Administration
NVOAD National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster
PPRL Public Policy Research Laboratory
PTSD Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
ROL Review of Literature
SPSS Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UT University of Tennessee, Knoxville
WHO World Health Organization
CHAPTER 1
FAITH-BASED DISASTER RESPONSE: BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

This chapter will include a discussion of context; for the research including contemporary history, public policy and the separation of church and state as well as ways religious resurgence has contributed to the development and acceptance of faith-based disaster response. Within this framework, the faith-based organization and program of interest to my dissertation research will be introduced. This will be followed by a discussion of the theoretical foundations for this study. Then I will introduce my research by identifying the researchable problem and purpose of the study. Next, research questions and operational definitions will be provided followed by assumptions, limitations and delimitations of the study. The chapter will conclude by discussing the significance of this study to nursing and the national dialogue on faith-based disaster response.

Historical Context

On August 29, 2005 Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast of the United States setting in motion the worst natural disaster our country has ever endured. For days on end I and the world watched in horror as citizens of New Orleans gathered on their roof tops, in the Superdome and Convention Center, and in shelters around the state and country while others waded through contaminated flood waters trying to save their families and care for the dead. Pleas for the most basic of necessities to survive fell on what seemed like deaf ears. Victims of the hurricane were without water, food, shelter, clothing, medical care, transportation and other items important to the preservation of health.

The government agency charged with the nation’s disaster response, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), did not respond in a timely or effective manner. Local and state government officials in Louisiana steadfastly refused to ask for help or allow the federal government to take over the response. In the midst of the chaos and overwhelming needs, faith-based organizations (FBOs) stood in the gap and offered services for which they did not have the financial capacity, physical space or training to offer. It would make sense to assume this only complicated the response. The exact
opposite was true. It worked. FBOs are credited with providing invaluable services, in some instances the only services, victims received. The FBO disaster response was so effective that government evaluators charged with determining what went wrong in the Katrina and Rita response repeatedly state that FBOs provided comprehensive services with little collaboration, cooperation or communication with the government. Results of this conclusion include a presidential directive for federal departments to develop faith-based initiatives and collaborate with faith-based organizations in the future (United States House of Representatives, 2006; United States White House, 2006).

**Context of Religious Resurgence**

In 1648 the treaties of Westphalia brought to an end thirty years of religious wars and atrocities committed in the name of religion. This act symbolically and politically changed the balance between the authority of the Pope and the authority of governments and heads of states. The modern day thoughts and practice of separation of church and state originate in the Westphalian treaties. Regardless of a nation’s collective religions (a national religion or a theocratic versus a secular government) religion was no longer considered important in official international politics (Thomas, S. M., 2005).

Secularization theory posited religion would become less and less important and eventually be inconsequential in a modern society. The practice of religion would become private and individualized. A realization that religion mattered, really mattered, began to dawn on those in the West where religion had been relegated to bystander status at best (Casanova, 1994). On the heels of the Iranian and Polish Revolutions, September 11, 2001 changed the Westphalian tradition dramatically. Religion was propelled to the forefront of national and international dialogue. In the words of internationally renowned scholar of religions, Scott Thomas (2005), “Religious ideas – including here, beliefs, virtues, and practices – matter, and they have consequences for terrorism or political action because ideas and the social or religious groups that espouse them provide the mimetic model for what it is that is desired in society” (Thomas, S. M., 2005, p142).

According to Thomas, religion is pitted against religion. Scholars of religion now find themselves in an unexpected position; their knowledge and opinions are being
courted by government leaders to understand, predict, plan for and negotiate religious ideologies threatening the very existence of the world as we know it (Thomas, S. M., 2005).

It soon became evident that religions still had influence among their adherents and governments. The faithful had been continuing their religious practices all along. One of the religious practices, fairly common among all religions, is that of providing aid to those most in need. This includes disaster response. In fact, as religious organizations increased their aid to meet unprecedented social needs it became clear governments and religions could not operate in isolation; "...the freedom of public religion sometimes requires the support of the state because it is impossible for religious bodies to avoid contact with today's modern welfare state and all its ramifications in the educational, welfare, legal, social and health care sectors" (Hackett, 2005, p 669).

Those representing Christian religions involved in humanitarian aid often speak about their motivation for providing aid: their commitment to be “Christ” to someone else. This motivation is seen in their social commitment and action, philosophy, and the perception and application of their beliefs to human rights (Vorster, 2002). This concept is further elucidated in Chapter 2.

**Public Policy Context**

Among the most recent events in United States history to illuminate the role of faith-based organizations in social action are Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In these situations, we know FBO disaster response was effective when other methods of disaster response were not, but how did they, the staff and volunteers of FBOs, do it? What is the experience of faith-based disaster response from the victim’s perspective? One way to approach these questions is to identify what disaster relief activities faith-based organizations provided, identify how and where they chose to utilize their resources, attempt to understand their organizational structure (including their staff, volunteers and those they help) and examine research results regarding FBO disaster response.

The preeminent national association in the United States for faith-based organizations involved in disaster response is the National Volunteer Organizations
Active in Disaster (NVOAD). NVOAD (National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster, Incorporated, 2007b) is the national faith-based organization that is listed as a support agency to FEMA and the American Red Cross in Emergency Support Function number six of the National Response Plan. NVOAD was the recipient of a $50,000 grant to strengthen their communication and collaboration with government agencies and other voluntary organizations within the Washington, D.C. area. This was a direct result of high level government meetings after September 11 to identify ways for the government to coordinate disaster response activities with NGOs. The successful strategies resulting from these efforts have since gone national, such as an electronic newsletter. NVOAD hosts an annual conference for its membership and has multiple standing committees whose work involves donations, volunteers, disaster recovery, mass care, communications and collaboration with the membership and government agencies (Church World Service, 2007a; Church World Service, 2007b).

Church World Service (CWS) is the disaster response arm for the National Council of Churches (Church World Service, 2007a). This is a broad organization to which many faiths belong. The memberships of these two organizations are different. CWS joined NVOAD to increase collaboration, communication and coordination of faith-based disaster response activities (Government Accountability Office -03-259, 2002; Government Accountability Office-06-297T, 2005, National Response Plan, 2004; Pipa, 2006). The combined list of NVOAD and CWS member denominations is in Appendix I and demonstrates the depth and breadth of the religious organizations belonging to these two umbrella organizations.

Fiscal responsibility and separation of church and state has been a recurrent theme in the literature regarding faith-based disaster response. To facilitate transparent records, it is common to make annual financial reports available on organizational Internet sites. At the time of this writing, a detailed financial report is unavailable on the NVOAD internet site, but CWS has made available their financial report for July 2005-July 2006. The majority of their financial support comes from donations and their membership. Government funds contributed 26.3% or $24,172,542 dollars. CWS expenditures for disaster relief and recovery constituted 39.3% of their resources or $35,981,260.
Administrative, program development, refugee resettlement and assistance, education and advocacy and mission relationships and witness comprised the remainder of their expenditures (Church World Service, 2007c). A significant portion of NVOAD’s long range planning goals involves strengthening their relationship with FEMA (National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster, 2007b).

The lay literature includes a host of articles about the interface between FBOs and government agencies in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita as well as human interest stories related to faith-based disaster response. One of the concerns repeatedly addressed in the news and in lay and professional journal articles is the issue of the separation of church and state, including whether or not FBO volunteers and staff attempt to proselytize those they help or make assistance dependent on participation in faith-based activities. The conversation regarding this is multi-faceted. On the one hand, by definition, FBOs are about faith; it is who they are and providing disaster response is what they do. This is also supported in the literature from the field of religious studies. At the same time, if a FBO accepts government funding it is with the requirement they do not decide who receives help based on the recipient’s faith tradition and that participation in faith activities is not required. The GAO reports discussed earlier in this review of literature verify that FBOs honor this requirement (Government Accountability Office-03-259, 2002; Government Accountability Office-06-297T, 2005).

There is concern on the part of FBOs that the government will interfere in how they execute their activities, or how they share their faith, to the point that many FBOs decline government money for their work. This leaves them providing social services promised by the government but at the FBO expense. This phenomenon has been illustrated in the sheltering of victims after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. At one time, FBOs were housing as many or more victims as the Red Cross. The Red Cross refused to enter some geographic locations because of perceived danger, leaving many without shelter. Small churches independent of the large faith-based organizational structure, opened their churches and gymnasiums to provide shelter. Their utility bills tripled, their buildings were sometimes left in shambles, and there was no simple reimbursement process for their efforts. Some churches chose not to apply for reimbursement out of fear
of government interference, some would have applied but could not decipher the application or provide the required documentation, others did not know they could apply for reimbursement, and some did apply. The exact numbers in each category are unknown. There is not even an exact count of the FBO shelters, but those working in the areas where shelters were provided believe there were 750+ small churches providing shelter (Hughes, 2006; Rockefeller Institute of Government, 2005).

Case management is another issue addressed in the news and literature. FBOs were not using the same computer programs to track those to whom they provided assistance; therefore determining the interface with government case workers or even other FBO case workers was very difficult if not impossible. It is believed that there was some duplication of service among disaster response agencies. There is no easy answer for this dilemma. If FBOs do not have government funding, are paying for their response activities, can they be “required” to use the same technological systems government uses? Additionally, the issue of whether case management is a function of FBOs has been raised. For those large FBOs that have been in service for many years and have a formal social services outreach, such as Catholic Charities and Lutheran Social Services, case management by licensed social workers is an on-going and established service with routine government agency and NGO collaboration. For the smaller FBOs, whose first disaster response experience was Hurricane Katrina, case management was either non-existent, isolated or learned on the spot (Rockefeller Institute of Government, 2005).

For all these services, financial and human capital is required. Large and small FBOs have been giving repeatedly and are providing services beyond their capacity. They are providing services 365 days a year. Yet, time and again, the government goes to FBOs and asks for more. For example, the mayor of Houston asked FBOs for $4 million a month above and beyond what they were already doing to help those victims in the Houston Astrodome (Farris, 2006a). John Bergland, the national disaster services coordinator for the Salvation Army, has summarized the situation when he says “…the thinly stretched resources of faith-based groups may present the ultimate challenge for government if it relies on them in catastrophic circumstances. Government can rely on
the faith-based organizations, but there’s a reality that we can’t always deliver” (Hughes, 2005, p3)

The Interfaith Alliance is an organization located in Washington, D.C. with a mission statement of “People of faith and good will, united to: Promote democratic values, Defend religious liberty, Challenge hatred and religious bigotry and Reinvigorate informed civic participants” (Interfaith Alliance, 2007). The alliance is a strong proponent of separation of church and state. In a roundtable discussion sponsored by the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government on assessing the role of FBOs in disaster response, Kim Baldwin (the alliance’s director of public policy and voter education) verbalized the current dichotomy when she described her belief in the separation of church and state, believing FBOs should pay their own way, and then when she left Washington and went to the gulf coast and saw with her own eyes the depth and breadth of FBO disaster response, she acknowledged it was like comparing apples and oranges. Examples of her remarks include:

“When we got to Baton Rouge we met with the mayor of Baton Rouge, the mayor of Baker, religious leaders from all around the area. And we thought there were just truckloads of government money coming into faith-based organizations all over the place. Well, that couldn’t have been more wrong. There was not only no money going to religious organizations or houses of worship – there were just a few and these seemed to be some random, mega-churches with Baton Rouge, but nothing outside of that particular label of large mega-church though we could never really prove it. And then not only that, but the mayor of Baker and Baton Rouge had not gotten one dime. We were in Baton Rouge 56 days after Katrina hit – 56 days and no money had come into the City of Baton Rouge. The population had doubled overnight. So, you’ve got the situation where the perfect storm was created. You had terrible response by the federal government and we all saw that, that happened. You’ve got the religious community primarily in Baton Rouge, because that’s where we were, seeing all of these stories and what’s going on, on TV and happening. And they came to the aid of these people; Why? Because it’s what they do; it’s what the religious community does” (Rockefeller Institute of Government, 2005, p 6-7).

Largely related to the success of the faith-based disaster response after hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the U.S. government is looking to FBOs to assist with immigration and refugee resettlement and a host of other social services (Farris, 2006a; Farris, 2006b). Indeed, the government has created a checklist whereby FBOs can participate in the
pandemic flu preparation and potential execution of the pandemic flu plan (Roundtable 2006). Jim Towey, the director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, is quoted as saying FBOs provide love, compassion and hope, the things the government cannot provide (Hughes, 2005; Hughes, 2006)

**Faith Disaster Response (pseudonym)**

Faith Disaster Response (FDR) is a faith-based organization with a mission to provide assistance to individuals, congregations and communities that have experienced disaster. With the exception of a few paid administrative staff, FDR is composed entirely of volunteers and exists at the direction of the international parent denomination. Three types of disaster response are offered by FDR: 1) financial support alone; 2) local church response that includes financial support and volunteer labor; and 3) international church response to include financial support and volunteer labor. Prior to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, FDR was largely an administrative organization with a single volunteer national director for the purpose of dispersing donations to disaster sites. With the unprecedented effects of Katrina and Rita, FDR represented one denomination’s grassroots efforts to respond from a basis of faith to human crisis and need.

In the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, FDR established a constant presence in the gulf coast states coordinated by permanently assigned staff. The resulting faith-based program is called “Bringing Back Hope.” Centers of operation were established throughout the region with a large church complex in a suburb of the greater New Orleans area. Since October 2005, that operation relocated to a facility owned by another FBO in downtown New Orleans. The two faith-based organizations had a collaborative arrangement whereby FDR occupied the facilities rent free for one year while paying for the necessary personnel to secure the facility. Work sites or bases of operation were also located in Alabama and Mississippi. Teams of volunteers were housed and fed at these bases of operation. There would be as many as 160 volunteers at

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1 To protect the confidentiality of the faith based organization staff and volunteers with which this research is done, the name has been changed. If references are desired for this section, I will contact the FBO and ask them to contact the interested party

2 Pseudonym
any one time. In Mississippi, a Disaster Relief Center was built that allowed for deliveries from semi-trucks as well as housing relief workers. It was common for relief workers, particularly staff of FDR to live in recreational vehicles at these bases of operation; volunteers lived in the base of operation with supply and equipment filled trucks outside the base of operation.

As a result of FDR’s response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the need to develop new approaches to training volunteers emerged. Three levels of training were identified to include emergency response teams, local disaster response teams and care teams. Emergency response teams were designed to assess the needs within 24 hours onset of the disaster and attempt to restore communication and operability to the local church and parsonage. The rationale for this was to secure a base of operation for the disaster response as well as alleviate the local pastor’s concerns for his or her family so pastoral and local church care could be directed to the community.

Local disaster response teams used local church volunteers who travel to disaster areas and provide services such as clean-up, gutting of houses, installation of temporary roofs and feeding and/or clothing those in need. Those teams typically responded in one to two week intervals, were made up entirely of volunteers and were responsible for their travel, meals, lodging and safety. The organization had teams who have received additional training to provide spiritual and emotional support to individuals, congregations and/or communities. This training was provided by licensed professionals in counseling, pastoral care, or other qualified health care professionals.

As indicated in the official government office accounting reports, tracking the finances and activities of faith-based organizations is difficult. Each FBO has a unique tracking method and they are not interchangeable. Even within FBOs, particularly denomination based FBOs, it is nearly impossible to track the disaster response activities of every single congregation (Government Accountability Office-06-297T, 2005).

In an attempt to quantify their work, FDR conducted a survey of 707 of the 4,500 churches in the parent denomination located in the United States. For a relatively small denomination, the results are impressive. As of May 2006, FDR’s disaster response to the hurricanes included the receipt of 3.5 million dollars from in-kind donations and the
distribution of over 4 million dollars worth of crisis care kits. Providing emergency housing was one of FDR's relief activities. In the same time frame identified above, FRD provided 280 families with long-term emergency housing, 764 individuals with long term emergency housing, 640 families with short term housing, and 3,924 individuals with long term housing at a value of $266,708. There were over 5,536 volunteers donating 282,744 hours of service including labor, medical, nursing, social work, construction, attorney, counselor, mortician and other professional services. The dollar value of these volunteer services was estimated to be well over 4 million dollars. Cash donations exceeded 4.3 million dollars that was received through the compassionate ministry arm of the parent denomination. An additional 1.7 million dollars was donated to FDR at the disaster response site or donated to other organizations. The total value of disaster services related to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita through May 2006 was 18.5 million dollars. Since May 2006, an additional 147 teams with 3,200 volunteers provided disaster response services in the Gulf States, contributing over another 1 million dollars.

In August 2007, the bases of operation were closed and the current disaster response activities modified. Volunteers were still being solicited and teams were to provide in-depth recovery work. However, teams were more autonomous and worked more closely with local churches.

**Theoretical Influences**

A perfect theoretical fit for this dissertation does not exist; however, these four theories, Neuman’s Systems Model (Neuman, 1995), Program Theory (Harden, 2006), Organizational Theory (Dyck, Starke, Harder & Hecht, 2005; Stadler, Ben-Ari & Mesterman, 2005), Integrated Theory of Volunteer Work (St. John & Fuchs, 2002; Wilson & Musick, 1997) each has elements which apply.

**Neuman’s Systems Model**

Nursing’s metaparadigm is overarching. Nursing theories focus on various aspects of the nursing metaparadigm and define the concepts somewhat differently: person,
environment, health and nursing (Fawcett, 1989; Neuman, 1995). Tourville and Ingalls (2003) compare a variety of theories, including Neuman’s. Their analysis reveals “person” is liberally defined as a specific individual, family, or community. “Environment” is viewed as any location in which the person is located and care is provided. It is accepted that environment can be a hospital room, a home, school, or other similar location. More traditional definitions of environment relating to climate, esthetics, and social context are also incorporated. Health is a particularly difficult concept to define in nursing. It is much more than the historical definition of the absence of illness and is now defined as a continuum and dependent on the person’s ability to function (Persell & Speraw, 2008; Tourville & Ingalls, 2003). These liberal definitions are crucial to disaster response as the effects of most disasters touch all of the components contained in the definitions.

A consideration for a nursing model or theory utilization in faith-based disaster response is the inclusion of spiritual care. Faith-based organizations, by definition, provide spiritual care. Thus, any model or theory chosen for the present study was required to have spiritual care as a major concept, not an aside (Martsolf & Mickley, 1998; Tourville & Ingalls, 2003). Tourville and Ingalls (2003) describe three major categories of nursing theory: interactive, systems and developmental. Of the systems theories or models, Betty Neuman’s Systems Model has a strong spiritual care component based on the philosophy of Teilhard de Chardin.

In the latest edition (1995) of her book on the System’s Model, Neuman describes the person as “a composite of physiological, psychological, sociocultural, developmental, and spiritual variables (p150)” See Figure 1.1. She further identifies three different types of systems within which the person is viewed: 1) a microsystem where the individual and their subsystems are the focus, 2) mezzosystems in which the person interacts or is integrated into small social groups, and 3) macrosystems where the individual is incorporated into society at large. These three person-related systems are very salient to disaster response, which at any given time can involve all three types of systems. At first glance it seems obvious FBOs are contained within the mezzosystem, but a reflective look at the FBO research examined (thus far) for this dissertation revealed FBOs impact
Figure 1.1. Neuman’s Systems Model (Ross & Bourbonnais, 1985, p. 200)
the microsystem as well as the macrosystem. These all become reciprocal relationships (Hinds, 1990; Neuman, 1995; Ross & Bourbonnais, 1985).

If Neuman’s Systems Model is applied to disaster response, all of the client categories identified earlier (person, family, community, state, region, nation or the world) have a central core comprised of basic survival behaviors. By virtue of being in a disaster, the victim’s survival core is stressed and potentially breached. Neuman (1995) also describes circles of defense surrounding the central core. If there is a break in the lines of defense, the client/patient is subject to injury or illness.

The first line of defense is resistance. An example is normal physiological mechanisms that are protective (Hinds, 1990; Neuman, 1995; Ross & Bourbonnais, 1985). A consideration for disaster response is the client/patient’s location on the wellness/illness continuum before the disaster. If individuals are well hydrated, alert and oriented and free from acute or chronic illness, their chances of survival will be greater (Persell & Speraw, 2008).

Normal lines of defense are considered next. For disaster situations this includes problem-solving abilities, coping abilities, and intellectual abilities acquired over time by the individual, family, congregation or volunteer relief workers. If a volunteer leader becomes disabled or injured, the entire team of relief workers loses the problem-solving and coping capabilities of their leader and suffers a break in normal defenses (Persell & Speraw, 2008).

The third line of defense is considered flexible and constitutes the person’s potential for change and includes protective behaviors (Neuman, 1995; Ross & Bourbonnais, 1985). For the individual this means the development of a disaster plan or the creation of a safe room. For the congregation a flexible line of defense includes the development of a disaster response team or structural change to their building to mitigate potential injury. For volunteer relief workers the most obvious flexible line of defense is to complete the disaster training the FBO instituted (Persell & Speraw, 2008).

A broad view of environment is built-in to Neuman’s Model. Stressors within the person (internal) and outside the person (external) have the potential to impact the response of the other to stress. Internal environment consists of factors that compromise
the physiologic or psychological response to stressors. External environment consists of circumstances beyond the individual’s control but impacting their ability to respond to stress (Hinds, 1990; Neuman, 1995; Ross & Bourbonnais, 1985). Thus inclusion of the sociocultural influences of each of the person systems is an integral part of the model (Neuman, 1995). This is crucial in FBO disaster response. Disasters do not and will not discriminate between the sociocultural entities; everyone is or will be impacted. But sociocultural entities influence disaster response. As FBOs become the primary deliverer of disaster services, a new level of religious/sociocultural influences are pondered. For FBOs engaged in disaster response, internal environment is dependent upon the accumulated individual environments and interaction of the entire staff and volunteers. Collectively they are only as strong as their weakest link. All are susceptible to the same external environmental circumstances (Persell & Speraw, 2008).

Health is the least well-defined of the major paradigm concepts in Neuman’s Model. Essentially it is left to clinical research and circumstances to define but generally viewed as “balance and harmony between and among the systems” (Neuman, 1995, p 152). It is hard to imagine a disaster situation that leaves all of these components of health intact. Whether natural or man-made, disasters alter the external environment, leaving the internal environment affected.

The focus of nursing care is the client. Utilizing the definition of client based on Neuman’s Systems Model, the focus of nursing care becomes the individual, family, community or FBO engaged in disaster response. The goal of nursing care is to assist the client to achieve their greatest potential of health. In order to accomplish the goal, nursing interventions are utilized. The interventions increase client adaptation to stressors or decrease the stressors. Interventions are classified as primary, secondary or tertiary. The nursing process is applied at each level of intervention (Neuman, 1995; Ross & Bourbonnais, 1985).

Including a spiritual variable explicitly in nursing theory originated with Neuman’s Model. Spirituality is viewed as innate whether or not the person is aware of their spirituality or spiritual needs. Spirituality has a long and well developed history as a concept in nursing. As such, Neuman incorporates common nursing terms for spirituality...
in her discussion: spiritual well-being, spiritual care, spiritual needs, and spiritual
distress. She acknowledges the link between spiritual well-being and hope, spiritual
needs and hope, spiritual distress and hope as well as spiritual care promoting hope
(Neuman, 1995). Thus, the spiritual dimension of Neuman’s Model confirmed my
decision to explicate the construct of hope in my study for further analysis.

The utility of Neuman’s Systems Model in non-faith-based community programs
is tested. Melton, Secrest, Chien and Andersen (2001) conduct a community assessment
to determine the need and potential use of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner programs.
Neuman’s Model provides a framework for assisting clients in crisis in adaptation to the
stressors and gaining control and subsequent stability of their system; each of these issues
will be present in a disaster. This research supported the consideration of Neuman’s
System’s Model for faith-based disaster response.

In summary, Neuman’s Systems Model provided a useful framework from which
to begin a theoretical dialogue related to nursing and faith-based disaster response. This
model addresses many of the theoretical requirements identified in FBO and disaster
response research: a systems approach and a focus on spirituality. Initially the Model was
criticized for its complexity; however, this is the exact quality that indicated its utility for
my research.

Program Theory

Harden3 (2006), utilizes program theory to evaluate faith-based organizational
programs. Several assumptions underlie faith-based program theory: 1) faith-based
programs explicitly and implicitly represent religious beliefs and specific faith traditions;
2) FBOs fulfill their religious mission through the utilization of their programs; 3)
spirituality and faith can be observed in explicit activities with outcomes that are
measurable; and 4) theological assumptions are implicitly present in faith-based programs
(Harden, 2006).

He systematically utilizes a theoretical framework to understand how FBOs go
about their work, what researchers in this arena need to understand about FBOs, and how

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FBO programs should be evaluated. One of Harden's stated goals is to promote a theoretical framework in which faith-based programs and nonreligious programs can be compared and evaluated. The significance of his work requires a detailed examination here.

Harden’s first premise is that identifying and understanding the differences between faith-based programs is necessary if a successful description of the role of faith and spirituality in these programs is to be possible. Program theory was posited as a way to do this because it links faith-based activities and outcomes, allows for multiple causal theories to be considered to evaluate faith-based programs, allows combinations of outcomes to be linked to theory, includes contextual factors in evaluation design, and most importantly, accounts for religious beliefs and values in the evaluation process. He states “…the nature of faith and spirituality can be operationalized and therefore can be taken into account in the design without entangling the evaluator in the complex system of religious beliefs and values” (Harden, 2006, p 483).

It is posited that essentials for evaluating faith-based programs is the researcher’s understanding of faith and spirituality as well as differentiating faith-based organizations from faith-based programs. Therefore, Harden defines faith-based organizations as “…all organizations that engage in spiritual and/or social intervention activities based on religious beliefs and values of a faith and spiritual tradition for transformational purposes” (Harden, 2006, p 484). Faith-based programs are “believed to facilitate a form of divine intervention or discovery that may result in social or spiritual transformation based on deeply held religious beliefs and values” (Harden, 2006, p 484). This then requires an understanding of the term “transformational” as it is referenced in much of the faith-based or religious studies literature. “Transformation” is indicative of a change, a change resulting from religious ideas that are related to spirituality and/or social well-being. Including social well-being in the definition aligns Harden’s work with the literature reviewed below in which social well-being is a variable utilized to evaluate faith-based disaster response in the most current studies in New Orleans, post Hurricanes Katrina and Rita (Public Policy Research Lab, 2006; Public Policy Research Lab, 2007) and can be explicitly or implicitly located in many of the sociological theories utilized for
faith-based disaster response around the world (Stadler, Ben-Ari & Mesterman, 2005; Tourville & Ingalls, 2003; Zotti, Graham, Whitt, Anand & Replogle, 2006).

Harden (2006) also speaks of implementation theory, referring to specific activities that are undertaken to elicit a specific response. He uses this theoretical position to explain how non-religious activities may still have spiritual impact because the provider of the service is doing so as a reflection of their faith. This is consistent with the integrated spiritual care described in the nursing literature (McSherry, 2006). If transformational program theory is included, it is inclusive of explicitly spiritual activities with observable spiritual outcomes. Spiritual transformation theory is closely related in that it includes explicit spiritual activities in order to create spiritual and/or social change or transformation.

Because Harden believes researchers must understand the faith-based systems and their programs, he has identified structural separability, functionality and other contextual factors as variables for evaluation. Structural separability is operationalized as sociological or normative. Sociological structural entities include participants, roles, activities, and relationships. Normative structures include expectations, norms, and behaviors. Functionality is the how and why faith based programs function. Other contextual factors include but are not limited to the participant’s own faith tradition and the financial support and viability of the FBO.

Faith-based program theory contains theoretical concepts, intentionality and spontaneity, that determine whether the model utilized by the faith-based program is charismatic, enhancement, modern or traditional. Spiritual activities are the priority in charismatic models with social services secondary. In the enhancement model social spiritual activities support social service activities as well as including social service programs that do not include spiritual activities if basic human needs are at issue. Those faith-based programs in which non-religious activities are the priority are utilizing the modern model and those utilizing the traditional model do not require social and spiritual programs to support each other (Harden, 2006). In this research, my initial assessment of FDR concluded it represented the enhancement model. At the conclusion of this research, my assessment is that FDR represents a modern model.
The larger FBOs provide services to hundreds of clients each year. One to three FBOs in each of the cities provide more formal services such as English tutoring, transportation, and job search assistance. Many FBOs provide combination services for those individuals and communities they served. For example, some operate shelters and job assistance programs (Kramer et al., 2002).

To summarize, the sentinel work of Harden (2006) provides a theoretical framework to define faith-based organizations, faith-based programs, spirituality, and faith. His work also provides models of faith-based programs and a theoretical basis for their evaluation. The faith-based program of interest for my proposed study is Faith Disaster Response. An examination of the research literature on faith-based disaster response follows, beginning with research on disasters around the world.

**Organizational Theory**

Organizational theory offers two applications to FBO disaster response: mechanistic or organic. Mechanistic organizations are centralized, formalized and have strict adherence to the status-quo. Organic organizations are the opposite (Dyck, Starke, Harder & Hecht, 2005). In disaster response both organizational applications are necessary. It takes a mechanistic type organization to respond to state, regional, national and world disasters but it takes organic organizations for the flexibility required with disaster response.

Stadler, Ben-Ari and Mesterman (2005) utilized organizational theory to explain their research. Based on the activities of the Haredi Disaster Victim Identification Teams (ZAKA), the researchers demonstrated how FBOs gain acceptance with government and social systems. The ZAKA found a needed service no one else wanted to do and through it were able to fulfill the tenets of their faith. The ZAKA are highly centralized, very much formalized and have high adherence to their status-quo of Jewish burial rites.

Organizational theory is closely related to and compatible with Neuman’s Systems Model. Utilizing Neuman’s Systems Model has been a long-standing and useful approach to my work in disaster response. The spiritual care component of this model reflects its compatibility with FBO disaster response. Neuman’s definition of client can
be expanded to allow the client to be a single person, family, community, state, region, nation or the world and the multiple systems each of these clients represents. Indeed some disasters would meet the criteria for a world disaster (Burney, 1992; Neuman, 1995; Tourville & Ingalls, 2003).

**The Integrated Theory of Volunteer Work**

The integrated theory of volunteer work (Wilson & Musick, 1997, St. John and Fuchs, 2002) explicates why individuals volunteered with FBOs in the aftermath of the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. Foundational to those reasons is the relationship or membership a volunteer has with a religious denomination. Denominations are seen as having the organizational structure already in place to quickly mount a response to an event such as a disaster. Main assumptions of the theory are: 1) volunteer work is productive, 2) volunteer work involves collective action, and 3) volunteering is an ethical decision. Capital, a key construct for the theory, is those resources that increase productivity (Wilson & Musick, 1997). The systems approach is also not represented in the theory of volunteer work. The link to an organization as influential in religious volunteerism is supported by the systems theories, specifically Neuman’s Systems Model.

**The Research Problem and Research Questions**

The primary purposes of this study are twofold: 1) To understand the experience of faith-based disaster response for those charged with organizing and executing such a massive, grassroots effort, those delivering direct service, and the survivors who seek and receive assistance; 2) To understand the impact of the disaster event and levels of hope in the lives of those who provide and receive assistance. The understanding of the experience will illuminate the answers to the following questions: 1) How did the staff and volunteers of FBOs, stand up and put into action a massive response so quickly, and sustain their efficacy over many months? 2) How did their efforts impact the lives of the people they sought to serve? 3) Were the FBOs as on target, efficient, and effective as
they seem? 4) How did their services and the ways in which those services were delivered, impact individuals and communities? 5) If successful, how did they do it without the infrastructure, training and funding sources that governmental agencies have at their disposal? 6) What is the impact of the disaster on those who serve and receive assistance? 7) Is the impact of the disaster reflected in their stories? 8) What is the level of hope for those who serve and receive assistance? 9) Do the Impact of Event Scale – Revised (IERS-R), Herth Hope Index (HHI) and the Hope Visual Analogue Scale (HVAS) effectively measure the impact of the disaster and the level of hope?

**Research Design**

To address the research questions both qualitative and quantitative methods were utilized: 1) a two-phase field study with phase one a formal participant-observer experience and phase two an informal collection of data related to informal interactions and conversations; 2) phenomenological interviews as the primary method of investigation; 3) administration of the HHI, a HVAS and the IESR; and, 4) utilization of the FDR database and descriptive statistics to describe the population. The sample for the participant-observer portion of the field study includes team members who were present at the New Orleans base of operations the week of July 15-22, 2007. The sample for the phenomenology interviews and administration of the assessment tools includes nine staff members, eight volunteers with FDR, and five residents of Hurricane Katrina who have resettled in New Orleans and received FDR disaster services. Each of these participants was linked to FDR, a single, moderate sized FBO engaged in disaster response in New Orleans, Louisiana. The research process is completely identified in Chapter 3.

One research methodology specifically recommended for understanding the lived experience of a phenomenon is phenomenology. To meet the first research objective, this type of interview was employed and began with a single question: “What stands out to you from your experience of providing or receiving faith-based disaster services?”

A quantitative descriptive method was used to meet the secondary objective through the administration of assessment tools that measure the level of hope and the emotional impact of the disaster event. Prior to the interview, participants were asked to
complete each of the following assessment tools: the HHI, HVAS and IESR. Each of
these assessment tools, their theoretical underpinnings and utility for this study are
discussed later in this and subsequent chapters. Scores on the HVAS and IESR were
utilized for the purposes of construct and concurrent validity in the study.

The databases maintained by FDR provided a description of the population.
However, in order to describe the sample, additional demographic data was collected.
The assessment tools and demographic data form can be found in Appendices II-IV.

Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations

Assumptions

The theoretical assumptions for this study were: 1) Faith-based disaster response
explicitly and implicitly represents the religious beliefs of the organization; 2) Faith-
based disaster response fulfills the organization’s religious mission; 3) hope can be
observed in explicit activities with outcomes that are measurable; 4) theological
assumptions are implicitly present in faith-based disaster response; 5) faith-based
disaster is productive work; and, 6) faith-based disaster response involves collective
action.

Methodological assumptions include: 1) administrative and paid staff of FDR,
volunteers with FDR and recipients of assistance from FDR would be willing to talk to
me; 2) team members present during the participant-observer experience would be
willing to let me fully participate and observe the disaster response; 3) the base of
operations in New Orleans would remain operational through July 2007; 4) administrative and paid staff, volunteers and those receiving assistance from the FBO
were free to give voice to their experiences, whether positive or negative; and, 5) participants would accurately and honestly tell their stories and complete the assessment
tools.
Limitations

The sampling frame for the study was confined to a small number of staff, volunteers and recipients of a single, moderate-sized faith-based organization. The location was limited to New Orleans, Louisiana. Therefore, the generalizability of this study is limited to staff and volunteers of FDR and persons helped by FDR. Sample size for the qualitative techniques is adequate but ultimately limits the quantitative findings. I used existing databases to describe the population and as such, my results were subject to the accuracy and completeness of the data without further opportunity for clarification.

Delimitations

The sample included participants in each of the following groups: 1) national and regional staff responsible for the base of operations in New Orleans; 2) volunteers with FDR in New Orleans; and, 3) household members over the age of 18 who received help from FDR’s New Orleans base of operations. Analysis of the database maintained by FDR was limited to descriptive statistics. Spoken and written comprehension of English was required for participation. Participants had to live in the continental United States. Volunteer teams may have had as many as 60 or more members. To eliminate the possibility that all volunteer participants would be from the same team, only one team member per team was enrolled in the study. Participants enrolled in the participant-observer portion of the study were ineligible to enroll as an interview participant to eliminate the appearance of coercion. Only one member per household receiving assistance participated in the study.
Conceptual and Operational Definitions

Conceptual Definitions

Faith-based Organization

Faith-based organizations are “…organizations that engage in spiritual and/or social intervention activities based on religious beliefs and values of a faith and spiritual tradition for transformational purposes” (Harden, 2006, p 484).

Faith-based Program

Faith-based programs are “believed to facilitate a form of divine intervention or discovery that may result in social or spiritual transformation based on deeply held religious beliefs and values” (Harden, 2006, p 484).

Hope

Hope is a multidimensional concept that is futuristic, realistic, spiritual or transformational, life-sustaining and necessary to realize future goals.

Impact of Event

Impact of event will be defined as experiencing avoidance, intrusion and hyperarousal associated with hurricanes Katrina and Rita two years after the event.

Operational Definitions

Faith-based Organization

Faith Disaster Response is an organization identifying itself as providing spiritual or social programs in response to disasters based on religious beliefs, values of a faith and/or a spiritual tradition for transformational purposes.
**Faith-based Program**

Any disaster response activity or service provided by Faith Disaster Response. Examples of these activities include but are not limited to the provision of shelter or housing (temporary or permanent), clothing, mental health services, and/or transportation; food services; cleaning debris and rebuilding individual homes and community development.

**Hope**

The summative score on the Herth Hope Index.

**Impact of Event**

The cumulative score of the Impact of Event Scale – Revised.

**Hypotheses**

The quantitative component of this study was a descriptive correlational analysis of the results of the measure of hope and impact of events. To further answer research question number nine, three hypotheses were developed. These hypotheses describe the predicted relationships between the measurement tools.

**Hypothesis Number One**

Scores for the Herth Hope Index and the Hope Visual Analogues scale will be positively correlated.

**Hypothesis Number Two**

Scores for the Impact of Event Scale - Revised will be negatively correlated with the Herth Hope Index and the Hope Visual Analogue Scales.
Hypothesis Number Three

The amount or degree of loss experienced by the resident participants will be positively correlated with the Impact of Event Scale – Revised.

Significance of the Study

There is a long history of FBO disaster response with formal and informal ties to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the FEMA and the World Health Organization (WHO) and its affiliates. FBOs are viewed as meeting public health needs of communities in which they respond: food, shelter, water and clothing. Concern for the safety of volunteers exists. Criticism regarding the separation of church and state and federal funding for FBOs exists. Yet the role of FBOs is so critical to the public health infrastructure of the United States and the world, that within certain guidelines, government agencies have been directed to work with FBOs in these difficult circumstances (Centers for Disease Control, 1999; Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2006).

The implications for policy development related to ways in which FBOs function within and among government agencies is ongoing and of great importance. If FBOs are to continue their contribution to social support systems of governments and their citizens, existing policies must be examined, perhaps amended, discarded or generated. It was critical that such policy implications be identified as they became evident in this research.

This research is particularly salient to nursing because according to the American Nurse’s Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses, Provision number two, a nurse’s primary commitment is to the patient. The patient is defined as an individual, family, group or community (American Nurses Association, 2001). The ANA Code of Ethics further states in Provision number eight that “the nurse collaborates with the other health professionals and the public in promoting community, national, and international efforts to meet health needs” (American Nurses Association, 2001, lines 46-47). FDR is one component of “the public” that is meeting health needs by providing safe living conditions and assistance for disaster victims. Ethically, nurses and nursing service must
collaborate with faith-based disaster response organizations as each strives to provide basic public health necessities.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literature regarding faith-based disaster response is varied and housed in multiple databases. The purpose of this literature review is two-fold: 1) to examine literature that elucidates the proposed variables and their relationships to faith-based disaster response in order to provide direction and assistance in deciding which quantitative data will be collected, and 2) to provide a basis for understanding and interpreting the qualitative data that will be collected. The literature demonstrates that researchers use quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods, and a variety of theoretical frameworks and that there is convergence of the lay and professional literature.

This chapter includes the following sections: 1) Methodology utilized to conduct the literature search; 2) Understanding the programs of FBOs and related nursing research; 3) Faith-based or religious disaster response throughout the world; 4) Faith-based or religious disaster response in New Orleans, Louisiana following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; 5) Research-based government reports of FBO disaster response; 6) Faith-based disaster response in the nursing literature; and, 7) Concepts of spirituality and hope.

Methodology

Over 100 articles published in nursing, medicine, public health, religion and the military literature between the years 2000 to 2006 were examined. Databases utilized in the search included the Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Military and Government Collection, Pre-CINAHL, Med-Line/PubMed, Academic Search Premier, American Humanities Index, Alt HealthWatch, Essay and General Literature Index, Humanities International Complete, Information Science and Technology Abstracts, MLA Directory of Periodicals, Primary Search, the Nation Archive and the American Theological Association's ALTA Religion Database. The following key words, limited to inclusion in the abstract and or a combination of abstract and text, were utilized in the search: faith-based disaster response, disaster response, faith-based organization, religious disaster
response and faith-based or parish nursing disaster response. Additional literature was
drawn from Internet sites specific to FBO and parish or faith-community nursing Internet
sites. Finally, a search was completed on in-progress studies.

Research Literature

Theoretical Basis for Faith-Based Disaster Response Around the World

There is no one theoretical basis for faith-based disaster response. Research on the
topic is most prevalent in the fields of psychology, sociology, social work, religious
studies and nursing. Theories utilized in this body of research range from the grand
theories to middle-range theory or models, and include: transformational development or
theory (Clarke, 2006, Harden, 2006), sociological theory (Sutton, 2002), organizational
theory (Stadler, Ben-Ari & Mesterman, 2005), symbolic interactionism (Laliberte,
2003), integrated theory of volunteer work (St. John & Fuchs, 2002), social support (Ai,
Tice, Peterson & Huang, 2005), logic theory (Zotti, Graham, Whitt, Anand & Replogle,
2006), program theory (Harden, 2006), implementation theory (Harden, 2006), outcome
theory (Harden, 2006), ecosystems views (Tangenberg, 2005), open systems
(Tangenberg, 2005), organizational perspective (Scott, 1981), faith-related community
organizing models (Warren, 2001; Wood, 2002), and the parish nursing/health ministry
collaboration model (Pattillo, Chesley, Castles, & Sutter, 2002). FBO disaster response
emerges from this entire class of theories. See Appendix V for a comparison of the
research literatures on faith-based disaster response.

Using ethnography, Sutton (2002) examined his work as a chaplain at ground zero
after 9/11 from the perspective of the sociological. He identified the need to understand
faith-based organizations (requires organizational theory or systems approach) and
develop public policy related to FBO disaster response. Developing public policy was
also discussed in Clarke’s (2006) work discussed below.

The logic model was used by Zotti et al. (2006) to evaluate a -based intervention
to assist children in coping after a natural disaster. The intervention was a week long day
camp where children engaged in physical activity, Bible study, games, music, drama and
crafts. The major contribution of this study was the identification of problem areas related to initiation and implementation of faith-based disaster response initiatives: lack of clear procedures for working with communities affected by disaster; lack of preparation for large-scale response; safety and security inadequacies; lack of the use of any language other than English; and lack of sufficient or effective funding mechanisms.

The logic model itself contributed to the current discussion as it is an evaluation model focused on implementation and process, impact, and outcome evaluation. However, it does not provide understanding or meaning to the faith-based disaster response experience.

Identifying why Christian faith-based volunteers participate in disaster response was the focus of research conducted by Clarke (2006), St. John and Fuchs (2002) and Wilson and Musick (1997). The theory of transformational development, utilized by Clarke, had three major constructs: 1) the person is the focus of transformation; 2) persons in the community build the community; and 3) transformation occurs when communities fight good and overcome evil. Interestingly, it has been said that if transformation is to be sustainable, it must be linked with churches. This would suggest that FBO disaster response is most effective when conducted by denominations (Sudgen, 2003). This is consistent with the findings of St John and Fuchs (2001) who demonstrate churches have the organizational structure to sustain volunteerism.

The integrated theory of volunteer work originated with Wilson and Musick (1997) and was utilized by St. John and Fuchs (2002) to explain why volunteers offered their services in the aftermath of the Murrah Federal Building bombing in Oklahoma City in 1995. St. John and Fuchs concluded affiliation with a religious denomination was predictive of volunteering because religious denominations have the organizational structure to support volunteerism in disasters. The main assumptions of this theory include the following: 1) volunteer work is productive, 2) volunteer work involves collective action, and 3) volunteering is an ethical decision. Capital, a key construct for the integrated theory of volunteer work, is those resources that increase productivity (Wilson & Musick, 1997).
Qualitative data from a study of faith-related services, values and practices was utilized by Tangenberg (2005) to support an ecosystems approach to faith-based human services initiatives. The ecosystems approach she described is similar to a generalized systems approach and may be synergistic with Neuman’s Systems Model. This researcher supported a balance between faith-based initiatives and the work of social workers. The qualitative data she used to support her premise is from her unpublished research and little information is provided about the research questions, methodology, design or analysis. Because she believes FBOs represent conservative social trends, bias against faith-based initiatives was introduced in Tangenberg’s work. Tangenberg concluded social workers must: 1) be diligent in assessing whether or not faith-based initiatives discriminated against clients or try to change the client’s belief system; 2) determine whether or not the client has the capacity to resist attempts at religious programming; 3) assess whether or not the client’s beliefs or values are in conflict with the faith-based organization; 4) evaluate whether or not faith-based organizations possess the necessary skills for services they are offering; and, 5) determine whether or not there are effective collaborations between the faith-based organization and other agencies.

**Research Studies Related to Post-Katrina New Orleans**

Social workers and policy experts located at Louisiana State University, located in Baton Rouge, have routinely collected annual surveys from citizens of Louisiana since 2003. Each year, results of the survey were compared to previous years and the survey questions were adjusted as needs or circumstances in the state indicated. After the hurricanes, an additional survey related to the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita was administered. These surveys assessed wellness and the sense of well-being among a sample of Katrina survivors, citizens of New Orleans who have relocated to other cities. Included in the survey are questions on mobility of the population and resources, including faith-based resources (Public Policy Research Lab, 2007, Public Policy Research Lab, 2006, Weil, 2007).

One survey (Weil, 2007) was administered to the survivors and relocated citizens in two phases: the first from September 2005 through November 2005 and the second
February 2006 through April 2006. Among the aggregate sample results indicated that victims most trusted people from their faith community or place of worship. Concerns regarding safety and crime within the city limits of New Orleans were high.

A second important study that supported the work of Weil (2007) was the Louisiana Survey Report of 2006 (Public Policy Research Lab, 2007). This was a telephone survey in which 960 citizens of Louisiana were randomly selected and asked about their perceptions of current issues and the performance of the local, county and state governments. Of those responding, 67% lacked confidence in the state’s ability to effectively address their problems and identified rebuilding (housing) and jobs as their main priorities. Almost 60% of the respondents reported feeling depressed in 2006, with only 12% seeking counseling (Public Policy Research Lab, 2007).

The 2006 Louisiana Post-Hurricane adult survey (Public Policy Research Lab, 2006) identified the top ten concerns of New Orleans citizens Post-Katrina. The number one concern identified by the citizens of New Orleans was the lack of housing and displacement of residents. FBOs were identified as providing the most effective response with a score of 8.1 on a scale of 1-10 with 10 and were followed by other non-profits (7.5), the Salvation Army (7.5) community foundations (7.5) and the Red Cross (7.4). Federal, state and local governments are ranked the lowest with 5.1, 4.6 and 4.6 respectively. Similar to the 2006 Louisiana Survey (Public Policy Research Lab, 2007), 53% of the participants feel depressed with less than 7% seeking counseling.

**Government Research on Faith-Based Organizations**

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, government agencies were charged with finding ways to collaborate with faith-based and other charitable organizations in disaster response and recovery (GAO-03-259, 2002). As a result, several comprehensive government studies were conducted on the finances and activities of faith-based and other charitable organizations. Findings of those reports indicate that NGOs have raised and distributed billions of dollars for disaster response. The services provided by such charities were identified as direct cash assistance, services to families of the deceased, and shelter for victims and disaster relief workers as well as long-term
assistance in the form of mental health services, education and assistance in finding employment (GAO-06-297T, 2005).

Findings were derived from both quantitative and qualitative data. Interviews were conducted among all involved in disasters: government officials, charity spokespersons, personnel from offices of emergency management, attorneys general, district attorneys, and victims. The wide variety of respondents is impressive and comprehensive. Those preparing the Government Accountability Office (GAO) report 03-259 identified ways to enhance work with charitable organizations utilize member verification of the published content and provide the participants with an opportunity to respond to any discrepancies in writing. Any written responses were also included in the report. The most significant limitation of their findings was that the GAO accepted the data provided by charitable organizations without independently confirming the accuracy of the data. One barrier to accurate information on NGO finances is the inability to track funds across organizations. No such mechanism for tracking exists (GAO-03-259, 2002).

Most charities required some form of identification or documentation from those receiving assistance. While examples of fraud in the charitable organization and by those receiving help are found, very little fraud was identified overall. There was no agreement between NGOs on how to disseminate their assistance nor to whom should assistance be given. These same NGOs were found to engage in activities that provided services to traditionally hard-to-reach or vulnerable clients, but the lack of multi-lingual formats complicated their response (GAO-03-259, 2002, GAO-06-297T, 2005).

All government reports examined, whether from the GAO, White House or U.S. Congress, identified similar challenges for faith-based disaster response: 1) victim access to aid; 2) coordination among all the agencies and the government; and 3) planning for future disasters. Specific directives are developed to meet these challenges. The directive most salient to my research is that of collaboration with FBOs through a formal relationship between FEMA and NVOAD; NVOAD is designated as the sole formal link between the government and faith-based disaster response. Each advises the other and multiple and redundant communication strategies are being employed to assist all FBOs.
to respond effectively and collaboratively in disasters (GAO -03-259, 2002; GAO-06-297T, 2005).

The Concept of Spirituality and Hope Related to Faith-Based Disaster Response

**Spirituality and Faith**

The discussion of what constitutes spirituality and faith is an important inclusion in the literature. Harden, 2006, contends “…spirituality, in its broadest sense of the term, refers to being in union with the supernatural in such a way that religious beliefs and values are expressed through observances of religious practices and operate under certain standards of conduct” (p 485). Nursing literature also contributes to the concept of spirituality.

Providing spiritual care in nursing takes on new significance with the addition of spiritual care requirements in the accreditation process of hospitals, codes of ethics and human rights documents (Miner-Williams, 2006; Swinton & McSherry, 2006). It is now seen as unethical to fail to provide spiritual care to patients. This includes patients or persons surviving disasters. Nursing literature frequently associates spirituality with the search for meaning and purpose in life (Clarke, 2006), or as the essence of being human (Miner-Williams, 2006).

Grounded theory was utilized by McSherry (2006) to develop a model of providing spirituality and spiritual care derived from health care professionals and patient interviews. A limitation of this study was that the health care professionals, while diverse, were small in number per professional category. From the transcripts of 53 health care professionals and patients, descriptions of spirituality in nursing were classified as individuality, inclusivity, integrated, inter/intra-disciplinary, innate and institutional. The individuality of spirituality was supported in Miner-Williams’ (2006) comprehensive review of literature and subsequent theoretical framework on spirituality. Perceptions of spirituality were unique, individual and were dependent on cultural, societal and religious experiences. A sense of transcendence was included in participant descriptions of spirituality.
The majority of the nursing research on spirituality is set in Christian environments. This is seen as a limitation of the collective results of the studies. By including the classification of inclusivity in her spiritual description, McSherry (2006) posits that the spirituality of the entire community must be considered. At the same time she concluded there is a risk of isolating the majority beliefs if the focus became the minority.

In the study by McSherry (2006), spirituality was also seen as integrated. Health care professionals and patients alike described spiritual care as integrated in their interactions with each other in the form of a smile, reassuring hand on the shoulder, and respect. Concurrently, several studies demonstrated that nurses are reluctant to offer overt spiritual care because of being uncomfortable with their own spirituality or not knowing how to provide spiritual care (McSherry, 2006; Miner-Williams, 2006; Ross, 2006).

Nursing research demonstrates spirituality or spiritual care does not occur in isolation. Multiple disciplines are involved in providing this care. There is also evidence of a personal toll exacted on the provider of spiritual care (Walter, 2002). This is similar to disaster literature describing the emotional, spiritual and psychological toll on those who responded to disasters. In McSherry’s (2006) study, this spiritual and emotional toll was described as one reason health care professionals avoided providing spiritual care.

Increased attention is given in the literature to the biological origin of spirituality; known as innate spirituality (McSherry, 2006; Narayanasamy, 1999). This may support the theory that every person needs spiritual care. Some describe this as connectedness, or the inner drive that leads to the search for meaning and a connectedness with a higher power or something greater than ourselves (Miner-Williams, 2006). This classification of spirituality secures the place or fit of faith-based organizations in disaster response.

Faith is defined by Harden (2006) as “…the process by which an individual constructs a personal framework of beliefs for making the spiritual world coherent and meaningful” (p 486). It is in his definition of faith that a commonality with nursing’s definition of spirituality is found. When other contextual factors are included and merged with these definitions, the outcomes of FBOs are spiritual or social or both. Therefore, any activities performed by FBOs may have spiritual significance.
Spiritual support was extensively examined by Ai, Tice, Peterson and Huang (2005) in an attempt to measure and define how spiritual support contributes to coping. Their study was conducted three months after September 11, 2001 with students at the university where they taught as the participants. Multiple tools were used to measure attitudes and emotional distress related to faith, prayer and spiritual support. Extensive statistical analysis was performed that ultimately linked the participants’ faith with optimism and positive psychology or emotional well-being. The results indicate that spiritual support is explained entirely by the relationships of prayer and strength of participants’ faith with their positive attitudes. This is the only study that links race to optimism and hope with findings that these effects are increased in participants of the white race. The researchers correctly suggest the finding related to race warrants more study. The greatest contribution this study makes to the current discussion is the identification of constructs significant to coping with disasters by persons of faith. Those constructs include the following: strength of faith, prayer, positive attitudes of optimism and hope, and emotional distress exhibited by depression or anxiety. Spiritual support is a consistent variable included across research designs and is linked to prayer, strength of faith, positive attitudes, optimism, hope and decreased emotional distress.

**Hope**

Hope, or the lack of, is related to spirituality, social support, well-being, and emotional distress or depression. Several researchers have conducted comprehensive reviews of literature or contributed to the analysis of the concept of hope (Benzein & Saveman, 1998; Herth & Cutcliffe, 2002; Wang, 2000). These researchers’ works provided the framework for this discussion.

The vast majority of nursing research on the concept of hope was designed and conducted on populations who were terminally ill. One grounded theory study (Keene, 1998) identified hope in the aftermath of floods in North Dakota. In this disaster situation, participants found hope through rebuilding, helping others and being helped.

In comprehensive reviews of literature, hope was defined or described as necessary for health and well-being. In a concept analysis, Benzein and Saveman (1998)
identified critical attributes of hope: future-orientation, optimism, activity undertaken with the expectation of reaching goals, intentionality, inter-connectedness and realism. They proposed antecedents and consequences of hope. The proposed antecedents are stressful stimuli, crises involving loss, temptation to despair, and life threatening situations. Consequences or outcomes of hope were identified as coping, peace and improved quality of life. Dufault and Martocchio (1985) view hope as multidimensional, even calling it a life force. Herth & Cutcliffe (2002) described hope as holistic, meaning, and associated with authentic caring and imbuing life with meaning.

The work of Wang (2005) utilized a human science perspective in which, hope was theorized as a highly individualized experience. The human science perspective also posits that effort must be made to understand and support hope, not just measure it. Spiritual transformation involves change, as does deciding to hope when all seems hopeless. Wang’s work has relevance in that individuals in the midst of disaster choose to change their day-to-day living patterns, retaining what they can of what is familiar while responding to continual change.

Analyses of the current nursing literature on the concept of hope were presented by Herth and Cutcliffe (2002). In their analysis, hope was examined from the perspectives of research, education, policy and practice. The gaps in nursing knowledge were clearly identified and articulated, including future research questions. Cross-cultural and multidisciplinary research on hope is identified as having remaining work to be completed. It was suggested that one of the future directions for research in nursing related to hope be intervention-based. Faith-based disaster response is an intervention. It is an intervention that promotes public and individual health, is multidisciplinary and cross-cultural.

The relationship of time and hope was also introduced by Herth and Cutcliffe (2002); essentially asking what effect the passage of time has on hope. This is salient to my study whose sample population may have received the FBO intervention over a year and a half ago or as recently as last week. In a study examining post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after September 11, 2001, researchers utilized the 20-item Stressful Life Experiences Short Form to establish a baseline of stressful life events prior to September
11. Analysis revealed the stressful experiences tool successfully identified prior life events that impacted the development of PTSD after September 11 (Pulcino, Galea, Ahern, Resnick, Foley & Vlahov, 2003).

The potential of promoting hope through specific interventions has been studied by a number of researchers (Herth, 2000; Rustoen & Hanestad, 1998). Among these Tollett & Thomas’ (1995) study with homeless veterans stands out. They utilized reality surveillance to lead participants to design a plan for the future. This was followed by success mapping or developing an action plan with specific goals. Hope was positively impacted by the intervention. Rustoen and Hanestad (1998), who worked with patients who have cancer, utilized repeated measures to examine the longevity of eight different group sessions, each designed to promote a different aspect of hope. They found hope initially increased after the intervention but had no impact on the reported quality of life within six months.

Several tools are designed to assess hope. See Appendix VI. The most salient article retrieved on hope from the nursing literature was written by Herth and Cutcliffe (2002). Herth is a well known researcher on hope and has developed the Herth Hope Scale and the shorter Herth Hope Index with both scales based on the theoretical work of Dufault and Martocchio (Herth, 2000). Hendricks, Hendricks, Murdaugh, Tavakoli, Gibbons, Servonsky, et al. (2005) used a visual analogue scale as a concurrent measure in a study of adolescents in the rural south.

**Additional Related Findings**

*Attachment, Separation and Loss*

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita represent the worst natural disaster in the history of the United States. The amount of loss experienced by those in its path was unprecedented. Homes and communities for hundreds of miles along the gulf coast were destroyed. The entire city of New Orleans was devastated and had to be evacuated. The city was uninhabitable for a time. The residents’ were separated from friends, family, neighbors, colleagues and the city in which they lived. They lost their homes, household
belongings, and source of employment. Many lost family members or friends. Some
suffered personal injury.

The three volume sentinel work of Bowlby (1969, 1973, and 1980) provides
valuable insight on the experience of loss and separation from individuals or things to
which attachments are formed. His work related to attachment development in children is
well known. However, his work extends beyond the child and speaks to adult
attachments.

In Volume II (1973), Bowlby identified natural and cultural clues adults use to
assessment danger. These clues involve previous experiences, association of experience
with danger or loss, being alone, and being in the dark. The associations an individual
makes may be accurate or inaccurate and have cultural influences. Many in New Orleans
had not associated true danger with hurricane forecasts. Too often an evacuation order
was given and then retracted or the forecast storm did not materialize. This reduced the
perception of a real danger and left citizens of New Orleans vulnerable to the
consequences of not having evacuated.

The city of New Orleans, for a period after the hurricanes, was without power,
therefore dark. According to Bowlby (1973), darkness erases our ability to orient
ourselves and recognize what is going on around us. Visual stimuli then become
exaggerated or distorted and this contributes to a heightened sense of fear and danger.
The environmental dangers resulting from the devastation in New Orleans made the city
dangerous in the daylight, when individuals could see where they were walking, what
they were about to touch and the immediate threat to danger. When darkness fell, the
vulnerability to danger was exponentially increased. When being in the dark is coupled
with being alone, vulnerabilities individuals experience are increased. Both of these
conditions are natural clues to danger (Bowlby, 1973).

Experiencing natural and cultural clues can be related to disaster situations.
Bowlby (1973) posits that these clues signaling danger result in family members and
friends coming together in a stronger way than before the disaster; this strong bond
continues for some time after the disaster. This coming together, or clinging to one
another, is not abnormal but a coping mechanism for survival following disasters.
Types of loss and the conditions that affect how loss is experienced are also addressed by Bowlby (1980). The experience of loss is influenced by the suddenness of the loss, the relationship of the person lost to the bereaved, societal roles the person lost fulfilled, and the age and gender of the person lost. All of these contributing factors to the experience of loss are present in disasters and in particular, New Orleans post-Katrina and Rita.

Elder and Clipp’s (1988) examination of literature related civilian or military survivors of war demonstrate strong attachments or bonds formed during times of crisis and loss. The loss of fellow soldiers or others with whom soldiers developed relationships with while deployed, were significant. The process of fighting required the soldiers to work together, not act as individuals. It was in the working together for a common goal that the close relationships were formed. Soldiers developed a sense of trust because they were dependent on each other for survival. When soldiers lost one of their close comrades, they succumbed to feelings of being alone. When soldiers felt alone they were in more danger. These findings are consistent with Bowlby’s (1973) theories of separation and loss. In conclusion, Elder and Clipp (1988) found these relationships offered some protective mental health benefits and lasted a life time.

In a study of charisma and its affect on attachment, Aberbach (1995) concluded that times of crisis and loss can precipitate mass attachment behavior, particularly if there is a charismatic leader in the crisis. Aberbach concludes attachment to charismatic leaders weakens as the crisis abates. While Bowlby (1973) posits crisis attachments may be long-term, he did not address attachments to charismatic leaders.

Green (2006) utilized narrative analysis to examine anticipatory loss related to disasters, specifically hurricanes, among residents living on vulnerable coast lines who constantly faced answering questions of why they didn’t move. During their life time, participants in Green’s study endured multiple evacuation orders, each time wondering if they would have a home to return to. They reported feeling “battered by the waiting” (Green, 2005, p206). One participant stated “Moving would also threaten our memories. This is where we’ve built our lives, raised our children, buried our dead. Every street corner is in some ways a monument to our personal and collective past. Ironically,
moving in order to avoid the threat of storms seems as threatening as the loss that they may eventually bring down upon us.” (Green, 2005, p 208). This study demonstrates: 1) the participants learned in the experience of loss and surviving, 2) loss and the resulting trauma caused changes in how they lived their lives; a reprioritization, and 3) their experience was communal.

**Divine Agency**

The concept of “divine agency” is foundational for the majority of Christian faiths and is closely linked to the doctrine of divine providence (Schwobel, 1987). Divine agency is a concept closely linked to the doctrine of divine providence. Essentials of the concept include the belief that God is a free agent, that He has the power to act and does act in ways He chooses to achieve specific outcomes. This leads to a belief that God orders or directs events in individual lives as well as the world in general. When individuals experience what they perceive as divine agency it is often referred to as divine providence.

The act of praying is an acknowledgement of divine agency and the limits of human agency; people cannot overcome their own limitations but God can. Prayers of petition, thanksgiving and repentance all acknowledge divine agency.

Yong (2000) attempts to identify a foundation for understanding the work of the Holy Spirit or Divine Agency: “At the most basic level, the Holy Spirit symbolizes the presence and agency of God in the world. To say anything about the Holy Spirit is to venture an opinion about this presence and agency” (p175). He posits Christians and non-Christians experience the Spirit, which is foundational for understanding the world in which they live.

A comparison of theological perspectives on divine agency was completed by Henderson (1985). Philosophical differences aside, prayer was informally viewed as the language of faith and a way to relate to God, however God was envisioned. The act of praying, affirms God’s agency, His dependability in all circumstances. Henderson (1985) concludes: “…the belief that God acts to change the world when he forgives the penitent who confesses, when he enables the believer to be truly thankful, to see life as
meaningful in the midst of terrible evils, and when he enables the petitioner to present his desires to god in a spirit of sacrifice and to be assured that the value of life will be maintained even if the desires are not satisfied” (p237).

**Communitas**

Communitas occurs when individuals leave their routines, structured surroundings and hierarchical relationships to come together in a new way. Equality, blurring of boundaries, a sense of belonging, commitment to one another and a belief that together anything can be accomplished are hallmarks of communitas. Based on the works of Victor Turner (1969, 1974, and 1982), Sharpe (2005) examined the development of communitas in an organization providing leisure activities. The research methodology used was ethnography. In this study, the key components of communitas that were identified were: 1) establishing and communicating the mission, 2) selecting and training leaders for the excursions, 3) creating the social atmosphere, 4) capitalizing on chain of command, 5) and facilitating the experience.

Spencer, Hersch, Aldridge, Anderson and Ulbrich (2001) used ethnography to study forms of communitas in residential care centers for the elderly. These researchers also used the foundational work of Turner (1969) to examine both normative and existential or ideological communitas. According to Turner, normative communitas occurs through established routines, activities and social systems. Existential communitas is experienced when individuals come together urgently and purposefully to work together for a shared goal or cultural value. The activities and setting elders engaged in caused them to feel at home and as if in a family. In this study, the distinctions or functions between the nursing home staff and the residents were blurred. Spencer, et al. concluded these elders were experiencing an existential communitas.

**Social Suffering**

Social suffering is a rather new term applied to all types of suffering. It is becoming a focus of social science research; researchers bear witness to the social
suffering. Beyond describing the suffering, one of the goals of writing about it is ways to produce change or alleviation of the suffering. Wilkinson (2006) summarized research and written accounts of the research on social suffering. He speaks of social suffering as a lived experience and that suffering is often not talked about or given voice. Concern is expressed that the language of the people, those experiencing the suffering, will be silenced and transitioned to scientific verbiage that changes the meaning and understanding of the suffering. He in fact suggests the language of social science researchers becomes a tool of the empowered which works to silence the voices of the sufferers.

Suffering is a condition common to all of human kind. It is a leveling experience that forces an individual to acknowledge their own limits. Through shared suffering individuals become inextricably linked. Long (2006), writing on philosophy and religion, concludes some suffering is so devastating that it can never be overcome per se; it causes individuals to question how a loving and caring God could or would allow such pain to exist. Yet, Long also discusses the idea of transcendent suffering. It is in transcendent suffering that love, care, and compassion for others is demonstrated to a degree that we are willing to put our own selves at risk. Just as God responds to suffering, He calls people to respond to suffering. Responding to suffering is transformative.

Dossa (2005) utilized narrative story-telling to describe the social suffering of Afghan women. Social suffering involves three different pathways: suffering, ways in which institutions respond to the suffering and how victims remake their worlds. One of Dossa’s conclusions is that researchers cannot remain silent about the social suffering they witness during the course of their research; they have an ethical responsibility to act beyond observation and contribute to resolution of the suffering.

**Concluding Summary**

The research literature across multiple disciplines has been examined. Harden (2006) provides a valuable framework from which to evaluate faith-based organizations versus the associated programs they provide. Faith-based programs are transformational
by design. Religion shares a similar concept of spirituality with nursing, including the practice of a particular faith or religion as one dimension of spirituality.

Faith-based disaster response around the world was critically examined. This process revealed that FBOs make a valuable contribution to marginalized and needy populations. This contribution is often in the face of failed government response and is demonstrated in some instances as more effective than government response.

Little is known or understood about the experience of faith-based disaster response. The body of literature on attachment, separation and loss as well as divine agency, communitas, and social suffering provide a social science foundation from which to understand and interpret the findings of my research. When examined from an organizational, program, government and or religious perspective, with few exceptions, the voices of those who provide the response at the staff and volunteer level are not documented. None of the literature examined included the voices that received faith-based disaster assistance in their own voice. The experience of those with the direct responsibility of providing and receiving the care, those in the trenches so to speak, is not represented. If their stories are not heard, understood, and analyzed, their potential utilization and effectiveness will be compromised.

In conclusion, my research may contribute to understanding the connection of faith-based disaster response and hope. It is clear from the literature examined that hope is a goal of faith-based disaster response and is already been linked to spiritual well-being in nursing and other disciplines. Hope is also seen as a prerequisite to action. In the words of Emily Dickinson (1924), “Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul, sings the tune without the words, and never stops at all (lines 1-4).”
CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the mixed methodology used in the conduct of this research. It includes the following topics: a discussion of the research purposes and objectives, elaboration on qualitative methods including ethnographic field study and participant-observation, existential phenomenology and considerations of bias and quantitative methods. The chapter ends with a discussion of human rights in research and how those were protected in this study including the process of obtaining approval from the University of Tennessee (UT) Institutional Review Board (IRB).

The primary purposes of this study are twofold: 1) To understand the experience of faith-based disaster response for those charged with organizing and executing such a massive, grassroots effort, those delivering direct service, and the survivors who seek and receive assistance; 2) To understand the impact of the disaster event and levels of hope in the lives of those who provide and receive assistance.

The understanding of the experience will illuminate the answers to the following questions:

1) How did the staff and volunteers of FBOs, stand up and put into action a massive response so quickly, and sustain their efficacy over many months?
2) How did their efforts impact the lives of the people they sought to serve?
3) Were the FBOs as on target, efficient, and effective as they seem?
4) How did their services and the ways in which those services were delivered, impact individuals and communities?
5) If successful, how did they do it without the infrastructure, training and funding sources that governmental agencies have at their disposal?
6) What is the impact of the disaster on those who serve and receive assistance?
7) Is the impact of the disaster reflected in their stories?
8) What is the level of hope for those who serve and receive assistance?
9) Do the Impact of Event Scale – Revised, Herth Hope Index and Hope Visual Analogue Scale effectively measure the impact of the disaster and the level of hope?

Table 3.1 provides an integrated philosophical, theoretical and research design map.

**Designated Methods of Inquiry**

This study was a non-experimental, descriptive mixed methods design. A summary of the philosophical and theoretical underpinnings, the research questions and the methods for answering those questions is found in Table 3.1. The primary method of inquiry was qualitative and includes a participant-observer experience in the ethnographic research tradition and interviews obtained by the existential phenomenology methodology. The participant-observer experience chronologically occurred first, followed by the phenomenology interviews and simultaneous collection of the quantitative data. The qualitative data were integrated and then triangulated. The integrated qualitative analysis was then triangulated with the quantitative data for a comprehensive mixed method data analysis. The quantitative portion of the research design was non-experimental and cross-sectional.

**Qualitative Measures**

Multiple qualitative methods were employed in this research and include: 1) a two-phase field study with an ethnographic participant-observer experience where the researcher was a volunteer member of a FDR team in New Orleans followed by informal ethnographic data collection; and 2) existential phenomenology interviews with three groups of participants: staff and volunteers who provided assistance through FDR and persons who received assistance from FDR.
Table 3.1. Integrated Philosophical, Theoretical and Research Design Map

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Pragmatism</th>
<th>Program Theory</th>
<th>Integrated Theory of Volunteer Work</th>
<th>Neuman’s System’s Model</th>
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<td>Research Question</td>
<td>Method of Inquiry &amp; Measurement</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. How did they, the staff and volunteers of FBOs, stand up and put into action a massive response so quickly, and sustain their efficacy over many months?</td>
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<td>Phenomenology</td>
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<td>2. How did their efforts impact the lives of the people they sought to serve?</td>
<td>Ethnographic Participant-Observer Experience</td>
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<td>3. Were the FBOs as on target, efficient, and effective as they seem?</td>
<td>Ethnographic Participant-Observer Experience</td>
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<td>4. How did their services and the ways in which those services were delivered, really impact individuals and communities?</td>
<td>Ethnographic Participant-Observer Experience</td>
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<td>5. If successful, how did they do it without the infrastructure, training and funding sources that governmental agencies have at their disposal?</td>
<td>Phenomenology</td>
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<td>6. What is the impact of the disaster on those who serve and receive assistance?</td>
<td>Phenomenology</td>
<td>Impact of Event Scale</td>
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<td>7. Is the impact of the disaster reflected in their stories?</td>
<td>Existential Phenomenology</td>
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<td>8. What is the level of hope for those who serve and receive assistance?</td>
<td>Existential Phenomenology</td>
<td>Herth Hope Index</td>
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<td>Hope Visual Analogue Scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Do the Impact of Event Scale – Revised, Herth Hope Index and the Hope Visual Analogue Scale effectively measure the impact of the disaster and the level of hope?</td>
<td>Impact of Event Scale</td>
<td>Herth Hope Scale</td>
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<td>Hope Visual Analogue Scale</td>
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Quantitative Demographic Data to Describe Population and Sample
Field Study

Field study is a research methodology common to anthropology and the social sciences. As such, field study incorporates the constant vigilance and data collection from the moment the researcher enters the field until the research ends. Formal and informal data collection techniques were embraced (Roper & Shapira, 2000). Therefore, I considered myself a researcher in the field from the moment the participant-observer experience began until data collection for the entire study was complete. There were two phases to the field study: 1) a formal participant-observer experience July 15-22, 2007; and 2) informal interactions conversations and experiences from the time the participant-observer experience ended until data collection was complete.

**Formal Field Study: Ethnographic Participant-Observation.** Participant-observation is a technique utilized in qualitative research designs such as ethnography and case study. This technique allows the researcher to experience what it is like to be part of the phenomenon of interest. It provides an opportunity to gain perspective from an emic or insider view of the phenomenon (Roper & Shapira, 2000; Yin, 2003). In this study, it provided the only opportunity for me to observe and experience the interaction between all three groups of participants in the phenomenon of faith-based disaster response: the staff, volunteers and persons receiving assistance. With the exception of an extended time period, this methodology was conducted as described by Roper and Shapira (2000) for ethnographic research. By intensive interaction with and observation of the faith-based disaster response, a foundation for understanding the interview process was developed. This provided a more informal atmosphere in which I was able to ask questions, to participate in what was taking place and discover what other sources of information I needed to consider. This technique contributed to the answers of all of the research questions but directly answered research questions two, three and four.

Seven dimensions of ethnographic participant-observer work are described by Roper and Shapira (2000): time, place, social circumstances, language, intimacy,
consensus and bias. The ways each of these dimensions, with the exception of bias, were experienced are reported in Chapter 4. Bias is discussed later in this chapter.

Field Notes

Formal Field Notes. Field notes were kept throughout the entire ethnographic participant-observer experience. The notes and subsequent coding followed the procedure recommended by Roper and Shapira, 2000). Informal analysis of the field notes began as they were being written. The field notes were coded into pre-established general domains or categories: 1) the setting of the observation, 2) activities, 3) specific events outside normal disaster response activities, 4) observed relationships and their social structure, 5) general perspectives members share with me during the observation, 6) specific observations I identify related to the research topic, 7) strategies participants utilize to accomplish goals, 8) observations identifying processes of the disaster response, 9) meanings participants assign to their work and, 10) phrases that are repeated throughout the field notes. The computer qualitative analysis program, NVivo, © was designed to assist with data management, provide a mechanism to record and manage researcher ideas and thoughts, allow questions to be asked of the data, provide the capability to visually represent the data and generate reports of the data (Bazeley, 2007). Therefore, NVivo © was utilized in these ways with the ethnographic data generated by my research. However, NVivo, © did not replace my personal inductive analysis of the field notes.

Informal Field Notes. This methodology took the form of personal journal notes. It was simply a method that allowed me to continue to keep field notes of my experiences along with informal interactions and conversations related to faith-based disaster response. The field notes were considered a data source. They were similarly coded and categorized as described in the ethnographic participant-observer experience. Activities included in these field notes were integrated into the ethnographic participant-observer experience, were identified as separate data sources and contributed to my understanding of the overall experience of faith-based disaster response. As with the ethnographic
participant-observer experience, these field notes will be archived with all the other data for reference and utilization in future research studies.

**Existential Phenomenology Interviews**

Existential phenomenology employs a known philosophical perspective from which to understand faith-based disaster response as it is experienced by the people involved. Merleau-Ponty’s (1945) writings on the role of perception in phenomenology provided the philosophical basis for the inclusion of phenomenology in this research. Inextricably intertwined, perception and experience can provide the context from which to understand what is meaningful. Thus, existential phenomenology helped me know the participants for who they were and how they came to identify their choices and responsibilities in the situation in which they found themselves. The phenomenological technique as described by Thomas & Pollio (2002) was employed as a second but primary measure of the experience of faith-based disaster response. This methodology directly contributed to the answers for research questions one through eight.

Interviews were taped using both an analogue and digital tape recorder. This dual recording was to prevent loss of data secondary to equipment failure. All interviews were transcribed by me. Gift cards to Wal-Mart, valued at $25, were offered to all participants. The majority of staff participants refused the gift card or planned to give it to a resident of New Orleans. In keeping with the philosophy of phenomenology, the interviews were face-to-face, open-ended and ranged from 20 minutes to over two hours in length.

**Attention to the Threat of Bias**

Care was given to preclude or minimize the impact of bias in every phase of data collection and analysis. I have worked in an official capacity with FDR since my first clinical assignment in my doctoral work. I already knew most of the FDR staff, and maintained a cordial and professional relationship with them. I continue to work with the leadership of FDR to develop training. Despite my professional/clinical affiliation with FDR, I had never observed or worked with a volunteer team before. The members of the
team I joined for the participant-observer experience were from the church I regularly attend and of which my husband is the minister of music. I provided the disaster response training for the team. Because of the short duration of the participant-observer experience, it was imperative I be integrated quickly into any team I joined. It takes time to gain the trust of people you have just met. By joining the team from my local church, I exponentially reduced this rapport building phase.

The potential of bias introduced by knowing the team members is acknowledged and efforts have been made to account for that bias, the first of which was to exclude members of the team from the existential phenomenology interview portion of the research. This exclusion also eliminated the appearance of coercion to participate. To further account for any bias, I participated in a bracketing interview prior to the participant-observer experience.

**Bracketing Interview.** Bracketing is a process by which the researcher attempts to identify and set aside their identifiable biases. Its use is especially common in phenomenology. I participated in a bracketing interview prior to any data collection. The interview was conducted by a member of the existential phenomenology group at UT. This same group subsequently analyzed the transcripts of that experience. Analysis of the interview revealed I had mixed emotions and thoughts about faith-based disaster response and what faith-based organizations should or should not do in disaster situations. Because of my previous experience at developing the training for the FBO, I was frustrated at the lack of training prior to volunteers arriving at the disaster site.

The bracketing interview also revealed my long standing relationship with the parent denomination of FDR and my experiences as a pastor’s wife. I was reluctant to disclose personal relationships within the context of the church, particularly if they were conflictual. Because of my working relationship with FDR, I had some assumptions regarding how volunteers or staff came to participate in the disaster response. In response to a question about what I expected to find in the data, I disclosed I anticipated some research participants may be stuck in loss. During the research process (including the
participant-observer experience, phenomenology interviews and analysis) I made every attempt to bracket, to set aside, these biases.

**Recruiting the Sample**

The research population and subsequent sample were three groups of participants: 1) administrative and paid staff of FDR, 2) volunteers with FDR, and 3) persons who have received assistance from FDR. Written permission was granted by FDR to solicit participants utilizing their existing databases of volunteers and recipients of assistance.

In all facets of this study, the participant observer experience, the interviews, instrument administrations, and field notes, data was collected from and about adults aged 18 and older. The sample was limited to persons receiving assistance within the geographic area of New Orleans, Louisiana and staff and volunteers who provided assistance after hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Only participants fluent in spoken and written English were included in the study. Study participants were limited to one participant per household; no more than one participant per household contacted the researcher.

**Staff Member Population from Which the Sample Was Derived**

Staff member participants were recruited with the assistance of the administrative staff of FDR. A list of eleven staff members and their contact information was provided. Staff members were subsequently invited by email and phone to participate in the study.

**Volunteer Population from Which the Sample Was Derived**

A database of those volunteering their services to FDR throughout the gulf coast was utilized to recruit volunteers for my study. With the assistance of electronic mail, every team leader received an invitation to participate. Additional information was retrieved from the database: age, gender, length of volunteer service, number of times the participant volunteered in New Orleans, and the amount of time that passed from the hurricane until they volunteered.
Resident Population from Which the Sample Was Derived

Three hundred and eighty-one residents who had contact with the organization were entered into the FDR database. It is unclear if all 381 residents received assistance or whether 381 residents engaged in conversation about assistance. One staff member, responsible for determining the resident information entered in the database, indicated a resident was likely to be included even if physical assistance was not provided since having the conversation was seen as providing supportive and emotional assistance. The essential information obtained from the database was name, address, phone number, the date they were entered into the database and ethnicity.

Conducting the Phenomenology Interview

In all, nine administrative staff, eight volunteers and five persons receiving FBO assistance were interviewed. Members of all participant groups were asked virtually identical initial questions. The staff was asked an initial question: What stands out to you about your experience as FDR staff responding to Hurricanes Katrina and/or Rita in New Orleans? Volunteer participants were asked: What stands out to you about your experience of volunteering with FDR after Hurricanes Katrina and/or Rita in New Orleans? Residents were asked, “What stands out to you about the experience of receiving assistance from FDR after Hurricanes Katrina and/or Rita?” Supportive and clarifying follow-up questions were asked of all participants during the interview that sought examples of experiences alluded to but not fully described. Periodically, I confirmed what they told me by summarizing and soliciting anything else they wish to add.

I transcribed the interviews. Doing the transcriptions myself allowed near continual emersion in the data and I was assured the transcripts were accurate. All identifying information was deleted from the transcripts.

At least one, with a maximum of two, transcripts from each group was analyzed with the assistance of the existential phenomenology group at UT after all group members had signed a confidentiality form (See Appendix VII). Additionally, subsequent
transcripts were analyzed and analysis verified with the assistance of the dissertation chair.

The analysis process was consistent for all transcripts. First the transcript was read aloud completely. As the reading ensued, the search for meaning in the text was continuous. Periodically, the meaning units or parts that stood out were summarized. Metaphors contained in the transcript received specific attention for analysis. Themes, in the participant’s own words, were identified and those themes indicative of recurrent patterns were considered essential. Once essential themes were identified, support for the themes was once again sought in the data. Themes that recurred across all three groups of participants were considered universal. The identified essential and universal themes and the supportive text were then brought to the interpretive group for assistance in identifying the best descriptive term for each theme. Relationships among identified themes were explicated and a thematic structure proposed. At least one participant from each group was asked to confirm the overall findings in relationship to their experience. These analysis steps are consistent with the existential phenomenology protocol as identified by Thomas & Pollio (2002).

As the existential phenomenology interview analysis was being conducted, concurrent analysis of the participant-observer experience field notes was conducted. The data was then merged into a single data set. An example of that process, utilizing two or three pieces of datum for each theme, dimension, category and/or sub-category is included below (See Appendix VIII). The transcripts of the existential phenomenology interviews are being archived for future research.

**Quantitative Measures**

The quantitative measures in this research design were intended to answer research questions six, eight and nine as well as answer any demographic questions. Existing FDR databases were utilized to describe the population and have already been described earlier in this chapter in the section entitled “Recruiting the Sample.” Measurement tools for hope and the impact of the hurricanes were administered. That process is now described.
Administration of Measurement Tools

Three measurement tools were administered. Hope was an important concept for those receiving help as well as those providing the assistance. I knew I would not be able to explicitly measure hope prior to the disaster nor imply causality of the disaster for the current levels of hope. This was non-experimental research.

Measurement instruments included the Herth Hope Index Score (HHI), the Hope Visual Analogue Scale (HVAS) and the Impact of Event Scale – Revised (IES-R). The HVAS was utilized in this study as a concurrent measure of validity for the HHI and is included in hypotheses number one and two (See Chapter 1). The IES-R is used as a measure of the impact of the event, hurricanes Katrina and Rita, as well as a concurrent validity measure of hope. The IES-R and its anticipated relationship to the HHI and HVAS are in hypothesis number two (See Chapter 1).

The groups of participants that made up the experience of faith-based disaster response were: 1) administrative and paid staff of FDR; 2) volunteers with FDR; and 3) recipients of assistance from FDR. Multiple extraneous factors existed: 1) the amount of time since the hurricanes; 2) the length of time from the disaster until the research participants received faith-based assistance or volunteered or worked as staff; and, 3) the degree of financial or personal loss experienced by those receiving assistance. Hypothesis number three concerns the degree of loss experienced by residents and the IES-R (See Chapter 1).

Each participant was asked to complete a demographic form (See Appendices II-IV). Demographic data of interest varied somewhat from group to group but generally included age, gender, income, education, occupation, and faith tradition.

Hope Scales

The purpose of including the hope scales was to answer research questions eight and nine. Multiple hope scales exist. Statistically, each of these scales is very similar and the validity and reliability testing are not sufficiently different to support the choice of one scale over the other. See Appendix VI. The theoretical and conceptual basis for the
all the scales are derived from the same body of literature, including nursing. Hope and spirituality are so intertwined that each of the scales, except the Snyder Hope Scale (1995), explicitly addresses the spiritual component, necessary for my dissertation. Therefore, the Snyder Hope Scale was eliminated as a potential choice. Length of completion was a critical consideration for my dissertation as the scales were to be completed before an in-depth existential phenomenology interview and multiple scales were administered.

The Herth Hope Index is a brief scale with 12 items. Dr. Herth gave me permission to use this copyrighted assessment tool. Included in her permission were copies of the tool and scoring direction. See Appendix IX. This is also the only scale that reported a stepwise multiple regression analysis for the background variables of length of illness, income, fatigue and marital status. The faith-based organization’s database descriptive statistics did not include all of these variables so a comparison cannot be made.

**Visual Analogue Scale**

Many concepts have been assessed or measured by visual analogue scales (VAS), including pain (Kahl & Cleland, 2005, Williamson, 2005) human responses (Lee & Kieckhefer, 1989), depression (Benedetto, Lindner, Hare, & Kent, 2005), and physical fitness (Stroyer, Jenson, Avlund, Essendrop, Warming & Schibye, 2007). Validity is usually measured via correlations with concurrent measures and is generally above $r = .80$. However, as Lee and Kieckhefer (1989) suggest, each new situation in which the scales are used requires that validity be reassessed.

Visual Analogue Scales take many forms, but all have a line with an anchor at either end representing the minimum or maximum trait being measured. Some use numbers or words along the line and ask the participants to select the appropriate response, some have nothing between the anchors and ask the participant to generate their own response. The latter method is what I used: a line between two fixed points from zero to 10. Zero represented no hope at all and 10 represented the most hope one could have. Each participant who received assistance from the faith-based organization was
asked to mark his/her degree of hope before receiving faith-based disaster response, after receiving faith-based disaster response, and his/her degree of hope now. The length of their mark on the line from zero was measured and recorded. The measure of all three visual analogue scales was summed and recorded as a single variable.

Volunteers and administrative staff of FDR were also asked to complete the hope scales. The hope literature frequently refers to what is in essence the transferability of hope. In other words, person providing assistance must have hope if they are to assist those they are helping in restoring or increasing their hope. Restoring hope is a specific goal of FDR. Therefore, volunteers were asked to rate their hope before and after providing FDR disaster services as well as the hope they currently have. FDR staff were asked to rate their hope before coming to New Orleans as FDR staff, their hope after they were no longer staff and their current level of hope. For current staff members (four) the second analogue scale was not applicable. In this instance the measurement of their current hope was included twice. The disaster literature indicates those providing assistance in disasters are at risk for stress related disorders. A decrease in hope may be consistent with these disorders. Measuring the level of hope of the staff and volunteers may confirm or disconfirm whether this phenomenon in faith-based disaster response needs further study.

**Impact of Event Scale - Revised**

The Impact of Event Scale - Revised (IES-R) serves a two-fold purpose in this study and answers research question six and nine. Analysis of this scale revealed the impact of the hurricanes on my research sample, providing insight for interpretation of the remaining data. The scores of the IES-R reflect emotional impact of stressful events. A score greater than 24 indicates some symptoms associated of post-event stress may be present, scores greater than 33 may be indicative of sufficient symptoms to indicate probable stress-related mental distress and scores greater than 37 may indicate sufficient stress to impact immune function for as long as 10 years (Asukai, & Kato, et al., 2002; Reed, 2007). It was intended to serve as a measure of validity for the HHI. Hope is presented universally as the anti-thesis to hopelessness or despair. In turn, hopelessness
or despair is frequently associated with depression. If the participant is greatly impacted by the event, the anticipated result of the HHI would be a lower score. The impact of event scale was utilized as a third validation of the measures of hope on the visual analogue scale; a high impact of event would be correlated with a low HVAS.

The Impact of Event Scale, developed by Horowitz, Willner and Alvarez (1979) has been in existence for many years and is utilized in the clinical area to identify persons with depression and/or post-traumatic distress disorder. The original scale contained 15 items designed to assess intrusion and avoidance. Intrusion includes symptoms of thinking about it (the stressful event) when you don’t want to and having trouble staying asleep. Avoidance would include such actions as trying not to think about the event. There has been a significant amount of debate in the literature on the scale’s utility for these purposes, but the research findings are consistent and demonstrate a high level of reliability and validity (Joseph, 2000).

The Revised IES or IES – R, was developed by Weiss and Marmar (1997). It includes the original scale as well as seven additional items that assess arousal (symptoms such as being constantly on-guard, getting upset and becoming angry, and trouble concentrating on what you are doing). See Appendix X for a summary of the literature and research related to the IES. It was anticipated that higher scores on this scale would correlate with lower scores on the Herth Hope Index and the current level of hope on the visual analogue scale. Volunteers, administrative staff and persons receiving faith-based assistance were asked to complete the IES-R.

The second purpose for administering the IES - R was to gain an expanded description of the sample. It would seem obvious that a disaster the scale of hurricanes Katrina and Rita would have a major impact on the life of anyone in their path. Yet, not all were affected equally and not everyone perceives the impact of a particular event the same. By administering the IES - R, I have a valid measure of the impact of the hurricanes on my sample, providing another dimension to understanding their experience of faith-based disaster response.

Descriptive statistics and correlations were analyzed as indicated above and will be reported in Chapter 4. Data is reported in aggregate. The data on the visual analogue
scale and the IES - R support the operational definition of hope but do not become the operational definition.

Demographic data

This data describes the sample and as such did not overtly answer any of the research questions. However, it does contribute to the answers for research questions four, six and eight. Because identifying information was removed from the databases prior to my access and analysis, it was necessary to collect basic demographic data on the sample. The form for demographic data is attached (See Appendices II-IV).

Simple descriptive statistics, comparison of means and correlations were performed. The complete data analysis is reported in Chapter 4. Although all of the instruments used in the study have established and credible reliability and validity, my sample size was too small to perform psychometric testing.

Concurrent hope measurements included the hope visual analogue scale (See Appendices II-IV) with a summative score between zero and 30 and the Impact of Event Scale with a summative score between zero and 88. For a summary of research related to the Impact of Event Scale see Appendix X. The assessment tools were collated and presented as a single questionnaire to the participants (See Appendices II-IV). Each of these techniques will be discussed in detail.

Maintaining Rigor and Counteracting Threats to Validity in the Research

Mixed Methods

Concern for rigor and countering threats to validity are as important in mixed methods research as they are for strictly qualitative or quantitative research. However, because the methods are mixed, counteracting threats to validity are referred to as integrated legitimation (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). In this study, I selected a homogenous sample, increasing the sample integration legitimation. The sample is homogenous in that all of the participants are directly related to a single faith-based organization, Faith Disaster Response.
Because I included the ethnographic participant-observer experience, I also addressed the inside-outside legitimation process. This experience brings a complementary strength to the study and allows me to fully integrate the emic and etic perspectives into the study.

Sequential legitimation has been addressed by considering the sequence of the different methods. The ethnographic participant-observer experience was first. This provided the foundational emic and etic perspective. Second, the scales were completed by participants prior to the existential phenomenology interviews to prevent contamination of the quantitative data by the interview process. The wording in the scales was such that contamination of the interview that followed was limited. The existential phenomenology interview question was open-ended and allowed the participant to tell his/her story in his/her way. And finally, the final question in the interview process related to hope was asked after the phenomenology portion of the interview is complete, and only if the participant did not spontaneously include it in the interview. This was intended to prevent a question about hope from contaminating the interview data. When I coded the data, I separated the data of those participants who spontaneously incorporated hope and those whom I asked about hope. There was little if any difference in the data between the two groups.

There is a pragmatic mixing or pragmatic legitimation present in the study as well. The methods chosen were complimentary without overlapping weaknesses. The presence of political legitimation was uncertain a priori, however, the potential for how the study relates to policy has been described. The need for the research was demonstrated. Now that the study is complete, the political legitimation is evident and will be discussed in Chapter 5. In mixed methods research, not only must rigor and validity be addressed from a mixed methods perspective, each method must maintain rigor and validity. Therefore, the rigor and validity of each method will now be discussed.
Multiple methods for maintaining the rigor of the qualitative research are embedded into the design. In the ethnographic participant-observer experience, informal member checking was utilized to ascertain if I understood the experience and correctly interpreted it. Field notes were maintained throughout the experience to reduce the effect of time on my memory of the experience. The field notes were written a minimum of one time per day during the participant-observer experience. During phase two of the field experience field notes were written as indicated. These tended to incorporate communication regarding the dissertation process, continued communication with members of the participant-observer experience, written communication received from a resident in New Orleans, a blog as given to me by a participant, and email communications. As previously described, the field notes were subjected to computer analysis using NVivo ©.

The interviews were digital and audio-taped, then transcribed verbatim by me. The transcripts were then checked against the tape for accuracy. An interpretive existential phenomenology group provided assistance in the interpretation process. Two participants in each group were asked to verify the findings. In addition, I submitted to a bracketing interview to try and reduce the amount of researcher bias in the interpretation. The results of the bracketing interview were reported earlier in this chapter.

Multiple data sources have been utilized and provide convergence and integration of the data, another confirmation of the validity and reliability of the research findings. As the researcher I brought some past experience at analyzing transcribed interviews of focus groups. I also assembled an expert dissertation committee with members having years of experience in ethnographic participant-observer experience and existential phenomenology interviews.
Quantitative

Three of the research questions are answered in part by quantitative methods. Hypotheses related to the research question nine were proposed and tested. Methods of quantitative analysis were identified and performed.

Research Questions

Research question number six. What is the impact of the disaster on those who serve and receive assistance? The IES-R was used to quantitatively answer this question. This 22 item Likert scale assessment tool yields a summative score between 0 and 88. The lower score indicates minimal impact of event and higher scores indicate significant impact. The summative scores were analyzed using the following measures of central tendency: mean, mode, median and standard deviation.

Research question number eight. What is the level of hope for those who serve and receive assistance? The HHI and HVAS were utilized to measure the level of hope for those who provided and received faith-based disaster assistance. The 12 item HHI is scored on a Likert scale with a possible summative score of zero to 48. Zero indicates a low level of hope while higher scores indicate greater levels of hope. The summative scores of the HHI were analyzed using the following measures of central tendency: mean, mode, median and standard deviation.

The HVAS was utilized as a second measure of the level of hope for those who provided and received faith-based disaster assistance. Three statements, or items, were presented to the participant to complete and the measure of these items was summed: 1) When you became staff [volunteered or received assistance from] with Faith Disaster Response in New Orleans, how much hope for your future did you have? 2) After you received assistance or your staff or volunteer service in New Orleans ended, how much hope for your future did you have? and 3) How much hope for your future do you have now? Each end of the line was anchored by the phrase “no hope” or “maximum hope.” Participants were asked to place a mark on a 10 centimeter line that represented how
much hope they had in relation to the question. The distance between no hope and the participant’s mark was measured and recorded. The measures of the three questions for each participant were considered individually as well as the summative scores for the three questions. Each measurement and the summative score were analyzed using measures of central tendency: mean, mode, median and standard deviation.

**Research question number nine.** Do the IES-R, the HHI and the HVAS effectively measure the impact of the disaster and the level of hope? Reliability testing utilizing Cronbach’s alpha were performed on the summative scores of the IES-R, the HHI and the HVAS and were then compared with the Cronbach’s alpha obtained when the scales were developed and utilized in other studies.

**Demographic data for the volunteer and resident population.** Demographic data for the volunteer and resident population were obtained from databases maintained by FDR. Data retrieved from the volunteer database was gender, age, the number of days the volunteer provided assistance in New Orleans and the number of times the participant volunteered with FDR. Age was described utilizing the following measures of central tendency: mean, mode, and median. Gender was described by the percent of the population that was male or female. The number of days a participant volunteered was described by the following measures of central tendency: mean and median. The number of times a participant volunteered was described by frequency and percentage.

The demographic data retrieved from the resident database was gender and ethnicity. These variables were described with percentages.

**Demographic data for the final sample.** Demographic data was collected on all study participants and included the following: gender, ethnicity, age, income, education and marital status. Additional demographic data collected from the staff included length of service, denominational affiliation and state residence. Additional demographic data from volunteers included the length of their volunteer service, the number of times they volunteered in New Orleans, whether or not he/she had been injured during their
volunteer service, whether or not they had participated in the denominational training and state residence.

In addition to the universal demographic data collected on all study participants, the following was collected on the resident participants: number of children living in the household, types of assistance received from FDR, other agencies from which they received disaster assistance, the types of damage or loss they experienced as a result of the hurricanes and religious affiliation if any. Results of this demographic data was reported in aggregate utilizing frequencies.

**Hypotheses**

To further answer research question number nine, three hypotheses were developed: 1) Scores for the Herth Hope Index and the Hope Visual Analogues scale will be positively correlated; 2) Scores for the Impact of Event Scale - Revised will be negatively correlated with the Herth Hope Index and the Hope Visual Analogue Scales; and 3) The amount or degree of loss experienced by the resident participants will be positively correlated with the Impact of Event Scale – Revised. Correlation of means using Spearman’s rho was utilized to test these hypothesis with a significance level set at \( p = 0.05 \). In order to test these hypotheses, there must be at least two measures on each subject. This required the creation of the summative score for the HVAS to tests hypothesis number one and two.

**Quantitative Data Analysis: Entering the Data**

As the sole researcher, I entered the data from the assessment tools and demographic form into the computer program for analysis. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 14.0 was utilized for data analysis. Once the data was entered, it was rechecked for accuracy and completeness. There was little need to clean the data. Occasionally a participant forgot to complete one item on a scale. One participant declined to complete a scale. However, because the sample was so small, I chose to not
delete any case because of missing data. Therefore, all cases were analyzed; missing data
was identified as such and included in the total percentages reported.

**Distribution of the data**

The data was examined for normal distribution. Skewness for income and
ethnicity were greater than -1 and +1, indicating a substantial degree of skewness. See
Table 3.2. This was not unexpected. All the staff and volunteer participants were
Caucasian and the participants in the resident group were all African American. Income
also varied between the groups as none of the resident participants made over $50,000.
Five volunteers and three staff earned greater then $50,000. Munro (2005) defined severe
skewness as greater than -0.2 and +0.2. This meant the remainder of the data was also
skewed and did not represent a normal distribution. Therefore, the data did not meet the
assumptions for statistical analysis beyond descriptive statistics.

**Protection of Human Rights in Research**

**Participant Risks Related to the Research**

University of Tennessee IRB approval was obtained prior to beginning this
research. The risks to participants in this study were minimal but did exist. The potential
existed that those who have experienced the trauma of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita would
have painful memories triggered by the interview process and experience emotional
distress. To protect participants from this potential, all participants were told they could
end their participation at any time during the research process. No overt signs of
emotional distress were evident.

I anticipated that emotional distress would be experienced by the volunteers.
Disaster response is hard emotional work. I considered that the interview process or
completing the assessment tools would trigger emotional distress related to their
volunteer work. To protect these participants from this potential, they were also told they
Table 3.2. Skewness of the Data

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</table>
could end their participation at any time during the research process. No overt signs of emotional distress were evident.

The staff of FDR could have also experienced emotional distress during the interviews. Most of them had been working in the New Orleans area off and on for almost two years. The potential they had repressed their emotions related to disaster work was great, otherwise they may not have been able to perform their work. They had the same option as the other participants to discontinue their participation in the research study at any point and time. No overt signs of emotional distress were evident.

The participants in the ethnographic participant-observer portion of the study could have experienced emotional distress and were offered the same protective measures. While the potential for physical injury was not associated with the research, it should also be noted that disaster response has inherent risk of physical injury. These volunteers would be engaging in the work and associated risk even if I wasn’t there. However, it was known that I am a nurse and a nurse practitioner so volunteers did come to me for assistance when they became injured. I had planned to refer them to FDR staff to follow the approved protocols should injury occur. I was not licensed in the state of Louisiana, nor is Louisiana a member of the state licensure compact. Therefore, it would have been illegal and unethical for me to provide service unless it was a truly emergent situation. In such emergencies where there is no other qualified provider and the person is experiencing a life threatening event I could intervene until help arrived or they could access care. This is consistent with principles of disaster response and Good Samaritan laws; however, at no time did an emergency of this nature occur.

Multiple health issues requiring first aid did occur during the course of this research. Providing first aid is in the protocol of FDR. We had a first aid/emergency bag with us and all members had access to the bag and could help themselves to anything in it at any time. All team members received first aid training provided by FDR prior to coming to New Orleans.
Participant Benefits of the Research

Participants in the research were told they were contributing to nursing knowledge. In other research studies, participants indicate that having someone listen to their stories may be perceived as therapeutic (S. P. Thomas & Pollio, 2003). All participants completing the interview process were offered a $25 gift card from Wal-Mart. As previously described, some staff members accepted, all volunteers and residents accepted the gift card. The gift card was given to the participant at the very beginning of the interview. This was done to reiterate to them that they would receive the gift card whether they completed the interview or not. All participants completed the interview.

Informed Consent

Ethnographic Participant-Observer Experience

Members of the volunteer team with which I worked were informed at the time the trip was planned that I anticipated going along as a researcher. They were told that my intent was to experience being a volunteer team member for FDR and that I would be recording my observations as field notes. They were assured that no identifying information about any individual (e.g. name) was recorded and that my notes would be secured. The training I wrote for FDR was provided to the team members; however, the training is not included in my research design or data. They were told that a lack of consent did not impact their ability to be a valued and active team member. Lack of consent meant that their comments, activities and interactions with me would not be recorded in my field notes. Signed informed consent was obtained from my fellow team members the morning we left for New Orleans. There were no other teams in New Orleans initially.

During the participant-observer experience a volunteer team with a large number of adolescents arrived to provide assistance to the residents through FDR. They shared our living space, meal time and work environment but were not official members of my group. It was not my intention to study them but they were part of the environment.
Therefore, in a broad sense they were included in the observation notes but no specifics about any individual adolescent were included. Their presence was recorded as part of the environment. When they arrived, informed consent was obtained from the adult leaders to observe and record my interactions with the adults. The same information and assurances provided to my team was given to the adult leaders of this volunteer team. FDR staff and homeowners/residents with whom I interacted were given the same information and consent form. I did not interact with or observe any community leaders/members. Risks and benefits were included in the consent process. (See the informed consent forms in Appendix XI.) All consent forms were stored separately from the rest of the research data and records.

*Existential Phenomenology Interviews and Assessment Tools*

Prior to agreeing to be interviewed, participants received a letter identifying the purpose of my research, the interview process, and the risks and benefits of being a participant (See Appendices II-IV). They were also told they would be asked to complete a short questionnaire type form prior to the interview beginning. They were not informed of the content or name of the assessment tools prior to being asked to complete them. The topic of the tools became obvious. This was because I did not want to prejudice the assessment scales or interview by providing an opportunity to contemplate how they might respond in advance. That would have contaminated the data. When we met for the interview, the same information was again presented to them. Signed and digital and audio-taped consent was obtained before the interview was initiated. Since they signed consent forms knowing a tool would be administered, verbal assent only was obtained to administer the hope scales and impact of event scale.
CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Research methods and philosophical underpinnings have been mixed and integrated from the beginning of this research; the same will be true for the research findings. Every attempt will be made to represent the findings from individual research methods included, but ultimately, the findings are integrated or triangulated. Faith-based disaster response is a multi-disciplinary endeavor and as such deserves a multi-disciplinary examination. Ethnographic and phenomenology research traditions differ between disciplines and that each discipline utilizes a different language and understanding related to these two qualitative methods. I will make every attempt to anticipate these potential differences and use language familiar to the disciplines represented in this research.

Data analysis is presented in this chapter in the following order:

• The sample
  o Population from which the sample was derived
  o Unexpected occurrences
  o Final sample

• Ethnographic description of the research setting for the participant-observer experience

• Analysis of the contextual ground and figural themes of the qualitative data

• A model representing the universal findings of the qualitative data analysis is identified

• An illustrative case presentation from the data

• The quantitative data analysis
  o The Herth Hope Index Scale
  o The Hope Visual Analogue Scale
  o The Impact of Event Revised Scale
The Sample

The sample consisted of three groups of participants: 1) administrative and paid staff of Faith Disaster Response, 2) volunteers with FDR, and 3) persons who have received assistance from FDR. The sample was limited to adult persons 18 years of age and above receiving assistance within the geographic area of New Orleans, Louisiana post-hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and staff and volunteers who provided assistance in New Orleans after the storms. Only participants with comprehensive spoken and written English were included in the study; it was unnecessary to deny participation for lack of command of the English language. Study participants were limited to one participant per household.

Staff Population

The administrative and paid staff of FDR over the span of the two years numbered 11. Of those 11 nine (82 %,) participated in the research. Table 4.1 compares the populations from which the samples were drawn and the samples for each participant group in this research.

Volunteer Population

FDR began their official disaster response with volunteers in February, 2006. The first volunteers entered into the database arrived February 4, 2006 with the last teams arriving June 24, 2007. The databases contained information for 2704 volunteers in New Orleans. Of that number, 2,700 had valid birthdates. The mean age was 34; the median age was 27; the mode 17; standard deviation 18. The youngest New Orleans volunteer in the database was 6; the oldest 84. It was not unusual for entire families to volunteer in New Orleans. This meant small children were included in the database for insurance purposes. These small children may or may not represent volunteers per se; however, they were not deleted from the database analysis.

Gender, ethnicity, education, income nor marital status of the volunteers was recorded. I assigned gender based on the first name of the volunteer. If gender could not
be assumed based on the first name of the participant that data was considered missing and recorded as such. Gender assignment resulted in 1,218 or 45% of the volunteers presumed female; 1,408 or 52.1% presumed male and 78 or 2.9% did not have a gender assigned.

Volunteers documented in the database provided service within a range from four to 21 months after the hurricane. The mean number of months from the occurrence of the hurricane and the provision of volunteer services was 12.7; the median 13; the mode 18. The mean length or time of service was 4.2 days; the median was 7 days; the mode was 7 days. Table 4.2 compares the volunteer population with the final volunteer sample.

**Resident Population**

Although information on residents who sought help was recorded in the database, it was difficult to compute meaningful statistics about the larger population. No matter how many people of a household appeared to ask for help, only one member’s information was recorded. There was no way to know whether the person whose name was recorded was actually the head of the household, how many other members of the household there might have been or what their demographics might be. Therefore, the statistics presented here can be considered only the roughest approximation of the resident population.

Of those recorded, 196 or 52.4% were African-American, 128 or 33.6% Caucasian, 12 or 3.1% Hispanic and 1 or 0.003% Asian.

Gender was managed in the same manner as the volunteer population. Based on my gender assignment, 133 or 35.7% were presumed male, 222 or 60.9% were presumed female and 13 or 3.5% without an assigned gender. The type and depth of work provided was not consistently recorded in the database; instead types of work provided were referenced to other files to which I was not given access. No other information regarding the residents was recorded in the database. Table 4.1 describes the final sample of volunteers and Table 4.3 provides a comparison of the volunteer population and final sample.
Unexpected Occurrences in Sampling

During the sampling process, there were six unexpected occurrences:

- Participant insistence on group interviews
- Disabled participants
- Potential youth participants
- Individual participants from more than one group
- Too many volunteer participants
- Too few resident participants

Each of these unexpected occurrences is discussed in detail.

Participant Insistence on Group Interviews

My research design included one participant per team and was designed for individual existential phenomenology interviews; however, in follow-up communications to confirm interview appointments participants began saying their entire team would like to talk to me or ask if I wanted to interview several of their team members. When this happened, I thanked the participant for their interest and enthusiasm and reiterated the need to interview them individually.

Despite this communication, at the first two interview appointments more than one participant was waiting to talk to me; two in a northern state and five in a mid-west state. After talking with my dissertation chair, and wanting to honor their desire to participate and have someone listen to their story, I made a reasonable attempt to do a group phenomenology interview with them. I then tried a more firm approach in my next communications, insisting I only wanted to formally interview one participant, but would still be happy to talk with their other team members. However, the same phenomena of more than one coming to the interview continued. In the end, there were five group phenomenology interviews conducted. These group interviews are not discussed in this dissertation and have been archived for future analysis.
Potential Youth Participants

I limited my study to participants 18 years of age and older. During the process of sampling, participants began asking if I wanted to interview the adolescents on their team. I always declined, explaining that I would need additional consents from parents. They seemed to understand this as many of them also need parental consents for youth activities their church sponsors. No youth participants were present at an interview appointment or at any conversations after the appointment.

Participants with Chronic Conditions and Disabilities

It became obvious during the sampling and interview process that some of the volunteers had chronic health conditions. Two volunteers had disabilities which required assistive technology but this was not apparent until they arrived for the interview. One of them wore bilateral hearing aids, the other was totally blind. Both were interviewed. It became evident during the interviews the volunteer with the hearing aids did not require assistance or oversight from his team members to complete his work safely. However, the blind volunteer described his work as requiring assistance. For example, he could not operate the chain saw even though other members of his team were using it or he had to be led to the drywall so he could remove it. Because of the impact that his visual impairment had on his activities of daily living his interview was archived for inclusion in a future planned study of disabled volunteers.

In addition to the volunteers with whom I interacted directly, other participants spoke of responders who had various forms of disability. One described another team member who was wheel chair bound due to Cerebral Palsy, used computer assisted communication and had her mother with her as caretaker. Several participants spoke of chronic illnesses or disabilities when I met them: heart problems, arthritis, and diabetes. At the same time, a faith-based magazine article highlighted a FDR volunteer with a seizure disorder who has since died from complications\(^4\). With the exception of the blind

\(^4\) Reference withheld to protect the identity of the person and the organization.
participant referenced above, all those with chronic conditions were included in this dissertation research.

**Multiple Individual Interviews within a Volunteer Team**

On three occasions more than one individual phenomenology interview was obtained per team. When more than one was obtained, a number representing each team participant was put in a cup and one number was drawn. The interview representing the drawn number was included in the dissertation research. The other interviews were archived for future research. This allowed me to remain true to the study design of including one interview per team while respecting the wishes of people to be heard.

**Too Many Volunteer Participants**

The volunteer sample was recruited with the assistance of FDR’s database. The initial plan was to randomly select every 10th team leader to receive the invitation. The UT College of Nursing IRB reviewers asked that I include every team leader. Therefore every team leader was sent an email containing the formal IRB approved invitation to participate in the research. If they did not want to personally participate they were invited to share the invitation with their team members. There were a total of 200 emails sent; 54 were returned to me as undeliverable. The email addresses were double checked and if in error corrected and resent. All but 10 were successfully delivered. I began receiving responses from the recipients before I completed sending all the emails. Within 30 minutes of sending the email invitations, I had a full cohort of participants. For the next four months I would continue to receive emails and phone calls from volunteers who wanted to participate in the research.

The original participant recruitment plan was to also solicit volunteer participants via FDR’s parent denomination’s on-line newspaper. Due to the overwhelming number of volunteers wishing to participate, the on-line advertisement was withdrawn. In total, 29 volunteers were interviewed. There remains a list of 32 volunteers who still wish to participate in the research.
Too Few Resident Participants

New Orleans residents who received FDR assistance were recruited using a variety of methods. Recruitment flyers were placed on community bulletin boards and in a variety of churches in the neighborhoods where FDR worked. No participants were recruited from the flyers. A newspaper advertisement ran in the New Orleans Picayune Newspaper on Thursdays and Sundays for three weeks at a cost of $99. In order to conserve costs, the newspaper provided zoned advertisement so that the advertisement was included only in the newspapers in neighborhoods in which FDR worked. No participants were recruited from the newspaper advertisement.

Utilizing the database of New Orleans residents assisted by Faith Disaster Response, recruitment letters were mailed. Initially I had proposed every resident included in the database be mailed an invitation to participate in the study. Since my desired sample size was six to 10 participants, the UT College of Nursing IRB reviewers asked that instead I implement a random selection process yielding less than 100 letters. I then selected every tenth resident in the database. This was equally divided between those residents who received cleaning and hygiene supplies at the welcome center and those who had work done in their homes. A total of 84 letters were mailed to residents of New Orleans. Twenty-nine, or 35%, of the letters were returned as non-deliverable. Mail service remains problematic in the city. A residence may have a mailbox, in other words a valid address, but no one may actually live there. For this reason, it is unknown how many delivered letters were actually received by the intended participant. A total of eight residents responded to the letters. One resident sent a letter in which she shared her experience with FDR. She did not wish to be interviewed but wanted me to know her story. Another resident was unavailable during the time I was going to be in New Orleans. A third resident made the interview appointment with me but failed to keep that appointment. A follow-up phone call was made offering another time but the resident never again contacted me. A total of five phenomenology interviews were conducted with residents of New Orleans who received assistance from Faith Disaster Response.
Due to the low number of participants, 15 additional recruitment letters were mailed following the same random selection strategy as the first. Four letters, 27%, were returned as non-deliverable. Again, current mail service in New Orleans makes it impossible to know how many of the letters were actually received by the intended participant. No additional participants were recruited. In consultation with my dissertation chair, a decision was made to stop further recruitment efforts and limit the resident sample to five.

**Managing Unexpected Occurrences**

At every unexpected occurrence, in consultation with my dissertation chair and the IRB as needed, decisions were made about how best to proceed. At one point my IRB application was amended and subsequently approved to include group interviews with a new group consent form; interviews with disabled participants; and permission to archive those interviews not directly related to my dissertation research design. All interviews with more than one person per volunteer team were archived for future research. A list of all volunteers wishing to participate but not yet interviewed was archived. The sample size of residents was limited to five. All residents who wished to be interviewed were. Their data is analyzed and included in this dissertation.

**Final Staff Sample**

There were nine Caucasian research participants representing the staff of DR. All of the staff participants were married; there were two husband and wife teams among the participants. The age of the participants ranged from 26 to 64 years of age; the mean age was 48. Five of the staff participants had education beyond high school; two had a high school education. Six had an annual income between $25,001 and $50,000 and three earned over $75,000/year. The range of time each participant worked for FDR was four to 24 months with a mean of 14 months. Staff lived in states across the country. All staff members were affiliated with the parent denomination of FDR. Staff participants fulfilled
a variety of positions within FDR ranging from national administrator to cook. Table 4.1 provides a description of the final sample included in this research.

Initially, one staff member, a cook, was left off the list. I asked for and received permission to add the cook to the list. Two staff members lived in a geographic area that would require additional travel so in an attempt to control costs and time, the remaining nine staff members, who could be interviewed in convenient geographic and time clusters were asked to participate in the research via email and follow-up phone invitations. All nine consented. Three staff members were interviewed at the operations center in New Orleans, three in their homes and two in a meeting room at a conference center in another state.

Prior to each interview I reviewed the informed consent form, offered to answer any questions and obtained signed consent. Then the participant was asked to complete the HHI, the HVAS, and the IES-R. Two tape recorders were then used to tape the interviews, one digital and one analogue. All interviews were transcribed by me. Gift cards to Wal-Mart, valued at $25, were offered to all participants. The majority of staff participants refused the gift card or planned to give it to a resident of New Orleans.

**Final Volunteer Sample**

Included in this study are a total of eight volunteer participants. Of those eight, six volunteered one week in New Orleans and two volunteered one week on two different occasions. All volunteer participants were Caucasian. Six volunteers were male; 2 female. The youngest was 22 and the oldest was 73; four of the volunteers were over the age of 62 and three were under the age of 30. The mean age was 46. All but one of the volunteers was married. Six of the volunteers had education beyond high school; the remaining two have a high school education. One, a current college student, earned less than $10,000/year, two had an annual income between $25,001 and $50,000, two make between $50,001 and $75,000/year and three make over $75,000/year. Seven of the eight volunteers were members of the parent denomination of FDR. One volunteer admitted to being injured during work in New Orleans. Volunteers performed the following services
Table 4.1. Description of Final Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Volunteers</th>
<th>Residents</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>26-64</td>
<td>22-73</td>
<td>45-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;$10,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,001-$25,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,001-$50,000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,001-$75,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;$75,000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital Status</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to the residents of New Orleans: gutting houses, removing trees, distributing and/or making care packages, roofing houses, community building activities and listening to residents. See Table 4.1 for a comparison of the demographic data among groups.

When volunteers would respond to the recruitment materials via email or telephone, their emails and phone messages commonly began with “this is (their name) and I would be honored to participate in your research.” Many times the participant began their story in their reply to my invitation. For example, “I volunteered in New Orleans two times” or “I was concerned for my health because of my age” Or “in case you are interested, both my husband and I are disabled.”

Interviews with volunteers were commonly conducted in church meeting rooms or libraries across the country. The research procedure for the volunteer participants was the same as for the staff participants. Gift cards to Wal-Mart, valued at $25, were offered to and accepted by all participants. A complete description of the final volunteer sample is provided in Table 4.2.

**Final Resident Sample**

The final resident sample included five current residents of New Orleans. Demographic information was collected at the time of the interview and consisted of age, gender, annual income, education, marital status, number of children living in the home, types of assistance received from FDR and other agencies, types of loss and religious affiliation, if any.

All resident participants were African American. Three were married, one was divorced and one was single. The range of ages was from 45 to 56 with a mean of 52. Four of the five residents had education beyond high school; one resident had a high school education. The annual income of two residents was between $10,001 and $20,000; three had annual incomes between $30,001 and $50,000. Two attended a church associated with FDR, two were of a Christian denomination other than FDR and one stated they did not have a religious preference. All of the resident participants received assistance from government and non-government agencies in addition to FDR.
Table 4.2. A Comparison of the Volunteer Population and Research Sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Database Population</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>6-84</td>
<td>22-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>53.2%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>46.8%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Days Served per time volunteered</strong></td>
<td>4 (median 7)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Times Volunteered</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2328 (86.1%)</td>
<td>6 (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>219 (10.8%)</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>37 (1.4%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>24 (0.9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One resident received FDR assistance within one month, one within six months and one within nine months. Two residents did not say when they received assistance from FDR. All of the resident participants lost their home and household items in the hurricanes, three lost their jobs, one experienced injury to a family member and friend, and one experienced the death of a friend; none reported the death of a family member. All resident participants were currently living in New Orleans: three were in FEMA trailers; two had returned to the home they lived in prior to the hurricanes.

The procedure for obtaining informed consent, administering the scales and doing the interview was the same for the residents as for the staff and volunteers. Each resident was offered and accepted a $25 gift card to Wal-Mart. Table 4.3 offers a comparison of the resident population with the final research sample.

Four interviews were conducted in church meeting rooms and private homes or FEMA trailers. Therefore participants were familiar with and comfortable in the environment since it was in their neighborhood.

Table 4.3. A Comparison of the Resident Population and Final Research Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Database Population N = 362</th>
<th>Sample N=5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0.003%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Context for Ethnographic Participant-Observer Experience

As proscribed by Roper and Shapira (2000) the following contexts of the ethnographic participant-observer experience were examined: time, place, social circumstances, language, intimacy, consensus and bias. All but bias are addressed below. Bias was addressed as part of the methodology in Chapter 3.

Time

The participant-observer experience took place July 15-22, 2007. The experience was limited to this time frame due to the official closure of FDR in New Orleans. During this week time was marked by when we got up, when we got to the work site, when we took breaks, when we ate and when we went to sleep. Most days we were up by five o’clock in the morning, eating breakfast by six-thirty, receiving our instructions by seven-thirty and at the work site by eight. Frequent breaks were a necessity and the first break of the day was usually by 10:00 a.m. Lunch was often as early as 11:00 or 11:30. Two afternoon breaks were taken. By this time of the day we were hot, tired and sweaty. The goal was to finish the work by five and return to the village and get ready for the evening meal. It was rare for us to be back by this time. We almost missed or did miss dinner several times. Dinner was at six. We would be back in the dorm by seven or some volunteers would explore the city. Mandatory lights out was at 10:00 p.m. Most nights some of us were already in bed long before that. Conflict in the dorm was always about lights out.

Place

Place refers to the location or setting of the experience. It is evident from the data that observations occurred in multiple places: 1) the 15 passenger van we used for transportation purposes; 2) the volunteer village where we stayed, ate our meals and slept; 3) the base of operations for FDR located a few miles from the volunteer village; 4) restaurants; 5) the work sites; and 6) a building supply store. The type of participants
observed at each site was dependent upon the activity taking place. Table 4.4 illustrates the types of places where observations took place and who or what was being observed.

I was a participant observer with one volunteer FDR team. As a participant observer, I became a member of a volunteer team originating from the mid-south in a border state to Louisiana. My team traveled from this location to New Orleans by a 15 passenger van. One of the team members drove. It took eight hours to complete the trip. From the moment we got into the van until we returned, each team member always sat in the same place. Our soft drink executive drove, our elderly team mate sat in the front passenger seat, I sat on the first bench with my spouse, the other two female team members sat on the second bench, and our college student team member sat on the third bench. One of the other two female team members was married to the driver. The college student slept most of the way there and back, occasionally getting up to participate in conversation.

Casual conversation about our lives in general and disaster response in New Orleans in particular occurred each time we were in the van. Other than the trip to and from New Orleans, small amounts of time, in 15 – 20 minute blocks, were spent in the van going to and from the work site or to and from the building supply store to buy supplies. When driving in New Orleans, much of the van conversation related to what we were seeing in the environment; the devastation and progress as a result of the hurricanes.

We stayed at a volunteer village in New Orleans that cooperatively housed volunteers from multiple NGOs and faith-based disaster relief agencies. During our time at the volunteer village, there were the seven members of our team, an unknown number of adult college students who were members of a NGO and 42 members of a team volunteering with FDR. One staff member with FDR stayed in an apartment on a floor above us. Some residents of New Orleans also lived at the volunteer village in their shelter facilities.

Meals were provided at the volunteer village. There was no charge to my team as grant money provided for this expense. It was unclear which FBO contributed the grant money for the meals as both the organization owning the facility and FDR received grants for such purposes. Meals were served at very specific times for volunteers, for
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location or Place of Observations</th>
<th>Who or what was observed at the location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 passenger van</td>
<td>Team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff members on one occasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Casual conversations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>External environment during travel to other locations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Village</td>
<td>Team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Volunteers with other FBOs and NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meal time</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recreational activity in community room</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sleeping area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff of the volunteer village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community residents living at the volunteer village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base of Operations for FDR</td>
<td>Team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Daily instructions &amp; preparations for work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other FDR teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>Team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employees of Restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patrons of Restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Site</td>
<td>Team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other FDR teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breaks and meal time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building Supply Store</td>
<td>Team members purchasing supplies and/or equipment</td>
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<td>Employees</td>
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<td>Parking lot</td>
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<td>Day workers lining drive seeking employment</td>
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those being sheltered and those from the community needing a meal. Failure to be present at the specified time meant forfeiture of the meal. Our team never involuntarily forfeited our meal but we witnessed community members being turned away because they came at the wrong time. This was distressing to some of the team members who wanted to give their meal to the community residents.

Meals were served by staff of the volunteer village and community residents working as part of their shelter arrangements. There was always plenty of food; it was not always what we wanted. We always ate breakfast there. Breakfast was always the same: scrambled eggs, greasy bacon and/or sausage, bread, grits, and occasionally pancakes. Boxed cereal was available as was fruit drink and coffee. All of us agreed the food was very bland. This was consistent with a letter from one of the residents of New Orleans. In the letter the resident was more forceful in stating her opinion of the food calling it “bad food.”

After breakfast, a member of our team would go into the kitchen and help the volunteer village staff or residents prepare our lunches. We took sack lunches to the work sites: sandwiches, chips and water. We had assigned coolers and our team of seven took as many as four coolers to the work site each day. In the coolers we packed bottles of water in ice. We brought soft drinks and bottled water with us (thanks to our soft drink executive team mate), but the facility also gave us bottled water for the day.

The evening meal was somewhat varied but nearly always included rice. It was rather bland and unimaginative. At least half the time we chose to pay for our meals and go out to a restaurant. This became a small source of contention as some of us wanted to stay and eat our meals with the other volunteers and other team members wanted a different environment.

Meals were served cafeteria style. There were two very large rooms with generic dining tables and chairs. Most tables sat four people but it was common to push tables together so eight or more could sit together. All volunteers shared the dining facilities at the same time.

The facility we stayed at was a four story facility and not only housed volunteers but was an active shelter for displaced residents of New Orleans. Our team stayed on the
third floor of the facility. The floor was divided into two sections, one for men and one for women. There were 30 bunk beds in each section. Each volunteer had the use of a small rusty locker; the volunteer had to provide the lock. Restroom facilities were located in each section. In the women’s section there were three toilets located in stalls with doors. There were three showers with a curtain for privacy. There was no dressing area for getting into and out of the showers. The showers were timed and would spontaneously go off every few minutes. To get the water to start again the button had to be pushed. It was impossible for our team members to complete a shower without pushing the button multiple times. The water was luke-warm at best and many times just plain cold.

We went to several restaurants while in New Orleans and in route. Quality and style of the restaurant varied from fast food to expensive Cajun on the river walk. Where we stayed in New Orleans there were few restaurants from which to choose. We would think we saw one and when we got there realized it was still closed with no attempt at renovations since the hurricanes. We would have to drive to the French Quarter/River walk area or drive to the north edge of New Orleans by the airport to find restaurants. Even then, service was slow and the restaurant understaffed. Many times we were the only patrons in the restaurant. It was much more efficient to eat at the volunteer village.

Faith Disaster Response was officially phasing out their base of operations and the majority of the staff was located at a similar facility a few miles from the volunteer village. They stayed in a small camping trailer behind the facility. This facility was quite large, gated and used the services of a security agency. Work was being done on the facility to re-open it as a faith-based residential drug rehabilitation facility. Orientation was held in a chapel of this facility as was the mock training later in the week.

The team had two major work sites during the week. One was the home of a divorced African-American woman and the other the home of a married African-American couple. The first home was a two bedroom, single story small wood framed house. A FEMA trailer was parked in the driveway with the very large PVC pipes going across the yard and sidewalk from the trailer to the sewer. We could not enter the house without stepping over the pipes. Initially there was not a bathroom available to us for our
use. The house was near completion and we were given a punch list designed to bring the
house closer to being ready for occupancy. The homeowner was never present during the
work as she was working herself; however, she came over each morning and evening to
visit and talk about the work to be done that day or want to see the progress made.

The second house had been gutted and the new electrical wires were in place.
Studs were still prominent when we walked in. One of our jobs this week was to install
insulation so sheet rock could be added. There was a working toilet in the house but no
walls to provide any privacy. Team members wishing to use the bathroom would get in
the van and drive to another neighborhood and use the restrooms at a local fast food
restaurant. At breaks we would sit on the patio lawn chairs. Often the homeowners were
present and would assist in our work or visit with us.

Both of these houses were located in a completely devastated area of New
Orleans. The houses were one to two blocks from where the levees broke. At the time of
the flood, the water in the homes was to the rafters. We could still see water marks on
neighboring houses. Neither of the homeowners had neighbors immediately adjacent to
their homes. FEMA trailers were evident up and down the streets; homes were being
worked on and were in various stages of recovery. Multiple faith-based organizations
were in each neighborhood at one time. We always waved to each other as we would pass
where the other was working.

The roads were hazardous for driving. We frequently drove not only a large truck
but pulled a trailer behind it. That proved to be particularly unwieldy. The large truck,
called a stake truck had large equipment supplies and equipment and the trailer pulled
behind it contained smaller equipment and supplies such as saws, hammers, drills, and
generators. When we would drive the stake truck (a six-wheel large truck with supplies
and equipment) while towing the disaster trailer at the same time, we were always
concerned the trailer would come unhitched because of the potholes and road damage.
We eventually learned to weave our way through the streets to avoid the most and largest
potholes.

There were two completely restored homes directly across the street from the first
home. It was common for those homeowners to ask across the street if we needed
anything. There were no street signs in the neighborhoods. Someone had taken a white board of some type and with a magic marker written street names on it and nailed it to the telephone poles at corners. There were some street signs at the major intersections, but not all. We followed the staff to the work site the first couple times, and then we were able to remember on our own how to get there. There were still times when we were not sure where we were. On at least one occasion the male team members were just lost.

When it was necessary to purchase equipment or supplies to do our work, the team would be given a money card for the building supply store and verbal guidelines on what to purchase. We would then go to the building supply store, purchase the materials, load them on the truck and proceed to the work site. Every time we went to the building supply store the drive-way in and out was lined with numerous day workers asking patrons to hire them for the day. Research participants often spoke of these men and the circumstances of seeking daily employment. The parking lot was always full of cars, pick-up trucks and vehicles pulling flat trailers no matter what time of day. This always struck us as unusual because we had gotten accustomed to seeing closed business and empty parking lots. The building supply store was a hub of community activity. Every time we made a purchase, a security guard always checked our receipt against the purchases.

**Social Circumstances**

There was an informal orientation at the New Orleans base of operation when the team arrived. We were the first team to arrive that week and the staff did the entire orientation for just the seven of us. The second team arrived three days into our week and was a group of teenagers and their sponsors from a state in the northeast. There were 42 of them. They also got an orientation. This group lived with us on the third floor dormitory area of the volunteer village but the teenagers were not part of this study. A group of adult college students with a non-government, non-faith-based organization was also housed on the third floor. All three groups used the community room between the two dorm areas. At any given time team members from all three teams were in the community room, watching television together or putting puzzles together. It was
common to ask about each other’s work of the day, watch and comment on television programs and share puzzles and games.

The NGO group was the source of night-time conflict for the other two teams. The volunteer village had strict rules about lights out. Members of the NGO team never obeyed the lights out time and would talk and laugh well into the night. This behavior often continued even if they were asked to be quiet.

Each morning the staff of Faith Disaster Response would meet us and give us the day’s assignments. At the end of the work day we returned to the volunteer village. A shower, however cold and short, was always the first order of business. Meal time would follow. As we showered and changed clothes we would gather in the community room and make decisions about meal time. Usually two or three team members would get back in the van and drive around New Orleans. On one night we went to dinner at a Cajun restaurant on the river. Free time was available when the team returned each day from the work site and included meals and recreational activities.

Teams from all over the United States (US) came to New Orleans for periods of 1-2 weeks. These teams engaged in disaster recovery work in neighborhoods where homes were damaged or destroyed by Katrina. Due to the amount of time that has passed since the hurricanes, the focus of FDR’s work shifted from mudding-out or gutting damaged houses to rebuilding and community building. My team did not know until we arrived in New Orleans the specific work we would be doing. All activities of the team and staff were observed. Homeowners were not always present when the teams are doing their work. I was able to observe our team’s interactions with the homeowners and the FDR staff member’s interactions with the homeowners. I did not have the opportunity to observe any interactions with government or community officials.

Language

All of the participants, staff, residents and members of other teams spoke English. I did not have to utilize a human or electronic translator in any communication. The other FDR team and staff members were from states across the country.
Understanding English was not the only consideration related to language for this study. Staff and volunteers were from geographic areas all over the country, some of which have regional accents. Neither the accents nor the colloquialisms presented problems. The majority of staff and volunteers identified themselves as belonging to a single Christian faith. Persons who received assistance came from a variety of faith backgrounds. They did not use any terms or phrases I was unfamiliar with. Being able to understand the nuances and terminology of faith was critical to being able to integrate into the group and analyze the data obtained. I believe I was well suited to know and understand the faith language of Faith Disaster Response. I regularly attend a local church of the sponsoring denomination for FDR. While FDR in its current organizational state and service delivery is relatively new, I believe my familiarity with the denomination provided an invaluable contribution to understanding communication patterns and faith language.

**Intimacy**

From the information I’ve already provided, this clearly was a close and intimate participant-observer experience. However, FDR has very strict guidelines related to gender. Men and women were assigned different sleeping quarters and unmarried men and women were not allowed to travel alone to and from work sites. FDR staff has a policy that they do not go anywhere with a volunteer without another person being present. Concern related to gender issues and intimacy was non-existent during the participant-observer experience. I was not denied access to any of the activities and the broad general access to the experience promised by the organization was honored. Because the staff member granting the permission and the staff member responsible for executing the permission were two different people, there was some negotiation and explanation of the research necessary at the beginning of the week; ultimately all issues were resolved and the research was conducted without restriction by FDR.

Beyond gender intimacy, I anticipated and expected spiritual intimacy. Our team was the recipient of a special prayer at our home church before we departed. At the end of orientation the FDR staff gave a brief devotional. One evening a pastor member of our
team offered a specific prayer of healing for a staff member. Some teams present had team meetings in the morning and evenings. I was not a participant-observer in their team meetings and cannot say what took place there. Our team was small and spent nearly every minute together. We did not feel the need for further team meetings. We said grace at meal time but did not have specific times of spiritual instruction or devotion beyond that.

Camaraderie did develop between our team members and with the other FDR team there. These relationships are referred to extensively in the data reported later in this chapter. I believe I was able to retain the stance of researcher without interrupting any group or spiritual intimacy or biasing my analysis of the experience. The only time the team was aware I was doing research was when I sat at the computer each night and entered my field notes. I always sat in a corner of the room, where the computer screen was not visible to anyone but me. I was rarely interrupted. One of my team members commented that all I did in my spare time was work on employment matters.

**Consensus**

There was ample opportunity for informal member checking related to the participant-observer experience. We were together constantly. I had anticipated I would engage in extensive member checking on the eight hour drive back to our home location. That did not happen as we were all so tired that most team members slept the entire trip home. However, our team met on three separate occasions to talk about our trip and reflect on it. I was able to do member checking during that time. There was consensus regarding the experience.

**Ethnographic Participant-Observer Field Study**

Field notes were kept throughout the entire ethnographic participant-observer experience. The notes and subsequent coding followed the procedure recommended by Roper and Shapira, 2000). No one involved with the participant-observer experience refused to participate and informed consent was obtained from all participants. Any
references to young people in the environment was general and in passing and consisted of entries such the following: “as my team members gathered in the meeting room, members of the youth team returned to the dorm after their work.” Participants alluded to in field notes were given pseudonyms

Informal analysis of the field notes began as they were being written; the commitment of being a team member did not allow time for formal analysis until after the experience was completed. The field notes were coded into pre-established general domains or categories: 1) the setting of the observation, 2) activities, 3) specific events outside normal disaster response activities, 4) observed relationships and their social structure, 5) general perspectives members share with me during the observation, 6) specific observations I identify related to the research topic, 7) strategies participants utilize to accomplish goals, 8) observations identifying processes of the disaster response, 9) meanings participants assign to their work and, 10) phrases that are repeated throughout the field notes. One additional category, devastation, was established during the coding.

The computer program, NVivo ©, was utilized to assist with management of the data. In total, there were 2769 references coded in NVivo ©. This number does represent some duplicate coding as some events were coded under more than one free node. In addition to the pre-established categories, a free node was made for each participant.

The setting of the observation was the first pre-established category. After the initial analysis, this category contained 60 references. Setting has already has been described above as place. This pre-existing category, while providing a place to start, was not as useful in the final analysis as hoped and this data was included in the description of place. In the second round of coding, emphasis was placed on the event and relationships, not the setting or place.

“Activities and strategies” used to accomplish goals and “observations identifying process of disaster response” seem to contain the same data. There was not as much definition to these categories as needed. Indeed, the strategies and activities had nearly an identical number of data, 126 and 123 respectively. The content of these two categories, while not completely identical, contained a significant of overlap. This would support
that the team did little that week other than direct work associated with disaster response. As will be shown later in this chapter, developing strategies to do that work was as common as the work itself. That is why these two categories were so similar. Over time and with gained experience in coding, the processes of disaster response became less utilized. In the end, it contained 75 entries and contained duplicate entries with the other two categories under discussion.

Other than “activities related to conducting the research,” “specific events outside disaster response” was the least utilized category with 33 entries. I attribute this to the fact we did very little outside disaster response. This category also contained entries related to the night we took two FDR staff members out to dinner and the subsequent tour of New Orleans they gave us. The entries in this category became much more meaningful when triangulated with the phenomenology themes and dimensions. Most of these entries were recoded as being fun or as relational or both.

“Observed relationships” contained the second largest amount of data with 143 entries. Upon examination, the relationships were clearly linked to “meanings participants assigned to their work.” With 194 references, the largest amount of data was coded as meanings participants assign to their work. It was difficult to separate the meaning, the work, and relationships as the work and relationships provided the context for the meaning. Therefore, as I transitioned to free nodes, it was more enlightening to leave the meaning attached to the event and recode the event into two or more tree nodes. For example, when the team saw multiple FEMA trailers in front of a single home the meaning was that too many members of a single household lived there to fit into a single FEMA trailer and now their family was split between trailers. Yet, having a FEMA trailer is also seen as progress because at least the family has a place to live and is back in their own neighborhood. At the same time, the meaning of that many FEMA trailers means the neighborhood and specifically that family’s home was devastated. The environment was devastated but they were also personally devastated. It is in this way that a single piece of data was coded multiple ways.

Repeated phrases in the field notes were limited. The two most significant phrases that were repeated throughout the field notes had to do with being hot, tired and/or
sweaty and waiting on something or someone. Without considering the context of these repeated phrases they were meaningless. When the context was added new insight was accomplished. For example, consider the consequences of being hot, tired and sweaty. Profuse sweating (which is what we experienced) leads to dehydration. We were already in a potentially dangerous environment to health and safety requiring constant vigilance and adaptation (mitigation). Now, hot, tired and sweaty becomes a significant piece of the experience. So, these pieces of data were coded much more accurately under the new tree nodes consistent with the phenomenology themes and dimensions related to danger and safety or an aspect of the work.

The last pre-existing category, “observations related to the research process,” contained 25 entries and as utilized served more as an audit trail of my research process than providing meaning to the overall experience. Those entries were not universally recoded as free nodes but incorporated into the description of the research contained in this chapter.

The pre-established categories in NVivo © were coded as free nodes. At the same time analysis of the phenomenology interviews was being conducted and the data triangulated. As similar patterns emerged from both data sources, tree nodes were then developed in NVivo © that matched the phenomenology themes and dimensions. The field notes were then re-coded from the free nodes to tree nodes. I found the tree nodes did provide a meaningful way to look at the data. From there the participant-observer data was integrated or triangulated with the phenomenology themes and dimensions. This was not a process that required manipulating the data and making it something it was not. It made sense. None of the data had to be forced into a new theme, it flowed naturally. Indeed, it was as if the participant-observer data provided very specific examples of the phenomenology themes and dimensions. I was able to see the day-to-day, minute-by-minute experience versus the most remembered. It led to an understanding of why the phenomenology participants remembered what they did.
Informal Field Study

This methodology did not involve any direct or overt data collection. It was simply a method that allowed me to continue to keep field notes of my experiences along with informal interactions and conversations related to faith-based disaster response. The field notes were considered a data source. They were similarly coded and categorized as described in the participant-observer experience. Activities included in these field notes were integrated into the participant-observer experience, identified as separate data sources and contributed to my understanding of the overall experience of faith-based disaster response. As with the participant-observer experience, these field notes were archived with all the other data for reference and utilization in future research studies.

Phenomenology Interviews

Existential phenomenology employs a known research philosophy from which to understand faith-based disaster response as it is experienced by the people involved. This philosophy helped me know the participants for who they were and how they came to identify their choices and responsibilities in the situation in which they found themselves. Thomas and Pollio (2003) build on this philosophy to create an applied methodology for listening and coming to know the experience of participants. Their applied approach to phenomenology was employed as a second but primary measure of the experience of faith-based disaster response. This methodology directly contributed to the answers for research questions one through eight.

Qualitative Triangulated Data Analysis

Data sources for this analysis were multiple: a participant-observer experience; the presentation members of the participant-observer team made to their local congregation upon their return from New Orleans; a letter I received from a resident who didn’t want to be interviewed but wanted to tell her story; the Internet site for one team leader interviewed; and phenomenology interviews with nine FDR staff, eight volunteers with FDR and five residents in New Orleans who received assistance from FDR.
The data has been triangulated and is presented as one data set. Originally it was anticipated that themes might vary between the data sources and research methods. However, all data sources and research methods revealed unified themes and experiences. The phenomenon is consistent as experienced by all participants.

I will present the contextual ground, supporting data and subsequent analysis of the phenomenon first. This will be followed by supporting data for and analysis of the figural themes.

The reader is reminded that according to the philosophical underpinnings of phenomenology, what matters most is the lived experience of the participants and coming to see the world through their eyes. The words of the participants are used to define the contextual ground and the figural themes. However, other disciplines, specifically religious studies, anthropology and other humanities prefer to take a different approach to the analysis and derive more scholarly names for the themes from the literature rather than the participant’s words. The presentation of these findings attempts to integrate both of those approaches. The participant’s words are presented first, followed by the derived scholarly name.

The contextual ground and figural themes will be presented in the following order:

- Contextual Ground: “It’s a God Thing” (Divine Agency)
- Figural Theme Number One: “I Will Go” (Decision Point)
- Figural Theme Number Two: “The Eyes of New Orleans are in Pain” (Social Suffering)
- Figural Theme Number Three: “They Were Strangers” (Stranger-to-Stranger Interactions)
- Figural Theme Number Four: “You Form a Family” (Communitas)
- Figural Theme Number Five: “There Was Change Happening Within Them” (Transformation)
- Figural Theme Number Six: “You Just Start to Wonder” (Reflection)
Contextual Ground: “It's a God Thing” (Divine Agency)

The context in which participants experienced faith-based disaster response was God infused. They perceived the experience as being God led, God inspired, and guided by divine providence. There were two dimensions that were particularly prominent:

- “The Lord’s Timing” (Timing)
- “We all Have Angels” (Divine Emissaries)

Regardless of religious affiliation, participants attributed their involvement in FDR to God; whether they worked for, volunteered with or asked for assistance from FDR. God, led them, He acted on their behalf by providing for them when they could not provide for themselves, and He engaged them personally, in many instances using an emissary to do so. The emissary was seen as a church, an angel or an individual. The concept of divine agency, from a Christian perspective, includes viewing God as a separate being with the capacity to intentionally behave or act to bring about His desired end (Schwobel, 1987).

In acknowledging the divine agency of God, participants were accepting the limits of their own personal agency. They were neither able to control their own circumstances, nor make, cause, or explain events. As a result God received attribution. By acknowledging God’s divine agency order and meaning was brought to their experience. In the following interview excerpt, the participant describes the feeding of 1,000 people per day by a church that was not large. It isn’t the feeding per se that is attributed to God, it is that 50-75 volunteers were able to feed this many people every day for a period of time with limited resources. From their human agency this would not be possible; it was attributed to God:

Staff #6: This was not a large church and yet they began to on their own start a feeding operation and they just started feeding in their community and it became just something that was a God thing because [they] were feeding over 1,000 people a day. And, when you have, have 50-75 volunteers feeding over 1,000 people a day for over three weeks it’s just amazing

Volunteer #1: It’s like when all else fails, it’s like God can still provide even in the darkest of times when your government [is] failing you. It’s like, you might not have any faith at all but then a church comes in and they help
The belief that God personally engaged participants was revealed in many interviews. One resident spoke about this:

Resident #4: …I know it is God. That’s what I try to tell my husband. It’s God, you know. He put these people in your [path]… it’s no other way it could have come but through God. That’s how He works through people. I’m just so blessed that God chose me to do these things.

At least some post-hurricane experiences generated a belief or confirmed a belief in God for the individual. One volunteer related her encounter with a New Orleans resident and how his belief in God resulted from being rescued from his roof-top by people just like her:

Volunteer #1: [the man I was talking to said to me] “when young people like you came and rescued me I know there is a God and the church is the only people doing stuff; the church is the only part of this community who is helping us”…“How can I not believe there was a God when I was rescued from the roof top of my house?”

This experience and others led this same volunteer to conclude “something’s happening down here and it doesn’t have anything to do with the government but it has to do with God and it has to do with God providing for His people.” Multiple participants provided examples of what they believed was God providing for his people. In the following excerpt, a resident expresses her belief she was personally chosen by God.

Resident #4: I haven’t seen God physically but He has worked through so many people and I’m just truly blessed because He chose me… I said, “God, we got a roof,” [we’ve] been praying, and despite everything that’s happened I know God is in the midst.”

Another resident referred to both God’s timing and the emissaries He sends. She described how she had no heat in the winter and how cold she had been and the way that she called relatives and friends but no one would help her. In desperation she prayed. As she prayed there was a knock at the door and her pastor had brought a volunteer to fix her heat. Resident #2 remembered work that a volunteer did in her home: “I forgot the man’s name but he was a God-send.”
Residents of New Orleans were not the only participants acknowledging divine agency. The following three interview excerpts demonstrate how volunteer, staff and participant-observer (P-O) participants experienced divine agency:

Volunteer #5: in the midst of this God is bigger, way bigger. Life stinks right now but God isn’t restricted to this disaster that happened, there is so much more [to God].

Staff #3: I think this entire project has been directed by the Lord and been led by the Lord.

P-O: he told the congregation he felt that it was his job to go as God had directed and God would take care of his health issues.

P-O: He quit his job to come with us. His work was not going to give him the time off but he said he knew God was asking him to do this so he quit his job. He found a new, better job the week we returned from the trip.

**Dimension Number One: “The Lord’s Timing” (Timing)**

One element of the experience and contextual ground of divine agency is the timing with which participants perceived God provided or acted on their behalf. Timing was evident in specific instances where the right person or supply was at the right place at the right time and in supernatural experiences. All participant groups spoke of God’s or the Lord’s timing; it was always in circumstances in which they had exhausted their own resources and limits:

Staff #6: The pastor would call we’re out of food and I’d begin to scramble to try to find food and he’d call me back within 15 minutes and say, “Never mind, the truck you sent us is here.” And I’d never sent him a truck.

Resident #4: We [were] kinda stressed. We had to be out of this hotel but we didn’t have the utilities hooked up. I didn’t know what we’re going to do.” And [a guy who was a volunteer] looked at it. and said, “Wait a minute, I think I can help you out.” And lo and behold he hooked up and we had electricity that
day... And it was like a angel to us that God sent this particular person, that [he] was able to help us out right in the nick of time.

**Dimension Number Two: “We All Have Angels” (Divine Emissaries)**

Supernatural events were also attributed to God providing for or acting on behalf of the participants. In the supernatural events, God’s emissaries were angels. A resident participant provided the richest description of supernatural events attributed to God. Resident participant #5 recalled multiple experiences where she believed angels appeared to protect her and give her guidance. She was hesitant in sharing these experiences and only mentioned them near the end of the interview. Below, a resident remembers the supernatural experience of encountering a man who assisted them during the post-hurricane flooding, when she and other family members were trapped on the third floor of a church. This man followed them to the superdome and eventually disappeared. Upon their return, she tried to locate the man only to learn he had died before the hurricanes:

Resident #5: some things had happened that kinda like made me think maybe I’m not still living because the guy across the street from here vanished on [us] ...this man had been with us in the church. We got on the bus [together to go to another state] and he went to the back. I couldn’t understand. If we’re about to leave New Orleans to go somewhere safe, why would you go all the way to the back [of the bus]? His last words to me were “You all gonna be alright.” ...[later] I even called the people who [had the house where I first saw him and I asked] “Do you know where that man came from?” They said he came from over there. When I called the Red Cross to look him up the only person with his name was deceased [before the hurricane].

**Figural Theme Number One: “I Will Go” (Decision Point)**

The first figural theme for the experience of faith-based disaster response is “I will go.” There are three dimensions to this theme:

- “The Conditions Were Just Right to Go” (Supporting Conditions to Act)
- “Showing God’s Love Through Service” (Service)
- “Those People are Worth Saving” (People Have Value)
Acknowledgement of the pain and devastation in New Orleans does not in and of itself constitute faith-based disaster response. There has to be a decision point, an action step, that moves beyond acknowledgement and toward providing or seeking assistance. All participants had to make a decision whether to go and work as staff for the organization, volunteer or ask for help. Deciding must be followed by commitment to the process.

Research participants identified the circumstances surrounding their decision:

Staff #2: “I marked it February 12, 2006. Today I said I would go” …it was just like a phrase. “I’m scared Lord. Please watch over us. I don’t know what the future will hold, but I said, “I want to go and serve in any way You want me to.” I ended it with “I will go.”

For the staff and volunteers, deciding to go was linked with their faith and was grounded in divine agency. They described this as God leading them; God bringing them to the decision point. These participants believed events in their life prior to the hurricanes were God’s way of preparing them to go:

Staff #3: Randy come home [from New Orleans] and said there was a lot of work to do. They were working on putting the project together... We sat there in his dining room. He had his laptop up with pictures, not pictures you saw on the news, but the real deal. And he said, “We’d be honored to have you come down and serve with us” and I said yes, “I will, I will,” I had no doubt that God had been clearly telling me that’s where I needed to be.

Staff #8: My whole life led up to the point of being able to serve God at that time. I think everything that had happened in my life prepared me to go.

**Dimension Number One: “The Conditions Were Just Right for Me to Go” (Supporting Conditions to Act)**

Some volunteers acknowledged the pain and devastation in New Orleans; however, circumstances needed to be just right in order for them to act or commit. Therefore “The conditions were just right for me to go” is the first sub-category of the theme “I will go.” For some it was being able to get off work to go, for others it was part of their work and for one it was because a foster child needed an opportunity for court
ordered community service. These participants did not deny divine agency; indeed divine agency would explain the development of the “just right” conditions:

Volunteer #2: I did it for a very selfish reason. A little over a year ago we went to the court system and got a young man out of our church that was in deep deep trouble. We got permission from the court to bring him to our house and once we got there we had the rehabilitation plans that he was going to be required to do 100 hours of community service

Volunteer #3: The conditions were just right for me to go. At the time I had to work, the trip was paid for, it was great.

P-O: She had trouble getting off work but was given permission at the last minute. She was experiencing financial and personal challenges and could not afford to pay her way. A member of the congregation called me the Sunday before we were to leave and told me they felt God leading them to pay her way.

**Dimension Number Two: “Show God's Love Through Service” (Service)**

A second dimension of the theme, “I will go,” is God’s love compelling them to go. Participants showed God’s love to others through service. Going does not equal service and service does not equal proselytizing. The decision point must transform to “doing.” Participants believed that by loving someone else, caring for someone else, God’s presence in their life would be revealed. Participants made it clear they were not actively attempting to convert those receiving assistance to their faith or denomination, but if asked who they were or why they were there they were willing to share their faith. During the participant-observer experience I did not observe any interactions that could be interpreted as proselytizing; I did not hear any invitations to attend church, I witnessed no prayers other than the one at orientation and meal times, I did not hear people speaking about God. It was not until the participant-observer experience was over, when my team members were in their own church environment, that they spoke deliberately of spiritual things.

No participant spoke of conversion experiences as a result of their involvement with FDR. Participants did speak without hesitation about their personal faith and its interface with the experience and times in which prayers were requested. These are important distinctions. Much of the concern about using federal money for faith-based
disaster response is related to proselytizing. As noted in Chapter 2, government reports and independent researchers have failed to identify proselytizing, yet it continues to be a named concern. The findings of this study are in agreement with the literature; I found no evidence of proselytizing.

Multiple pieces of data demonstrate the participant’s perspective on showing God’s love:

Staff #1: This disaster has caused a whole lot more than a faith-based response. It’s caused the country to respond. That always just makes me smile because I know that what is compelling them is still the love of God. Staff #3: This is really an opportunity, this is really a non-Faith Church population and we really need to show Christ love here, and that was the case.

Staff #8: You want to know why I do what I do? Katrina and New Orleans were just work and witness for 6 months.

Residents knew FDR was a faith-based organization when they asked for help. Because of that, they did expect faith to be incorporated in the experience; however, like the staff and volunteers it wasn’t about being pressured or recruited for the parent denomination of FDR, it was about a shared purpose and faith:

 Resident #1: I met so many people that just felt the need to help, to show people that Christ is actually physically [present] in their work and witness teams. [They] were on a mission to show the love of Christ.

Volunteer #5: [I want] help them see that God is bigger than the circumstances that they are going through.

P-O: Our prayer for her was that through the week she would feel loved and accepted by all and experience hope for herself.

Dimension Number Three: “Those People are Worth Saving” (People Have Value)

A third sub-category of “I will go” was a belief that the people of New Orleans were worth saving. The people they were helping might be poor or rich, in great or small need; there were no restrictions placed on who would be helped. All that was necessary was a need to be helped.
Staff #7: Those people are worth saving, they’re worth working for. They’re worth doing that for, you know. And it doesn’t matter how much money they do or don’t have.

Staff #6: Faith Disaster Response helps everyone. There isn’t any color, economical, social class, or any barriers we’ve put up as a society to say you’re eligible, you’re ineligible. We look at every person as valuable in the eyes of Jesus Christ.

Staff #9: We were helping other people accomplish what needed to be done. We didn’t have all the skills, we didn’t have all the money, we didn’t have all the stuff it takes it takes to try to help restart their lives… we had all this love and desire to help these folks.

Resident #1: [FDR] helped many people and you didn’t have to be affiliated with their church to get help, you just had to have needed help.

Volunteer #8: I just knew that those people needed [it] to be done and they couldn’t do it on their own. Some of them were close to retirement age and they just needed the help. I wanted to help and do what little I could.

P-O: A sign hung on the wall in the dining hall at the volunteer village. We all felt it spoke about why we were here and the work we were doing: “While women weep as they do now, I’ll fight; While little children go hungry as they do now, I’ll fight; While men go to prison, in and out, in and out, I’ll fight; While there yet remains one dark soul without the light of God, I’ll fight – I’ll fight to the very end.”

It might have been easier for the staff members and volunteers to decide to go to New Orleans and offer assistance than it was for the residents of ask for help. Many residents were unaccustomed to asking for assistance. They were the ones who offered assistance to others. Often they didn’t know who to seek assistance from, and when they did seek assistance on their own, none was to be found. Many tried working on their homes by themselves. They found it overwhelming. It was not until they were overwhelmed that they realized they needed help to complete the task of gutting and rebuilding. When FDR went to them and asked if they needed help it made it easier to accept. For the residents, “I will go” meant their decision point was to ask for or accept the help:

Resident #1: When we came back and saw the damage left by the hurricane in the sub-division that we live, [you could see] the water had receded. You
would see the water lines on the houses. When you open the door...you [would] see the dampness in the home and the mold around the walls where the line is. We had to gut all that, cut all of the drywall off to get to the bare studs and then clean it up. That’s what we saw when we came back the first time and that’s when we realized we needed help.

Resident #5: I was always the one who helped. I was the one that sat down and listened to other people’s problems. But, the table [has] kinda turned

Volunteer #4: They had the money they could have paid somebody to do it but they couldn’t find anybody or contractors to help them.

Staff #3: I know a lot of people I’ve talked to that are like me in that they don’t want to ask for help. Whether it’s pride or just personality, it doesn’t come naturally. I don’t know how I wouldn’t have asked for help if I had been a resident of New Orleans.

Evidence in this theme demonstrates two conditions necessary for deciding to go: 1) the participant was either in possession of something someone else needed; and 2) there was a recipient who was looking for what they possessed. Possessions ranged from God’s love to a certain skill, energy or even money. Possession of a skill did not mean it was the skill that was needed. Many situations required new and different skills than what the participant had. In order to serve, money was necessary to purchase supplies and equipment as well as keep the organization viable. Sometimes teams of volunteers brought more energy than money. Residents were willing and desired to help themselves; however, their help was often refused because the volunteers wanted to lessen the emotional strain for them. Table 4.5 compares what participants had or did not have prior to engaging in the experience of faith-based disaster response.

**Figural Theme Number Two: “The Eyes of New Orleans are in Pain” (Social Suffering)**

All participants experienced pain and devastation. Volunteers and staff reported seeing the pain etched on the faces of the New Orleans residents. However, volunteers and staff were not immune to their own experiences of pain as a result of their experience
Table 4.5. Comparison of What Participants Had or Did Not Have to Serve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Group</th>
<th>Possession</th>
<th>Need</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Skill</td>
<td>New Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Desire to help</td>
<td>Someone to help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organization of helpers</td>
<td>Consent to help</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Money</td>
<td>More Money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>Money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skill</td>
<td>New Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Desire to help</td>
<td>Someone to help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Money</td>
<td>Direction on helping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>Money</td>
<td>Help/Workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Desire to help</td>
<td>Allowed to help</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

in New Orleans. A total of 433 pieces of data were coded under this theme. This theme, in the participant’s own words, was aptly described as “The Eyes of New Orleans are in Pain.” There are four dimensions, along with their sub-categories, in this theme:

- “I Carry a Scar” (Evidence of Pain)
  - “Envision as own problem” (Empathetic pain)
  - “I have mixed emotions” (Mixed emotions)
- “It’s Someone Else’s Fault” (Assigning Blame)
  - “The insurance companies” (Failure of insurance)
- “They’ve Hurt Their Brothers and Sisters in Christ” (Interpersonal Conflict)
  - “Too young/I was the older person” (Age related conflict)
- “Whatever Was Happening Wasn’t as it Should Be” (Chaos)
  - “It was overwhelming” (Overwhelming)
  - “A new reality” (A new reality)
  - “It was dangerous” (Dangerous conditions)
  - “It’s a hostile environment” (Dangerous situations)
- “I Just Felt Utter Hopelessness” (Hopelessness)
A pervasive component of faith-based disaster response was the experience of suffering. Individuals witnessed other persons suffering and/or they suffered themselves. Their suffering was directly attributable to results of the hurricane and the subsequent response. Figure 4.1 identifies the types of pain and suffering the participants experienced.

It is significant that many of the participants used the word “just” right before identifying a feeling or experience. This word’s use implied a stripping away of all other responses; it was the simplest form of the expression yet all encompassing. If the participant spoke of “being just left alone” or “I just cried,” the significance of the action that follows was amplified. Another significant descriptor in their quotes was that of unbelief or unbelievable. The pain and devastation they saw and experienced was incomprehensible to them. Many of them described a process of seeing differently or a new way of taking in what they saw as necessary to being able to believe what was being seen. The last descriptor is that of a battle or war. Many participants described the devastation as a war zone and or their experience as a battle.

Volunteer #1: I remember a lighter skinned older woman that had eyes that were really really light green and they reflected the sun. They were beautiful eyes but you could just tell there is so much hurt behind them. It doesn’t matter if they’re smiling or anything like that. When I think of the eyes of New Orleans they are in pain, they could be smiling at any time during the day but there is so much pain behind it.

Recognizing another’s pain requires skill. It is unknown if any these individuals had specialized training in counseling, interviewing or other instruction in social awareness. Somehow they were connected enough to the individuals or the cues individuals were giving to interpret what they were seeing and hearing as emotional pain. Participants were aware of pain the residents were experiencing:

Volunteer #12: This lady just sat on her front porch and just sobbed. [She] was 85 and her husband and brother both drowned. I just can’t even forget her. She
looked at us when she first came out and then after that she stood on her porch and she looked out, she couldn’t even look at us when she was telling us about it. You could just see tears running down her face and her wiping them.

Volunteer #4: We were gutting a home [and] mother and grandmother came to meet…The mother went into one specific bedroom; she spent about 20 minutes…[when] she came out she stood in the middle of the street crying…she said her oldest son was 10 years old and the only thing he wanted for Christmas was for her to salvage something out of his bedroom. She was crying because she couldn’t find anything to take home to her son for Christmas.

It wasn’t just the residents of New Orleans whose pain was visible to others. Here, a staff member speaks of the pain reflected on the face of a volunteer:

Staff #7: I knew there was a lot behind his laughter. His laughter was trying to cover up something… He’s still looking for something and a lot of people down in New Orleans have that same kind of outlook.
Residents spoke of their own pain, but they were the only participant group that did not speak of pain they observed in someone else. There is no real way to measure the depth of pain any one person experiences, but the residents of New Orleans bore the brunt of the pain and suffering. Their pain cannot be compared to the experiences of the staff and volunteers.

Resident #3: The first day we came [back after the flood] we went in and I told my daughter, “Let’s just go because I just can’t, I can’t even look at it.” So, we just turned around and left.

Upon return from New Orleans, one of the my team members participating in the participant-observer experience told her local congregation about resident’s homes in New Orleans that were slated for destruction. Signs were on the front of many houses asking for donations to prevent demolition or actually stating to not bulldoze the house. We never met these residents but their anticipation of loss and the resulting pain was evident in the signs posted on their homes.

**Dimension Number One: “I Carry A Scar” (Evidence of Pain)**

The first dimension of the theme “The Eyes of New Orleans are in Pain” refers to those providing assistance to the residents of New Orleans. This pain was not transient or inconsequential. Expressed as “I carry a scar,” this theme dimension included descriptions of physical responses to witnessing the devastation and pain of others; these were visceral and riveting accounts:

Staff #6: I carry a scar with me from Katrina… 18 months later, look at my hands. I’ve had staph, they’ve investigated me for MRSA [multi-drug resistant *staphalococcus aureus*] and its not MRSA and I’m still on a doctor’s care. I’ve been on steroids, I’ve been on antibiotics, and you can see my hands, [holding his hands up] and they contribute it to something I came in contact with in the flood water. So, every day when I get up and my hands have been dry all night. I wake up sometimes and my hands are bleeding. Every day it is a reminder of the pain and the suffering that is still happening down here in New Orleans.

In the next quote, the staff person repeatedly referred to the inability to escape feelings of depression:
Staff #9: It never seemed to fail, every time I would cross Lake Ponchartrain I could feel the depression of going, because I knew what I was going to go into. I knew I was going to cross this place where stores were empty and cars still flipped upside down. I knew I was going to see that and every time I went in I saw that. And, a condo or townhouse with Help Me written on the roof…that was there every time I went.

All of these participants made a conscious choice to go into the pain. To some extent they knew the experience would be challenging, yet they went. If it was a resident coming home, they consciously chose to come home to where the pain was. Volunteers consciously chose to go to New Orleans to work even though they knew pain would be there. They did not consciously say “I want to experience pain” but pain was a by-product of their choice to help or return to New Orleans:

Volunteer #5: When we got together in our group meetings, it was obvious that some of the kids, and even some of the adults, were having a difficult time seeing the devastation. Here it was, what a year and a half later, when we were down there in February of this year, February 07, and uh, you know, just the unbelievable, that stuff was still the way it was.

Another aspect of the pain or social suffering experienced by participants was the absence of familiar rituals. The volunteer quoted next was very upset, physically ill, because there were still bodies that had not been buried. This excerpt illustrates another concept as well; pain begets pain. Witnessing pain made her experience pain. This is reflected more in the sub-category of this dimension related to empathy. This volunteer spoke of being alone, of New Orleans being left alone. In the sentinel work of Bowlby (1969, 1973, 1980) on attachment, separation and loss, being alone is one of the dimensions of sensing danger or leading to dangerous situations. It is part of the pain:

Volunteer #1: New Orleans was just left alone. There’s still bodies in warehouses that haven’t been buried. That’s awful, that’s sick, that our government can’t supply money for the rest of the bodies to be buried, that’s disgusting. It disgusts me, like, that’s someone’s mom, you know, it’s awful it’s like someone’s daughter or that wasn’t buried and just setting in a warehouse and it makes me sick, physically sick.

There were other instances in which participants were immediately drawn back into the experience of suffering; it was as if it was happening all over again:
Resident #2: [When we were evacuated] I had to take a shower and when I went in the shower and turned the water on I just started screaming and hollering cause I was drowning again….

In a letter one resident wrote to me, she described what it was like to try and garner sufficient resources to live in New Orleans again when expected and traditional resources failed to be available. She found herself going through the debris piles from gutted houses trying to salvage and then sell or use objects she would find. Her emotional pain spoke of the loss that necessitates replacing things and the length of time people were living in these circumstances:

Resident Letter: I’ve been scavenging discards from trash heaps, doing most of the work myself & depleting my savings for 2 yrs. now.

My team members and I witnessed, and to a lesser extent, experienced social suffering. This was the first time most of the team had witnessed the devastation through anything other than television. Their shock and disbelief was profound:

P-O: All through the tour, team members were just in a state of shock. They could not believe what they were seeing. Few expressions were shared, just disbelief. It will take time to process it all. I think back to what I’ve previously described as taking a while for your brain to process what it sees. It will take them some time.

P-O: He talks about the devastation he saw in Gulfport. He describes seeing houses and thinking this is not so bad. But after a while he would be able to see the house wasn’t even setting on its own foundation, etc. He describes the same experience I had the first time I saw it. It takes a while to get your hurricane eyes and for your brain to process what it sees.

Sub-Category Number One: “Envision it as your own problem” (Empathetic Pain). A sub-category of “I carry a scar” was empathetic pain in which volunteer participants reported taking on the pain of others. Empathetic pain was introduced in one of the quotes above. Volunteers revealed the process of taking on someone else’s problems as well as the continuance of empathetic pain beyond the time they volunteered. Empathetic pain had the potential to overwhelm them:

Volunteer #1: It’s hard to think about it because I wish I could be there… all the time just helping do stuff and you can’t be. We’ve talked about compassion fatigue and how when you take on someone else’s problems and you start to envision it as your own problems that it just makes you really more affected than
having the objective outlook and for me, I’m just one of those people. I would have compassion fatigue.

Volunteer #8: I tried to put my, I mean I don’t know, tried to put myself in their place… I just can’t imagine your whole home, I mean, I just don’t know. I don’t know how to describe it I guess.

**Sub-Category Number Two: “I have mixed emotions” (Mixed Emotions).** The final sub-category of “I Carry a Scar” is that of “Mixed Emotions.” The staff of FDR expressed mixed emotions about their experience. On the surface these remarks could be considered part of the normal reflection on work done but more intense. Staff members experienced guilt for leaving and regret at what they were unable to accomplish. This contributed to their personal pain. In some ways this pain is unending because they will never have resolution to the questions or events that contributed to their thinking about it:

Staff #2: I was feeling guilty for leaving. Umm, there was this sense of guilt feeling in me and it was just like we’re going to be letting people down.

**Dimension Number Two: “It’s Somebody Else’s Fault” (Assigning Blame)**

The second dimension of the theme “Eyes of New Orleans are in Pain” is “It’s somebody else’s fault.” This dimension represents the lack of control participants perceived; lack of control about both federal and local government regulations that affected the resident’s ability to recover and the lack of control over being reimbursed by their insurance companies for damages. Volunteers and staff were more likely to place blame or fault at the feet of government than the residents. The residents in this study did not engage in fault finding or placing blame. It may be the residents’ long time exposure to city and state politics left them feeling helpless or hopeless about change; they were so accustomed to it as to not notice. Staff and volunteers were not from New Orleans and may have expected government efficiency to be the same as where they lived:

Volunteer #1: The biggest thing is it was like a third world country in our own country and you just never think that… it was like, when you think about 9/11, the same exact thought process, how can this happen to our country, how can this be happening in our country.

Staff #8: Poor FEMA, I think that they were dead in the water; I think they did every thing wrong and I don’t think they could have done anything right… you
can’t put a FEMA trailer into an area unless there’s a spot to put the FEMA trailer, to block it, tie it down, put electricity to it, that’s the easy part. Now, you’ve got to have potable water and you have to have a sewer... [but] every morning I went out I saw a pumper truck pumping septic systems, and I finally asked somebody, and they had in that sub-division 12 or 14 houses that had FEMA trailers that were all hooked up and operating but there was no where for the sewer to go, it just went into the line. So what they had done was they had managed to get like 6 blocks of the line cleared and so they pumped the line every morning so they didn’t back up into the trailers. These are the people that are getting cursed at because they can’t put in more trailers.

The resident who wrote to me described her own frustration at the process of trying to rebuild. No decision she made was helpful:

Resident letter: If you don’t elevate your house to base flood elevation you can’t get a building permit. My house is brick & 6” below that level so I appealed my damaged assessment of >51% to get permit. Well, the [Louisiana] Road Home [assistance program] won’t help you if you’re <51% damaged, not to mention the $30,000 deduction for not having flood insurance & the contract you have to sign that you won’t sell or rent your home for years if they help you.

Other examples include:

Staff #9: the infrastructure of the city is destroyed. There in lies the problem. Nothing can get fixed until we fix the infrastructure. And that is where we were starting to focus on with the committees and everything is to get the players who are involved in fixing the infrastructure, getting them together to try to work this out. Until that gets done New Orleans is not going to get fixed basically.

Resident #1: Katrina was tracked and the mayor came on and the governor came on; uh, they mentioned they we could possibly be hit by a hurricane and we need to look at evacuating. And they wouldn’t say whether it was mandatory or not. However if you don’t leave, we would suggest...Mayor Nagin would say things like, “Get to higher ground, maybe go up in the attic.” He mentioned one time that, “If you don’t leave, take a hatchet up so you can cut a hole in your roof and get out, cause if the flood, if we’re flooded you need to get on top of you roof; get out your house.” Those were his suggestions. He suggested one time if you didn’t evacuate you should buy these, these bags, these body bags or something about body bags.

During the participant-observer experience it was impossible to not have thoughts and feelings about what we saw and the impact on the people and the current state of infrastructure in New Orleans. Much of the work we were involved in related directly to
being able to get city inspectors on the premises in a timely manner. Houses were sitting without anything being done to them because an inspection was needed to progress. There were similar concerns related to safety and security issues in the city. The current infrastructure simply did not support residents returning to New Orleans:

P-O: update on the infrastructure of New Orleans. They are still short over 500 police officers. He said from over 300 schools they have around 50 +/- open, but of the school age kids back in the city, over 60% do not attend school.

P-O: He tells us the Baptist builders paid the licensure fees of an engineer so they could have their own. They now share their inspector with all the faith-based organizations. It is only with this person they have been able to get houses inspected so they can continue to rebuild them. He tells us there is only 1 Class AA inspector in the city of New Orleans.

**Dimension Number Three: “They’ve Hurt Their Brothers and Sisters in Christ”**

**(Interpersonal Conflict)**

The third dimension of “The Eyes of New Orleans are in Pain” is related to conflict experienced during the disaster response. When that many people who do not know each other must live and work together in very close circumstances, some element of discontent is bound to occur. For many, criticism was painful. Add to that the frustrations of continuous flexibility required by disaster response and the probabilities become a certainty. Staff members of FDR were most likely to experience deeper conflict than volunteers. Conflict experienced between staff members and volunteers was expressed in scriptural terms; sometimes with spiritual resolution: “they’ve hurt their brothers and sisters in Christ:”

Staff #2: This one week in particular we couldn’t figure out why one team had all these wonderful things to say about their experience here and the other team nothing but negative things to say and…it was hurtful things and I battled with that a lot and our staff battled with that a lot to the point where a letter was written just to say I’m glad you came but I’m a bit concerned about these comments made… they’ve been more hurtful and we’re all working toward the same goal and basically to let them know that they’ve hurt their brothers and sisters in Christ.

Misunderstandings regarding administrative decisions within the faith-based organization or components of the actual activities associated with disaster response were
explained by the participants. The context of these misunderstandings almost always was a specific activity or involved a specific person and appeared to be minor ones that felt worse than they turned out to be. The overall impression of the faith-based experience was not tarnished by the conflicts. In one instance, a team of volunteers either did not understand or did not agree with the role of one of the staff. Because of this, the volunteers did not clean their equipment, leaving it for the staff to do at the end of the day. The staff member recalls the hurt and frustration encountered in this incident:

Staff #8: They didn’t clean anything. I spent 45 minutes cleaning their stuff, got it in my truck, had a flat tire on the way back; I get back and I’m just smoking. I’ve missed dinner and I walked in to where everybody is and they’re doing something… and I said, “I need to talk to somebody about the tools you people left in the street” and this guy turned around and looked at me and said, “What about the tools?” And I said, “Well, they weren’t clean.” And he said, “Well, you clean them. Some of us work today and don’t just sit in a truck all day.” And my mouth started to engage and for one of the maybe two or three times in my life my brain said, “Don’t say anything” and I looked at him and I said, “Oh.” And I walked out, went back to my trailer, made my dinner, and I did not leave my trailer the rest of the night, I was just fried.

One of this staff member’s coping mechanisms was to withdraw from the pain, to do nothing. It was at this point the staff member recalls a conversation with himself about what happens next; a spiritual solution:

Staff #8: And when I got everybody ready in the morning and we went… the dark [voice] inside said “see if they get any help today, they won’t get a thing” and God said, the other [Voice] inside of me, said, “These are the people you have to love… doesn’t matter what they do, these are the ones you have to treat extra special cause all the others are family, these are your enemies, now you go to be nice to them.”

And, that’s what he did. He went and was nice to them and reports that when the team left at the end of the week his relationship with the team was restored and he now fondly remembers them.

Another staff member reflected on the decision of the parent denomination to stop the official work of FDR in New Orleans. He indicated that the national administrators of the parent denomination appreciated FDR but that it was not a priority for the
denomination. He was literally in a fight for FDR’s future. This was a conflict with no resolution:

Staff#6: Until this becomes a priority for the denomination we will never be what our potential will be. It breaks my heart because I think we have the potential to do a lot of good for a lot of people in a lot of places. There are so many voices crying out to headquarters [it’s like being] a director of an orchestra who’s trying to direct this huge musical composition and he’s trying to get attention to everybody and when there’s a disaster I’ll get the attention. And when the disaster goes away, the attention goes away.

Yet another staff member reflected on the decision to leave New Orleans and identified one of the strategies that he believed would have made leaving less painful for the residents of New Orleans:

Staff #9: I’d like sustainability. That’s really important too. I’d like us not to leave until we have been able to turn over whatever we’ve been doing so that we’ve kinda done what’s God’s had us do. Let’s don’t just leave. Let’s be able to hopefully pass it on and make it sustainable.

Feeding and providing meals for residents, staff or a volunteer was a recurrent theme of the experience. Food was certainly necessary for sustenance; however, in many instances the fellowship or camaraderie experienced during meal times was of greater significance than the food. Perhaps that is why participants from multiple groups spoke of meal preparation and its ability to cause conflict. Early in the response, teams were asked to bring their food with them, cook their own food, serve their own food and clean up after themselves when the meal was done. As the organization grew a cook was hired. However, meal preparation continued to be a source of conflict. There was an old adage some participants would quote that seemed to describe this situation: there were too many cooks in the kitchen:

Staff #7: You can’t have three different groups cooking three different ways…I think if you’re going to have a disaster relief team, you take in the cooks, you furnish the food.

During the participant-observation experience, my team and I also experienced conflict when we didn’t understand why we were to do a particular activity, didn’t have the resources to do what we were asked or when we were too fatigued to cope with the constant changing of our circumstances:
P-O: I encounter part of my team in the dining hall, mopping. Those coolers I filled last night have leaked. There are some unhappy team members. This is just a fiasco. I can see [people] have been working hard. Fred is still convinced there are 15 or so FDR coolers; however, he can produce none of them right now. At least two of the coolers if not more I filled have to be completely refilled. The morning is not starting well. Thing is, I really do understand their frustration. I’m frustrated. But, I do not know what else to do.

\textit{Sub-Category: “Too young; I was the old person” (Age related conflict).} Being a teenager or elder also contributed to personal discomfort without direct conflict. As participants relate their concerns about their age or other participant’s age, each made it clear no one had made them feel inferior or belittled them because of their age, but they or those working with them were aware of limitations related to age. Age appears in another theme as well but not as a source of social suffering but as an advantage. Both sides of this equation are understandable. The perspectives reported on being young or a youth volunteer were provided by the adults that worked with them. It is obvious when the experience is viewed as a whole that both the young and the old contributed exponentially to the recovery efforts. In many ways, the young were needed to do the hard physical work; the old were needed for their wisdom and experience. When combined the outcome was better than either could accomplish alone. However, there were also inherent dangers for these two ends of the age continuum. In this theme the disadvantages of being too young or too old are revealed:

Volunteer #6: We are going to go back. I don’t have a clue who we’re going to work with, I really don’t…it’s my understanding Faith Disaster Response’s grant has run out, they aren’t in New Orleans anymore. Mercy Response I’ve looked at but you have to be 18, Habitat you have to be 16 and I have kids that are freshman and sophomores that want to take this trip and so I’m not going to say no to them. We’re going to try to find a group that can accommodate that age. So, that’ll be, right now that is the challenge.

Staff #7: Being as old as I was and not having done anything before, I guess I was intimidated with a younger person because I felt like I was out of my element.
Dimension Number Four: “Whatever Was Happening Was Not As It Should Be” (Chaos)

Data in this dimension are directly related to the devastation experienced or observed. Participants described the difficulty they encountered in assimilating what they were seeing into their reality. Dangerous conditions encompassed the entire experience either in the form of environmental conditions or contamination and dangerous situations within the structure of the home. Secondary to the dangerous conditions was a hostile environment in which security or lack there of and the threat of crime against persons existed. Presentation of this data begins with quotes supporting the dimension:

Staff #9: Each time I would go in…there was never any real improvement…what was happening was vandals would come in…there was a lot of activity but it wasn’t necessarily good. Even for the people who needed to live there because they were homeless it’s not a good environment for them because of water and all that stuff that’s contaminated, …you know it’s not a good environment, so it’s not good for them to live that way…and all I would see…wasn’t as it should be and that saddened me because I new we needed to do more.

Resident #2: The hurricane was over with and my husband went outside and he say, “Well we made it.” And then he seen the water running up hill; water was running up hill. And it was when it was running up hill, that’s when he said, “Get back inside you all! Put the food and stuff upstairs because we gonna get a little rain and a little water.”

Volunteer #1: I saw was a sign on a tree and it said, “My home” and it had the address and a little drawing maybe done by a little kid and it was on a tree and I looked and the tree was huge so I looked behind the tree and there was nothing…It was just cement steps to no where.

Sub-Category Number One: “It was just so overwhelming” (Overwhelming).

Living and working in the devastation was overwhelming for participants in all groups; therefore “It was just so overwhelming” is a sub-category of the dimension “Whatever was happening wasn’t’ as it should be.” For the residents the pain was additive. The devastation was also personal; it was their homes, their belongings and their city that had been destroyed:
Resident #1: We were struggling, not knowing what tomorrow held for us we were getting by day by day… it was just so overwhelming.

Resident #4: New Orleans is my home. Never lived any place else. I love it, I really, really do. And, it was heart breaking to see this city like it was.

Resident letter: When I got back, there were only debris cleanup crews in [my neighborhood], every-thing was gray & dead, not even a bug. The mold was up to the ceiling. I couldn’t even open the door to gain entry due to swelling. I slept in a tent on my patio.

Many of the staff members were in New Orleans with Faith Disaster Response for many months. The average length of service for a staff member was 14 months with a range of four to 24 months. Some of them had actually lived and worked in the city after the hurricanes longer than the time the residents had been away. One principle of faith-based disaster response was the return of the home to its previous state of safe, sanitary and secure. When the entire structure was destroyed or deconstructed down to the studs and concrete slab, it becomes impossible to restore a home to its previous state. Anything done to it was new:

Staff #8: I left November 6th and the 9th ward had gotten water the week before which means you couldn’t of had a trailer until then because they couldn’t get you water. The last three houses [the boss] sent me to check I called him back. I said, “You sure about this address?” “Yeah, why?” “Well, it ain’t here!” “Really, the house is gone?” “No, you’re not listening [boss], the house is gone, the neighborhood’s gone, the sub-division is gone, by gosh there’s no [neighborhood] anymore! It’s all plowed!” “Oh, well then don’t go there.” Yeah, so you can’t make, you can’t make brand new ghettos, they were all living in a ghetto and you can’t make a brand new ghetto.

Volunteers had the least amount of exposure to the city because their length of stay was shorter than residents who had lived there or the paid staff that lived there for extended periods of time. With few exceptions, the majority volunteered for one or two weeks. Some returned a second time, with a few returning four times or more. With a
single week to assimilate the devastation they were seeing and working in, many of the
volunteers used words such as shocking and disbelief to accent their descriptions. They
were shocked on many levels. They did not realize it was as bad as it was. They had no
frame of reference with which to compare it:

Volunteer #3: They took us on a little journey around the city and we saw the
9th ward and then even some of the other more up-scale neighborhoods. The
9th ward was obviously the worst…absolutely obliterated.

Volunteer #4: People had never been able to get in; furniture had been pushed up
against the doors and we ended up having to take the doors off the hinges and just
begin pulling furniture out….Being there, knowing that nobody else had been
in and just wondering if we would even find a dead body after all that time.

Volunteer #6: Some of these yards were up to your waist. I’m 6 foot 4 and
some of this stuff was up to my waist…You walk into the yard and you aren’t
even walking on the earth. You’re walking on the woven mess of weeds that
have grown underneath the taller weeds. And so, you’re sponging, you’re
springing a little bit off these weeds.

When my team volunteered in July, 2006 many were seeing the devastation for
the first time:

P-O: The neighborhood where we worked had more non-fixed houses than
fixed and rows and rows of FEMA trailers. Water marks are still visible on many
houses, as are the big painted X’s on the fronts of the houses representing the
results of the house searches... The street of the house we are to work is almost
impassible. It is full of potholes.

Sub-Category Number Two: “A new reality” (A new reality). A transition was
taking place and there was a new reality to accept. There was no guarantee the new
reality was permanent; it was fluid and changed day to day. The staff and volunteers were
moved by the plight of the residents who had experienced such a profound transition:

Staff #1: For some of them it has numbed them in the sense that this is a new
reality. Not a numbing in a bad way. But for everybody down here this is the
new reality: seeing FEMA trailers and seeing homes gutted.
Water marks on houses, FEMA trailers in front yards, big X’s on houses, potholes, no street signs were just a few examples of the new reality residents coped with on a daily basis. As volunteers my team also experienced the new reality. Progress and new reality were linked but not always viewed from the same lenses:

P-O: Eventually we get to an area that still has debris. There is a church. It has no windows. There are broken houses around it. There is an overturned school bus in front of it. There is a car whose back end is hiked up. Suddenly our guide says there’s something wrong with this picture. This is all staged. He knows for a fact that bus wasn’t there, the car wasn’t there. We notice an unmarked white sedan with a person setting there. Then our guide suggests this is now a movie set. Apparently there is a new TV series featuring 2 cops from New Orleans at the time of the hurricane. This must be the set. It is eerie. They tell us a lot of filming is done here because movie studios cannot even begin to replicate this.

There is also a new reality for the infrastructure of New Orleans. It was not difficult to see the impact the broken infrastructure had on the neighborhoods we work in:

P-O: An update on the infrastructure of New Orleans. They are still short over 500 police officers. He said from over 300 schools they have around 50 +/- open, but of the school age kids back in the city, over 60% do not attend school. This is an amazing statistic to me. He also said that there have now been over 800 Katrina related suicides.

**Sub-Category Number Three: “It was dangerous” (Dangerous conditions).**

Dangerous conditions surrounded the residents, staff members and volunteers as they worked together and individually to recover from the disaster. Residents did not speak of the environmental danger; there was an unspoken acceptance of the conditions. In some ways the longer a person was exposed to the conditions the more they became anesthetized to them. It was as if an agreement between the residents and danger has been reached; they learned where and when to do something and by acting on what they learned the danger was abated, even ignored. The staff of FDR also became accustomed to the danger; always mindful of it, careful to take precautions, but live in harmony with it. However, volunteers did not have sufficient time to become accustomed to the danger or even fully recognize what the dangers were. This required FDR to work hard at
mitigating the dangers and stay on constant alert. The leaders, whether staff of FDR or volunteer team leaders, were responsible for the safety of others:

Volunteer #3: I remember the way we had to suit up was because of all the devastation you just had to be covered from head to toe because of the mold….

Volunteer #6: You walk in, with the knowledge there could be Africanized bees, there could be fire ants, there could be poisonous snakes, there are compressed propane gas tanks, and whatever else is not friendly.

Our team had been well prepared for the dangerous aspects. Despite that preparation, we were unprepared for the level of constant vigilance required. The team’s volunteer service began nearly two years after the hurricane, in the dead of summer. Our primary dangers were heat related, but sometimes we created our own danger:

P-O: We barely make it in the house before a downpour begins. We have to close all the windows. It is dark. It is difficult to work. Fred decides he knows how to rig the electricity from the FEMA trailer to the house. I look in the corner and there are two wires, each with an exposed end in the plug in at the wall running the other exposed ends into an extension cord plugged into the trailer. I wonder about the safety of this, but the guys seem content with the arrangement. Later, when I tell the boss about it, he is horrified and talks about how dangerous that is.

We also experienced unexpected weather conditions, outside of the unrelenting heat, that caused us more than a few anxious moments:

P-O: It starts lightening. Tom is obviously concerned about the weather and goes out in the street trying to see over the houses and what the storms are doing. I realize I have team members on ladders at the side of the house. I go and tell them to get down off the ladders and come in. I don’t want anyone struck by lightening. To my surprise they do as I ask. They hadn’t any more than gotten inside the house than the boss tells us a tornado is headed our way. We are to pack everything up and leave and return to our dorm. We know of no other place safe enough to go. We quickly pack things up, keeping an eye to the sky at all times.

Sub-Category Number Four: “It’s like a hostile situation” (Dangerous situations). As if the environmental and created dangers weren’t enough, the city of New Orleans had experienced constant security issues and increased crime since the hurricanes. City law enforcement agencies remained understaffed and were still routinely
assisted by the National Guard. As with the environmental and created dangers, residents of New Orleans did not talk about danger resulting from a hostile situation. However, staff and volunteer participants were very aware of the associated dangers, but not all were afraid:

Volunteer #1: People think it’s fixed. They think that it’s done...when I was down there at Christmas and they’re like “Oh, how was it? Did you have fun?” “No, I didn’t have fun. It was sick down there. Houses still have body counts on them. You think that’s fun? You think that’s OK? It’s not.” Like, it’s, you know, it’s, to me it’s like a hostile situation because the people in New Orleans are mad, they’re geared up and I’m just like afraid.

Staff #7: When we first went there I was not scared at all. We would go down and work in those houses and they would say be careful there’s snakes and you don’t know what kind of people... but I truly think that God was there... I used to tell the kids that had gone with me be very careful, stay with somebody, but the truth is that I would not have been afraid to be alone myself.

When in New Orleans, my own team experienced being in such an environment. We never felt threatened or “in” danger, but we were aware of the possibility. One of the more common strategies team members used to counteract the situational danger was to lock the van doors. Since the van was not bullet proof, this action was more one of comfort than security:

P-O: As we transition to the lower 9th ward, he tells us we are driving through the area where there is a murder a night. Usually it is drug dealer or turf battles, but there are those caught in the cross-fire. We hear Fred locking the doors.

**Dimension Number Five: “I Just Felt Utter Hopelessness” (Hopelessness)**

The amount of pain and devastation witnessed and felt left some participants with a sense of hopelessness. While this dimension represented only a fraction of the overall experience of faith-based disaster response, it nonetheless was evident and real for some, though few residents expressed such feelings. Participants defined hopelessness by what they weren’t able to do, when no resolution to the situation existed, and a sense it was never ending:

Volunteer #8: [I felt] Utter hopeless for the people down there. Just, I just couldn’t believe all the devastation and how it must have upset their lives,
probably forever and I just felt what little bit I was going to do wasn’t going to help the whole area. I just felt utter hopelessness.

Volunteer #5: I think the hopelessness comes because you become so narrowly focused on the disaster life you’re walking through.

Staff #3: I just always go back to the thought that maybe we didn’t do enough and maybe I didn’t say enough at the right time, my opportunity was lost to truly restore hope.

Staff #2: You may be feeling a sense of hopelessness because you’re not satisfying this person and you’re not sure what’s going on over here, There have definitely been battles and just doubt with what are we really doing, are we really restoring hope?

Resident letter: I’ve sued for $81,000 but really, that can’t repay me for the 2 years of toil & suffering I’ve undergone, only some of my financial losses, not to mention putting all of my plans & hopes on hold.

**Figural Theme Number Three: “They Were Strangers” ( Stranger-to- Stranger Interactions)**

Prior to hurricanes Katrina and Rita, FDR was a vehicle through which donations could be made and sent to disaster areas as direct monetary assistance. With the hurricanes came an unprecedented need for manual labor as well. This required a completely different type of organization, one that had to be built from the ground up. Staff and volunteers were recruited. Few if any had met each other before their arrival in New Orleans, and even if they had met, they had no real experience of working and living together; in effect, they were strangers. With 633 pieces of data, this theme represents one of the largest data portions of the research. There are five dimensions with multiple sub-categories:

- “We Took Jesus to the Streets” (Caring)
  - “To be Jesus in the flesh” (Jesus Incarnate)
  - “Listen” (Listening)
  - “We just sat and prayed” (Spiritual support)
- “We Cleaned Up” (Work)
- “The Help!” (Receiving Assistance)
“Found the most important things” (Respect for sentiment)

“I’ve Been More Administrative” (Administrative)
  - “Bring attention to safety” (Safety)
  - “Watch the money” (Finance)
  - “It was time for the residents of New Orleans to step up” (Transferring power)

“You Need to Be Gumby” (Adapting)
  - “We learned as we went” (Experiential learning)
  - “The things that overwhelmed me” (Overwhelming)
  - “How I dealt with it” (Coping)

Not only did staff and volunteers not know each other, they did not know the people they were helping. In many cases they never personally met the people they helped, particularly during the months spent gutting homes. Residents of New Orleans were not immediately allowed back in the city, the infrastructure was broken and there were few places safe enough to live. Residents and staff members communicated through mail and phone, seeking assistance and the necessary permissions to do the work. Staff members routinely worked with city, state and federal officials, serving on many committees related to rebuilding New Orleans. In some cases staff members of FDR chaired these committees. Yet the story didn’t change; members of the committees and government officials were strangers.

In asking for or accepting the stranger’s help, the residents bared their lives and souls as these strangers stripped their belongings and memories, took their homes down to their very foundations, stripped walls and ceilings up to the rafters and then put their belongings and memories along the curbside for all to see. Yet, the residents speak of the care with which these strangers did the destruction.

The acknowledgement that faith-disaster response was about strangers helping strangers was represented in all participant groups. Residents of New Orleans were incredulous that strangers would come to help them; staff members and volunteers were more matter of fact about it:
Resident #2: I know Faith [Disaster Response]. It [has] really been a blessing to me. They really helped us, not just in supplies and stuff like that, [but] words [and] encouragement. That’s the most important thing. They were strangers. So good that they could come out [of] their busy schedule and help us, when no one else would come to help us.

Volunteer #4: And, I think that is the major lesson, being, just being there, being of service to people, to strangers. It’s easy to be of service to your family members and your friends, but when you’re of service to total strangers out there, you know, that I think is you know the lesson that is taught, you know that God wants us to learn. That’s what it is.

Staff #8: On the first day and of course when they started out they came from all different places and didn’t know each other and [now] they’re a family.

**Dimension Number One: “We Took Jesus to the Street” (Caring)**

There was a natural transition between the volunteers’ and staff’s belief that they were in New Orleans because God directed them to go and intentionally acting in a way that would demonstrate God’s love. This was described as “we took Jesus to the street.” When participants spoke of this, they expressed the belief that they took Jesus to the streets by doing the work, providing care, and serving as they thought Jesus would do:

Staff #5: We took Jesus to the streets, that’s what the teams did, took Him to the streets.

Staff #9: [We] do what Jesus wants us to…hold the hands of the folks that are just trying to figure out what just happened to them. That’s what we have to do.

**Sub-Category Number One: “To be Jesus in the flesh” (Jesus Incarnate).**

Volunteers and staff members also spoke of being His emissaries:

Staff #6: I tell people that we’ve been able to move down here…to be Jesus in the flesh.

Staff #8: I was there just to support the people that were there to do the work and to be Jesus’ hands and feet and to show Jesus’ love.

Staff #8: I’m out there in July when it’s hot cutting these bushes. And I’m going, “God, what in the world is this?” And he goes, “This is what I want you to do. Didn’t you read the book? This is what I want you to do for me. What you’re doing for the least of these is what you’re doing for me.”
Sub-Category Number Two: “Listen” (Listening). Listening occurred spontaneously and on purpose. Participants found comfort in listening to one another. Listening contributed to the relationship transformation of stranger to that of family (the next theme to be discussed):

Staff #7: There was an older lady that got bit by a spider and I took her to the doctor. I just sat there and visited with her while we waited… she would say that people never sit to listen with her anymore.

P-O: Two of our guys take the truck and go unload the insulation. When they get there, the homeowner is there and apparently just needs to talk. They listen. It is quite a while before they are able to return.

Sub-Category Number Three: “Just set and pray” (Spiritual support). A third sub-category of the dimensions of “we just took Jesus to the streets” is that of providing spiritual support. Prayers were offered on behalf and for the residents of New Orleans, the volunteer teams and the staff members. Residents prayed for residents and they prayed for help:

Resident #1: when she called me back the second time… I said, “I can’t get [in touch with] anybody but we can pray, you know I can get a hold of God” so she said, “well you pray; we’re going to save my battery” you know, because of the electricity, and so that’s what I did.

Resident #2: I was standing outside and I was praying and was asking the Lord to help me. That morning the doorbell rang it was the Pastor at the door saying, “I just came over to see about you.” And I said, “Thank God.

Staff #7: We had a lady come that had cancer and because of all the mess in New Orleans there just really wasn’t not a whole lot to do and all she wanted us to do was just set and pray with her.

P-O: As we get out of the van, our team mate asks if he can have prayer with them. We gather around them and he prays a beautiful prayer for God’s safe-keeping. All are moved. He prays for the leader’s back.
**Dimension Number Two: “We Cleaned Up” (Work)**

The physical work of FDR is represented in the second dimension of the theme “they were strangers.” Staff members, volunteers and residents worked in isolation, side-by-side, or any combination there of as they cleaned up the homes, yards and neighborhoods of New Orleans. The work varied, and was expansive and dependant on the current stage of deconstruction or reconstruction at the work site. Some volunteers worked on a single home their entire length of service, some mowed yards and cut down weeds and others participated in rebuilding homes. Sometimes volunteers knew the work they would be doing prior to their arrival in New Orleans, but always, the work they were to do could change day-to-day, minute-by-minute. Table 4.6 represents the different types of work participants identified in their experience of faith-based disaster response. The list is not meant to be an exhaustive list of faith-based activities. It includes those activities mentioned more than once by participants. Four types of work are represented: 1) administrative; 2) deconstruction; 3) reconstruction; and 4) community building.

Despite the variety of the work represented in Table 4.6, the intensity and meaning of the work is not captured. Participants spoke about how hard the work was both mentally and physically, they spoke of the challenges of the work and their interactions with each other during the work:

Volunteer #5: I talked to the people in the neighborhood… they couldn’t do much more than just cry… They couldn’t really say a whole lot… maybe thank you were the only words they said. You could just tell because, it’s hard you know. We were in there ripping things out of their house, you know, and they were thankful.

Staff #8: There was a retired black couple who were raising their grandchildren [and] had lost part of their roof and… I was able to show them how to take 2 x 8’s and sandwich broken trusses and put bolts through them without having to tear the roof off and so the lady was able to use her insurance money to replace her carpet and flood damage that her insurance would not cover.

**Dimension Number Three: “The Help!” (Receiving Assistance)**

The dimension of “we cleaned up” represented the perspective of the staff and volunteers. This dimension, “the help!” describes the viewpoint of the residents who saw
Table 4.6. Types of Work in Faith-Based Disaster Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative</th>
<th>Deconstruction</th>
<th>Reconstruction</th>
<th>Community Building</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supply teams with buckets and</td>
<td>Ripping things out of their house</td>
<td>Cleaned storage area</td>
<td>Clean up the yard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shovels and hammers</td>
<td>Knocked down that hill</td>
<td>Jack up the house</td>
<td>Take on a quick tour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Off-load wheelbarrows,</td>
<td>Pulled an air conditioning unit off a cement pad</td>
<td>Assist residents in getting air conditioning unit in</td>
<td>Rebuild parks</td>
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<tr>
<td>lawn mowers, weed eaters, brooms,</td>
<td>Demolished everything on the inside</td>
<td>back of trunk</td>
<td>Hand out cleaning supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shovels, spades, machetes and gas</td>
<td>Moved some stuff because we were physically able</td>
<td>Sandwich broken trusses and put bolts through</td>
<td>Find most important things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cans</td>
<td>Spray the building with insecticide</td>
<td>them without having to tear off shingles</td>
<td>Cut the grass</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empty disaster equipment trailer</td>
<td>Cook</td>
<td>Put on new roof</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and reorganize it</td>
<td>Washed out wheel barrows used to cart debris</td>
<td>Hang folding doors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buy insulation</td>
<td>Scoop up all of our belongings out of the garage</td>
<td>Landscape</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arranging trip</td>
<td>and put them in the front yard</td>
<td>Trim painting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Financing trip</td>
<td>Gut the building</td>
<td>Stain folding doors to match cabinets</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oversight of work</td>
<td>Took the walls down to the studs</td>
<td>Put in closet organizers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Acquiring equipment and supplies</td>
<td>Stripped the floor down to the concrete</td>
<td>Wash the dirt off the exterior of a house</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chair and serve on committees</td>
<td>Piled debris and household items at curbside Tear</td>
<td>Donate new hymnals</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant writing and administration</td>
<td>out the hardwood floor that was throughout the</td>
<td>Rebuild pews and sell</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Met firefighters to use as first</td>
<td>whole house</td>
<td>Bring trailers full of food and unload</td>
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<tr>
<td>responders</td>
<td>Remove kitchen cabinets and all appliances</td>
<td>Gave the electrician, they gave me this heat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Met policemen, assure volunteers</td>
<td>Power-washed gutted houses</td>
<td>Install oven hood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wouldn’t steal</td>
<td>Pulled every single nail from the house</td>
<td>Patch paint on trim, siding and windows</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Investigate flood zones</td>
<td>Remove hot water heater</td>
<td>Put in bathroom baste boards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investigate city codes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unload insulation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Distribute business cards</td>
<td></td>
<td>Install insulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask sheriff to spread word</td>
<td></td>
<td>Clean up after ourselves</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Set up databases</td>
<td></td>
<td>Caulk and foam cracks</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clean paint off windows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>Deconstruction</td>
<td>Reconstruction</td>
<td>Community Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keep track of inventory</td>
<td></td>
<td>Take paint off hinges and door knobs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Track volunteer hours and work</td>
<td></td>
<td>Salvage anything</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Scout out potential sites to volunteer</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rescue my china, wash the china, wrap it in bubble wrap</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire facilities for volunteers to stay</td>
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<td>Build a porch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manage insurance</td>
<td></td>
<td>Put in phone jacks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Put in cable connections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hire staff</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fix studs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attend to safety/OSHA</td>
<td></td>
<td>Install wiring for washer/dryer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manage the money</td>
<td></td>
<td>Put in external dryer vent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make work assignments</td>
<td></td>
<td>Install outside lights with sensors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify dangers</td>
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<td>Build doors</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Put gas pipes under house</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Replace sewer cap under house</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Install bathroom vanity</td>
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<td>Install toilet</td>
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<td>Put caps on electrical wiring</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tuck wires in box to be out of the way of sheet-rocker</td>
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<td>Remove paint from attic fan</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Put in baffles for insulation</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mop floors</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Paint exterior trim</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frame new doorway</td>
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themselves as both a recipient and provider of the work. In this dimension residents are overwhelmed with the help they received. This was a good overwhelmed. Many worked side-by-side with the volunteers and staff. Some talked about wanting to clean up their own mess but not having the emotional or physical strength to do it; they were emotionally ready for the staff and volunteers to take over:

Resident #1: We came back to gut our house ourselves, my wife and I, and it was too big of a task for just her and I… then we came back with some help and then we got one room done and then we realized we needed more help and Faith Disaster Response helped us gut our house.

Resident #2: When we first came back in town… [we] signed up for the Faith Disaster to come and gut our house. My husband was kind of impatient and wouldn’t wait and said, “Aint nobody gonna come around and gut our house for free,” and I said, “That’s why the volunteers came down,” and so we tried to gut the house ourself. And a [staff member] came by our house and he helped us with the cleaning process, gutting out our house.

Resident #5: It makes a difference because no one wants to live with rodents, and especially me, so as long as the grass is cut that keeps a lot of rodents from hanging around… it’s a big difference [with] street lights on… It helps a little bit with security.

*Sub-Category Number One: “Found the most important things” (Respect for sentiment).* Many times the residents wished for the return or salvage of a single item in their home that held sentimental value such as a picture of a family member or a piece of jewelry. As best they could, volunteers and staff members tried to find the requested items. All participants, whether requesting the item, hunting for the item or finding the item were touched emotionally by the fact that the volunteers tried to find what was valued most:

Staff #2: I was able to witness a bunch of excitement because when we pulled up two volunteers were holding this rock… and the homeowner came over and said, “I can’t believe it. My daughter had a list of things that if they could be found, to find them.” We had arrived just at the time when they found the most important things that she wanted, it was two necklaces under everything, not dirty, not anything, they were shining.

Staff #8: This one lady goes, “the only thing I want is my wedding ring. My husband died 11 years ago and I got this wedding ring and it was on my dresser
and if you [could] find my wedding ring”…they found that wedding ring in the first hour and a half, they went and looked for it and they found it.

Resident #4: I have a 23-year-old daughter, she’s my only child. All her stuff from school, all her pictures was destroyed… the [volunteer] group had gone up to the attic and they found some pictures and they was so excited and said, “Here Miss Beth”5… I was just so grateful and they were so happy that they found a few things for us that we could salvage.

**Dimension Number Four: “I’ve been more administrative” (Administration)**

Disaster response requires administrative skill. Staff members (particularly the team leaders) were consumed with administration and of necessity left the majority of the physical work to the volunteers. Team leaders were responsible for the trip arrangements, financing their trip, seeing their team got the work done, and making sure they had the equipment and supplies to do the work. Team leaders and staff members worked in concert to attend to the administrative details. Because the administrative skill set for these two groups is different, the supporting data is presented separately.

*Administrative skills related to staff.* The staff members’ administrative skills required an unprecedented expertise. They were charged with starting, from the ground up, FDR in New Orleans. This required a significant amount of money. Receiving a grant supporting volunteer work provided some financial relief for the organization, but once the grant was depleted, resources were not sufficient to continue the response.

One of the first things that had to be established was relationships with city officials so the work could be done, and done safely for all concerned. Staff members worked in isolation, each attending to their own areas of responsibility. There was no one else to ask for assistance or delegate to. Yet, when it was obvious shared responsibility was needed, they quickly adjusted and worked together. What follows is a series of quotes that outline how they developed FDR’s response. Multiple quotes from the same participant reveal process and contribute to understanding the complexity and significance of the work accomplished:

5 Pseudonym
Staff #3: I met as many firefighters as I could, because they were some of the few people that were still in the city, first responders...I went to every police station across the city...and told them what we were going to be doing, told them our protocol, told them I had to receive consent of the homeowner before we would work on the house, [they would] see people at work on the property. I also made sure we told our volunteers that nothing could be taken [so] looting would not be a problem... they wouldn’t have to worry about any of that. I wanted them to know the areas that we’d be working in.

Staff #3: I tried to investigate the code process, the FEMA flood zones and none of that was in place yet... so we weren’t going to waste rebuild sources in an area that may not be rebuilt... I gave [the city official] my card first, and she called me three days later and said. “We have a committee next Monday and its called the Unmet Needs Committee of New Orleans and we need a chair for that committee” and she said, ”Would you be that chair?” and I said, ”We will, we will.”

Staff #3: I was filling up at the only gas station... and I saw the Sheriff setting in his patrol car and I thought OK, this is a good opportunity. I don’t know a lot of people; I don’t know how to get the word out that we can help... So I went up to him and handed him my business card and I said any residents you come across, please give them my number and have them contact me so that we can get them in the system.

Staff #4: We started out with a simple calendar and then it went to a big calendar and then it went to a computer calendar keeping track of all... the people coming. At that time we were running three states... We learned as we went. We finally came up with a way of keeping track...We were the office.

Staff #5: [I] Went to Mississippi because I needed to know where I was sending people and the capabilities and I just needed a visual of.

**Administrative skills related to volunteer teams.** Teams required less complex administrative skills; however failure to attend to the administration of bringing a team could leave a team vulnerable to safety issues as well as a lack of transportation, a facility in which to stay, equipment and supplies as well as food. Each volunteer was charged $5/day for a limited health policy that provided coverage for the volunteers experiencing health issues related to their volunteer service in New Orleans. Before the grant was in place volunteers had to provide their own food but were allowed to stay without charge at
the gym of a local Faith Church. At the gym, volunteers slept on mattresses on the floor, shared communal bathrooms, ate communal meals and used outside individual showers.

Once the grant was in place, a cook was hired. Many teams continued to bring food to share with all volunteers and staff members on site. Team leaders were sent a list, in advance, of the supplies and equipment they would need. Teams brought their own Tyvek suits and respirators. If they did not, FDR had a supply of this safety equipment to use and teams donated money to replenish the supply. Teams were also asked to bring a donation with them to New Orleans to cover the supplies used at the work site. One Staff member reported, “All some teams brought was energy,” but other teams, sometimes as small as 7-10 members, brought $10,000. The money the teams brought was put in the FDR fund and used for the disaster response. The seven member team I went with took $3745. In addition to these donations, teams were responsible for their own transportation expenses whether that was driving a 15 passenger vans, flying or renting tour buses.

One team’s fund raising activities are described on their Internet site/Blog:

Team Internet Site: The garage sale was a huge success! We would like to offer a very big thanks to our team members for the use of their house over the weekend to host our garage sale. Also thanks to the team member who made some wonderful baked goods to sell. We raised just over $439.00. This money will go directly towards our group's traveling expenses.

Team Internet Site: Here are just a few ways you could give to our group: cases of water bottles, Gatorade, or juice, Hand Sanitizer, Sam's Club or Wal-Mart Gift cards of any amount. Money (cash or checks).

When teams arrived in New Orleans, the administrative responsibilities of the staff and volunteers merged. Orientation to the site was required, assignments for work were made, and volunteers had to be taken to the work site and gain access to the homes. This was illustrated in the following:

P-O: The staff goes over our list of things to do today. It is much shorter. He tells me that if the work gets to the point that it isn’t keeping everyone busy to send some to the other house to begin installing insulation.

P-O: The staff is excited to hear all we got accomplished yesterday. We still need to caulk and foam cracks while the guys finish the insulation. He can’t believe we have already started that. He is also impressed we have bought the rest of the supplies we need. He puts one of us to work on putting caps on all the electrical
wiring in the boxes and tucking the wires in so they will be out of the way of the sheet-rock. He puts another in charge of removing the old paint from the attic fan.

**Sub-Category Number One: “Bring attention to safety” (Safety).** The dimension of “I’ve been more administrative” has three sub-categories: 1) “bring attention to safety;” 2) “watch the money;” and 3) “Was time for the city residents to pick it up.” The first component to be discussed is bringing attention to safety. Living and working in New Orleans after the hurricanes was dangerous. Every attempt was made to make the working conditions as safe as possible, following the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines. Each team volunteering in New Orleans was required to attend an orientation session where they were told what to be aware of and how to mitigate dangerous circumstances. Security issues aside, real dangers to volunteers, staff members and residents were the mold, contamination, animals, structural stability and heat:

Staff #4: It got hot and there were no bathrooms and people weren’t drinking because there were no bathrooms. That’s a real serious health problem. So we went out and bought port-a-johns, the ones with 5 gallons of water in them, self flush, and a guy had to dump them… But, it solved the problem.

Staff #3: The fire departments were open so I knew we had first aid locations. There were no hospitals or anything like that. And I knew we had a lot of volunteers coming and I knew that injuries were inevitable so I went to every fire station in the city, handed them my card, told them what we were going to be doing and asked them if [we] could use [their fire station] that as a first aid location, and they could provide first aid. All of them said anything but IV’s [intravenous fluids]; we can do anything you need.

When my team volunteered in New Orleans we had multiple opportunities to be concerned about safety. We too dealt with unbearable heat and humidity, minor injuries and a hostile environment. When a dangerous situation was evident a counter safety measure was employed:

P-O: Our teammate is starting to look hot and is getting into trouble with heat. We keep him behind to rest. I put a cold wet cloth around his neck, set him in front of a fan and keep a close watch. He sits while we work.
P-O: Some of the neighborhoods we drive around in appear to be unsafe. We see many police, military police; I hear the doors of the van lock.

P-O: By lunch, [his fingers] are stuck together and he can’t get the now hardened insulation foam off them. He is practically panicked. He tries gas, he tries paint remover. His fingers are burning. He is convinced his skin is coming off. His wife tries to help him. I tell him to look at the can and see if it gives any emergency directions. [It says] use acetone. He is obsessed with getting this off. His fingers are claustrophobic! They [go to a pharmacy and] return with a bag full of remedies: nail polish remover, WD-40, Goof off and who knows what else. None of this stuff is working either. They finally put lotion on his hands and stuff them into clear plastic gloves to moisturize them and allow him to eat. He says this feels really good and calms down enough to eat.

Sub-Category Number Two: “Watch the money” (Finance). Taking care of the finances or “watching the money” is another sub-category of “I’ve been more administrative.” Money was brought to the site; money was spent at the site, and money was necessary for the response to continue. In addition, when grant monies were involved, accounting for the money took on new dimensions. It was common for staff members and volunteers to use their own money. The amounts of personal money involved were much greater for staff members than for volunteers. There was a big difference between purchasing $50 worth of supplies and letting the organization borrow several thousand dollars:

Staff #4: Getting the money there, moving the money around. Watch the money, because one night he left me with 30,000 dollars and we had to, you know, keep track of every cent, make sure it went where it was supposed to go… We had a paper trail on every piece of money we handled.

Staff #4: I would do all my buying on my own personal credit card that I brought and turned in the bill. That worked out good for me and for them. The other administrator did the same thing. That way we didn’t have money, just turned in and submitted an expense report every month.

Staff #6: A lot of people think that Faith Disaster Response is 100% funded by the denomination budget [but] Faith Disaster Response is 100% funded by volunteer donations and so we do not get a paid check from the general church saying this is how much you have to spend. We have to raise our own funds.

Volunteer #5: [they told] us one day our materials were going to be late… and it was going to be the middle of the day before we got our materials and I knew we
needed them and so, I had money, I just went over and bought what I needed for the day.

FDR would give the team leaders money cards to purchase the supplies they needed. These cards generally contained $1,000. Volunteers were to record all purchases and put the receipts in the envelope provided:

P-O: We spent about $700 on this trip alone. We literally had the isles clogged with our carts. We had divided the shopping list up between us and we were all gathering at the front to check out.

**Sub-Category Number Three: “Was time for the city residents to pick it up”**

*(Transferring Power).* The third and final sub-category of “I’ve been more administrative” is that of the local residents taking over administration of rebuilding their city. FDR was active on many New Orleans committees directly responsible for the disaster recovery. When FDR was no longer present in New Orleans, their positions on these committees had to be filled by others. Many volunteers and staff members questioned ending their official presence in New Orleans. At the same time, these same participants acknowledged that it was the residents’ city and a sign of their work being completed was when city residents were willing to take back the responsibility for rebuilding. One participant recalled how this inner turmoil for him was resolved. He was at a committee meeting and one of the residents of New Orleans assured him they were ready to take over:

Staff #9: She sat on the CARE committee with me and I was talking to her before I left and I was saying to her, “I really don’t know that I am supposed to leave, I’m really struggling with this” and she kind of took me off to the side and she said, “You know, when you guys came down here we were lost. We had no more idea what to do or not to do. We were just lost. Our world had just caved in.” She said…I didn’t know anything a year plus ago, neither did any of these other people. But, you guys came in and helped us, lifted our spirits, you did all this sort of thing. Now it’s our turn. We need to do this now.” That was my release. It was time for me to leave.

**Dimension Number Five: “You Need to be Gumby” (Adapting)**

The final dimension of “They were strangers” is “You need to be Gumby” or adapting. The strength of this dimension is evident in the number of data pieces related to
it: 239. Being flexible has always been an unofficial but important mantra of disaster response. As one of the staff members told me:

Staff #8: I learned [being] flexible isn’t enough… You need to be Gumby. You need to be fluid. I needed all the time to adjust. Every day it was something new to adjust.

Based on my own participant-observation experience, I have concluded that I agree with this staff member; a volunteer needs to be Gumby-like. Of the 239 pieces of data in this dimension, 143 are from the participant-observer experience. As the coding proceeded and evidence mounted supporting my teams Gumby experiences, I realized this constant state of flux contributed to many of the safety and conflict issues encountered by the team. From one moment to the next a participant was never sure what was happening or what would take place thereafter. Plans were made but permanent plans did not exist:

Staff #5: They didn’t know where they’d sleep, they didn’t know what they’d eat; they started bringing their own food, and they started bringing their own sleeping bags… you just, they just rolled with the punches

Staff #8: We had talked to them on the phone six times, cause they were rather young and [the staff supervisor] said, “You understand 14 and under can’t go in [to work on a] house?” …Well, they had 4 people that could go in the house, 16 that couldn’t. The whole team was [aged] 10 – 14. The first smart thing the guy did that was in charge was to kick the windows out of the house and put a kid with a wheel barrow at every window, cause the kids [couldn’t] go in the house.

P-O: About 1:30 we finish all of our assigned tasks and begin loading our equipment and supplies back on the trailer, truck and van… Just as we are finishing, the other administrator and the sheetrock man show up. They go through the house and tell us we are not finished. The sheetrock person needs the ceiling in three rooms insulated and it needs to be done this afternoon so they can deliver the sheetrock tonight and begin tomorrow

Sub-Category Number One: “We learned as we went” (Experiential Learning).

As a result of nearly constant coping with the unexpected, participants adapted and learned as they went. Usually this learning was appropriate and innovative. Specifics of this component differ between the participant groups but the essence of learning as you go is consistent. Staff members learned about putting together a faith-based organization disaster response:
Staff #3: I knew we had 3 weeks [before] the first team [was] coming and I didn’t have a clue what I was supposed to do. I had to discover what I needed to do.

Staff #4: I don’t think any of us knew for sure where we were going or quite how we were gonna get there. But it grew a lot like a tree. I think each day we added to and made changes to adjust to it.

Staff #9: We first went down there not really knowing what we were expected to do, or thinking we knew what we were doing but not really.

Team leaders had to learn how to organize a team and all volunteers had to learn how to make do with the equipment and supplies provided or create something new:

Volunteer #6: I had no idea what people had done to organize trips when I had been a participant so that was an eye opener to me, just the logistics, the frequency of the communication with the agency you’re going to work with, all of those types of things.

Volunteer #5: We didn’t tell the kids about all the plans because everything was in flux, you know, just because you were planning to do this didn’t mean it was going to happen. They knew nothing about this alternate plan which they took me out of, and we did let them know.

Residents also learned as they went:

Resident #5: They needed something for the roof, I learned what shingles are while they were here and I had to go to the store to get them so I’m like, OK, I can do this, just give me the name of it. So, I went to the building supply store and I found the first sales person and I told them what I was looking for cause I didn’t have a clue what I was going in there for.

My team learned about the work and the impact of the absence of supplies or equipment. We improvised and learned as we went:

P-O: After break I move to scraping paint off the attic fan trim. It is slow going. Our college student suggests we use the wire adaptor for the drills. Great idea. It takes us three hours, but we eventually get all the old paint off, down to shiny metal!

P-O: We do not agree on how the house should be washed. One team member takes a hose to it, but it doesn’t really clean it, just moves the dirt around and makes mud. We tell him we think it needs power washed. He insists it doesn’t. We try to get the power washer off the trailer but can’t figure out how to hook it up. The staff comes back and says it is the wrong hose. We find other hoses for power washers but none of them fit the actual power washer. We have been doing
this in the sun and have wasted a lot of time and have only gotten. Then we
discover it is out of gas and there is no gas in the gas cans. So, we just begin
wiping the siding down by hand.

**Sub-Category Number Two: “Things that really overwhelmed me”**

*(Overwhelming circumstances).* The second sub-category of “You have to be Gumby”
is “things that really overwhelmed me.” This sub-category differs from a similar category
in the theme “the Eyes of New Orleans are in Pain.” Then the participants were
overwhelmed by the devastation. Here, they are overwhelmed by the work. For the staff
members it is the amount and constancy of the work that is overwhelming:

Staff #3: I had returned over 900 resident calls to my personal cell phone. I was
getting about 110, 120, 130 calls a day and I missed at least half of those because
my voice mail would only hold 40 and I couldn’t empty them fast enough and
record them.

Staff #8: This was intense; you just didn’t get a day off.

For the volunteers, the situations that overwhelmed them were far less dramatic:

Volunteer #3: It really did seem like a daunting task, to absolutely strip that house
down to nothing.

**Sub-Category Number Three: “How I dealt with It” (Coping).** The third and
last sub-category of the dimension “You have to be Gumby” is “how I dealt with it” or
coping. Journaling, writing about the experience, was a common way of trying to make
sense of and deal with it:

Volunteer #1: I journaled every single night so I have all their stories in a journal,
and I think that’s how I deal with it… I look at my journal, I think about it a lot
and I don’t necessarily use that journal for my personal journaling at home cause
it’s a lot to deal with it, you know.

Volunteer #6: You gotta have that type of stuff like that group journal so that
[there is] an outlet for whatever they want to write… there is no right or wrong
with what goes into the thing, we’re not, we’re not prescribing anything for the
journal. I would really encourage people to do that stuff because it really works…
Figural Theme Number Four: “You Form a Family” (Communitas)

Six hundred and thirty-two pieces of data support the fact that forming a family was an important part of the faith-based disaster response experience. There are seven dimensions in this theme, with some dimensions having sub-categories:

- **“Relationships I’ve Been Able to Form” (Relationships)**
  - “College student ministries” (Outstanding volunteer group)

- **“We had Built a Team Spirit” (Team spirit)**
  - “too young, too old” (Age differences)

- **“Worked and Sweated Together” (Communitas through work)**
  - “Encouraging each other” (Encouragement)
  - “The experience of growth” (Strengthening relationships)
  - “Whole families” (Families as volunteers)

- **“You Gotta Have Fun” (Relaxation and Recreation)**
  - “It’s fun going above and beyond what’s expected” (Existential fun)
  - “Kinda have fun with it” (Fun activities)

- **“Just the Way Everyone Came together” (Trans-Group Cooperation)**

- **“The Church is Becoming the Church” (Trans-Denominational Cooperation)**

- **“The Sheep and the Goats” (Judgment)**

Strong bonds within and between groups were forged. The time these participants spent with each other and under the circumstances with which they spent that time, working and sweating together, created an environment of trust, mutual respect, admiration, care, love and attachments. Some participants referred to it as becoming family:

Staff #2: I’ve seen each person go [and] we just form a family and I think that’s why it’s been hard to watch the different long-term volunteers go

Resident #5: So, you know…it was all like family.

Many different types of relationships can be found in the faith-based experience. Figure 4.2 describes the types of relationships encountered in the FDR experience. As each theme is described, one or more of these relationships may be found.


Figure 4.2. Types of Relationships In and Among Participant Groups

**Dimension Number One: “Relationships I’ve been able to form” (Relationships)**

Descriptions of the relationships formed are found in the participant’s stories and in the participant-observation experience. Staff developed relationships among themselves as well as residents of the community and volunteers:

Staff #2: Going shopping with the homeowner the other day was just really neat…she was picking out things and we would comment about them and it would lead to something else, nothing related about Katrina…we’d just talk about life and we’d talk about her hair and getting hair colored and dyed and you know, just different things like that so that’s been neat.

Staff #3: I’ll never, never forget this hard Sheriff…this brilliant Italian guy, tears on his face, and he said he’d call me.

Staff #8: I always made sure I went to her cash register. And I would always take time to give her a breather and say hi to her. At one point when I was back there and they were closed she came over and took care of me anyway, because I had made a friend.

Staff #9: I'll never forget these people. I’m an old person, you know, but I’ll take them to my grave with me.
Relationships between volunteers and residents were significant as well. One way the volunteers and homeowners celebrated their relationship was for the volunteers to sign the studs in the resident’s homes. After gutting the house, stripping the walls to the studs and then power-washing the home, all the volunteers who worked there would take a permanent marking pen and sign their name and/or leave messages to the residents. This act was special to the residents. As one resident told me, she figured out a way to still see the signatures after the dry wall went up:

P-O: Teams that preceded us have written them notes in Sharpie pens on the studs and doorways. The homeowner tells me she will know they are there even when it is covered by sheetrock. She is taking pictures of all their signatures and is going to have a picture made of them that will hang in her entry way when the house is finished. We add our signatures and team name to a clean spot on a stud in what I think will be a dining room or kitchen.

Sub-Category Number One: “College student ministries”⁶ (Outstanding volunteer group). One group of volunteers stood out more than any other; young adult college students with College Student Ministries (CSMs). This was a student mission group who came to work with FDR in New Orleans for six weeks during the summer of 2006. Other college student groups served with FDR, but CSMs are referred to over and over by both the staff members and other volunteers. One of the staff members provided an introduction to this extraordinary:

Staff #1: I had a group from universities around the United States, a group called College Students Ministries. They gave up their summer and they raised their own funds and spent six weeks down here with us. Along with them there was a teacher… [that] we kind of considered the den mother for this group of kids. But, just seeing the CSM kids with the concept that [in] their six weeks, they were going to, and they did make a difference in history by offering hope to the community.

Staff participant 8 recalls “They knew how to play, they knew how to work, they knew how to work together, and they knew how to pray.” This same participant described what it was like to return to New Orleans and the CSMs had gone home:

Staff #8: I just praise God that my wife got there in time to spend about a week or 10 days with them and then they left because their summer was over and then we went on vacation; then I come back; it’s all different. It’s like getting a divorce,

⁶ Pseudonym
like your mom died or something, you know, your son moved away, cause life’s not the same in Louisiana anymore, the CSMs are gone.

Pictures of the CSMs could be found on the team Internet site. They had pictures of just the CSMs and pictures of team members with the CSMs:

Team Internet Site Picture: Four members of the College Student Ministries team who worked with Internet site team. All have obviously sweated through their clothes, yet are smiling and joking as each is trying to show their muscles.

*Dimension Number Two: “We Had Kind of Built a Team Spirit” (Team Spirit)*

From the moment volunteers join a team, relationships begin to form. Activities that promote the growth of relationships include fund raising, planning the travel, traveling to New Orleans as a group, sleeping and eating together, and working and playing together. Some participants knew each other before they joined the team. This was normally the case for volunteers. However, they knew each other in social circumstances; they worked together or went to church together. They recalled getting to know each other while serving together in New Orleans:

Volunteer #4: you know, you go to church with people and you see them on Sunday and think you know them a little bit but if you spend a week with them, working hard and caring about each other, [you] get to know them a little bit better and get an appreciation for them.

Volunteers found a way to create team spirit and relationships with teams they never worked with or met. In the church gym, where most of the volunteers stayed during the first year, a wall of boxes was created to separate the men’s sleeping quarters from the dining hall. As boxes of food, equipment and supplies were emptied, the box would be added to the wall. Before putting the empty box on the wall they would autograph them, draw pictures on them, or leave messages on them. This wall became a literal bond between the teams and staff members. Some volunteers spent hours on “their” box. On occasion, volunteers would recognize the names of people they knew that attended a Faith church in another state or town:
Volunteer #5: One of the neat things was several of the groups had written on cardboard boxes and stuff that they had been there. But, I knew some of the people that had signed the thing and I had known that they were down there.

The wall served to connect all volunteers and when FDR changed locations, the wall had to be torn down. To some it felt like tearing down sacred walls. Those who stayed at the newer facilities tried rebuilding the wall but the original significance was never regained. The sense of community and belonging associated with the wall was gone.

Another example of the family bond between volunteers and residents was provided as they recounted how they kept in touch after the initial relationship was formed:

Volunteer #4: When we came back the next year we went back to that same house and the lady recognized our van as we pulled up out front and she came out to greet us and she let us walk through the house that we had cleaned up and now it had sheet rock up, and they were painting and [installing] cabinets... She was really happy to see us again thankful we had just stopped back to say hello to her.

Volunteers also formed strong relationships with staff members of FDR. My team invited two of the staff to come with us for a relaxing evening and treated them to a nice meal at a local restaurant. It is one of the team’s fondest memories:

P-O: We have a 5 o’clock date with a couple of the staff tonight. It is our tour and we are taking them out to supper. I think we are all excited. One of them made the reservations for us. We are going to a truly local spot, Cajun food, live music.

**Sub-Category Number One: “Too young, too old” (Age differences).** Age differences, young or old, were introduced in the theme “Eyes of New Orleans are in Pain” and are revisited in the theme of Communitas. Rather than age differences causing pain or problems however, in Communitas age differences were viewed as being helpful:

Volunteer #5: I think it is a hard concept to wrap your mind around even for somebody who believes in God and loves God but, He’ll use...even a bunch of teenagers on a roof of a house, or kids mowing lawns and cleaning up trash to ultimately bring [us] to the place of what He designed us for and that’s to love Him.
Volunteer #4: He cooks for hundreds of kids all summer long at the boy scout camp, he’s 75 years old and so he wasn’t going to go out gutting homes with us but he stayed and helped FDR with getting groceries and things like that. And that gave him a chance to feel like he was helping.

**Dimension Number Three: “Worked and Sweated Together” (Communitas Through Work)**

The third dimension of Communitas is “worked and sweated together.” Volunteers did not do the work in isolation. Some residents matched the volunteers work hour for hour and as they worked and sweated together they offered encouragement to each other, attended worship services together, grew in life experiences together and shared their families with each other:

Resident #1: when we were putting bathrooms in the plumber wanted us to, to dig the ground up, shovel the ground up… I thought we were deep enough and long enough and he would come back and he’d put that ruler in there and he’d say we need you to dig more and he and I we just, we just bonded. We worked and we sweated together, and it’s hard to explain how a disaster can bring people together like that and to work for a common goal.

P-O: After speaking with the homeowner to get informed consent, he became my personal helper for a time. I was using the foam insulation and putting it in the spaces where you could see daylight around doors and windows. He took me personally to places he knew needed it and supervised how I did it. I was so pleased he felt comfortable in doing this.

**Sub-Category Number One: “Encouraging each other” (Encouragement).** The first sub-category of the dimension “worked and sweated together” is “encouraging each other.” Encouragement was experienced in many ways and was reciprocal. Some participants volunteered even though they were physically unable to perform at the same level as others. In some cases this was because of a known disability and in others, an injury had occurred just prior to the trip and the volunteer chose to participate anyway. When this occurred, encouragement was just as apt to come from a resident as from a fellow volunteer:

Resident #5: And one, she was on crutches and she felt kinda bad cause she wasn’t able to do too much. I said, “But you know what, just your presence being here, because in spite of [your broken leg] or walking on crutches…you wanted to
come and help; just for to hold a hand for somebody.” …I guess in a way, in a sense, we encouraged each other.

P-O: The homeowner of where we are returns. She is curious as to what we accomplished. We take her through the house and show her everything we have done. She is excited and thinks we got a lot done…

Sub-Category Number Two: “The experience of growth” (Strengthening relationships). Relationships that were formed during the disaster response were dynamic. It was the residents of New Orleans that spoke in this sub-category. They received more from the volunteers than just work on their homes. They felt the volunteers cared for them personally, and provided examples of how and when that occurred:

Resident #1: So the wife and I got to know them…and those were times we remember lovingly cause you could really sense the desire to help, not only help but really mean it.

Resident #4: I met so many people… one [in] particular, it was the head of the project, he’s such a sweet person, you know, he has just been wonderful and there from the beginning to the end… matter of fact during the midst of all this he got married and his wife she came down and he brought his wife to meet me and… I could see that he really cared.

Resident #5: all of the teams that came down they was willing to write their names on my wall, on my studs in my house, so behind my sheetrock is the name of the majority of the people who came down who did any work at my house… they’re living in my house as we speak. So, that was uplifting to me to know what all was put into my house and all the love that went through my house.

Sub-Category Number Four: “Whole families” (Families as volunteers). Two volunteer participants spoke a great deal about the families that came and volunteered, not just husband and wife, but families with small children. The participants would tear up when speaking about them. I asked them why this meant so much to them. Their responses correlated with what volunteers would later tell me about bringing their families. They were passing on or teaching their children about serving others:

Resident #4: For me it stood out because they’re teaching their children… it’s not just about ourselves you know, we are here for a purpose; God brought us here for a purpose and that’s be there for people… not about yourself, it’s not even about not just giving money…
Resident #5: It was the little kids. They were just so sweet. I think the youngest one was maybe five years old, four or five, and he was actually going around picking up some of the nails from when the roof was being done and he was also helping with the shingles and one of the statements that he made to his bigger brother was “Make sure you don’t forget any cause someone may step on it.” And I mean, it’s like, what do he know about, you know, actually caring about someone at that age?

Several of my team mates worked with a team from Pennsylvania that had several parent and teen combinations. They got to see and experience first hand what the residents were telling me about. And, even though my team mates were not the recipient of their care, one father/son team made an impact on them as well. They witnessed not just work, not mentoring alone, but a relationship of trust, love and care:

P-O: Our soft drink executive shared one story that stood out to him about how the plumber and his son worked together, he said it reminded him of how he worked with his own two sons. The plumber was under the house and his son was handing him tools, equipment and supplies that he needed or putting together pipes, etc., before handing them to his dad. At one point, the son just wasn’t getting to the dad what the dad thought he was asking for. The dad got a little impatient and the son said,” Dad, I’m trying”

Dimension Number Four: “You Gotta Have Fun” (Relaxation and Recreation)

The unanticipated dimension of fun emerged during data analysis. At first I was taken aback by it. Fun? In disaster response? How can this be? Then, the more I examined the data from all sources and gained a better understanding of what the experience is about, I’ve come to the conclusion none of us would have survived the experience with out fun. It didn’t have to be leg slapping, belly laugh fun; it didn’t even have to be a traditional activity associated with fun, but there did have to be enjoyable elements that broke tension and facilitated stress reduction. Fun was also not age specific. Some of the more dramatic funny events may have been perpetrated by younger persons, but all were there to enjoy it. Fun as experienced in faith-based disaster response was both existential and physical. Fun was relational, fun was work and, fun was fun:

Volunteer #3: I remember, we had some crazy guys on our team. We were on one of our breaks and I was just setting outside drinking Gatorade and the boys start dancing, and I don’t remember what it was but it was so funny. They were dancing and they were trying to get me to dance and they were trying to get
another adult to dance and we don’t really dance, so it was just funny and
everyone, we just laughed a lot… that just happens when you’re working so
closely together. You know, you gotta have fun.

Sub-Category Number One: “It’s fun to go above and beyond what’s expected”
(Existential fun). Existential fun is that had by helping others. Participants reported
having fun working and sweating, having fun experiencing something new, having fun
doing their job. These were some of the same participants who were so confident in why
they were there, called by God to be there to do the work. They were experiencing fun,
joy, as a fulfillment of what they felt they were supposed to do:

Staff #2: It’s fun to go above and beyond what they’ve [homeowners] expected because you just see more excitement…I just love to see the excitement on someone’s face…I get pleasure out of gift giving and I’ve been feeling that pleasure while I’m here…

Volunteer #5: I’m just thankful God’s put me in the place He has to allow me to do stuff like this and have fun doing it. You know, in the midst of all the devastation down there and all the stuff down there, I had fun.

P-O: His [oldest team mate’s] sense of humor and fun helped carry us through when we were too tired to go anymore.

Sub-Category Number Two: “Kinda have fun with it” (Fun activities). Fun can
be found in any circumstance:

Volunteer #6: We would put a song together about every single trip just as a way to compile the memory… we had a talent show the last night…we had a rap battle the first year and so the kids wrote down lyrics and then they would battle against each other and we’re a bunch of white kids, don’t think that it was good, but it was fun. There’s always a water fight every year, there’s always enough stuff to keep it light,

Resident #5: [a man] told a lot of jokes to the people… they enjoyed a lot of his little jokes… they thought it was funny.

P-O: One of our team members has arranged a joke for our driver. He has been teasing her all week and today she has arranged for the security guard to stop him and hassle him a bit. The security guard stops someone else instead. Still, it was all in good fun.
**Dimension Number Five: “Just the Way Everyone Comes Together” (Trans-Group Cooperation)**

A significant dimension of Communitas was the coming together of all staff, volunteers and residents. The staff and volunteers came from all corners of our country and parts in between. They came as groups and they came as individuals. They came by bus, car, van, truck and plane. But, when they got to New Orleans they came together as one unit:

Staff #2: I love it when they come back excited with stories about the home owners, and even things that have gone on within the team, and I just feel like I’m a part of it as they are in the middle of it all… just the way everyone just comes together… it’s not a team from Arkansas, not a team from Indiana, not a team from Ohio, we’re one team that week… by the end of the week I don’t even know who belongs to what team.

Staff #8: I liked it when one of our staff said that the government asked him how do you guys all work together, cause it didn’t matter which church it was, and I saw that all over the place, it wasn’t a competition, they all worked together.

Staff #9: I think the understanding there is, the blacks and the whites, that they are all there for the same reason…Whatever it takes, black, white, green, we’re all here to help, and that’s what we’re going to do… you never heard anything about race coming from those committees

**Dimension Number Six: “The Church is becoming the Church” (Trans-denominational cooperation)**

Churches are generally in competition with each other; competing for parishioners, competing for contributions, competing for recognition, and espousing their doctrinal differences. However, in New Orleans the FBOs came together in an unprecedented manner. The denominational lines were blurred to the point of being invisible. All denominations worked together. Staff members and volunteers became friends. They recognized each other at restaurants and at rest stops coming and going from New Orleans. That this occurred seemed to be somewhat of a surprise to participants:
Volunteer #1: There is a good part about all of this disaster: denominations are coming together down there and they’re helping one another and they’re like you do the list, we’ll rebuild, you guys get the furniture, you know, and they’re going in a circle and they’re saying Catholics do this, Nazarenes do this. Lutherans do this, you know, Congregationalists do this, it’s just, I loved that. That made me so happy.

Staff #7: And I saw the different denominations out there working…I saw the Baptists rebuilding neighborhoods and you think this is so wonderful and across the street were the Episcopalians doing the same thing and I thought, “Just think if all of these people would actually go together and form one big union, and just go in, look at what could be done.

*Dimension Number Seven: “The Sheep and the Goats” (Judgment)*

As with all families, the family formed by the staff, volunteers and residents of New Orleans experienced some disagreements among their members. Some weren’t as enthusiastic about the process of faith-based disaster response as most. This did not occur often, but when it did occur it was of such significance to be remembered and included in the interview as one of the things that stood out to participants. One of the participants describes this as “the sheep and the goats.” He was the leader of over 40 teenagers and some of them had come to the end of their willingness to work. A decision was made to separate the teens who wanted to work and those who didn’t by allowing the latter to return to the volunteer village and engage in recreation for the day. This was not without controversy in and of itself:

Volunteer #5: We came up with the plan. I called it the sheep and the goats. We decided to take everybody out to the job… we had our group prayer time together, safety and instructions…and then we decided anybody who would really rather go back to the compound [could go]…I ended up being the one to take them back… they got bored, they played cards, they tried to do everything to keep themselves busy… But they [the group that stayed to work at the site] got more work done than they had gotten done all week… because they wanted to work.

Judgment did result in strained relationships but did not result in excommunication. The teens that went back to the dorm that day were still part of the team. Benefits of separating the two distinct groups were reported for both groups. That judgment occurred, perhaps unfairly, was acknowledged by the study participant. The
participant indicated that perhaps the teens had done all they could do; maybe they were too overwhelmed and stressed with the situation to do more; maybe so much shouldn’t be expected of teenagers.

Youth volunteers weren’t the only ones perceived as being in two different groups: those wanting to work and those not wanting to work. Volunteer participants reported interactions with some New Orleans residents who had decided to wait for someone to come and fix things for them rather than try and fix it for themselves. Some residents were perceived as negative, and volunteers who had worked in both Louisiana and Mississippi believed the residents of Mississippi were more engaged in participating in their own recovery:

Volunteer #2: You’ve got the group of people that are going to get in there, they’re going to fix it, “It’s my house, it’s my home, I’ve been here, I understand that they’re having some troubles with the levees, I don’t care, I’m going to fix it…” You got a third over here that are saying, “I don’t care what they do, if they don’t do it I’m not going to do anything. I’m going to set here; I’m going to wait until they fix it for me.” And then you’ve got this other third that are… they’re over here today and they’re over there tomorrow [indecisive].

Volunteer #7: I drove back through Mississippi to see how they were coming along. Well, I was pleasantly surprised [to see] people working their selves and you could see construction all over the place… whereas in New Orleans it didn’t look like many people were doing things themselves.

Residents were also separated or judged by where they lived and worked. It was difficult for some to accept the full recovery of the French Quarter and the remaining devastation in the neighborhoods. In the theme representing the decision point and commitment to go, one staff member alluded to the people in the neighborhoods being worth saving, as opposed to those in the French Quarter; she also noted the difference between these two populations:

Staff #7: Have you ever walked down Bourbon Street? Do you know what’s there? What’s worth saving? And you add the drug dealers to that, OK, but you go over here to the suburbs where we were working, yeah those people are worth saving, they’re worth working for.

Judgment of the residents did not appear to have negative outcome on who was offered assistance and who was not. Some volunteers did say they preferred to provide
help to those who needed it the most and had reported it to the staff when they felt they had worked on a wealthy family home.

**Figural Theme Number Five: “There Was Change Happening Within Them”**

*(Transformation)*

An outcome of having responded to the pain and devastation of New Orleans, coming together as strangers and leaving as a family was personal change. All groups had participants that spoke about the change that happened within them as a result of being involved in faith-based disaster response. There are seven dimensions to this theme.

- “Changed their Outlook on Life Completely” (Transformed Lives)
- “We Challenge You from Today to Live the Rest of the Year Like That” (Service as a Lifestyle)
- “Now I Know How to Be a Servant of God” (Mentoring)
- “They Gave a Lot of Hope” (Hope)
- “I’ve Been so Blessed” (Blessing as a Reward)
  - “This has to get a thank you” (Gratitude)
  - “Our bill had been paid” (Anonymous expressions of gratitude)
  - “Able to give back” (Reciprocity)
  - “A pay it forward kind of thing” (Pay it forward)
- “There’s Life Moving Back” (Resettlement)

Change, as described by the participants, was a by-product of the experience or involvement with a particular team member, resident or staff person with the intention of creating change. Because of their experience and the change in their lives, these participants were passionate about recruiting others to participate in faith-based disaster response. Participants felt blessed by their involvement and they felt compelled to say thank you to those from whom they received assistance. Lessons were learned and incorporated as part of the change experienced.

Participants were not the only ones who experienced metamorphoses; collectively the city of New Orleans experienced transformation over the course of the time FDR was
there. This is not to say FDR was responsible for these modifications but to note that the city was also undergoing transition and reconstruction. Progress was being made; and the progress impacted the work of FDR. Each of these dimensions of change will be presented, beginning with inner change experienced by the participant.

**Dimension Number One: “Changed Their Outlook on Life Completely” (Transformed Lives)**

One staff member described having been in an abusive relationship prior to coming to New Orleans to provide assistance. She had no confidence in her ability to independently function or that she was a person of value. Over the course of her time there, she experienced transformations she could identify:

Staff #7: I think I had to learn it was OK to be me, you know. I didn’t get up in the mornings worrying. I used to get up wondering what I was going to get yelled at for that day. And that felt good when that was over. But, now I get up knowing that it’s OK to be me. Whatever I do, if I make a mistake, God is still going to love me.

Another staff participant, one with no previous disaster response experience but with significant responsibilities for FDR in New Orleans, described the process of change he experienced in order to be able to be effective at what he did:

Staff #3: I stopped being naïve at the end of February 2006 when teams started coming week after week and I realized it wasn’t going to stop, ever, and that for the next 75-80 weeks of my life I was going to be going seven days a week for about 15-20 hours a day… I had to fasten down the responsibility in front of me, really strap it down and take control of it and grab the reins as tight as I could.

Staff members were not the only ones experiencing personal growth. One volunteer participant, a youth group leader, spoke of the alterations he experienced among the teenagers he led during the week he visited New Orleans with them. He reported that upon returning to their home, he had received feedback from the parents of these youth:

Volunteer #6: I have a good number of emails saved from the parents from that first trip saying, “I don’t know what you did with my kid down there but this is fantastic, you know, I’d like to send them to New Orleans every year.”
Another volunteer described the change that occurred with his foster child who had accompanied him to New Orleans. The foster child had gotten in trouble with the courts and had been assigned to community service, part of which was fulfilled by volunteering in New Orleans. This foster dad brought him with the hope this child would realize a life of crime and/or no education would result in working that hard the rest of his life. The foster dad relates what happened:

Volunteer #2: We worked Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday morning and Thursday afternoon we went on a trip around the city and Friday we had to work at the place where we were staying…Wednesday night he comes up to me and he was actually sweating, he was actually, actually extremely tired and he said “This is hard work. I don’t want to do this the rest of my life.” And I said, “Amen, thank you Lord.”

Residents also experienced growth. This resident describes how she gained the confidence to do what she always wanted to do and to be herself with other people:

Resident #5: I went by my sister-in-law’s house and helped because I knew, it just gave me the opportunity and chance to do, I guess, things I always wanted to do, and thought that I wasn’t good enough to do, so it gave me a chance to share part of me with other people.

This participant eventually concludes “I just love the new me.”

One of the team member’s of my participant-observation team came from a position of long standing personal difficulties that left her afraid to speak in front of others. Upon returning home, she participated in the team presentation about the trip to the congregation on a Sunday morning. Her change was noted in the field notes:

P-O: She wanted to talk about some of the statistics about New Orleans we had been told during our orientation. She is not an up front person at all and I believe this is the first time she has ever spoken in public. This topic allowed her to just read from the slide and not have to ad lib; however, she surprised us and herself, by making several spontaneous comments.

*Dimension Number Two: “We Challenge You from Today to Live the Rest of the Year Like That” (Service as a Lifestyle)*

Volunteer and staff participants spoke of their responsibility to tell others about the current state of affairs in New Orleans, recruit additional volunteers and challenge
others to make service a lifestyle, not a one time service trip. Some participants shared about the work they did in their local areas when they returned from New Orleans. They discovered there were people all around them who would benefit from the same services they provided in New Orleans:

Staff #2: We kind of challenged them and said “We challenge you from today to live the rest of the year out like that [providing service].

Volunteer #5: I came back realizing we can pack up a bunch of teenagers and go to New Orleans and they’re pumped and excited about going, but what about, you know, up the river, down the river, across the river where we live. So, we’ve started doing things in our local area with our teenagers and some of the kids that went on the trip.

**Dimension Number Three: “Now I Know How to Be a Servant of God” (Mentoring)**

Mentoring is a dimension of transformation. All groups of participants recalled how they mentored someone on their team or the mentoring they witnessed between two or more other individuals. Mentoring occurred between parents and children, between team members, between staff and volunteers, and/or between staff members and other staff members. When mentoring took place, it was meaningful to all involved. This was perceived as contributing to the inner transformation reported by the participants. One particularly poignant episode is related by a staff participant. He had been bringing equipment and supplies to one group of the adolescent volunteers during their week, making sure they had everything they needed. As the week ended, one volunteer relayed his influence on her life, an influence he was completely unaware of:

Staff #8: We’re switching tools around and I’m loading the back of the truck and there’s this 16 year old girl who came up, said “Mr., I need to talk to you.” …and she said, “Well, for the last four years, ever since I became a Christian I knew God was calling me to do something, but He didn’t, I have friends who are called to be pastors and I know people that are called to be missionaries,” and she goes, “and I thought that’s all you could be but I’m not called to be a pastor… and I thought how can I serve God?” And she says, “And I’ve watched you all week and now I know how to be a servant and serve God …”

A staff person related an incident in which a troubled youth was a member of a volunteer team. One of the team leaders had grown to respect the staff member and her
ability to work with young people. She came to this staff member and specifically asked her to befriend this young man:

Staff #7: The first thing she said was, “There’s a young man with me I want you to meet.” She said, “He’s having problems and I know you can help him. You’re a granny to everybody and this kid needs a granny.” It was really neat. And he’d come sit and talk with me. Neat kid.

My own team experienced this type of mentoring during our volunteer experience in New Orleans. We were completely unaware of the influence team members had on our youngest member, a 19-year-old college student. It wasn’t until the trip was completely over and a month later during a church service when the team was telling the congregation about their trip that he told of the influence:

P-O: This was his last slide. At this point he got very personal and told the congregation that being on this team this week had caused him to grow in his own faith, that he didn’t have a Christian example at home and that even though he was the youngest member of our team that he had got to spend an entire week working with older Christians who demonstrated for him how the Christian life was lived out.

**Dimension Number Four: “There’s a Lesson to Be Learned” (Lessons Learned)**

Participants found meaning in their experiences by identifying lessons they had learned. Some lessons were philosophical in nature and some were very practical. All lessons learned reflected a change the participant was making or would make in the future because of what they had learned. One resident spoke of trying to answer her daughter’s hard questions about why something like the disaster could even happen:

Resident #4: People say well why did this happen, why did this have to happen? ...I have a 23-year-old daughter who [is] a student at the university and she’s just, “Why is this? Why [did] this happened?” and I try to tell her there’s a lesson to be learned and sometimes you have to endure some things and God gives you the strength… It was through God’s strength and His grace that helped us endure that.

Resident #5: If I get to pass two three words with them [storm victims], you know you can be better, you CAN be better and I’ll tell them, think about it… Life is what you make it, you know, it’s not about what nobody can do for you; it’s what you can get up and do for yourself. That makes a difference in your everyday living.
The previous two data excerpts demonstrate the philosophical lessons learned. The datum below represents a more practical aspect of the lessons learned. In the mornings, our team left for the work site much earlier than other volunteer teams. In an attempt to be considerate and not awaken them, we would go into the bathroom to get dressed in the mornings. However, finding our clothing and toiletries in the dark was a challenge. The lesson we learned contributed to overall congeniality in the dormitory-like atmosphere. When you are tired from a long hard day’s work, not having to face conflict in the dorm can be a very important conservation of energy:

P-O: Lesson learned is to lay out all my stuff the night before. That way, I don’t have to see to get ready or go to the shower room.

**Dimension Number Five: “They Gave a Lot of Hope” (Hope)**

Hope was a concept identified early in this research process as being integral to faith-based disaster response. It was a concept that was incorporated into most of the disaster response program names, and FDR was no exception. Research participants spontaneously spoke of hope, sometimes calling it by name, and sometimes describing components of hope without referring to it specifically by name. When hope was not specifically named during the course of the interview, I would conclude the discussion by asking the participant about his/her experience with hope. The question was varied depending on the conversation to that point, but in general began with a reference to those involved in disaster response speaking of hope on occasion and then asking them if they encountered hope during their experience:

Staff #3: Even though I can’t define it, that’s what I think of when I think of hope, it’s the absolute confidence that everything’s going to be just fine even though at times it might be hard, that confidence is still there, it’s still that halo hanging there, that reassurance that everything is going to be fine.

Staff #9: All we were ever trying to do was give the folks hope… we send a team in and we gut that house, throw away all the stuff that is ruined and that sort of thing…we give them a fresh clean slate and you’d be surprised the hope that comes from that… we were there to love them.

Volunteer #1: I really hope that we offered hope while we were down there.
Volunteer #5: I think the infusion of people from the outside helped bring… restoring hope… it is the hope we can bring because we don’t have that muddied perspective… our perspective is completely different because we didn’t go through it. We can see that things are still good; for them, life is really bad but there is something better going on.

Resident #4: I’m a spiritual person and my family and I have always been in church and in a time like this, with this happening… your spiritual hope is really the only thing that you have to rely on. You can’t rely on the government, it’s just knowing that everything’s going to be OK, you just have to have that faith to know that God is there, He’s watching over everything that’s happening, giving us the strength to endure what we have to endure until things get better.

In the quotes above, several elements or constructs of hope are present and are congruent with contained on the Herth Hope Index: deep faith (spiritual hope is the only thing you have to rely on), having a positive outlook (everything’s going to be OK, we give them a fresh clean slate), possibilities in the midst of difficulty (can’t rely on the government, have to endure until things get better, the absolute confidence that everything’s going to be just fine even though at are times it might be hard, we can see and don’t have that muddied perspective), receive care (Faith group was their support system, we were there to show them we hadn’t forgotten about them), and giving love (we were down there to love them).

In the first quote below, the renewing of the city holds potential, the fact that this potential was seen in the midst of overwhelming circumstances illustrates that, for participants, possibilities existed in the midst of difficulties. Being able to give and receive care/love, and by extension help, is one of the items in the Herth Hope Index Scale:

Volunteer #3: I think there’s hope for a renewing in that city… so much was damaged and yet the city now has a chance to start over again

Volunteer #2: I feel we helped. Now, did we help 500 people? I doubt it. Did we help 10 people? I don’t know. Did we help one? Didn’t have one tell us that. But, you come away from it feeling, “Yes, I gave an effort and we helped some people,” and with the help there comes hope.

In the quotes below, faith is believed to be an element of hope. The implication is that God will be there for the residents of New Orleans after the staff and volunteers
leave. Potential is seen in facilitating a dream. Care is present for each other and for unnamed people:

Staff #2: We weren’t placed here to restore hope ourselves. The Lord placed us here and He will be here when we leave.

Staff #5: Setting in an office you don’t think you’re doing [much, but] you realize how you build rapport with people and help facilitate a dream for them and in turn giving hope to someone else.

The residents of New Orleans were the ones to whom FDR wanted to bring hope. While the findings from this research cannot lead to the conclusion that FFDR was the only source of hope for New Orleans residents, or had any actual influence on the resident’s hope, what is clear is that the residents themselves attributed a portion of their hope to FDR:

Resident #1: It just helps people to see that there is hope when it seems all hope is gone. And here Faith Disaster Response comes in, in the form of people, and provides that hope, provides, puts even a smile on people’s face, if you will.

Resident #3: There was always the monumental hope that it would all be right again. That was the biggest thing and that it’s finally happening. I remember the day I came down the street and saw the house painted [by FDR] it was like, ahhh, I mean I couldn’t believe it, “Is that my house?” I stay hopeful. I try to stay positive, I try to keep things really, really positive.

Elements of the conceptual definition of hope are present in this dimension of the figural theme “you form a family.” When compared with the attributes of hopelessness identified in the figural theme of social suffering, the differences between hopelessness and hope are illustrated. The attributes listed for each are direct quotes from the data supporting hopelessness and hope. See Table 4.7

The quantitative portion of this research, results of which are presented later in this chapter, included the administration of hope scales to all participants. These findings will add to this discussion of hope, and lend a different perspective.
Table 4.7. Comparison of the Attributes of Hopelessness and Hope
(In the Participants’ Own Words)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes of Hopelessness</th>
<th>Attributes of Hope</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upset lives forever</td>
<td>Absolute confidence everything’s going to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>be fine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What little bit I did wasn’t going to help the</td>
<td>Gave/received a fresh clean slate/start over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused only on disaster</td>
<td>Loved them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn’t do enough</td>
<td>Didn’t forget about them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn’t say enough</td>
<td>Anticipating good, going to see what was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost opportunity</td>
<td>Excitement for the future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unable to satisfy people</td>
<td>Each day with possibilities and progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning if restoring hope</td>
<td>Rebuilding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total devastation</td>
<td>Facilitating a dream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’ll never be the same</td>
<td>Put smile on people’s faces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media wants to scare people</td>
<td>Helping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do we believe it ourselves</td>
<td>Faith in God/ Faith God is there and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>watching/Spiritual hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not getting done</td>
<td>Developed Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t believe it anymore</td>
<td>Positive outlook/staying positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel like a failure</td>
<td>Renewal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting plans and hopes on hold</td>
<td>Enduring until it gets better</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dimension Number Six: “I’ve Been so Blessed” (Blessing as Reward)

Participants in all research groups spoke of being blessed by their experience with Faith Disaster Response. They were blessed by each other, by the work, by the donations, and by the relationships they formed. Blessing or being blessed was seen as a spiritual, not monetary, reward by God or people for what the participant had either done or received:

Staff #3: I came here expecting to serve and help others, to change others, not just residents but volunteers, but you know, it turned [out] that by the residents [and] volunteers that I’ve meet, I’ve been so blessed, you know, I’ve received a tremendous reward from other people that I was trying to serve.

Staff #7: [responding to New Orleans with FDR] was the greatest blessing that could ever happen to me because I needed to grow and find myself and I found myself there… For so many years I had been just someone in the audience, not participating, [but] knowing I wanted to.

Resident #4: I’m blessed. Of course I know personally people who have lost people during that storm and that’s got to be hard, I know, but at the same token I feel that I am blessed and that God has sustained me and my family; that [all those from] the church was definitely a blessing to me.

Team members also spoke of being blessed by the experience, blessed despite health concerns, linking blessing with God’s care:

P-O: He wanted to go and be a part of the team but was concerned for his health. He has a heart condition and multiple health problems. But, as he told the congregation, he felt that it was his job to go as God had directed and God would take care of his health issues. And despite a few injuries along the way, he had a wonderful week and was blessed to have been a part of the team and would go back tomorrow if he could.

Sub-Category Number One: “This has to get a thank you” (Gratitude).

Participants across all research groups were compelled to thank those who had helped them. This dimension demonstrates the ways the residents of New Orleans expressed their gratitude to the staff and volunteers of FDR for the help they had received. The expressed gratitude was meaningful to those to whom it was expressed. The staff and volunteers were not expecting anything in return, but when the residents took the time to thank them, it said to that FDR’s work was valued, that it meant something. Throughout
this dimension one unanticipated finding was evident: the residents wanted to do more than say thank you, they wanted to show their gratitude to those who had helped them. But this was difficult to do. Staff and volunteers were not allowed to accept gifts or money for the work they had done. This was in direct contradiction to what the residents wanted and needed to do. The volunteers and staff went out of their way to do special things for the residents and often would not let the residents assist with the work. This was done with the best of intentions, wanting to give the residents respite from the pain, devastation and overwhelming work of recovery. However, for many residents in this study, this left them trying to figure out a way to demonstrate their gratitude.

The creativity of the residents in thanking the staff and volunteers was not in vain. The stories of the residents saying thank you were consistent and treasured memories for the staff and volunteers. One resident participant knew it was the birthday of a volunteer working on her house; she wanted to get her something for her birthday but knew the volunteer wouldn’t accept it. She purchased a gift card to a store she knew was in the volunteer’s home town. Before the team left for home, this resident hid the card in the team’s van. After they left, she called them and told the volunteer where to find her birthday gift.

A common thank you to the volunteers was Cajun food unique to New Orleans. Some of the volunteer’s fondest memories are those of eating with “their” residents:

Volunteer #2: We had one couple say they were going to make some gumbo for us so they drove off and the next day at lunch time they drove in with…two caldrons full of home made gumbo and…then another group of people brought probably 120 Snickers bars.

Because residents could not pay the volunteers and staff directly, many of them made donations to FDR. As cards and letters of thanks that included monetary donations were received, FDR staff members then began writing thank you notes to the residents. But it is the words or prayers of thanksgiving most remembered:

Resident #1: [it was good] to see the dedication of the people who would come and I always said thank you for coming and helping us.

Staff #3: Day 3 was the final day. They were going to be finished that day so they huddled up for prayer and the homeowner’s right there. He takes his hat off and
he gets right in the huddle for prayer and everybody started to pull away at the end of the prayer and the homeowner said, “Hang on,” and he held the circle and he started praying and he thanked the Lord for sending these angels. You know, I’ll never forget that.

It was not unusual for total strangers to recognize a faith-based group of volunteers in the city and stop and tell them thank you. The thank-you that volunteers received from people they didn’t even know were equally valued:

Volunteer #5: When we were first went down there in October we went into a restaurant and there was another family or some big group having some kind of celebration… they actually stood up and gave us a standing ovation.

Staff #9: Toward the end we were working on a house, cutting the grass just to keep the rats down, the snakes down to make the neighborhood look nice; the houses may be destroyed but the neighborhood looks good and that helps, it really does. This lady pulled up in her [car] and fed the whole crew. And she said, “This is my way of saying thanks.”

P-O: Just this morning a police officer stopped in the street by the dorm and rolled his window down. He thanked the plumber and all the other volunteers for their work.

Sub-Category Number Two: “Our bill had been paid” (Anonymous expressions of gratitude). Occasionally, random acts of thanks were performed for volunteers and staff by residents they did not know. In one instance, a group of volunteers had gone to a local restaurant for their evening meal and when they were preparing to pay their bill they were told it had already been paid:

Volunteer #5: A couple of us went out to eat and we had our Faith Disaster Response shirts on… and we sat down and we were just talking, joking and laughing and while we were still setting there eating a gentlemen came over, he and his wife were leaving, and we chatted for about 15-20 minutes and when we went to leave our bill had been paid.

Sub-category Number Three: “Able to give back” (Reciprocity). It was important for the residents to be able to give back. They often did not know exactly what that might look like, but they were committed to the process. In part, they were committed to giving back because they now felt just as called by God to give back as the staff and volunteers felt called by God to help:
Resident #4: I’m just truly blessed because He chose me, that’s what I said, I’m blessed, there’s no other way, I said, “God, we got a roof,” been praying you know… I feel truly blessed, despite everything that’s happened God is in the midst and I want to be able to do what the church has done for me. I want to give back, I really, really do.

One resident felt so strongly about being able to thank those who had helped her she told them they would have to leave if they did not let her do something for them:

Resident #5: When they came, we knew they had prepared sandwiches or whatever, but we wanted to do something for them. I had to get to the point where [I said], “Look either you all gonna let us get you all something, some lunch, or you all can leave.” So they was like, “Well, no we have our sandwiches,” and I said, “Yeah, but you all don’t have shrimp sandwiches” so I had to tease them to keep from accepting no as an answer from them; to be able to allow us to do something for them.

Sub-Category Number Four: “A pay it forward kind of thing” (Pay it Forward). Two staff participants talked about paying it forward, a concept that is related to saying thanks in advance by doing something for someone else. They illustrated this concept with the following examples:

Staff #2: At the post office…one of the ladies asked me, “Can you feel this envelope, does it feel like I need to put another stamp on it?” And I said, “Well, it feels OK, but I always like to [put extra on] it just in case.” So she didn’t have another stamp and I said, “Well I have a two cent stamp here, it’ll probably only be a couple cents more at that” and so I don’t know if this lady saw me give this stamp to her but she came and said, “I have these extra stamps, do you want them?” as I was going out the door. I told my husband, it’s almost like a pay it forward kind of thing.

Staff #5: I remember the first time I got a letter and check from a couple. They said we want to give back to someone else who needs help and then another elderly lady, I mean she was in her 80’s, and she pretty much lost everything and they just really cleaned it out for her and she and her granddaughter both sent nice checks to help somebody else. It was just a paying it forward type thing…

Dimension Number Seven: “There’s Life Moving Back” (Resettlement)

The final dimension of the theme “There was change happening within them” was related to changes in the city of New Orleans rather than personal change. Progress in
rebuilding the city was evident to those who volunteered more than one time and to those staff members who were there over extended periods of time. Sometimes the progress was difficult to see:

Staff #9: That was the toughest time, probably, my first few months down there having to drive by that every day and to see nothing, nothing! I mean we’re in a big city and there was nobody there. Even when I was leaving now, a year later, you can see where they’ve started to gut a department store. You can see a service station opened up now, so there’s life’s moving back into this area. It’s been a year!

Volunteer #4: It was good to go back in September of 2006 and begin to see some things happening. When we were there the first time, everything was shut down. Signs on the homes “for sale by owner.” Nobody was living there. Came back in September of 2006 there was FEMA trailers in yards, some homes actually fixed up, landscaping had been done and you could see that it had come back and was beginning to be a neighborhood again.

P-O: From my perspective, much progress has been made since I was last here. The grayscale is gone. There are signs of life. Traffic is present. People are walking, setting on their porches, and visiting on the sidewalks. Homeless people gather in the grassy medians of the boulevards, most of the homes on the main street are lived in and are mostly in repair.

There was a process to the resettlement of New Orleans as experienced in faith-based disaster response. Residents first had to decide whether or not to come back. Whether or not they returned to the city, they must make a decision regarding their home; will they rebuild or demolish it. Rebuilding or demolishing both required the home be gutted. Because of the hazardous waste contained in the home, even homes that were ultimately going to be destroyed and never rebuilt must still have the hazardous waste removed before it was demolished. Once the home was gutted, all of the household items removed and the house deconstructed down to the studs and concrete slab, the homeowner must decide if whether to sell or rebuild.

In order to get a building permit, the damage to the home must be limited to a certain percentage and if the percentage and other criteria were met, then the home was required to be rebuilt according to flood plain specifications. Potentially, the home would have to be elevated as much as 12 feet. The homeowner must also secure sufficient finances to support the rebuilding process. As rebuilding progressed, city inspections had
to occur along the way, particularly electric inspections. If the home was rebuilt without following this process, a certificate of occupancy was denied and the homeowner still was not able to live in their home.

In some areas, the new city codes and or the decision to award building permits in specific areas have not yet been made. Serving as chair or members of the various rebuild committees of New Orleans helped FDR stay current with the decisions homeowners were faced with and guided where the organization invested their resources.

**Figural Theme Number Six: “You Just Start to Wonder” (Reflection)**

The experience of faith-based disaster response elucidated thus far is extensive and intense. It is not a surprise the experience left participants with questions about the work they had done, the people they met, and the future of New Orleans. In most instances, there were no immediate answers to their questions, almost always posed as wondering or thinking about an aspect of the experience. Most of the wondering was done after the experience was over and the staff or participant had returned home. These wondering questions gave insight to the impact the experience had on all involved. Therefore, I have included representative examples of most of the questions participants were asking themselves. Resident participants did not ask the same wondering type questions. They made statements about the disaster response that could be rephrased into a question if desired:

Resident #1: We didn’t know whether or not we had a home or not to come to.

Resident #3: I was here in the trailer… not knowing… still caught up in red tape. I don’t know if they’re ever going to get that straightened out.

Staff #6: As I interact with the kids I wonder how this is going to impact them when they’re 20, when they’re 30.

Staff #7: The concern about New Orleans, it’s what it’s going to become now… after we left what did people really think, did people go back to their old ways?
Staff #6: The one question they’d have over and over is, “I’m not a member of Faith Church, I’m not even a Christian, so why in the world would you wanna help me?”

Staff #2: I think it’s very easy to say, “We’re the hands and feet of Jesus” or “The Lord’s in control, we’re here to restore hope to these people.” And I’ve really, really thought about when we say this do we feel it? Do we believe it ourselves, you know?”

Volunteer #4: Being there, knowing that nobody else had been in and just wondering if we would even find a dead body after all that time.

A Model of the Experience of Faith-Based Disaster Response

A diagrammatic representation of the experience of faith-based disaster response is found in Figure 4.3. Following hurricanes Katrina and Rita, volunteers and staff read and watched the same news stories as the rest of America. They knew there was a need to respond and from a contextual ground of divine agency made the decision to act and go to New Orleans to offer what assistance they could. In the model, the contextual ground is represented as the dark gray box from which the remainder of the experience, the figural themes, stands out. A placeholder for the awareness of the disaster participants had prior to engaging in the experience is represented as a box filled with dots.

As staff #3 said, “I will go”. The residents of New Orleans also had to decide to ask for help or assistance. Arrows depict the direction the participants’ decisions took as they made the decision to go. In some cases they asked for the assistance from faith-based organizations. When staff and volunteers arrived in New Orleans they discovered news reports could not compare to the pain and devastation they witnessed in the faces of the residents, and as Volunteer #1 expressed it: “The Eyes of New Orleans are in Pain”.

The decision to provide or seek assistance resulted in a group of strangers coming together in the phenomena of faith-based disaster response. The staff of the organization did not know each other, nor did they know the homeowners, volunteers or city, state and federal officials they would come to work with. The volunteers knew neither the staff nor residents and sometimes did not know the team members with whom
Figure 4.3. A Model of the Experience of Faith-Based Disaster Response
they would work. The residents did not know the staff and volunteers; strangers whom they allowed to see their pain and devastation, and handle and throw away the remnants of their belongings. As Staff #8 suggested, “When they started out they came from all different places and didn’t know each other.” The figural themes “The Eyes of New Orleans are in Pain” and “They Were Strangers” are linked together with the experience of “You Form a Family” over-laying them both.

From the experience of strangers coming together, a bond was formed; Staff #2 referred to it as: “you form a family.” Communitas developed between the staff, volunteers, and residents. Reciprocal and life-long relationships were formed.

Change or transformation within one’s inner being was a result of the relationships formed in the new family as well as strangers helping strangers. All participants, regardless of whether they were staff, volunteers or residents, reported their lives were changed because of the faith-based disaster experience. As Staff #3 indicates, it “completely changed my life.” As the arrow suggests, transformation occurred throughout the entire experience.

In the midst of the experience, and in reflecting upon the experience, staff and volunteers asked themselves some hard questions. Reflection also occurred throughout the experience as represented by the arrow. They wondered about the lives of the people they helped but never met and about the long-term value of their work. One staff person wondered “after we left what did people really think?” Residents wondered about the people who were helping them: who were these people who had given their time to help strangers?

Illustrative Case of Faith-Based Disaster Response

What follows is an example of how the core themes and contextual ground are reflected in the words of volunteer participant number six, a teacher and coach in a non-faith based high school that was impacted by the devastation and pain in New Orleans. The participant’s story is discussed below with quotes integrated as needed.
Awareness

The pain and devastation left him saying “I can’t even understand what I’m seeing right now but we have to do something about this.” One way to do something was to take a group of students and volunteer in New Orleans to help those impacted by the hurricanes. At the same time the principal asked him to facilitate a service trip for the students, making the conditions just right to facilitate participating in disaster response.

Contextual Ground: “It’s a God Thing” (Divine Agency)

The context of his experience is revealed in his decision-making regarding doing a service trip to New Orleans or another location closer to home:

“You know, part of me says, “Gosh it would be so easy to go somewhere in Appalachia or somewhere south in our state where I didn’t have to buy that mold mask or I didn’t have to buy that Tyvek suit. It would be so less expensive for the kids,” but I’m not released from that stuff yet, I don’t think. Someone without a faith-based perspective on the world [doesn’t] understand the idea of being released from something,[spiritual] but in my opinion that’s what’s on my plate right now.

Figural Theme: “I Will Go” (Decision Point)

Deciding to go to New Orleans was a deliberate decision. He then announced to the students of the high school plans for a spring break service trip to New Orleans to provide hurricane relief:

“I went back and forth if I wanted to do this every year, because this wears you out. And with that being spring break, like in my head I was thinking I could either take this week off and relax and maybe go somewhere else, for vacation or I could, do I want to do this trip again. But, I mean, how do you stop doing something like that, really? That’s the thing that I went back and forth with in my mind was I know there’s a need. The need has been identified. We have the vehicle, we have the avenue… How can I not?”
**Figural Theme: “The Eyes of New Orleans are in Pain” (Social Suffering)**

The volunteers parked their tour bus in the parking lot of a devastated and abandoned school in a neighborhood in New Orleans. Remembering that experience brings emotions difficult to control and Volunteer #6 was tearful as he recounted the social suffering he and his team encountered:

“This school was an elementary school that is no longer being used...all the furniture has been removed, all the dry wall, all the chalkboards, everything is still up, with the day August 29th written on it. Unbelievable! It is like you walk back a little bit in time. When we were [there] in March was like going back 18 months in time and seeing, wow, this is what this building looked like, the day of [the hurricane]. And to see the water line inside the building. I had seen that before, in houses and on the outside of houses, and so inside a school building it didn’t shock me as much. But when I saw that flood line on the outside of the building it really sunk in (voice breaking, eyes tearing).

**Figural Theme: “They Were Strangers” (Stranger-to-Stranger Interactions)**

The decision to respond to the devastation and pain in New Orleans brought this teacher and his students to Faith Disaster Response and one of the residents. All were strangers to each other but would become inextricably bound over the one week of the experience. The neighborhood was devastated during hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Faith Disaster Response was already present and providing assistance to residents in this neighborhood when the teacher and students planned their trip. The team traveled by tour bus and Volunteer #6 describes their trip and subsequent arrival in the New Orleans area:

“We got there after midnight, like early Sunday morning. We just slept. People started waking up at 10, 11 o’clock and it’s a Sunday morning and there’s church going on. People got Frisbees out, barefoot in the grass on the church lawn whipping the Frisbee around. Some of the kids went in to check out the church service, you know that was just a choice thing. But then after the church service, some of the people from the church, some of the youth and some of the youth leaders, they were hanging out with us.”

The volunteers rode in their tour bus each day to the neighborhood where they worked. The bathroom on the bus was their only option for restroom facilities. They brought their lunches with them each day and would meet at the tour bus for breaks and
lunch. They met one particular New Orleans resident, Mary, while working on one of her neighbor’s houses and developed a friendship with her. Volunteer #6 tells the story from here:

“We had this lady, Mary, that lived around the corner, who would visit us every day and you know, she had brooms and shovels if we needed them and so we ended up using some of her stuff. Later on that spring, you know, we gave her our [contact] information.

Figural Theme: “You Form a Family” (Communitas)

The relationship the team and Mary developed continued beyond the time they met and worked together in New Orleans.

“She actually said, “I have a friend who lives in your town. If I come up later this year I’m going to come out and visit you guys. Out of nowhere, in September, here she comes, she calls into the school in the morning, “I’m here and I’m coming out.” So, she comes out and visits and brought us, I would say, 10 books on Katrina for the library.”

Students from the high school volunteered with Faith-Disaster Response the next year as well. They tried to find Mary:

“We actually went back to find her the second year…We went around the corner from the house so we could find Mary’s place so we could say hi but she was out. We got to talk to the guy in the trailer; we said tell her her friends from FDR said hi. So, we’ll try again next year.”

Figural Theme: “There Was Change Happening Within Them” (Transformation)

Their experience with Faith Disaster Response did not leave this group of teenagers unaffected. Their teacher, Volunteer #6, earnestly described what he perceived as the change in his students:

“I think adolescents struggle with the whole egotistical view of life and that’s a developmental thing, and so for a 15 or a 16 year old to begin to assume a perspective that is bigger than themselves I think is ground breaking for them because that’s something that they trend towards at 17, 18, 19, 20, they really start to move into that type of a phase, but in my opinion that’s really what started to happen with a lot of these kids. They had, maybe for the first time, they had

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7 Pseudonym
been confronted with the thought that wow, it’s not all about me, like there’s more to life than me, there’s serving other people.”

**Figural theme: “You Just Start to Wonder” (Reflection)**

This participant then goes on to reflect on his experience and wonders about the kids who attended that school:

“I’m just thinking [about when] we ate lunch leaning up against the school wall on the outside of the building, [I] looked at that water line every time I looked at the building. I mean,… I don’t think I even realized this maybe until this morning, but I really think that is one of the things that sticks with me the most. Maybe because I work in a school, but so many questions linger from that experience. Where are the kids going to school now? Where do, from that neighborhood live right now?”

Every aspect or theme of the faith-based experience is included in the Model of The Experience of Faith-Based Disaster Response and is represented in the illustrative case above.

**Quantitative Analysis**

The results of the quantitative analysis will be presented next. These results provide the quantitative answers to research questions six, eight and nine.

**Research Question Number Six: What is the impact of the disaster on those who serve and receive assistance?**

Measures of central tendency for the IES-R are presented in Table 4.8. One resident refused to complete the scale, bringing the $n$ for this scale in the resident group to four. The items on the scale selected by seven or more of the 22 participants at the moderate level or above with only one or two people choosing above moderate, include “Any reminder brought back feelings about it,” “Other things kept making me think about it,” and “Pictures about it popped into my mind.” A copy of the IES-R can be found in Appendices II-IV.
Table 4.8. Measures of Central Tendency for the Impact of Event Scale-Revised
(Range 0 – 88)\(^8\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Staff (n = 9)</th>
<th>Volunteers (n = 8)</th>
<th>Residents (n = 4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td>34.22</td>
<td>37.64</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median</strong></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mode</strong></td>
<td>22 (smallest mode, multiple modes exist)</td>
<td>25 (smallest mode, multiple modes exist)</td>
<td>35 (smallest mode, multiple modes exist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard Deviation</strong></td>
<td>10.997</td>
<td>17.096</td>
<td>13.279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range of Scores</strong></td>
<td>22-54</td>
<td>25-76</td>
<td>35-63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^8\) Scores >24 may represent the presence of some symptoms associated with post-traumatic stress, scores >33 may represent probable post-traumatic stress and scores >37 indicate the individual may be at risk for stress induced immunosuppression (Reed, 2007).
Research Question Number Eight: What is the level of hope for those who serve and receive assistance?

The HHI and HVAS measurement tools were utilized to answer this question. The summative scores for the HHI are presented first. The potential score for the HHI is 12 – 48. Table 4.9 presents the measures of central tendency for the HHI. Means across all participant groups are significantly higher than the mean of 32.39 that was obtained when the tool was standardized (Herth, 1992). No participant reported feeling alone. The item with the most diversity of responses was “I feel scared about my future” with at least one participant endorsing it in every possible category. The 10 remaining items were selected by the majority of the participants as agreeing or strongly agreeing. A copy of the scale can be found in Appendices II-IV.

Measurements of central tendency for the HVAS will be reported next. Three items were presented to each participant. Each item had a possible score of zero to 10. The measures of the three items were then summed, yielding a possible score of zero to 30. The summative scores will be presented first in Table 4.10 followed by the measures for each individual item in Tables 4.11, 4.12 and 4.13.

Research Question Number Nine: Do the IES-R, HHS and HVAS effectively measure the impact of the disaster and the level of hope?

This research question generated three hypothesis: 1) Scores for the Herth Hope Index and the Hope Visual Analogue Scale will be positively correlated; 2) Scores for the Impact of Event Scale – Revised will be negatively correlated with the Herth Hope Index and the Hope Visual analogue scales; and, 3) The amount or degree of loss experienced by the resident participants will be positively correlated with the Impact of Event Scale – Revised.
Table 4.9. Herth Hope Index – Maximum Score 48
(Range 0 -48)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Staff (n = 9)</th>
<th>Volunteers (n = 8)</th>
<th>Residents (n = 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>42.75</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>3.991</td>
<td>5.606</td>
<td>5.339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of Scores</td>
<td>36-48</td>
<td>30-47</td>
<td>35-47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.10. Measures of Central Tendency for the Summative Scores of the Hope Visual Analogue Scale
(Range 0 – 30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Staff (n = 9)</th>
<th>Volunteers (n = 8)</th>
<th>Residents (n = 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>24.02</td>
<td>27.75</td>
<td>27.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>27.75</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>4.678</td>
<td>2.331</td>
<td>3.215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of Scores</td>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>25-30</td>
<td>23-30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.11. When you became staff, volunteered or received assistance with Faith Disaster Response in New Orleans, how much hope for your future did you have? (Range 0 – 10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Staff ( n = 9 )</th>
<th>Volunteers ( n = 8 )</th>
<th>Residents ( n = 5 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>7.967</td>
<td>9.188</td>
<td>7.620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>9.250</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std Dev</td>
<td>2.513</td>
<td>.8709</td>
<td>3.1752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>3.9-10</td>
<td>8.3-10</td>
<td>3.4-10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.12. After you received assistance or your staff or volunteer responsibilities ended in New Orleans, how much hope for your future did you have? (Range 0 – 10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Staff ( n = 9 )</th>
<th>Volunteers ( n = 8 )</th>
<th>Residents ( n = 5 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>6.767</td>
<td>9.025</td>
<td>9.880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std Dev</td>
<td>3.9421</td>
<td>1.1055</td>
<td>.1643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>0-10</td>
<td>7.5-10</td>
<td>9.7-10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.13. How much hope for your future do you have now? (Range 0 – 10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Staff $n = 9$</th>
<th>Volunteers $n = 8$</th>
<th>Residents $n = 5$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>9.289</td>
<td>9.538</td>
<td>9.980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9.650</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>1.5568</td>
<td>.5125</td>
<td>.0447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of Scores</td>
<td>5.3-10</td>
<td>8.7-10</td>
<td>9.9-10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reliability testing using a Cronbach’s alpha was performed on the IES-R and the HHI. The Cronbach’s alpha for the IES-R was .912 The Cronbach’s alpha for the IES-R reported when the scale was developed was .98.

The Cronbach’s alpha for the HHI was .874. This is comparable to the Cronbach’s alpha of .78 - .86 obtained when the scale was developed and validated. Therefore, I can conclude in this dissertation research, the HHI measured levels of hope as it was intended to do. The Cronbach’s alpha for the HVAS was .700. While lower than desired, values greater than .70 are considered adequate value (Polit & Beck, 2004).

**Testing of Hypothesis Number One: Scores for the Herth Hope Index and the Hope Visual Analogue Scale will be positively correlated.** The HVAS was utilized as a concurrent measure of validity for the HHI. Specifically, I hypothesized these two scales would be positively correlated with each other. The reliability of this concurrent measure was tested using correlations, specifically a Spearman’s rho. At least two measurements per participant per scale are required for this type of analysis. Therefore, the three items of the HVAS were summed. A Spearman’s rho was calculated to test the correlation between the summative score of the HVAS and the summative score of the HHI. Significance, $p$, was set at .05. Spearman’s rho was -.049 with a significance of .834. This hypothesis is not supported.
Testing of Hypothesis Number Two: Scores for the Impact of Event Scale – Revised will be negatively correlated with the Herth Hope Index and the Hope Visual Analogue Scales. A Spearman’s rho was also calculated to test the correlation of the IES-R with the HHI and HVAS. Significance, \( p \), was set at .05. The IES-R was positively correlated with the HHI with a Spearman’s rho of .241; \( p = .293 \). The IES-R was negatively correlated with the HVAS with a Spearman’s rho of -.092; \( p = .685 \). Hypothesis number two is not supported.

Testing of Hypothesis Number Three: The amount or degree of loss experienced by the resident participants will be positively correlated with the Impact of Event Scale – Revised. Correlations were obtained for the residents’ IES-R summative score and the types of loss they experienced. A Spearman’s rho was obtained for each correlation with \( p \) set at .05 for loss of employment (\( .289; p = .638 \)) and household items (\( .289; p = .638 \)), death of a friend (\( .354; p = .559 \)), injury to household member (\( .354; p = .559 \)) and injury to a friend (\( .354; p = .559 \)). Hypothesis number three is not supported.

Concluding Summary

The findings of the research have been reported in this chapter. Qualitative data included a description of the participant-observer experience, both formal and informal field notes and phenomenology interviews. A model presenting a visual representation of the thematic structure of the experience of faith-based disaster response was developed. One case was presented as an exemplar. The contextual ground of the experience of faith-based disaster response is Divine Agency. There are six figural themes: “I Will Go” (Decision Point), “The Eyes of New Orleans are in Pain” (Social Suffering), “They Were Strangers” (Stranger-to-Stranger Interactions), “You Form a Family” (Communitas), “There Was a Change Happening Within” (Transformation), and “You Just Start to Wonder” (Reflection).

Sources of quantitative data included databases maintained by FDR and scores obtained from the Herth Hope Index, Hope Visual Analogue Scales and the Impact of Event Scale-Revised. When interpreting the results, I considered the potential threat to
internal validity represented by the concurrent anniversary date of Hurricane Katrina and the timing of the scale administration. Descriptive statistics indicate the HHI and HVAS move in opposite directions of the IES-R; however, there is no significant difference in the statistical analysis. The data did not lend itself to further inferential or psychometric analysis.

Hypothesis number one, that the HHI and HVAS would be positively correlated, is not supported. Hypothesis number two, that the IES-R would be negatively correlated with the HHI and HVAS was not supported. And, hypothesis number three, that the degree or amount of loss would be positively correlated with the IES-R was not supported.

Attributes of hope were found in the qualitative data and were compared to attributes of hopelessness. The qualitative data revealed processes and activities of faith-based disaster response. Discussion of these findings will be next in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION
Research Questions

The phenomenon of interest in this study has been faith-based disaster response. Specifically, the purpose of this study was to understand the experience of faith-based disaster response for 1) those charged with organizing and executing the grassroots effort; 2) those delivering direct service; and 3) the survivors who seek and receive assistance?

In order to answer this study objective, nine specific research questions were asked: 1) How did they, the staff and volunteers of FBOs, stand up and put into action a massive response so quickly, and sustain their efficacy over many months? 2) How did their efforts impact the lives of the people they sought to serve? 3) Were the FBOs as on target, efficient, and effective as they seem? 4) How did their services and the ways in which those services were delivered, really impact individuals and communities? 5) If successful, how did they do it without the infrastructure, training and funding sources that governmental agencies have at their disposal? 6) What is the impact of the disaster on those who serve and receive assistance? 7) Is the impact of the disaster reflected in their stories? 8) What is the level of hope for those who serve and receive assistance: and 9) Do the IES, HHS and HVAS effectively measure the impact of the disaster and the level of hope? Each of the nine research questions will be addressed and when applicable, the discussion will integrate the synthesis of the results obtained from multiple research methodologies.

**Research Question Number One: How did they, the staff and volunteers of FBOs, stand up and put into action a massive response so quickly, and sustain their efficacy over many months?**

In the simplest of terms, the answer to this research question is FDR’s disaster response was a grassroots effort that was made more efficient by their organizational structure, administrative skill, financial support, adaptability, availability, networking and sacrifice; all of this in the context of Divine Agency. Existential phenomenology was the
method utilized to answer this question. The answer to this research question is found the contextual ground of divine agency and the figural themes of “I Will Go,” “They Were Strangers” and “Communitas.” What follows here represents an integrated discussion of information gleaned from the staff and volunteers.

From the moment the FDR effort was born, the theme of strangers coming together was reflected. FDR had never before used volunteers to provide services. The organization had been a distributor of money, not services. Initially, individual congregations geographically located in the areas devastated by the hurricanes helped those in their own communities, whether they were a part of their congregation or not. At the same time, members and friends of the parent denomination began sending unsolicited donations to the denominational headquarters. These donations were provided by individuals who did not know each other or the persons who would be the beneficiary of their generosity. Members of the denomination, many of them strangers to each other, began calling their denominational headquarters asking how they could help and where could they volunteer. All of these elements came together demonstrating to the denomination a need to organize the effort. At that time, FDR was a one employee organization; it would not stay that way. As each person donated, volunteered or became an administrator or staff of FDR, they developed a spirit of communitas.

Communitas was further developed as strangers pooled their resources to assist other strangers. Churches donated their gymnasiums as housing for volunteers, residents offered the use of their restrooms and electricity to volunteers working in their neighborhoods, staff members networked with community leaders to maximize their response efforts, and strangers far and near brought food and supplies to the work site. Even those who donated money so others could do the work were incorporated into this spirit of communitas.

The networking with government and community agencies identified in the theme of communitas allowed FDR to decide where their response efforts should be directed. A decision was made early that gutting houses was one of the greatest needs and basic to the citizens of New Orleans being able to move forward. Whether the home was going
to be rebuilt or not was inconsequential as every house had to be gutted. By focusing on this, none of the work done by volunteers was in vain.

The themes of “They Were Strangers” and “Communitas” also reflect the organizations ability to adapt and learn as they went. Without this willingness, the response would not have been as effective. Staff and administrators had the autonomy to do what was necessary without layers and layers of administrative red tape. Staff also lived and worked in close proximity to each other, the volunteers and the homeowners. If a decision requiring consultation with other staff or homeowners was required, they could walk to the next trailer or drive to the house being worked on and immediately receive the desired feedback. This eliminated a lot of the delay encountered with off-site administration and contributed to the spirit of communitas.

The commitment demonstrated by the staff is impressive and reflects the figural theme of “I Will Go.” For an average of 14 months each, the staff lived in camping trailers on the parking lots of the church gymnasiums that became their base of operations. There was limited space, effectively no privacy, and constant availability. Staff was separated from their families. Their commitment and decision to provide assistance, against a contextual ground of divine agency, sustained them through these difficult times away from their family and home. It is from this same frame of reference volunteers sacrificed to provide assistance. They gave up their vacation time to volunteer and spent their own money to pay for transportation to the site, purchase supplies for the response, and donate additional funds to sustain the response.

In order to sustain the work and help strangers, the organization needed two things: money and volunteers. Grant money and donations were the only two sources of funding. When those funds were depleted, the organization could no longer function. This meant those wishing to volunteer did not have the organizational support to continue the work.
Research Question Number Two: How did their efforts impact the lives of the people they sought to serve?

The answer to this question can be summarized in the following way: there were both transformational and reflective impacts on the lives of the people. This research question was answered by integrating the themes derived from the phenomenology interviews and the ethnographic participant-observer field notes: “Communitas,” “Transformation,” “Social Suffering,” and “Reflection.” While the IES-R was not formally used as a means of answering this question the overall pattern of participant’s scores on this scale contributed to understanding the impact of the service rendered.

Transformation and Communitas

The figural theme of “Transformation” demonstrated the change in participant’s lives as a result of their experience with faith-based disaster response. Transformation was evident in all participant groups. The transformation was not confined to individuals; it was both an individual and group process in which participants effected change in one another. Participants became more confident in who they were, what they had to offer and what they wanted to do. The transformation included mentoring others and encouraging others to develop a lifestyle of service. Mentoring was purposeful and intended as well as serendipitous.

Participants expressed a belief they were blessed by the experience. Many saw this as a reward by God and others for what they were doing. Being blessed resulted in transformation, a part of which resulted in a desire to say thanks.

It is in the desire to say thanks in a tangible way that controversy or conflict is evident. As communitas developed, traditional barriers became blurred. Residents in particular did not then understand why they could not express their gratitude in the same way traditional family members would by giving gifts or tangible expressions of their thanks. This was in direct conflict with the rules of the organization that required staff and volunteers not accept gifts. Many residents went to great lengths to circumvent the rules because the connection they felt with the staff and volunteers, in their mind at least
superseded the rules. The one expression of gratitude that was accepted was food. It could be said that eating together, breaking bread together, is not only relational but seen in a Biblical context by these participants. They found emotional, spiritual and physical nourishment in eating together. This strengthened the sense of communitas.

Residents also wanted to give back or join with the staff and volunteers in the work. From the volunteer perspective they were there to work, give the residents respite. The residents appreciated the volunteer perspective but wanted to participate in the work. In part, it is in the work that relationships were formed and communitas was experienced. Working with staff and volunteers, as evidenced in the theme “They Were Strangers,” may have kept the residents from feeling alone or abandoned. This could have contributed to the high levels of hope evidenced by the hope scales. While the hope scales were not a methodology to answer this research question, they are never-the-less informative. One of the items on the HHI asked the participants to categorize how alone they felt. That no participant acknowledged feeling all alone is evidence of the spirit of communitas. It may be that working together is an intervention promoting hope deserving future study.

Respect, another aspect of communitas was very evident as volunteers and staff tried to find something of value to the resident. Nothing could make up for the resident’s loss; however, finding an item of sentimental value was meaningful and built community.

Reflection and Social Suffering

Impact on lives is also seen in the figural theme of “Reflection” and “Social Suffering.” It was common for participants in all groups to reflect on their experience with FDR and wonder about people and places. Their questions may never be answered and ranged from simple questions such as ‘I wonder where they are now?” to more intense questions such as “I wonder how many dead bodies were in that house?” The depths of their questions were influenced by the social suffering they witnessed or experienced, suggesting a significant impact on the participant.

The impact of the social suffering on participants is further illustrated in the dimension of “I carry a scar.” Participants spoke of feeling depressed or sad, crying, and
feeling hopeless. The impact was so great participants could not immediately take in what they were experiencing or seeing, there was an acclimation process. As they assimilated the devastation they were shocked; shocked at the scope and magnitude of the devastation and shocked that so much devastation remained.

While not an intended measure to directly answer this research question, the IES-R provided evidence of the impact of the event overall. It would be logical to think the greater the impact of the event the less hope one would have. However, that was not the case among the participants. The IES-R reflected significant post-event stress yet the levels of hope were high. It may be that the act of serving each other, developing communitas, lessened the consequences of the stress related to the hurricanes.

**Research Question Number Three: Were the Faith-Based Organizations as on target, efficient, and effective as they seem?**

The simple answer to the question is yes. This research question was answered by integrating the participant-observer field notes and derived themes from phenomenology. The central themes reflected here include: “They Were Strangers” and “Communitas.”

All disaster response, faith-based or otherwise, is judged on the effectiveness of their work. Participants in all research groups spoke of the success of the work FDR accomplished. In the spirit of communitas FDR staff and volunteers gutted homes so homeowners could make the decisions about what to do next; mowed lawns reduced vermin, increased security and provided a sense of normalcy; developed parks where children could safely play outdoors for the first time since the hurricanes; and for some, rebuilt homes.

The residents, staff and volunteers would be the first to acknowledge they did not help everyone. They could not do it all; however, in consultation with other FBOs, NGOs and government agencies, they determined what they could do and did it excellently. Essentially they specialized and by doing so became proficient and efficient at gutting houses. Every volunteer involved in gutting, regardless of how long ago they gutted a house, included portions of the protocol for gutting in their story. They knew this inside out. For example, one volunteer was explaining how much more efficient it was to take
sheet rock and wiggle it off the nails and carry it out in a big sheet rather than take a sledge hammer to it and break it apart from the wall. With the first method, little additional clean-up was required; with the second, it could take hours to scoop up or sweep up the debris from broken sheet rock. In the spirit of communitas, they shared what they learned with volunteers arriving in New Orleans, staff, and the residents. All participants were interested in doing the work as efficiently as possible to maximize the recovery efforts.

Faith Disaster Response had as a target facilitating the return of hope for the residents of New Orleans and by association promoting hope among the staff and volunteers. All participants knew what the target was and most referred to it directly in their interviews. The slogan for the organization reflected the target and was emblazoned on the t-shirts all volunteers wore. This also contributed to the spirit of communitas among themselves and those who then identified them as members of the organization because of the shirt they were wearing. Facilitating the return of hope could not be directly measured by my study; however, the HHI and HVAS indicated high levels of hope among participants in all research groups and the qualitative findings reveal the presence of many attributes of hope. Residents of New Orleans attribute, at least a measure of their hope, to FDR and the experience they had with them.

In the last months, FDR transitioned to rebuilding. They were not as efficient in this; they did not have volunteers with the right skill sets to make sufficient progress on homes to move them toward completion. This was not their specialty. In part, beside the financial and organizational decision to close, the lack of efficiency in rebuilding contributed to their closure. At the time they left New Orleans, few houses remained to be gutted. Guttering was their specialty; a skill no longer needed. They did not have sufficient funds to transition to acquiring the necessary rebuilding skills, equipment and supplies. In this sense, the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization lessened.
Research Question Number Four: How did their services and the ways in which those services were delivered, really impact the individuals and communities?

The simple answer to this question is that they treated the residents with respect, as individuals. Staff and volunteers maintained contact with each other and residents from the very beginning, consulted on items of importance, attempted to rebuild homes in light of resident’s wishes, tried to diminish the impact of the work, and facilitated the rebuilding of New Orleans. The participant-observer experience and the existential phenomenology interviews were the research methods used to answer this question. Embedded in the answer to this question are the themes of “Communitas,” “They Were Strangers,” “Social Suffering,” and “Transformation.” As the question implies, there were two groups impacted: individuals and communities.

Impact on Individuals

Staff, volunteers and residents worked together. It was in the doing of the work strong relationships were formed; bonds as strong as family ties. Volunteers and staff did not always meet the residents whose home they worked on, yet even in the absence of strong relationships, some volunteers returned to New Orleans multiple times and reported a spirit of communitas. It is in the figural themes of “Stranger-to-Stranger Interactions,” “Communitas” and “Transformation” the impact on individuals is found.

From the time a volunteer team decided to volunteer in New Orleans, the staff was in contact with the team leader. Informational materials related to safety and the volunteer work, along with a list of equipment and supplies the team would need, were sent in advance of arriving in New Orleans. Included in this informational material and in the orientation on-site, were instructions or guidelines on treating the residents and their homes with respect. The staff and volunteers of FDR, in concert with the residents, literally made every attempt to locate items of significance for the resident as homes were gutted. The staff and volunteers consulted with residents as their homes were being rebuilt, many times including amenities that would have been difficult or impossible to do had the home not been destroyed.
Participants did not use the word “communitas” to describe their relationships; rather they spoke of becoming a family. Regardless of a person’s definition of family, basic aspects of many families were expected and realized: treating each other with respect, developing strong bonds, working toward a common goal, eating together and trying to value what other family members’ value. In this way, communitas influenced both the methods of service delivery and the resulting impact on the individual recipient of the service.

As all worked and sweated together toward a common goal traditional barriers fell and individuals came together as family. However, families also experience disappointment, guilt at failed relationships and conflict. This was especially true as the organization left New Orleans. Their failure to complete even one house resulted in a negative impact for those involved. Families didn’t get the promised completed home. Staff members were plagued by guilt about leaving without fulfilling the organization’s obligations. Volunteers witnessed and were saddened by the result of the organization’s closure. The need for an exit strategy became evident too late. In this sense, the theme of “Social Suffering” contributes to the research question answer.

**Impact on Communities**

The city of New Orleans was devastated after the hurricanes. Conditions following the hurricanes were widely televised and participants thought they knew what they would be finding on their arrival in New Orleans. However, residents were not prepared for the loss of personal property and way of life, News stories did not prepare staff and volunteers for what they encountered when they arrived. The scope and magnitude of the disaster was so much greater than what they expected, and in many ways required skills they did not possess but would need to acquire. It gets more personal when as a volunteer, staff member or resident you stand in the destroyed or gutted home in the middle of a neighborhood that has not one house rebuilt. It was no longer a television news story but a real event that engulfed them. Through the spirit of communitas the victims of the storm were no longer nameless faces on the news but new members of their family. For many the task of deconstruction and then reconstruction
was daunting. But, as one home at a time was gutted or rebuilt, as one yard at a time was mowed, then the neighborhood began taking on a sense of normalcy and a sense of community returned.

Near the end of their time in New Orleans, FDR began the work of community building, developing parks. This gave families with children and pet owners a safe, clean place for recreation. It was in stark contrast to their FEMA trailers or the gutted homes of their neighbors. Residents found the community building efforts meaningful. So did volunteers. When volunteers would work on a park and then drive by again later to check on it and there would be children playing there, they gained a sense of accomplishment and meaning from their work.

Communities were also impacted by FDR’s active and aggressive participation on committees of significance for the rebuilding of New Orleans. The administrative work contained in the theme “They Were Strangers,” became important for not just the success of the organization but for the successful rebuilding of the city. The organization readily admits setting on these committees provided direction for their work that made the work more meaningful with the potential to have long-term community effects. The FBO always accepted any role the committee requested, made sure their involvement was more than in name only, they actively participated in committee work and on more than one committee.

At the same time, the organization’s rapid exit from the rebuilding process had the potential to negatively impact the city. It may never be known the full potential of their work had they stayed nor the impact on the resettlement of New Orleans because they left.

**Research Question Number Five: If successful, how did they do it without the infrastructure, training and funding sources that government agencies have at their disposal?**

The most succinct answer to the question is the contextual ground of the qualitative data: “It’s a God Thing” (Divine agency). This is not to negate the contribution of skilled administration, numerous volunteers, willing homeowners and
millions of dollars in donations. However, participants clearly believe God was responsible for their success. In addition to the contextual ground of “It’s a God Thing,” this research question is answered by the figural themes of “Stranger-to-Stranger Interactions,” and to a lesser degree in the theme of “Communitas.” The method used to answer this question was phenomenology.

One dimension of the theme “Stranger-to-Stranger Interactions” is administration. Without effective administration, the work identified in the theme would not have been effective and the spirit of communitas would not have formed. Staff members of FDR were skilled administrators. Rich descriptions of the work required for the organization to develop were provided. Each administrator had to be able and willing to work independently, collaboratively and without knowing in advance what might be required of them. They were given the power to make the decisions necessary to make their area of responsibility functional. They lived and worked on-site. While this certainly presents personal challenges, it provides immediate access to each other and the volunteers. It did not take an extended span of time to get sufficient information to make a decision, everyone was available.

Incredibly, the staff made sure a lack of finances did not negatively impact the response. When necessary they loaned the organization their personal money; sometimes thousands of dollars at a time. They trusted the organization to repay them and that the funds would be available to do so. This reflects communitas. This was more than a group of strangers coming together; they were loaning money to their new family. As soon as they started loaning their funds to the organization without a guarantee of getting it back, they moved to another plane, the barriers were blurred. This reflects a higher, more abstract level. The action also reflects transformation, not so much personal transformation but the sense of building a community. Needs did not go unmet for lack of money, at least until the organization closed. The staff negotiated their own “deals” for supplies and equipment and utilized sales or discounts. This multiplied their available finances. One staff member explained how a hardware store gave gift cards for a certain amount of money when a larger amount of money was spent. They were able to take advantage of this and garnered several thousand dollars in additional gift cards.
Government agencies and officials do not have the freedom to shop or manage money like this.

Staff also used their personal contacts to acquire equipment and supplies. They were not required to gather a certain number of bids in a prescribed manner or avoid companies with which they had previously worked. In this manner, they were able to network and use their contacts to obtain the best “deal” for the organization. Once again, the government cannot do business this way.

Another contributing factor to their success was that they were the office. Files and computer equipment were in their living quarters, their vehicles and their hands. Wherever they went, the office went; this gave immediate access to information they needed. It also meant they never had any time off. This was one an overwhelming part of the job and contributed an additional component to the personal impact, their social suffering. They did not fall under the same labor laws as government officials. They were not paid overtime, there was no limit to the number of hours they could work in a day or week, they just worked and considered it part of their Divine calling and is consistent with the contextual ground “It’s a God Thing.”

One final difference between government agencies and FDR has to do with qualifications for the job. Those managing a disaster at the government level are expected to have disaster management experience, appropriate degrees and comply with civil service regulations. Not one person on FDR’s staff had a degree in anything remotely related to disaster response, none of them had any experience in disaster response, most of them did have administrative experience, but not all had a four year college degree. In their words, they were able to do what they did because of Divine Agency. They believe God enabled and directed them to do the work of disaster response. They were indeed successful but their success was not achieved through usual and customary means; federal and labor regulations would prevent trying to duplicate their methods at a government level which would indicate faith-based organizations contribute a very unique type of disaster response.
Research Question Number Six: What is the impact of the disaster on those who serve and receive assistance?

There was a significant impact on participants in all groups. The data to answer this research question was gathered using existential phenomenology and the IES-R. All participants reported varying degrees of feeling depressed or sad; crying; not knowing what to do with themselves, where their neighbors, friends, and in some cases family members were; working long hours; having their entire neighborhood and home destroyed; and lack of effective response by the insurance companies and their government. Their scores on the IES-R demonstrated elevated post-event stress. The primary themes embedded in the answer to this question were “Social suffering” and “Reflection.”

The staggering degree of loss among the residents was an element of social suffering. All of the resident participants lost their homes and household items, many lost their only means of employment, and some lost friends.

Staff and volunteers also experienced significant losses but theirs reflected a choice. Staff members lost time with their families, many relinquished lucrative employment to take their position, and some reported chronic infections as a result of their disaster response activities. Volunteers lost vacation time and salaries; gave outright donations to the cause, purchased supplies and equipment on site; some experienced injury; all of them experienced some degree of discomfort; and many lost confidence in the U.S. government’s capacity to respond to disaster. Through their empathy with the residents’ losses they experienced social suffering.

One of the purposes of including the IES-R scale in the study was to get a description of the emotional impact of the hurricanes on the study participants. The findings suggest the participants in my study experienced significant impact and stress after the event. However, the scale was administered to all participants on or near the anniversary date of the hurricanes. There were daily television program events recounting the hurricanes and the aftermath that followed. At one point I apologized to the residents for the timing and they countered that every day they were reminded of the hurricane by
living in and seeing FEMA trailers, functioning without appropriate utilities and other city services and by still not knowing where their neighbors were. Yet, the potential of the anniversary influencing the scores of the scale cannot be denied. The occurrence or timing of the scale administration qualifies as an internal threat to validity related to history (Polit & Beck, 2004) and must be considered when interpreting the IES-R results. The three highest scoring items were “Other things kept making me think about it,” “I thought about it when I didn’t mean to,” and “Pictures about it popped into my mind.” These items would certainly represent the current events surrounding the administration of the tools.

Even though the IES-R scores were high, at no time did any participant exhibit signs of significant emotional distress. Several would become emotional, tearful, when they recounted specific events but no behaviors or anything a participant said indicated the need for referral to mental health professionals. Indeed, the participants were just as likely to smile or laugh when they recounted more cheerful memories. This would further support the potential that history should be considered a valid threat to internal validity and the scores may have been very different had the scale been administered weeks before or after the anniversary date.

**Research Question Number Seven: What is the impact of the disaster reflected in their stories?**

The participants’ stories reflected the impact of the disaster as found in multiple figural themes: “I Will Go,” “Social Suffering,” “Stranger-to-Stranger Interactions,” “Communitas,” “Transformation” and “Reflection.” Phenomenology was the utilized to answer this research question.

This was a historical event that people witnessed. The impact began as people witnessed it on their televisions and read about it in the papers. The impact continued from the time participants witnessed or experienced the disaster until they talked to me. The journey began with a decision to go (“I Will Go”) where people came together as strangers (“They Were Strangers”) and with a transformative experience (“Transformation”) they came together as family (“Communitas”). Through out the
experience they experienced change. They examined their lives, their purpose they faced challenges and supported each other (“Reflection”). They came away from their experience different than when they began. Their experience was so profound that they continue to have really vivid memories that are reflected in their stories. Even though the IES-R was not a measure to answer this research question, it does also demonstrate a profound impact. What they saw was so out of the range of normal human experience it left an impact on them they cannot shake. Perhaps the reason they cannot shake it is because of the transformation. Transformation is also memorable which could explain a lingering impact, particularly one that coincides with a high degree of hope. Yes, they are changed in the end and yes, they haven’t forgotten what happened to them. It speaks of the power of their experience.

Participants placed the contextual ground of their experience as a God thing. It was directed and led by God; He acted on their behalf through people, churches and angels. During the disaster recovery efforts for the largest natural disaster our country has ever experienced, faith-based disaster response met unprecedented needs. Participants made a decision to provide or ask for assistance. Pain and suffering was experienced by staff, volunteers and residents. They came together as strangers and left as family. Their lives and communities were transformed. Despite the significant impact of the disaster on their lives, all were hopeful.

**Research Question Number Eight: What is the level of hope for those who serve and receive assistance?**

The simplest answer to this question is that the participants’ levels of hope were unequivocally high. The research methodologies used to answer this question include phenomenology, the Herth Hope Index and the Hope Visual Analogue Scale. Themes derived from the qualitative interviews supported the existing literature on attributes of hope: interconnectedness and caring, positive feelings and a reason for living, goals and plans for the future, and a sense of meaning (Benzein & Saveman, 1998; Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; Herth, 2000). Hope is particularly reflected in the figural theme of “Transformation.”
FDR’s response assured residents felt care for and experienced interconnectedness. The HHI revealed not one participant felt left alone. This further supports the theme of “Communitas.” They demonstrated care by coming to New Orleans, the work they did, and by their commitment to the process in difficult circumstances. Residents in particular were amazed that people they had never met and may not ever see again would come to help them; help them do some of the dirtiest and dangerous work after the initial search and rescue. The interconnectedness was demonstrated in the bonds developed while doing the work and the continued relationships. None of the participants spoke of boundaries becoming blurred; they spoke of the care and bonds formed. No one expressed concern that the blurring of boundaries was unprofessional; rather the entire relationship had developed and changed to the point that to not honor the new bonds of communitas would have been unprofessional. It is important to note that it was not a one-way connectedness as in residents to staff and volunteers; they each were connected to the other, supporting each other and offering words of encouragement. They were experiencing communitas. If a participant from any group had a need, members of the other groups would do everything possible to meet it because they loved and respected each other; they were family.

**Positive Feelings and Reason for Living**

Each day as staff and volunteers worked on homes or parks, residents would come to see the progress made and inquire about what would be done next. With each piece of sheet rock that went up or toilet installed, possibilities for the future were realized. For example, residents could envision that one day they would be out of the FEMA trailer. As staff and volunteers gathered in New Orleans, their decision to come was confirmed; this was a disaster and they were needed. There was fulfillment of God’s purpose of them; they were transformed. Not only were they needed for this situation, but they discovered they were needed where they lived. Serving others gave them a reason for
living. One of the things that impeded the full realization of hope was the fact that they didn't complete the work they started.

**Goals and Plans for the Future**

This was still a disaster zone and it would seem logical that their immediate needs being met would take precedent over planning for a future. The “future” meant different things at different times. For example, it could be within the next hour, week, year, or lifespan plans. The immediate goal of most of the residents FDR worked with was to get out of their FEMA trailers and move into their homes, or if displaced to another location the goal was still to return to their home. The volunteers and staff helped the residents realize those goals by working on their homes and preparing them for the next stage of resettlement. The staff and volunteers also had goals for their own future. Based on the transformation they experienced they had many goals for change: the goal to change their neighborhood, the goal to change how they relate to their community when they return home, the goal to try and thank those that have helped them, and the goal to make service a lifestyle. Several participants reported loving, or valuing, the new person they had become.

**Sense of Meaning**

Embedded in hope is the sense of meaning. Each group of participants reflected on the meaning of the experience, the work and the relationships that developed. All participant groups wondered if their work was meaningful, significant enough to contribute to the future of the city of New Orleans. Staff and volunteers wondered about the meaning and value of their work and the people they assisted. In a sense, this reflection on meaning was related to the communitas they had experienced. Communitas provided meaning.

The scores on the Herth Hope Index were high across all participant groups, indicating a high level of hope. If hope is a life force, necessary for life, and the study participants have a high level of this life force, it may be that hope offers protective
benefits from high levels of stress. Among the attributes of hope found in the study participants, inter-connectedness and caring are present; communitas is found. The next question becomes: does communitas offer protective benefits from high levels of stress?

*Research Question Number Nine: Do the Impact of Event Scale-Revised, Herth Hope Index and the Hope Visual Analogue Scale effectively measure the impact of the disaster and the level of hope?*

This question is answered by the quantitative analysis of the IES-R, the HHI and the HVAS. Each scale separately measured what they were intended to measure. However, the three hypotheses this research question generated were not supported, therefore I cannot confirm or refute the utility of these three tools concurrent use. It will take additional research to determine the answer to this question as the results in this study are inconclusive.

*Comparison of Findings and the Review of Literature*

The review of literature was divided into research related to faith-based organizations and disaster response in the Unites States and around the world, including current research in New Orleans post-Katrina, government research on faith-based disaster response and nursing theory applied to faith-based disaster response. Each of these categories and their relevance to the current findings will be discussed.

*Summary*

As each research question was discussed, it became clear that within the context of “It’s a God Thing” (Divine Agency) some figural themes were more prominent and significant than others to the experience of faith-based disaster response. The theme of “You Form a Family” (Communitas) is central to the entire experience. It was a tangible outcome. Despite the destruction and devastation, this is what participants took away with them. They will treasure these new-found relationships for a life time.
Communitas led to the other essential theme of “There was Change Happening within Them” (Transformation). No one left the experience the same.

**Research Literature**

Harden (2006) states social or spiritual transformation is a central core of faith-based programming. My study had transformation as a theme which is consistent with his work. He also spoke of non-religious activities having spiritual impact because they were provided as a reflection of the provider’s faith. In the disaster response work of FDR, non-religious activities included gutting houses, mowing lawns, and rebuilding. Yet, because of the context of Divine Agency, these non-religious activities took on spiritual significance. Many such examples of non-religious work were included in Table 4.9. At face value, mentoring can also be viewed as a non-religious activity. Showing someone how to lay tile has little religious implications. However, there was always a deeper dimension to mentoring because it reflected caring, possibilities and hope. Once these deeper dimensions are introduced it puts mentoring back into a spiritual dimension, particularly within the contextual ground of divine agency. It transforms people. Mentoring became a way to act out their faith.

Attending services or participating in prayer was not a requirement for working with, volunteering for or receiving assistance from FDR. Explicitly spiritual activities were rarely found in this study; however, when present, they were almost always in the form of prayer. All participant groups engaged in prayer. They spoke of prayers for each other and for those who specifically requested prayer. I also witnessed these types of prayers during my participant-observation experience. Other explicitly spiritual activities included worshiping together, specifically in New Orleans as team members, volunteers and residents came together at a local church for regularly scheduled services.

Structural separability, functionality and other contextual factors were also presented by Harden (2006) as a means of evaluating faith-based programs and organizations. The sociological structure of FDR included the participant groups I studied: staff, volunteers and residents assisted. These three participant groups came together as strangers as indicated by the findings identified in the figural theme
“Stranger-to-Stranger Interactions.” The findings also suggest the participants did not leave as strangers. Many new and lasting relationships were formed as a result of their faith-based disaster response experience. These relationships are also included in sociological structure as identified by Harden (2006) and the theme of “Communitas” identified in the findings. Disaster response activities are also included in the sociological structure. The disaster response activities were numerous and included the broad categories of administrative work, deconstruction, reconstruction and community building.

Normative structures (expectations, norms and behaviors) were also present in the findings of this study. Participants were expected to follow work and facility guidelines established by FDR. Homeowners or residents were expected to provide written permission for FDR to do the work or the work would not be done. All participants were expected to follow the safety guidelines while doing the work. Staff and volunteers were expected to treat the residents and their property/belongings with respect.

Norms included all of the staff being associated with the parent denomination of FDR. This was usually the case for volunteers, but significant numbers of volunteers were from other denominations or no denomination. Anyone could volunteer with FDR if they were willing to work and follow the guidelines. The norm for residents was to have a need for assistance. In the deconstructive phase of FDR’s work the norm was also for the resident to not be present during the work. Many were not yet back in New Orleans. As deconstruction transitioned to reconstruction, the norm also transitioned.

Behaviors were also normative across all participant groups. Behaviors included honoring the “rules” of the facility volunteers stayed, such as being in bed with lights out at 10:00 p.m.

Functionality is the how and why faith-based programs function. The “how” in this study is more informative than the “why.” They “why” relates to divine agency, service and the commitment to doing disaster response. Fundamentally faith-based programs exist in order to give manifestations to their faith tenets. In that sense, the why of their existence is non-negotiable and not open to question. The specific purpose for which their program is intended varies. For example one faith-based program could be a
hospital with the purpose to restore health. The purpose of some other faith-based program could be to teach about their religion. Faith-based disaster response exists for other reason, short term goals which are to provide basic human necessities. The most recognizable and talked about goal of FDR related to hope; the staff and volunteers goal was to restore hope to the citizens of New Orleans. They understood hope was necessary to sustain life. They saw their disaster response activities as interventions to promote hope. In none of the interviews or my observations did I encounter participants identifying specific tenets of faith as promoted by the parent denomination. However, participants frequently referred to their personal belief that they were reflecting God’s love by following Biblical principles of ministering to strangers.

How the organization was able to mobilize and deliver service is of much more significance for the future. “How” FDR built their disaster response from the ground up, as a grassroots effort, provides a template for the “how” to which Harden (2006) refers. This was a cooperative effort, started by ordinary citizens who belonged to one denomination. They saw the need was being inadequately met, and through their local faith congregations decided to meet one need at a time. When the leaders of FDR’s parent denomination realized the commitment, willingness and desire of their congregants, they developed an organizational structure that allowed them to do so. The organization provided very little of its own money for the response; it was a vehicle through which others, including those awarding grant money, donated funds for disaster response. Fiscal accountability and frugal use of the money allowed the organization to provide extraordinary services, beyond what the money would have normally sustained by negotiating for services, equipment and supplies. This was more than being frugal; they felt they were stewards of God’s money. All participants were willing to work side-by-side and sweat together, to make the disaster response happen. They did whatever was necessary to get the job done, even if that meant adapting in unusual or unprecedented ways. They were willing to learn as they went, make the necessary adjustments, and keep on providing service.

The organization did not provide service in isolation. They collaborated and cooperated with other faith-based organizations, non-government organizations and
government organizations. They also did not discriminate related to who could provide or receive assistance. They opened the doors of their organization to anyone willing to help or needing assistance. For the participants, this reflected Biblical principles of individual worth, that all individuals have value and worthy of love and care. Not only did they open their doors to those outside the faith denomination, non-faith church members were incorporated as family. Caring was present.

As an organization, they were also willing to look beyond their own faith constituency for financial support. This meant they were able to sustain the operation longer than if the response were completely dependent upon funding within their own denomination. By looking beyond their own faith, they once again demonstrated from the beginning of the response an ability to adapt, learn, and respond according to the need. Donations from the parent denomination’s membership would not alone sustain the response. Ultimately, despite the careful and frugal management of the organizational finances, the needs of New Orleans residents outstripped resources available to them and therefore FDR was not sustainable.

Prior to the research I had concluded that FDR fit the enhancement model of faith-based programs as proposed by Harden (2006). This meant that social/spiritual activities supported social service activities. Based on my research findings, I now believe FDR more closely fits the modern model where non-religious priorities are paramount. In the case of FDR the non-religious priorities were disaster response activities.

The work of Kramer, Nightingale, Trutko, Spaulding and Brunow (2002) focused on faith-based organizations receiving grants in which volunteers were trained for employment. FDR did receive a grant to support volunteer services, but that is the only similarity. The grant FDR received was many times larger than the average grant received by the organizations Kramer et al studied and FDR did not use their grant money to offer employment or support job training for New Orleans residents in need.
Faith-Based Disaster Response Around the World

My findings support Sutton’s (2002) conclusions that there is a need to understand FBOs and develop public policy regarding faith-based disaster response. Since little has changed since Sutton’s work, public policy regarding resourcing FBOs, separation of church and state and case management still needs to be developed.

Safety and security issues were major findings in my study but unlike Zotti et al., the FBO I studied did an extraordinary job of identifying and mitigating dangerous situations. They had training sessions for their volunteers, they had very clear expectations and rules for volunteer behavior at the work site, and they developed resources for first-aid by contacting local firemen, and provided safety equipment and supplies for the volunteers. In another exception to Zotti et al.’s (2006) findings, clear procedures for working with communities affected by disaster were routinely implemented by FDR; staff was very active in the community and served as chair and members of a variety of committees and enlisted community support for every phase of their response.

Two of Zotti et al.’s (2006) recommendations for optimal functioning of FBOs were not met for the FBO studied in this research: multi-lingual capability and sufficient funding for long-term sustainability. English was the only language utilized by FDR. While there is no way to know for sure whether the lack of other language capability prevented them from providing service to anyone, what I can say with confidence is that within my data there was nothing to support this notion. No one talked about it; no one said it was a problem in dealing with the residents. In this particular disaster response it may not have been an issue. That is not to say that this would not be a problem in future responses in other locations. As already mentioned, FDR’s service in New Orleans has ended because of lack of funding.

The three major constructs of transformation are 1) the person is the focus of transformation; 2) persons in the community build the community and 3) transformation occurs when communities fight good and overcome evil (Clarke (2006). My findings address the first two of the three core constructs. The data identified in the figural theme
of “Transformation” supports the construct that it is the person who changes. The change happened within people and as they figured into group membership. For example a participant changed in that they grew to like themselves or do things they didn’t’ know they could to, but on a bigger level, when this group of people left their home congregation where ever it was across the country they got on a bus as a group of strangers. Something happened to their inter-personal relationships which changed so that they became a family of people. Change was still person change but impacting other individuals in the way they related to each other. In this way, my findings support and expand on what Clarke said.

As FDR was closing their organization in New Orleans, there was a transfer of power to community leaders. This was difficult on many levels, but ultimately, community change must come from individuals within the community. It is not possible to know how that transition unfolded. Staffs were not the only participants working for community change. The residents of New Orleans worked with the volunteers and staff of FDR to bring about change in their homes, neighborhoods and city; often one house, yard or park at a time. Therefore, the second construct is also supported in my findings. Fighting good and overcoming evil, the third construct, is not as easily addressed. I did not define good and evil for my research. All participants in my study worked for the good, so that part of the construct is supported. I do not have any evidence to support overcoming evil.

St. John and Fuchs (2001) suggested denominations have the organizational structure to sustain volunteerism. My findings do support that the organizational structure of the parent denomination of FDR sustained volunteerism. What they didn’t’ have was money. One of the stated reasons volunteers outside the denomination joined FDR’s disaster response was because FDR provided them an organization with which to volunteer. The organization was awarded a grant that allowed them to support disaster response volunteers. It is unclear from my findings if the grant they received sustained volunteerism, the denominational organization sustained volunteerism or if they were synergistic. This would be something to consider for future research. What is clear from
my findings is that organizational structure is not sufficient in and of itself; there must also be financial sustainability.

St. John and Fuchs (2002) also concluded being affiliated with a religious denomination was predictive of volunteering. This was directly related to the denominational organizational structure supporting volunteerism. While not a focus of my research, anecdotaly there is support in my research for their finding. The vast majority of the volunteer teams were associated with the denomination.

The work of FDR was productive and required collective action consistent with the Integrated Theory of Volunteer Work (St. John & Fuchs, 2001; Wilson & Musick, 1997). In the figural themes “Stranger-to-Stranger Interactions” and “Communitas” evidence supported the work of volunteers as being productive and requiring collective action. Volunteering an ethical decision occurred when volunteers decided to go because they were led by God to go or knew the residents of New Orleans needed help. In this sense, it would have been unethical to deny help they knew they were able and led by God to give.

Contrary to the work of Tangenberg, (2005) I found no evidence FDR discriminated against clients or tried to change their belief system. The databases maintained by FDR did not include the belief or denomination of the person asking for assistance. None of the residents I interviewed or interacted with during the participant-observant experience alluded to discrimination or attempts at proselytizing.

There was no attempt by FDR at religious programming; there were no spiritual activities or programs required or requested of residents asking assistance. It was therefore unnecessary for them to determine the residents’ capacity to resist attempts at religious programming.

Third, neither a resident’s beliefs, values, assistance from other agencies, socioeconomic status, gender, ethnicity nor any other descriptors influenced the assistance received from FDR. The only criterion for assistance was that someone asked for it. One of the principles of disaster response is that of distributive justice, the process of who receives the resources, and generally means the most good for the most people. This would have required FDR seek more information from those they assisted; case
management would have been necessary. Most FBOs do not engage in case management; those that do, lack the capability to share information between agencies. Given these capabilities, it is not unexpected that my findings do not support Tangenberg’s concern.

Fourth, the staff, volunteers and homeowners possessed a variety of skills related and not related to disaster response. The circumstances of the disaster and subsequent recovery in New Orleans were so unpredictable it was not possible to identify a precise skill set to meet all potential needs. That said, each of the staff came to New Orleans with extensive experience in administration and construction skills. The organization sought to identify skills of volunteers coming to New Orleans; they developed a skills check list and attempted to match the work to the skills the team identified. Despite the attempt to match skill to the need, all participants admit to learning as they went. Considering how to match skills of volunteers with current needs will continue to be a challenge in volunteer centered faith-based disaster response.

Finally, Tangenberg’s (2005) fifth conclusion regarded making effective collaborations between the faith-based organization and other agencies. FDR excelled at this. Their service on multiple committees expedited the work of the organization as well as contributed to the rebuilding of New Orleans. Tangenberg’s conclusions not only lacked support from the results of my study but their utility in faith-based disaster response is called into question.

**Current Research Studies Related to a Post-Katrina New Orleans Public Policy**

*Research Laboratory Studies, 2007*

From the very beginning of my research I encountered similar difficulties in recruiting my sample as did Louisiana State University in recruiting theirs’. Those difficulties (e.g. undeliverable mail, displaced citizens) were but a symptom of the much broader infrastructure problems facing New Orleans and any organization that tried to assist with the resettlement process. FDR’s response was more effective because of their knowledge of the infrastructure and plans for rebuilding the city. Failure to have acknowledged those issues could have derailed the effectiveness of their response.
My findings support and expand on Weil’s (2007) conclusions that the most trusted people were from the victim’s faith community or place of worship. Spontaneous expressions of gratitude from those officially assisted by FDR and random citizens of New Orleans made it clear residents appreciated the faith community and the recovery work provided by FBOs. The question that must now be asked is what will happen to the resettlement process when and if other FBOs discontinue their disaster response efforts.

Weil (2007) also found residents had continued concerns regarding safety and crime within the city limits of New Orleans. My findings not only supported his but provided examples of how the concerns came to be. Irrespective of the security issues, the work of disaster response is in and of itself inherently dangerous. Those staff and volunteers engaging in it must become aware of the dangers and actively make plans to mitigate them.

*Louisiana Survey Report, 2006*

Similarities exist between the findings of the Louisiana Survey (2006) and findings of my research. Specifically, staff participants, and some volunteers, did not believe the infrastructure of New Orleans was sufficient to support recovery and that until the infrastructure was fixed the rebuilding of New Orleans would be delayed.

Housing, identified as one of the top two priorities in the Louisiana Survey (2006) was a focus of FDR’s work. In this respect, FDR was meeting priority needs in New Orleans as identified by the people they were there to assist. FDR did not attempt to impose their own vision of what they thought the residents needed, but listened to them and in a collaborative manner set about to meet the expressed need. This demonstrated caring and was reflective of their purpose for being there.

Feelings of depression were reported by participants in my study as well as 60% of the respondents in the 2006 Louisiana Survey. Not one staff, volunteer or resident participant spoke of seeking counseling, even though some availability for counseling through FDR for staff and volunteers existed. Faith Disaster Response did not offer mental health services to the residents of New Orleans. Given the relative high scores on the IES-R for participants in my study, it would seem more emphasis should be placed on
supportive mental health services during disaster response. This is challenging for an organization dependent on volunteers.

**Louisiana Post-Hurricane Adult Survey, 2006**

The findings of my research support and contribute to the understanding of the results of the Louisiana Post-Hurricane Adult Survey (2006). Many citizens of New Orleans remained displaced. Members of volunteer organizations, NGOs and FBOs, were in the city assist with restoring housing. The city’s dependability on FBOs for resettlement is a concern. If they do not already exist, it would be important that city officials and residents develop an exit strategy of their own related to FBOs leaving.

The effectiveness of faith-based disaster response over other agencies was also supported by the findings of my study. On every street we worked there were multiple FBOs working, each on a different house. That is explained in part by the 2,000 to 4,000 volunteers from faith-based organizations that filled the city of New Orleans each week.

The lack of adequate infrastructure, basic utilities, sufficient police and schools, in the city that we observed would explain in part why the government agencies received the lowest scores on the Louisiana Post Hurricane Adult Survey (2006). It is very concerning that 60% of the school-age children living in the city did not attend school. The implications of children without an education must be considered. In the absence of sufficient schools, alternative ways to provide education should be developed.

Results of the Louisiana Post-Hurricane Adult Study (2006) on residents’ feelings of depression are consistent with the findings of Weil (2007), the Louisiana Survey (2006), and my study. Perhaps FBOs without the capability of providing on-site mental health support for their staff, volunteers and residents should develop a referral strategy for such services.

**Government Research on Faith-Based Organizations**

Services and functions of FDR were similar to those identified by the Government Accountability Office as being provided by FBOs and NGOs. Work done on resident’s
home, while not direct cash assistance, allowed them to use the money they received from insurance companies and other agencies on goods and services unrelated to housing. In this sense, by extension, direct cash assistance was realized. There was never a direct attempt to provide services to families of the deceased; but, by virtue of helping anyone who asked, some families of the deceased were assisted. Official shelter services were not provided by FDR; instead the work they did on resident’s homes contributed to long-term housing. Disaster response services varied from organization to organization in New Orleans. The more an organization specialized, the more efficient their response became. Resources were insufficient to allow specialization by FDR in more than one area. When they worked collaboratively with other agencies, the combined effort was more than any could have accomplished on their own. The collaboration and efficiency of multiple agencies in New Orleans provided an example of the benefits of working together.

The GAO did not independently verify its findings; however, my study does serve as one mechanism of independent verification for those concerned about fraud or proselytizing. Transparent financial records, available on their Internet site and parent denomination, provided credible assurance of FDR’s fiscal accountability. At some point during their response effort, FDR began recording identifying information for those whom they were assisting. This consisted of contact information only. There was no verification of services from other organizations, citizenship, nor need. There is now agreement between the conclusions drawn from the government reports and my study regarding these issues. The next step would be to identify ways to expedite funding and utilization of FBO disaster response.

That FDR did not use language other than English is consistent with the GAO findings for all faith-based organizations. FDR reached some of the traditionally hard-to-reach populations as they were represented in the geographic regions where they worked.

The findings of my research support and expand those of the GAO studies and the post-Katrina studies from the U.S. Congress and White House. All have identified challenges for faith-based disaster response. One challenge facing FDR, and perhaps other FBOs, is planning for future disasters. If the parent denomination administrators do not believe disaster response is a priority, developing and sustaining future efforts will be
at risk. The coordination between FDR, other FBOs, NGOs and government agencies is a model for future disaster response. Therefore, the government studies that identified working with government agencies as a challenge for FBOs were not supported by my findings.

**Nursing Theory Applied to Faith-Based Disaster Response**

**Person**

The work of FDR confirmed the liberal definition of person as an individual, family and/or community. Person was represented by the staff, volunteers and residents participating in the research. Individuals received assistance and participated in disaster response; entire families received assistance and participated in disaster response; and, the communities and neighborhoods of New Orleans benefited from FDR’s recovery work.

Community building in the form of park development and lawn care in neighborhoods provided participants in my study with an increased sense of security and being cared for. Participants described how having a place for children to play again brought families back to the neighborhood; how mowing the front yards of every house made the neighborhood look lived in, normal. One word used to describe New Orleans would not be normal, yet something as simple as a manicured lawn provided that sense of normalcy. Feeling cared for brought the experience full circle to divine agency and the reason staff and volunteers said they were there.

**Environment**

In my study environment, any location which the person was located and care provided, included contaminated homes, decontaminated homes, deserted neighborhoods, FEMA trailers, yards, parks, vehicles, dormitory rooms, community rooms, dining rooms, building supply stores, committee meeting rooms and FDR headquarters. In each of these environments, the liberal definition of person was represented.
Health

Viewed as a continuum the study participants’ health, particularly the residents of New Orleans, improved over time. Initially they were too overwhelmed by their circumstances to fully function; with help, their ability to make decisions and function returned. As a community there was progress in functioning; when FDR left, community members accepted responsibility for committee work and the continued recovery effort. The length of recovery after a disaster is varied, but ultimately the goal of all disaster response is to return a community to its pre-disaster state of functioning. In this sense, FDR’s leaving New Orleans can be viewed as timely and successful.

Nursing

Results of my study supported my choice of Neuman’s System’s Model (1995) being applied to faith-based disaster response. Neuman’s view of person in the microsystem, mezzosystem and macrosystem were particularly salient when the findings of my research were examined. Individual participants who provided or received assistance were all part of the microsystem in that the focus of the response was focused on them as individuals. Participants became part of the mezzosystem as they joined a team of volunteers, worked together as staff of FDR and as they transitioned from strangers to family. Integration into the macrosystem occurred as FDR collaborated and cooperated with other NGOs, other FBOs and government agencies and participated as member and chair of city-wide rebuild committees. Those were reciprocal relationships.

Neuman (1995) theorized person as having a central core comprised of basic survival behaviors. Basic survival needs of the participants were breached during and after the hurricanes as well as during the disaster response. Shelter, food, clothing, and sanitation needs were evident in all participant groups. Volunteers were at risk for dehydration and heat injuries secondary to the conditions in which they performed their work. Resistance, physiologic integrity, was the first line of defense utilized to protect the central core. Persons with higher levels of health were more resistant and had safeguards in place for their survival core than those with health problems. Health problems already
existed for many of the participants but they brought their prescription medications with them or modified their disaster response activities in accordance with their physical capabilities. Many residents lived in frame houses in poor neighborhoods before the hurricanes. This generally meant they experienced the usual challenges of the impoverished related to health care and other basic necessities.

Normal lines of defense included problem-solving abilities, coping abilities and intellectual abilities. The evidence suggested participants had strong normal lines of defense. Adapting or coping skills, the ability to learn as they went, were required on a continual basis and all participants provided evidence they were able to do so. The ability to adapt or cope protected their lines of resistance. If a participant had a lower level of health but a strong ability to adapt or cope, their central core was still protected. I did not find evidence to support that an entire team suffered when their leader lost their problem-solving or coping abilities. Given the evidence for team spirit and working together, it may be that team members compensated for each other in the face of a leader’s disability or lack of leadership.

Flexible lines of defense contained the person’s potential for change and included protective behaviors; those lines of defense were evident in the research findings. Much attention to safety was given by FDR. Residents rarely spoke of protective measures; they lived and worked in the contaminated areas of the city. Many of them had attempted to gut or work on their homes before asking for help. It seems probable that some, if not all, of their flexible lines of defense were breached.

One unused flexible line of defense was that of the denominational training for volunteers. The disaster response was well underway by the time the training was developed; this coupled with the on-site orientation left little support for requiring teams to be officially trained prior to arriving in New Orleans.

Neuman’s Systems Theory (1995) also includes internal and external environments. The external environment consists of circumstances beyond the individual’s control and impacts their ability to respond to stress. Such an external environment was evident in the participants of my study. A portion of their social
suffering was directly linked to the loss of control they experienced, particularly for the resident participants.

Sociocultural influences, included in the internal environment of Neuman’s model (1995), were an important component of the faith-based disaster response experience. Staff members were far removed from their comfortable sociocultural influences, residents had lost many of theirs, and even when volunteers served for brief periods of time, the conditions they encountered challenged their previous notions of sociocultural norms. As these groups of participants came together, they formed new sociocultural relationships, influencing each other in such a way that when the experience ended, they were transformed.

The work of FDR is in every sense an intervention; primary, secondary and tertiary. However, it is also necessary to consider the state of New Orleans at the time FDR arrived. The central core of New Orleans as a city, communities and neighborhoods within the city, families and individuals was threatened. Flexible lines of defense failed; the devastation was not prevented. Normal lines of defense were in various stages of failing; some residents adapted by relocating, others adapted by seeking temporary shelter and then returning to New Orleans, but many needed assistance to begin the process of rebuilding their lives. Resistant lines of defense were breached in many cases; residents experienced injury, had chronic illnesses, and lacked the basics needed for survival: potable water, shelter, food, clothing, and sanitation. Some residents lost their lives; their core did not survive.

That any system could enter into the devastation and protect the core and begin restoring the lines of defense is incredible. Many FBOs, NGOs and government agencies, each systems in their own right, joined together to protect the core of New Orleans and its citizens. The evidence does not demonstrate causal relationships; however, the participants said FDR contributed to protecting their survival core. This is also consistent with the findings of Melton, Secrest, Chien and Anderson (2001) in which sexual assault nurse examiners were studied. It was found that Neuman’s model (1995) helped the nurse examiners assist clients to adapt to the stressors and gain control and stability of their
system. There is a need for future research to explicitly examine faith-based disaster response as an intervention so the effects of their work can be understood.

**Spirituality and Faith**

Harden (2006) referred to spirituality as being in union with the supernatural in such a way that religious beliefs and values are expressed through certain standards of conduct. In my study, the contextual ground was “Divine Agency” and in the ground and figural theme of “Decision Point,” the supernatural was visible; God directed and led the experience, He provided what the participants needed. In addition, some participants reported supernatural experiences with Divine emissaries or angels. Participants also spoke of doing the work as a reflection of their faith, to demonstrate God’s love to others.

In the nursing literature, spirituality is frequently associated with a search for meaning and purpose in life (Clarke, 2006). The meaning and purpose participants found in the FDR experience contain many of the qualities McSherry (2006) described: individual, inclusive, integrated, inter/intra-disciplinary, innate and institutional. Individual spiritual experiences included multiple perspectives; there were no denominational barriers, spiritual experiences were inter/intra-group and denomination, and some spiritual experiences were institutional.

The data in my study also supports the innateness of spirituality as described by McSherry (2006), Narayanasamy (1999) and Miner-Williams (2006). Participants spoke of the need every person has for spiritual care and the inner drive that leads them to search for meaning and connectedness to a higher power.

Where as spiritual care is a requirement in nursing (Miner-Williams, 2006; Swinton & McSherry, 2006), spiritual care in disaster response faces unique challenges; some have equated it with proselytizing. While proselytizing was not found in this experience of faith-based disaster response, elements of spiritual care were. The staff and volunteers of FDR demonstrated their faith in their interactions with each other and the residents. Giving someone a smile, placing a reassuring hand on a shoulder, and treating others with respect are examples of spiritual care provided by McSherry that were present in my findings without evidence of proselytizing.
Faith-based organizations provide acute and chronic health care every day in hospitals, long-term care facilities and primary care practices. Faith-based hospitals and long-term care facilities include chapels within their facilities and hire chaplains to augment the spiritual care. Yet no charges of proselytizing are leveled at these facilities. In addition, these faith-based health care institutions are recipients of federal payments, in the form of Medicare and Medicaid, without concern the money will be used to advance a particular faith. Spiritual care in the public health sector does not have this type of history; perhaps the questions surrounding federal monies for faith-based disaster response stem from lack of experience with faith-based organizations in public health arenas. Future research is needed to determine where and how faith-based organizations can be integrated into public health care. Studying faith-based humanitarian aid around the world may provide some insight into how such integration could be stimulated.

In faith-based disaster response, staff and volunteers are vulnerable to the stresses of disaster response. Walter (2002) and McSherry (2006) identify providing spiritual care as exacting a toll on the provider as well. Findings of my study did not suggest the provision of spiritual care created additional stress on the participants; the opposite is true. Staff and volunteers purposed to provide spiritual care and as a result of their experience in faith-based disaster response were themselves transformed.

There is evidence the work of disaster response was stressful to the staff and volunteers. Some experienced depression, sadness, and physical injury as a result of their work; however, when their responses on the hope scales and the impact of event scales were examined there was evidence of high levels of post-impact stress but no evidence of decreased hope.

Harden (2006) said the outcomes of FBOs could be spiritual, social or both. This meant that any act of a FBO could have spiritual significance. This is supported by the findings of my study; participants experienced communitas and transformation.

Elements of spiritual support identified by Ai, Tice, Peterson and Huang (2005) were present in my findings. Almost all participants indicated high levels of personal faith and positive attitudes on the HHI. Participants reported the prayers they prayed on their own or that were prayed for them resulted in God acting on their behalf.
Hope

The findings of my research related to hope are very consistent with the concept analysis and discussion of hope in the literature (Benzein & Saveman, 1998; Herth and Cutcliffe, 2002). The antecedents of crisis, loss, despair and life threatening situations were very evident in the lives of the resident participants: they lost their homes, their lives were threatened, and many despaired. The places or agencies charged with helping the residents failed. Faith-based organizations filled in the gap as other sources of help continued to falter. Resident participants stated they felt loved and cared for by the staff and volunteers. They developed sufficiently strong relationships with them to call each other family. They worked side by side together and the consequences of the relationships and work (help) were that the residents coping abilities re-emerged and their quality of life improved as they were able to return or make plans to return to their homes. This is consistent with the consequences of hope; therefore, these findings would indicate the experience of faith-base disaster response contributed to hope.

My findings are consistent with those of Keene (1998) who identified hope in the aftermath of floods in North Dakota. There, victims of the flood found hope through rebuilding, helping others and being helped. In New Orleans, the staff, volunteers and residents associated with FDR rebuilt homes and neighborhoods all the while helping and being helped by others. The activities of rebuilding and helping may be seen as supporting hope. From the human science perspective, Wang (2005) posited hope should be supported, not just measured and that spirituality and hope are uniquely individual. Each resident, staff member and volunteer deliberately choose to change their daily activities during their experience with FDR, every attempt was made to salvage or retain what they could from the resident’s homes, and all knew the residents’ lives would be changed as a result of the devastation. This is consistent with Wang’s conclusion related to how hope is realized. Therefore, from the human science perspective, my findings support hope was realized in the faith-based disaster experience.

Establishing caring relationships has been studied as an intervention to promote hope (Herth, 2000; Rustoen & Hanestad, 1998, Tollett & S.P, Thomas, 1995). The data
from my study support caring relationships were established in and between the participant groups associated with FDR; communitas occurred.

Much of this discussion has focused on the residents’ hope with staff and volunteers mentioned secondarily. It should be noted staff and volunteers also experienced hope. To be sure the circumstances may have been different but they participated in the same activities rendering hope to the residents. Conceptually, there is ample evidence in my findings to support the conclusion hope was realized in their experience. The HHI and HVAS indicated the participants had high levels of hope. Qualitatively the participants hope was linked to the faith-based disaster response experience; the same cannot be said for the quantitative data, it simply represented a measure of hope. It was by examining these two data sets concurrently that the conclusion hope was present in the FDR experience were identified.

Of interest, it should be noted that Rustoen and Hanestad (1998) found hope initially increased after an intervention to promote hope but that within six months the intervention had no impact on the quality of life. Many participants in my study had completed their experience with FDR a year or more prior to engaging in the research. Yet, their hope remained high. The research design does not support causality, but future research should include longitudinal intervention studies for hope so that long-term effects of hope interventions can be identified or confirmed. Research of this nature is consistent with needs for future research identified by Herth and Cutcliffe (2002).

**Related Literature and Research Findings**

**Attachment, Separation and Loss**

In Bowlby’s (1969, 1973, 1980) sentinel work he identified natural and cultural clues to danger. Of these, being alone and being in the dark were significant to my research. After the hurricanes, many families in New Orleans were separated, they were alone, and they were in the dark. He posited that disaster conditions cause family members to come or cling together immediately after a disaster and for some time to come. In the absence of reunion with family members and friends, Bowlby’s work may
help explain the relationships and strong bonds that residents developed with those who came to their assistance after the hurricanes. Bowlby’s work explains in part the sense of community experienced by the residents. It does not fully explain the sense of community that was reciprocal among all participant groups.

Bowlby’s (1980) work related to loss focuses on individual responses to loss. The loss experienced by residents in New Orleans contained individual loss to be sure, but it is also collective. The loss was sudden and unanticipated, traumatic, and complex. Multiple losses were involved for all. His work related to multiple kinds of losses just not multiple losses at the same time.

The work of Elder and Clipp (1998) is applicable to my findings. Often my research participants said New Orleans looked like a war zone and would refer to themselves as having been in a battle. While war and disasters are not the same event, they can result in the same consequences: pain and devastation. While the soldiers felt alone in their loss, consistent with Bowlby’s (1973) work, participants in my study did not feel alone. My findings have led me to conclude this was in part because of the communitas they experienced.

Elder and Clipp (1998) did not name the soldier’s experience “communitas;” however, the relationships that developed during battle are consistent with that concept. The soldiers received some protective benefits from emotional distress by coming together periodically for visits. Many of my study participants continued to seek each other out after the disaster response experience. Some residents have plans to invite all the volunteers and staff back for celebration parties when their homes are completely rebuilt. Rather than viewing this as an abnormal attachment, it may be beneficial (protective) for all of them.

Green (2006) identified three important results of persons who experienced multiple evacuations because of the threat of hurricanes. Participants in her study and mine reported they learned from their experience of loss. Participants from both studies also experienced a positive change as a result of what they had lived through. One of the qualitative themes identified in my research is that of “transformation.” My participants were transformed through their relationships with each other, through mentoring, giving
and receiving, and loving and caring. Evacuating during a disaster was experienced as communal by participants of my study and Green’s. Future research may identify whether the communal experience of evacuating is consistent with the concept of “communitas” experienced in faith-based disaster response. If potential disaster victims were assured of communitas, perhaps they would not be so reluctant to evacuate.

The last application of this body of literature to my research is found in the work of Aberbach (1995). He suggested that in times of crisis individuals attach to a charismatic leader. The participants in my study frequently spoke of their attachment to one of the staff members. It could be said he possessed qualities of a charismatic leader. Aberbach posited this attachment was short-lived. I cannot support or refute that with my study as it is cross-sectional in nature rather than longitudinal.

**Divine Agency**

In my research, the concept of “Divine Agency” was demonstrated to be the context of the faith-based disaster experience. Regardless of research group, participants referred to being led by God to become involved in the experience, they described ways in which God provided for them, and they recalled times when they prayed to God. This is all consistent with the literature on divine agency reviewed in Chapter 2 and was an acknowledgement of faith, the language of faith, and a belief that God could and would act in individual lives and the world (Henderson, 1985; Yong, 2000; Schwobel, 1987).

Schwobel (1987) describes divine providence as the experience of divine agency. This would explain why the participants spoke of “the Lord’s timing” giving examples of how God provided for them at just the right time.

Results of my study also indicated the study participants’ beliefs were more in line with Farrer than Phillips as described by Henderson, 1985. That is they believed in a personal God who acted on their behalf in the world rather than a supernatural God with whom they could not have a personal relationship. I have to wonder how or if the experience of faith-based disaster response would be altered if participants’ beliefs were consistent with Phillips.
The body of literature on “communitas” is critical to understanding the theme of “You Form a Family” (Communitas). This anthropology term is used to describe the phenomenon of strong attachments among the participant groups in my research. As in the literature reviewed, my participants spoke of bonds among each other that were like being in a family. Two important comparisons of my study to the literature reviewed can be made.

First, Sharpe (2005) identified five principles or actions that built communitas for an organization providing leisure activities. The first was communicating the mission. FDR took every opportunity to communicate their mission. This began with the notification a volunteer team was interested in coming, continued during orientation and was further developed over the span of the experience.

Second, Sharpe (2005) noted the organization picked and trained their leaders. The leaders of FDR were certainly hand picked or invited to accept their position, but FDR did not specifically train them. All the staff reported learning about disaster response as they went. They trained themselves. However, the leaders trained and oriented volunteers. At times, the training was tedious. For example, donning and doffing personal protective equipment to allow entry into a contaminated home was a meticulous process that was designed to offer protection to those entering hazardous areas.

Third, the leisure activity organization set the tone for all of their social interactions and activities. This can also be said of FDR; perhaps because all staff and volunteers were staying at the same locations, eating together, sleeping together, and enjoying recreation and fellowship together. Orientation established the expectations for each volunteer. When staff and volunteers interacted with residents, it was not hierarchical but relational.

Fourth, a chain-of-command or respect for authority was important to establishing communitas. A chain-of-command did exist in FDR and on each team. This provided structure and definition for roles and the work that was to be done. It was however collegial rather than authoritarian. Each leader knew when a decision had to be made and
was ready and willing to make it; at the same time, there was room for discussion and flexibility. Perhaps one of the reasons authority was a non-issue in FDR’s experience is because everyone involved was there by choice. Sharpe (2005) alluded to “choices” made related to leisure activities but his conclusions are relevant to my study: his was something participants wanted to do, no one made them. And, they could change their mind at any time and quit being involved. It may be that part of their choice was an acknowledgement of leadership and authority.

Finally, Sharpe (2005) identified facilitating the experience as important to the development of communitas. The staff of FDR used those very words in describing their role with volunteers: they were there to “facilitate volunteers” working in disaster response. They were helping people do what they were going to do anyway and helped them be successful at it.

Working toward a shared goal or value in the development of communitas is found in the work of Spencer, et al. (2001). Once again this was found in the disaster response experience. When participants described the relationships they formed, it was often in the context of working toward the same goal or sharing similar values. The goal of FDR was to facilitate the return of hope for the residents of New Orleans and by extension all who volunteered or worked with them. This was a shared goal that participants knew and articulated. The other shared value among the participants was that of faith, not related to a denomination, but a personal faith that connected them to each other; they were persons of faith working to bring back hope.

**Social Suffering**

Long (2006) speaks of responding to suffering from a stance of love and compassion; this is also evident in my study. Suffering was experienced at a variety of levels by most of the participants in faith-based disaster response. Most participants were there to serve others because they felt led or called by God to do so; by serving others they were serving God. This was consistent with what Long referred to as transcendental suffering. And, as Long suggested, for some the devastation was so overwhelming and
debilitating they questioned how such an event could happen and instead of seeing hope, saw hopelessness.

The work of Dossa (2005) is applicable to my research in two different ways than identified by Long. Government agencies and officials along with insurance companies are the two most easily identified institutions that contributed to the suffering in New Orleans. Much of the work of FDR was directly related to what insurance and government would not pay for; FDR would do the work and let the homeowners use what insurance money they did receive for other necessities.

Dossa (2005) also referred to remaking the victims’ world. It may not be perceived as remaking, but the deconstruction or gutting of houses by FDR paved the way for rebuilding or remaking. Near the end of their time in New Orleans FDR did begin rebuilding some homes. Activities of community building, mowing lawns, and landscaping activities, transformed neighborhoods. People living there perceived the neighborhood as appearing normal and felt safer.

There was a sense of inequality in New Orleans. Several participants referred to the different worlds they found there; the affluent and tourist areas and the devastated neighborhoods. Inequality such as this is referred to by Charlesworth (2005) as one component of social suffering.

Finally, the concerns expressed by Wilkinson (2006) are applicable to how I wrote this dissertation. I have noted, in multiple places, the differences in language among the disciplines. I have made every attempt to make the participants’ voices heard. This has been a deliberate choice from the beginning by designing the research to include existential phenomenology as one of the research methods. Scientific language was not ignored in my writing, but it is secondary to the participants’ own words.

**Unintended Consequences of Faith-Based Disaster Response**

This research has demonstrated many intended benefits of faith-based disaster response. However, there were a few unintended consequences that merit discussion. The first unintended consequence is the detrimental emotional impact of disaster response work. The Impact of Event Scale – Revised is a well tested and reliable tool that
identifies the degree of stress associated with an event after it is over. It is also known that individuals involved in disaster response are susceptible to psychological trauma from their work. My research has demonstrated that staff and volunteers of FDR, as well as the residents they assisted, were not only susceptible to post-event stress, but over half of their scores reflected significant post-traumatic stress. This would suggest mental health services should be on-site and available for those involved in faith-disaster response. Preparing volunteers and staff for the psychological trauma they will face and teaching coping skills may be one way to try and prevent the full impact of their work.

A second unintended consequence is that of the residents being unable to fully engage in the work or say thank you in tangible ways. This represents a true ethical dilemma; to accept tangible gifts gives the appearance disaster response services can be bought or influenced whereas to deny tangible gifts leaves the residents with a sense of indebtedness they cannot repay. Faith-based organizations should begin now, before the next disaster strikes (a priori), to resolve these issues for all concerned.

It is also understandable why volunteers and staff would want to “do for” residents rather than “do with;” a desire to provide respite and relief from the stress are worthy ambitions. However, the literature and evidence from my research indicated the need to allow residents to participate in the work as they desire. Many residents spoke of knowing when they could do the work themselves and when they needed someone else to take over. Lest someone misunderstand, it is clear from my research that residents did participate in the work and that it was meaningful. It is also clear that in some circumstances they would have liked to do more.

The third and final unintended consequence I would like to address is that of unfinished business. Staff, volunteers and residents all struggled with the fact that FDR was closing its base of operations in New Orleans. Volunteers clearly did not understand the reasons for leaving. Staff understood, even if they did not agree; but, they also acknowledged it was not a smooth process and one that left residents with unmet needs. Residents, who previously were guided through the maze of resettlement in New Orleans, now found themselves on their own and not quite sure how to manage from there. Not everything is predictable, but it would seem FBOs could and should develop an entrance
and exit strategy simultaneously, placing as much emphasis on the exit strategy as the work done up to that point.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations to my study do exist. This was a very homogenous research sample. All the participant groups were associated with the same faith-based disaster response organization. The homogeneity of the groups does lend strength to the findings for this group, however results and conclusions of this study are limited to those providing or receiving assistance from faith-based disaster organizations. These findings are not generalizable to NGO disaster response or government disaster response. The sample size for all participant groups was small for quantitative measures; the sample size is small for the resident participants for the qualitative methods. It is possible only those individuals with positive experiences agreed to participate in the study. Whereas evidence of conflict was found in the results, it would have strengthened the study to have participants included whose experience was FDR was varied.

Another limitation is that other than the staff participants, the other two participant groups were not representative of the population from which the sample was drawn. All of the resident participants were African-American whereas 52.4% of the population was African-American. That references to racial tensions were largely missing from the data collected for this dissertation is a particularly significant limitation when the racial tensions related to the Katrina response have been so well publicized. The other discrepancy between the sample and the population for the resident group is gender related. In the research sample the resident sample was 80% female; in the population 58.8% were female. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that it is unknown whether the residents listed in the database are representative of the population FDR served.

The volunteer sample is representative of the population with the exception of gender. The sample included 25% females whereas the population was 46.8% female. In all other aspects (age, number of times volunteered and number of days volunteered) the
volunteer sample was representative of the population. Because the staff population was so small, the sample was 82% of the population and therefore very representative.

A limitation of the study is the lack of inclusion of residents who relocated to areas other than New Orleans and whose homes were gutted by FDR or other FBOs even if they did not return to the city. Money and time did not permit their inclusion in this study.

It is also a limitation that the timing for collection of the resident data occurred at the two year anniversary of Katrina. Historical threats to validity were a concern. In at least one instance, the timing of the interview hindered recruiting additional resident participants. It may have also impacted their stories as the local and national news revisited nearly every aspect of the Katrina response around the anniversary date.

The assessment tools, the HHI, HVAS and IES-R, were not as helpful for concurrent validity as anticipated. The most that can be said regarding their concurrent use is they may be beneficial in a larger sample. The other quantitative data, the databases maintained by FDR, were also a limitation of the study. Existing databases are limited and confined to the data entered. There is no way to verify the accuracy of the data, resolve issues related to missing data, and in some cases even know the true value of the data.

**Implications for Nursing**

Implications for nursing in the areas of education, practice and policy are present in the findings and conclusions of the research. Many of these implications are also applicable to the other disciplines associated with faith-based disaster response.

**Implications for Nursing Education**

As the review of literature suggested, nursing education has not traditionally incorporated disaster response in the curriculum. It is within the past few years any provision for this education has been made and for this means the inclusion of one or two lectures or an elective class in disaster response. Findings of this study demonstrate faith-based disaster response is an important contributor to public health and that within the
experience of disaster response many safety issues exist. Faith-based disaster response can be included in clinical practicums and the contributions of the FBO included in didactic content. One emerging specialty in nursing is that of parish or faith community nursing. Some undergraduate clinical practicums include parish nursing; however, faith community nursing education is nearly always at the graduate or certificate level. Faith community nurse education should include faith-based disaster response.

An additional and central focus of parish nursing is the link of faith and health (Detwiller, n.d.). The review of literature in this dissertation on the link between faith, spirituality, hope and health supports including faith-based disaster response in faith community nurse education.

Another new specialty in nursing is that of the homeland security nurse. This specialty education occurs at the Master’s or PhD level and is currently limited in its availability. One of the goals and expectations of homeland security nursing is to assess and incorporate all systems associated with a disaster and the recovery process. This and other studies have demonstrated faith-based disaster response has the capacity to make significant contributions to the disaster recovery process; therefore, content on faith-based disaster response should be included in the education for homeland security nurses.

Finally, nurses may be involved in disaster response because their community has experienced a disaster, because they volunteered to respond to a disaster with a NGO or government agency or because the volunteered to respond with their own faith communities. Regardless of the vehicle, nurses will interface with faith-based disaster response and would benefit having this content included in their basic and continuing nursing education.

Implications for Nursing Practice

The implications for nursing practice are nearly identical to those for nursing education. In nursing practice, nurses must take what they learned in education and apply it. A nurse who understands and knows what faith-based disaster response has to offer will be much more likely to efficiently utilize these organizations during a disaster. They will know what issues of safety to be concerned about and provide anticipatory guidance
for. They will realize the inherent dangers in faith-based disaster response and include the appropriate assessments when volunteers, staff or residents are in their care. Nursing care includes prevention. As Neuman’s Systems Theory demonstrated, there is great potential for nurses to impact primary, secondary and tertiary prevention as it relates to faith-based disaster response. Table 5.1 is a synthesis of nursing’s metaparadigm, the nursing process, Neuman’s Systems model, the Department of Homeland Security goals and constructs of the new nursing specialty of homeland security. This table is included here to not only demonstrate the similarities of these important complementary entities, but to identify threads or constructs applicable to nursing education, practice and research. As demonstrated by my dissertation research, faith-based disaster response is applicable to each of these broad spectrums.

Nurses belonging to faith communities may have the opportunity to engage in faith-based disaster response themselves. Their team members will know they are a nurse and come to them for assistance and advice. They may be the only health care provider on their volunteer team. They will need to recognize and be able to intervene when emergency situations arise. The qualitative findings of this study provide many examples of the type of emergency situations, beyond the disaster response, nurses must prepare for.

As with the implications for education, practice implications exist for parish or faith community nursing practice. The faith community nurse may be in a position to prepare a volunteer team to respond to disasters or even accompany them as they respond. The same is true for the homeland security nurse.

The practice of homeland security and public health nursing must incorporate faith-based disaster response in disaster plans and recovery work. Failure to do so eliminates a demonstrated effective response pathway. Building collaborations with the FBOs prior to the occurrence of a disaster is consistent with developing mutual aid agreements with other NGOs and government agencies. These nurses may also be in a position to positively impact public health policy regarding faith-based disaster response.
Table 5.1. Comparison of Nursing Metaparadigm, Nursing Process, Department of Homeland Security Goals, Neuman’s Systems Model & Homeland Security Nursing
(Persell & Speraw, 2008,4)

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<th>NURSING METAPARADIGMS</th>
<th>NURSING PROCESS</th>
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<th>NEUMAN’S SYSTEMS MODEL</th>
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<td>Stresses</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Central Core</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Central Core</td>
<td>Impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>Diagnosis</td>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prevention &amp;</td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Prevention &amp;</td>
<td>Support</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>Intervention &amp; Evaluation</td>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>Develop</td>
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<td>Service</td>
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<td>Organizational</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Excellence</td>
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<td>Excellence</td>
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</table>
An unanticipated implication for nursing practice is that of disabled volunteers and children engaged in disaster response. Given the inherently dangerous conditions of disaster response it is almost inconceivable that a small child, a blind person, a wheelchair bound person would be doing work at the site or would be in the city where limited health care is available. More research to distinguish between stereotypical concerns or real concerns related to children and the disabled in disaster response is needed. Regardless of the outcome of the research, it is now clear that the same kinds of chronic health problems people cope with and manage every day are present in volunteers responding to disasters. Nurses must be prepared to respond to disaster response emergencies and any chronic illnesses exacerbated by the experience. Nurses on volunteer teams should encourage team members to disclose all medical conditions, have sufficient prescription medications with them, take precautions to prevent exacerbation of their illness and carefully consider whether they should go to the site to participate in the response.

Implications for Nursing Research

This study has multiple implications for nursing research. More questions are raised than were answered. There is a need for intervention research as it relates to faith-based disaster response. The same can be said for the concept of hope. Supporting or encouraging hope and faith-based disaster response are interventions and should be studied as such. This will require longitudinal research designs that include data collection prior to instituting the intervention.

The current research should be expanded to include multiple FBOs engaged in disaster response; this means the inclusion of Christian and non-Christian FBOs. The experience of faith-based disaster response needs to be studied from the perspective of the government and NGOs as well. The failure to include these participants in my study was a major limitation. If policy development regarding faith-based disaster response is to occur, government must be included in the research. There are government sponsored studies cited in the review of literature, but I believe there needs to be independent research of government’s experience in this.
Additional research should attempt to make the resident sample more closely representative to the population sample. It should also include residents who have relocated. Many of them received faith-based services located in New Orleans or where the relocated.

Those who did not ask FBOs for assistance in this disaster should also be included in future research. It would be informative if not helpful to understand why they did not consider faith-based disaster response an option.

Research is also needed to identify more clearly the issues or concerns that prevent FBOs and government agencies from full collaboration. This specifically relates to documentation of who is being helped, establishing criteria for assistance, avoidance of duplication of service, case management, utilization of federal funds and other disaster response activities. It may be research could identify the pathways that led to full collaboration, cooperation and utilization of federal monies between acute care faith-based institutions, long-term care faith-based institutions and chronic care faith-based institutions. Researching these issues with world wide faith-based humanitarian aid agencies may also be informative to the process.

The majority of the parish nursing literature related to disaster care is on the internet sites of individual parish nurse organizations and is entirely devoted to linking the reader with government internet sites on disaster care. Two contributory articles were retrieved however. One by King (2004) is a review of the parish nursing literature and provides a thorough glimpse into the areas of research. King utilized three different categories of interest to delineate the articles: needs assessment, parish nursing care, and perceptions of parish nursing. Research on disaster or mass casualty care would be anticipated in any of these categories.

An urgent need for research in faith-based disaster response is related to children and disabled persons volunteering on-site. From a faith-based perspective it is nearly impossible to prevent someone from responding if they want to and given the transformation and Communitas experienced by my research participants; it would be hard to deny someone the experience because they are disabled or a child. After all, disabled people live and every day with their disabilities and are encouraged to
participate in as many activities as they are able. Being disabled does not mean they
cannot have the quality of life they choose. From a health care perspective, there is no
limit to the dangers in a disaster zone for someone who may not be able to hear a
warning, see a danger or quickly get to safety. This includes children who
developmentally may not be able to take care of themselves should the adult they are
with become incapacitated. These are both vulnerable populations and any research
design would need to consider human rights issues related to vulnerable populations.

**Public Policy and Faith-Based Disaster Response**

As identified in this dissertation, previous studies have demonstrated the need for
public policy development related to faith-based disaster response. Research to date,
including this dissertation research, has not supported a link between faith-based disaster
response and proselytizing. It is time to explore avenues through which faith-based
organizations can receive significant federal funding to sustain effective disaster
response. These avenues should be protected from political changes in congressional
representatives. It may be a fee for service, just as in Medicare/Medicaid, would work for
faith-based disaster activities; perhaps just as tax payers have the option to contribute a
dollar of their tax money to presidential campaigns they should have the option of
contributing a dollar to faith-based disaster response. Then it could not be said those
opposing faith-based services are having their tax dollars donated to such services.

Public policy must consider the resources of faith-based organizations; there is a
limit to their resources. If the federal government expects faith-based organizations to do
disaster response then money should be available to support the FBOs. Paying for overtly
religious activities can be excluded. The large faith-based humanitarian-aid agencies have
successfully developed fiscal accountability that separates federal money from donated
money ensuring each is spent on approved activities.

Lack of case management has been a consistent finding related to faith-based
disaster response; in part because the computer systems between the faith-based
organizations, NGOs and the government do not interface. It may be policies could be
developed that support such an interface by borrowing technology already in use for
public health surveillance. I am not suggesting the government give computers to faith-based organizations, but I am suggesting the government develop case management computer programming that includes the collection of necessary data to track the effectiveness of disaster response. This program could then be available to the FBOs and NGOs as a free download and linked to a central data collection server. The data could be encrypted or encoded with personal identifying information omitted. Research can identify signal alarms for data representing disaster response so that if a concern is identified, a disaster epidemiologist can follow up with the source of the information. The source, in this case the FBO, would be the only one with access to the identifying information.

Faith-based organizations providing disaster response do not always have a facility from which to operate. Research may once again discover ways FBOs, NGOs and government can collaborate to ensure access to faith-based services. Research may also be able to identify methodologies FBOs can use to reach non-English speaking populations. These populations are difficult for government, NGOs and FBOs to reach. Perhaps financial incentives can be provided to those FBOs willing to work with these populations.

Public policy has to do more than create an organizational chart that includes NVOAD. The current relationship between NVOAD and emergency support function number six should be researched to determine what is working for both and where improvements should be made, recognizing improvements require financial support. In the course of public policy development, research may also identify ways in which those receiving assistance can contribute to the response without ethically jeopardizing those who are assisting them.

If FBOs have the organizational structure and the trust of the people, have demonstrated fiscal accountability and effective disaster response, then supporting them financially may not take any more federal dollars than are already allocated for disaster response. It would take a reallocation of money; a redistribution of some monies from the government response to the faith-based response, perhaps in some of the ways identified above.
Summary

This dissertation has examined the experience of faith-based disaster response from the perspective of FBO staff and volunteers providing service to the residents receiving service. Research has demonstrated faith-based disaster response is effective and is fiscally sound. The experience of faith-based disaster response for Faith Disaster Response was one grounded in “Divine Agency.” All participants encountered a decision point where they decided to provide or seek assistance. The pain and devastation or social suffering in New Orleans was immeasurable. It was visceral and palpable. None of the participants were left untouched by it. A group of strangers came together to engage in disaster response activities to alleviate the social suffering. For FDR, those activities were administrative, deconstructive, reconstructive and community building. Disaster response activities were inherently dangerous but FDR ensured safety measures for each danger identified.

As participants, strangers, worked and sweated together they developed relationships that drew them together as members of a family. They played together, worked together and in some cases prayed together. They came as strangers but left as family. In the process, they were transformed; their lives were changed. For some this meant they gained confidence in who they were, what they could do and where they would go next. As part of their transformation experience they felt blessed and wanted to express their gratitude; they experienced hope.

Reflection on the experience was normal and in many ways demonstrated the impact the experience had on the participants. They wanted to know about the people they had helped or worked with. How were they? What were they doing? Did the neighborhood ever recover? It is in reflection concerns for the future of New Orleans are also found. Is it even possible to recover? These questions are not unlike questions being asked by government officials and citizens across the United States.

There are many more research questions identified than answered and implications for public policy are numerous. This dissertation research is but one step toward understanding faith-based disaster response.
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APPENDICES
Appendix I

NVOAD and CWS Membership
Table A.1. Members and Affiliates of National Members of National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster, Incorporated and Church World Service (National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster, 2007; Church World Service, 2007c)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster, Incorporated</th>
<th>Church World Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>America Second Harvest</td>
<td>African Methodist Episcopal Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Disaster Reserve</td>
<td>African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Red Cross</td>
<td>Alliance of Baptists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Charities USA</td>
<td>American Baptist Churches (USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Disaster Response</td>
<td>Armenian Church of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of the Brethren - Emergency Response</td>
<td>Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churches of Scientology disaster Response</td>
<td>Christian Methodist Episcopal Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Psychiatry Outreach</td>
<td>Church of the Brethren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed the Children</td>
<td>The Coptic Orthodox Church in North America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humane Society of the United States</td>
<td>The Episcopal Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Critical Incident Stress Foundation</td>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran Church in America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran Disaster Response</td>
<td>Friends United Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy Medical Airlift (Angel Flight)</td>
<td>Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Organization for Victim Assistance</td>
<td>Hungarian Reformed Church in America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Medical Teams International</td>
<td>International Council of Community Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REACT International, Inc.</td>
<td>Korean Presbyterian Church in America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Baptist Convention</td>
<td>Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Salvation Army</td>
<td>Mar Thoma Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Jewish Communities</td>
<td>Moravian Church in America</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adventist Community Services</td>
<td>National Baptist Convention of America</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Baptist Men USA</td>
<td>National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Radio Relay League, Inc.</td>
<td>National Missionary Baptist Convention of America</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team</td>
<td>Orthodox Church in America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for International Disaster Information</td>
<td>Patriarchal Parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church in the USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Reformed World Relief Committee</td>
<td>Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends</td>
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<td>Church World Service</td>
<td>Polish National Catholic Church of America</td>
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<td>Convoy of Hope</td>
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<tr>
<td>Episcopal Relief and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends Disaster Service, Inc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Aid</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster, Incorporated</td>
<td>Church World Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Relief Friendship Foundation</td>
<td>Presbyterian Church (USA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mennonite Disaster Service</td>
<td>Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Emergency Response Team</td>
<td>Reformed Church in America</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nazarene Disaster Response</td>
<td>Serbian Orthodox Church in the USA and Canada</td>
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<td>Presbyterian Church (USA)</td>
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<td>Society of St. Vincent de Paul</td>
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<td>The Points of Light Foundation</td>
<td>Ukrainian Orthodox Church in America</td>
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<td>United Church of Christ</td>
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<td>United Methodist Committee on Relief</td>
<td>The United Methodist Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way of America</td>
<td>American Bible Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteers of America</td>
<td>American Leprosy Mission</td>
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<td>World Vision</td>
<td>Church Women United</td>
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<td>Heifer International</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Interchurch Medical Assistance, Inc.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ludhiana Christian Medical College Board</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lutheran world Relief</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mennonite Central Committee</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Seventh-day Adventist Church</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Young Men's Christian Association</td>
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<td>Young Women's Christian Association</td>
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Appendix II
Staff Informed Consent and Tools
INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT
For Staff
The Experience of Faith-Based Disaster Response: A Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

I am a doctoral student at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. I am conducting my dissertation research. I am studying the lived experience of faith-based disaster response.

You are being invited to participate in my research study. This means you agree to being interviewed about your experience as an administrator or paid staff of Faith Disaster Response with responsibilities related to the New Orleans disaster response. The interview will be digital and audio-taped and will take about an hour. When the interview is completed, you will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire. This will take approximately another 15 minutes. You may decide to stop your participation in the study at any time. The following paragraphs provide additional explanation of the study. Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to sign this form, indicating your willingness to be included in the study.

You are being invited to participate in a research study of faith-based disaster response. This research involves human participants and has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The purpose of the study is to discover and understand the experience of faith-based disaster response for: those staff members who organized and provided disaster assistance; those who volunteered their time to provide assistance and for those who received assistance.

You are being asked to tell the researcher your experience with faith-based disaster response in an interview. The interview will be digital and audio tape recorded to ensure what you say is recorded accurately. The taped interview will be transcribed and the written transcript analyzed. You will not be identified in the transcript and any information you provide that could identify you will be removed from the transcript. No one outside the research team will have access to the transcript of your interview. The taped interview will be destroyed when the study is completed. The transcript of your interview will be kept in a locked cabinet in the researcher’s university faculty office. In the future, the researcher may analyze the transcript again as part of future research studies on faith-based disaster response.

The interview will take approximately an hour. The interview will end when you have nothing more to tell the researcher or when you choose to end it.

When the interview is over, you will be asked to complete a short questionnaire about your experiences. This should take approximately 15 minutes additional time. Your answers on the questionnaire will be kept confidential.

You may be asked for permission to contact you as the study nears completion to review the research findings and tell the researcher whether or not you agree or disagree with the findings.

_____ (Participant’s Initials)
You do not have to consent to this request in order to participate in the study. If you agree to be contacted at a later date you are free to change your mind and may still decline at that time.

There are no obvious risks to you by participating in the study. It is possible that sharing your experience with the researcher may cause you to remember unpleasant or anxious moments associated with Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the disaster response activities you have participated in. If this occurs, the researcher will refer you to a CARE team member or a mental health counselor in your area.

By participating in the study you will be contributing to the science of nursing. Some people who participate in these interviews have reported it was helpful to have someone listen to their story. You will be offered a $25 dollar gift card at the completion of your interview. If you decide to withdraw from the study you will still be offered the gift card.

All of the tape recordings, transcripts and questionnaires will be kept confidential. No information which could identify you will be recorded. No one outside the research team will have access to the research records. All records will be securely stored in a locked cabinet. The tape recordings will be destroyed when the study is completed. No references will be made in oral or written reports of the research that could link you to the study.

The University of Tennessee does not "automatically" reimburse subjects for medical claims or other compensation. If physical injury is suffered in the course of research, or for more information, please notify the investigator in charge Deborah J. Persell, at 870-972-3318.

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study,) you may contact the researcher, Deborah J. Persell, at P. O. Box 910, State University, AR 72467, and 870-972-3318. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the University of Tennessee Office of Research Compliance Officer at (865) 974-3466. You may also contact my dissertation chairperson, Dr. Susan Speraw, at (865) 974-7586, 2100 Volunteer Blvd, College of Nursing, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN.

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. This means if you decline to participate or withdraw from the study it will not affect your ability to participate in FDR as staff or a volunteer nor receive assistance should you need it. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

CONSENT
I have read the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.
Participant's signature ___________________________ Date _________
Investigator's signature ___________________________ Date _________
Demographic Data
Staff

Position:
_____ Staff
_____ Administrator

Length of service in months: _____

Age: _____

Gender:
_____ Male
_____ Female

Professional Training: _____________________________

State of home residence: __________________________

Marital Status:
_____ Single
_____ Married
_____ Divorced
_____ Widowed

Annual Income:
_____ Under $10,000
_____ $10,001 - $25,000
_____ $25,001 - $50,000
_____ $50,001 - $75,000
_____ Over $75,000

Education:
_____ Did not finish high school
_____ Graduated from high school or have GED
_____ Years of college completed

Denominational Affiliation: _________________________
Hope Analogue Scale – Administrative Staff
Think about the following three questions. Draw a line on the scale that represents how much hope you had or have for the future. Zero means there is no hope at all and 10 indicates you have the most hope humanly possible.

1. When you became staff with Faith Disaster Response in New Orleans, how much hope for your future did you have?

No                                           Maximum
Hope

2. After your staff responsibilities ended in New Orleans, how much hope for your future did you have?

No                                           Maximum
Hope

3. How much hope for your future do you have now?

No                                           Maximum
Hope
Revised Impact of Event Scale – Administrative Staff

Directions: Below is a list of difficulties people sometimes have after stressful life events. Please read each item, and then indicate how distressing each difficulty has been for you DURING THE PAST SEVEN DAYS with respect to your Faith Disaster Response staff activities, how much were you distressed or bothered by these difficulties?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little bit</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Quite a bit</th>
<th>Extremely</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Any reminder brought back feelings about it.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>I had trouble staying asleep.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Other things kept making me think about it.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>I felt irritable and angry.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I avoided letting myself get upset when I thought about it or was reminded of it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I thought about it when I didn’t mean to.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I felt as if it hadn’t happened or wasn’t real.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I stayed away from reminders about it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Pictures about it popped into my mind.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I was jumpy and easily startled.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I tried not to think about it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I was aware that I still had a lot of feelings about it, but I didn’t deal with them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>My feelings about it were kind of numb.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I found myself acting or feeling as though I was back at that time.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>I had trouble falling asleep.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>I had waves of strong feelings about it.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>I tried to remove it from my memory.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>I had trouble concentrating.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Reminders of it caused me to have physical reactions, such as sweating, trouble breathing, nausea, or a pounding heart.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>I had dreams about it.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>I felt watchful or on-guard.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>I tried not to talk about it.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HERTH HOPE INDEX
Listed below are a number of statements. Read each statement and place an [X] in the box that describes how much you agree with that statement right now.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I have a positive outlook toward life.</td>
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<td>11.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I feel my life has value and worth.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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1999 items 2 & 4 reworded
Appendix III

Volunteer Informed Consent and Tools
INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT
For Volunteers
The Experience of Faith-Based Disaster Response: A Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

I am a doctoral student at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. I am conducting my dissertation research. I am studying the lived experience of faith-based disaster response.

You are being invited to participate in my research study. This means you agree to being interviewed about your experience as a member of a volunteer team for Faith Disaster Response in New Orleans. The interview will be digital and audio-taped and will take about an hour. When the interview is completed, you will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire. This will take approximately another 15 minutes. You may decide to stop your participation in the study at any time. The following paragraphs provide additional explanation of the study. Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to sign this form, indicating your willingness to be included in the study.

You are being invited to participate in a research study of faith-based disaster response. This research involves human participants and has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The purpose of the study is to discover and understand the experience of faith-based disaster response for: those staff members who organized and provided disaster assistance; those who volunteered their time to provide assistance and for those who received assistance.

You are being asked to tell the researcher your experience with faith-based disaster response in an interview. The interview will be digital and audio tape recorded to ensure what you say is recorded accurately. The taped interview will be transcribed and the written transcript analyzed. You will not be identified in the transcript and any information you provide that could identify you will be removed from the transcript. No one outside the research team will have access to the transcript of your interview. The taped interview will be destroyed when the study is completed. The transcript of your interview will be kept in a locked cabinet in the researcher’s university faculty office. In the future, the researcher may analyze the transcript again as part of future research studies on faith-based disaster response.

The interview will take approximately an hour. The interview will end when you have nothing more to tell the researcher or when you choose to end it.

When the interview is over, you will be asked to complete a short questionnaire about your experiences. This should take approximately 15 minutes additional time. Your answers on the questionnaire will be kept confidential.

You may be asked for permission to contact you as the study nears completion to review the research findings and tell the researcher whether or not you agree or disagree with the findings.

_____ Participant’s Initials
You do not have to consent to this request in order to participate in the study. If you agree to be contacted at a later date you are free to change your mind and may still decline at that time.

There are no obvious risks to you by participating in the study. It is possible that sharing your experience with the researcher may cause you to remember unpleasant or anxious moments associated with Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the disaster response activities you have participated in. If this occurs, the researcher will refer you to a CARE team member or a mental health counselor in your area.

By participating in the study you will be contributing to the science of nursing. Some people who participate in these interviews have reported it was helpful to have someone listen to their story. You will be offered a $25 dollar gift card at the completion of your interview. If you decide to withdraw from the study you will still be offered the gift card.

All of the tape recordings, transcripts and questionnaires will be kept confidential. No information which could identify you will be recorded. No one outside the research team will have access to the research records. All records will be securely stored in a locked cabinet. The tape recordings will be destroyed when the study is completed. No references will be made in oral or written reports of the research that could link you to the study.

The University of Tennessee does not "automatically" reimburse subjects for medical claims or other compensation. If physical injury is suffered in the course of research, or for more information, please notify the investigator in charge Deborah J. Persell, at 870-972-3318.

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study,) you may contact the researcher, Deborah J. Persell, at P. O. Box 910, State University, AR 72467, and 870-972-3318. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the University of Tennessee Office of Research Compliance Officer at (865) 974-3466. You may also contact my dissertation chairperson, Dr. Susan Speraw, at (865) 974-7586, 2100 Volunteer Blvd, College of Nursing, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN.

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. This means if you decline to participate or withdraw from the study it will not affect your ability to participate in FDR as staff or a volunteer nor receive assistance should you need it. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

CONSENT
I have read the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature ______________________________ Date __________

Investigator's signature _____________________________ Date __________
Demographic Data
Volunteer

Gender:
_____ Male
_____ Female

Age: _____

State of Residence: _______________________

Marital Status:
_____ Single
_____ Married
_____ Divorced
_____ Widowed

Annual Income:
_____ Under $10,000
_____ $10,001 - $25,000
_____ $25,001 - $50,000
_____ $50,001 - $75,000
_____ Over $75,000

Education:
_____ Did not finish high school
_____ Graduated from high school or have GED
_____ Years of college completed

Denominational Affiliation: ______________________

Number of times volunteered in New Orleans: ______

Number of weeks total volunteered in New Orleans: ______
Disaster Response Activities you’ve participated in: (check all that apply)

_____ Gutting houses
_____ Roofing
_____ Distribution care packages
_____ Health Care
_____ Rebuilding homes
_____ Removing trees/limbs
_____ Community building projects (such as cleaning parks)

Did you complete disaster response training before volunteering?

_____ No
_____ Yes

Did you receive any physical injuries while volunteering?

_____ No
_____ Yes
Hope Analogue Scale -- Volunteers

Think about the following three questions. Draw a line on the scale that represents how much hope you had or have for the future. Zero means there is no hope at all and 10 indicates you have the most hope humanly possible.

1. When you first volunteered to provide disaster assistance, how much hope for your future did you have?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Maximum Hope</td>
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<td>Hope</td>
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</table>

2. After you completed your volunteer disaster assistance, how much hope for your future did you have?

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3. How much hope for your future do you have now?

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### Revised Impact of Event Scale -- Volunteers

**Directions:** Below is a list of difficulties people sometimes have after stressful life events. Please read each item, and then indicate how distressing each difficulty has been for you DURING THE PAST SEVEN DAYS with respect to your volunteer disaster response activities, how much were you distressed or bothered by these difficulties?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty Description</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little bit</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Quite a bit</th>
<th>Extremely</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1. Any reminder brought back feelings about it.</td>
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<td>2. I had trouble staying asleep.</td>
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<td>6. I thought about it when I didn’t mean to.</td>
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<td>7. I felt as if it hadn’t happened or wasn’t real.</td>
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<td>8. I stayed away from reminders about it.</td>
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<td>10. I was jumpy and easily startled.</td>
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<td>11. I tried not to think about it.</td>
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<td>12. I was aware that I still had a lot of feelings about it, but I didn’t deal with them.</td>
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<td>13. My feelings about it were kind of numb.</td>
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<td>14. I found myself acting or feeling as though I was back at that time.</td>
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<td>15. I had trouble falling asleep.</td>
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<td>16. I had waves of strong feelings about it.</td>
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<td>17. I tried to remove it from my memory.</td>
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<td>18. I had trouble concentrating.</td>
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<td>19. Reminders of it caused me to have physical reactions, such as sweating, trouble breathing, nausea, or a pounding heart.</td>
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<td>20. I had dreams about it.</td>
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<td>21. I felt watchful or on-guard.</td>
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<td>22. I tried not to talk about it.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
HERTH HOPE INDEX
Listed below are a number of statements. Read each statement and place an [X] in the box that describes how much you agree with that statement right now.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I have a positive outlook toward life.</td>
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1999 items 2 & 4 reworded
Appendix IV

Residents Informed Consent Forms and Tools
INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT
for
Interview with those having received faith-based disaster assistance
The Experience of Faith-Based Disaster Response: A Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

I am a doctoral student at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. I am conducting my dissertation research. I am studying the lived experience of faith-based disaster response.

You are being invited to participate in my research study. This means you agree to being interviewed about your experience receiving assistance from Faith Disaster Response in New Orleans. The interview will be digital and audio-taped and will take about an hour. When the interview is completed, you will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire. This will take approximately another 15 minutes. You may decide to stop your participation in the study at any time. The following paragraphs provide additional explanation of the study. Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to sign this form, indicating your willingness to be included in the study.

You are being invited to participate in a research study of faith-based disaster response. This research involves human participants and has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The purpose of the study is to discover and understand the experience of faith-based disaster response for: those staff members who organized and provided disaster assistance; those who volunteered their time to provide assistance and for those who received assistance.

You are being asked to tell the researcher your experience with faith-based disaster response in an interview. The interview will be tape recorded to ensure what you say is recorded accurately. The taped interview will be transcribed and the written transcript analyzed. You will not be identified in the transcript and any information you provide that could identify you will be removed from the transcript. No one outside the research team will have access to the transcript of your interview. The taped interview will be destroyed when the study is completed. The transcript of your interview will be kept in a locked cabinet in the researcher’s university faculty office. In the future, the researcher may analyze the transcript again as part of future research studies on faith-based disaster response.

The interview will take approximately an hour. The interview will end when you have nothing more to tell the researcher or when you choose to end it.

When the interview is over, you will be asked to complete a short questionnaire about your experiences. This should take approximately 15 to 20 minutes additional time. Your answers on the questionnaire will be kept confidential.

You may be asked for permission to contact you as the study nears completion to review the research findings and tell the researcher whether or not you agree or disagree with the findings.

_____ Participant’s Initials
You do not have to consent to this request in order to participate in the study. If you agree to be contacted at a later date you are free to change your mind and may still decline at that time.

It is possible that sharing your experience with the researcher may cause you to remember unpleasant or anxious moments associated with Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. If this occurs, the researcher will refer you to a mental health counselor in your area.

This means if you decline to participate or withdraw from the study it will not affect any current or future assistance you may receive from FDR. Some people who participate in these interviews have reported it was helpful to have someone listen to their story. A $25 gift card will be provided to compensate you for the time it took to participate in the study. This card will be given to you when the interview and questionnaire have been completed. Should you end the interview early or do not complete the questionnaire, you will still be offered the gift card.

All of the tape recordings, transcripts and questionnaires will be kept confidential. No information which could identify you will be recorded. No one outside the research team will have access to the research records. All records will be securely stored in a locked cabinet. The tape recordings will be destroyed when the study is completed. No references will be made in oral or written reports of the research that could link you to the study.

The University of Tennessee does not "automatically" reimburse subjects for medical claims or other compensation. If physical injury is suffered in the course of research, or for more information, please notify the investigator in charge, Deborah J. Persell at 870-972-3318.

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study,) you may contact the researcher, Deborah J. Persell, at P.O. Box 910, State University AR 72467, and 870-972-3318 If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the University of Tennessee Office of Research Compliance Officer at (865) 974-3466. You may also contact my dissertation chairperson, Dr. Susan Speraw, at (865) 974-7586, 2100 Volunteer Blvd, College of Nursing, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN.

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. This means if you decline to participate or withdraw from the study it will not affect current or future assistance from FDR. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

_______________________________________________________________

CONSENT
I have read the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature ______________________________ Date __________
Investigator's signature _____________________________ Date __________
Demographic Data
Individuals Receiving Assistance

Age: _____

Gender:
_____ Male
_____ Female

Annual Income:
_____ Under $10,000
_____ $10,001 - $25,000
_____ $25,001 - $50,000
_____ $50,001 - $75,000
_____ Over $75,000

Education:
_____ Did not finish high school
_____ Graduated from high school or have GED
_____ Years of college completed

Marital Status:
_____ Single
_____ Married
_____ Divorced
_____ Widowed

Number of Children Living in Household: _____

Types of Assistance Received from FDR:
_____ Temporary Housing
_____ Permanent Housing
_____ Work on your home (roofing, cleaning out debris, rebuilding)
_____ Clothing
_____ Food
_____ Financial
_____ Transportation
_____ Employment Assistance
_____ Referral to other agencies
_____ Other (list)
Other agencies from which you received disaster assistance:

_____ FEMA
_____ Red Cross
_____ Salvation Army
_____ Other religious or faith-based organizations
_____ Other (list)

What was the extent of the damage you experienced as a result of the hurricanes?

_____ Loss of employment
_____ Loss of home
_____ Percentage of household items lost
_____ Death of household member
_____ Death of friend
_____ Injury to yourself
_____ Injury to household member
_____ Injury to friend

Religious Affiliation if any: ____________________________
Hope Analogue Scale – Persons Receiving Assistance

Think about the following three questions. Draw a line on the scale that represents how much hope you had or have for the future. Zero means there is no hope at all and 10 indicates you have the most hope humanly possible.

1. When you first sought disaster assistance from Faith Disaster Response, how much hope for your future did you have?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Maximum Hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. After you received disaster assistance from Faith Disaster Response, how much hope for your future did you have?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Maximum Hope</td>
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<td>Hope</td>
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</table>

3. How much hope for your future do you have now?

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>10</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Revised Impact of Event Scale – Individuals Assisted

Directions: Below is a list of difficulties people sometimes have after stressful life events. Please read each item, and then indicate how distressing each difficulty has been for you DURING THE PAST SEVEN DAYS with respect to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; how much were you distressed or bothered by these difficulties?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little bit</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Quite a bit</th>
<th>Extremely</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>Any reminder brought back feelings about it.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>I had trouble staying asleep.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Other things kept making me think about it.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>I felt irritable and angry.</td>
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<td>I avoided letting myself get upset when I thought about it or was reminded of it.</td>
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<td>I thought about it when I didn’t mean to.</td>
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<td>I felt as if it hadn’t happened or wasn’t real.</td>
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<td>Pictures about it popped into my mind.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>I was jumpy and easily startled.</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>I tried not to think about it.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I was aware that I still had a lot of feelings about it, but I didn’t deal with them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>My feelings about it were kind of numb.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I found myself acting or feeling as though I was back at that time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>I had trouble falling asleep.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>I had waves of strong feelings about it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>I tried to remove it from my memory.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>I had trouble concentrating.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Reminders of it caused me to have physical reactions, such as sweating, trouble breathing, nausea, or a pounding heart.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>I had dreams about it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>I felt watchful or on-guard.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>I tried not to talk about it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HERTH HOPE INDEX
Listed below are a number of statements. Read each statement and place an [X] in the box that describes how much you agree with that statement right now.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I have a positive outlook toward life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I have short and/or long range goals.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I feel all alone.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I can see possibilities in the midst of difficulties.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I have a faith that gives me comfort.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I feel scared about my future.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I can recall happy/joyful times.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I have deep inner strength.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I am able to give and receive caring/love.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I have a sense of direction.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I believe that each day has potential.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I feel my life has value and worth.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

© 1989 Kaye Herth 1999 items 2 & 4 reworded
Appendix V

Comparison of Research Literature Related to Faith-Based Disaster Response
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government Accountability Office</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Effective Collaboration with Charitable Organizations after Disaster</td>
<td>Based in Washington, DC but surveyed all government contracts</td>
<td>Mixed Methods</td>
<td>Billions of dollars are raised by FBOs and non-profit organizations. FBO services include direct cash assistance, services to families of the deceased, shelter, mental health services, education and employment assistance. Identifies inability to track funds across organizations. Charities do require ID from those seeking help, little fraud found. FBOs reach vulnerable and hard to reach populations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kramer, Nightingale, Trutko, Spaulding &amp; Barnow</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Not Identified</td>
<td>Baltimore, Ft. Worth, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh &amp; San Diego</td>
<td>Not Identified but consistent with case study</td>
<td>Examines 47 FBOs with workforce grants. Grant money utilized to employ short-term and meet request for help. Other services: English tutoring, transportation, shelters and job assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Johns &amp; Fuchs</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Integrated Theory of Volunteer Work</td>
<td>Oklahoma City, USA</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Found being associated with a faith-based organization increases volunteerism because they have the organizational capacity to respond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sutton</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Sociological Theory</td>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>Ethnography</td>
<td>Utilizes ethnography to examine disaster response activities of the spiritual care aviation incident response teams after 9/11. Teams provide spiritual care to victims and workers at ground zero. Identifies areas for further research: understanding the effectiveness of faith-based organizations and developing public policy related to faith-based disaster response.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table A.5. Research Literature for Faith-Based Disaster Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laliberte</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Symbolic Interactionism</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>Buddhist faith-based organization from Taiwan working in China. China, not known for its openness to outsiders allows them in because it is useful in demonstrating human rights concerns and they don’t perceive the organization as threat because they originate from Taiwan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persily &amp; Hildebrandt</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Theory of Community Empowerment</td>
<td>Multiple settings in Africa and the United States</td>
<td>Intervention theory development</td>
<td>Focus is on the concept of indigenous lay workers trained to do the work of health care providers and researchers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zotti, Graham, Whitt, Anand &amp; Ingalls</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Evaluation of FBO Intervention with children post-disaster</td>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>Mixed Methods</td>
<td>Evaluates a week long day camp as an intervention to assist children in coping after a natural disaster. Interventions include physical activity, games, music, drama, crafts and Bible study. Identifies lack of clear procedures for working with communities, lack of preparation for large-scale response, safety and security inadequacies, lack of the use of any language other than English, and weaknesses in funding mechanisms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadler, Ben-Ari &amp; Mesterman</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Organizational Theory</td>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>Ethnography</td>
<td>Examines the work of the Haredi Disaster Victim Identification Teams and the resulting integration of Haredi members into Israeli society by becoming the ones who care for the dead of terrorist attacks and do so according to Jewish law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangenberg</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Faith-Based Human Services from a Social Work perspective</td>
<td>University students</td>
<td>Ecosystems and generalized systems approach</td>
<td>Premise of research and findings is that there must be a balance between faith-based initiatives and the work of social workers. Concludes social workers must be diligent to assess FBO discrimination or proselytizing as well as skill mix.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>Setting</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarke</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Transformational Development</td>
<td>Ache, Indonesia</td>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>Examines two Christian organizations’ response to the tsunami. Responses are linked to fulfilling gospel imperatives: empowering the poor, justice, and restoration. While not described as such, relates to action research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSU Public Policy Research Lab</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Louisiana Survey and other survey work</td>
<td>Baton Rouge Louisiana and the entire state of Louisiana</td>
<td>Quantitative Survey quasi-experimental</td>
<td>Many citizens of New Orleans displaced, FBOs seen as being more effective than government in disaster response, concerns related to crime, statewide depression, minimal mental health services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix VI

Comparison of the Review of Literature on the Herth Hope Index
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hope Scale</th>
<th>Theoretical Underpinning</th>
<th>Sample details</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha for total scale</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha for subscales</th>
<th>Test-Retest</th>
<th>Content Validity</th>
<th>Construct Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Herth Hope Scale 1991</td>
<td>Dufault &amp; Martocchio</td>
<td>20 Cancer support group</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Pre-test = .84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 judges with expertise in hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40 Oncology sample</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Pilot test = .75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Factor analysis with varimax rotation explained 52% of the variance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>120 Cancer patients</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td>Factor I = .89 Factor II = .85 Factor III = .84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Correlation with Beck’s Hopelessness Scale $r = - .69$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>185 well adults</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>.89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40 elderly</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>.92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>75 Bereaved elderly</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>.94 Factor I = .91 Factor II = .90 Factor III = .87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A.6 Comparison of Literatures on the Herth Hope Index
Table A.6 Comparison of Literatures on the Herth Hope Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hope Scale</th>
<th>Theoretical Underpinning</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha for total scale</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha for subscales</th>
<th>Test- Retest</th>
<th>Content Validity</th>
<th>Construct Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Herth Hope Index</td>
<td></td>
<td>20 physically ill adults</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Pilot test = .94</td>
<td>Range of .78 to .86</td>
<td>3-week .89 to .91</td>
<td>Two judges for construct validity and 12 for face validity</td>
<td>Factor analysis with varimax rotation explained 52% of the variance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td></td>
<td>172 adults:</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Correlations with Existential Well-Being Scale $r = .78$</td>
<td>Nowotny Hope Scale $r = .89$ Hopelessness Scale $r = - .47$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>70 acute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>71 chronic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>31 terminal</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>


## Table A.6 Comparison of Literatures on the Herth Hope Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hope Scale</th>
<th>Theoretical Underpinning</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha for total scale</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha for subscales</th>
<th>Test-Retest</th>
<th>Content Validity</th>
<th>Construct Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miller Hope Scale 1998</td>
<td>Dufault, Korner, Lynch and Marcel</td>
<td>75 university students</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Pre-test = .95</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>2-week .87</td>
<td>4 judges with expertise in area of hope</td>
<td>6 experts in measurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nowotny Hope Scale 1989</td>
<td>Frankl, Dufault, Hinds, Miller and Powers, Lazarus and others</td>
<td>306 adults with cancer or experienced stressful event</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>Six subscales with range of .60 to .90</td>
<td>Not Reported</td>
<td>Panel of six experts</td>
<td>Correlation with Beck’s Hopelessness Scale $r = -.54$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope Scale</td>
<td>Theoretical Underpinning</td>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>Number of Items</td>
<td>Cronbach's Alpha for total scale</td>
<td>Cronbach's Alpha for subscales</td>
<td>Test-Retest</td>
<td>Content Validity</td>
<td>Construct Validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snyder Hope Scale 1995</td>
<td>Stotland, Averill, First, Seligman, and Bandura</td>
<td>Reported as 1000+, but did not cite specific study</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Range of .74 to .84</td>
<td>.74 to .84</td>
<td>3-10 weeks &gt;.80</td>
<td>Not explicitly identified</td>
<td>Not explicitly identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller Hope Scale 2005</td>
<td>Concept development, multiple theoretical stances</td>
<td>1036 7th &amp; 8th graders</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>Satisfaction with life = .91 Avoidance of Hope Threats = .83 Anticipation of a Future = .76</td>
<td>Not Reported</td>
<td>Inter-rater reliability of 0.88</td>
<td>Confirmatory factor analysis Yielding a Cronbach's alpha of .93 and a subscale alpha range of .75 to .82 Subsequent recommendation to reduce scale: 13 item hope scale and 9 item hopelessness scale</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table A.6 Comparison of Literatures on the Herth Hope Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hope Scale</th>
<th>Theoretical Underpinning</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha for total scale</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha for subscales</th>
<th>Test-Retest</th>
<th>Content Validity</th>
<th>Construct Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multi-dimensional Hope Scale</td>
<td>Dufault, Engel, Farber, French, Herth, Korner, Lewin, Lynch, McGee, Menninger, and Stotland</td>
<td>56 adults with chronic illness</td>
<td>Modified Stoner Hope Scale 49</td>
<td>Pilot test not reported</td>
<td>Factor I = .85 Factor II = .85 Factor III = .92 Factor IV = .85 Factor V = .77 Factor VI = .88</td>
<td>Not Reported</td>
<td>Two hope content specialists Inter-rater reliability of 0.85</td>
<td>Inter-item correlations ranged from $r = .03$ to $r = .84$ Correlated with Beck’s Hopelessness Scale $r = .40$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix VII

Research Team Member Confidentiality Form
Research Team Member’s Pledge of Confidentiality

As a member of this project’s research team, I understand that I will be reading transcriptions of confidential interviews. The information in these transcripts has been revealed by research participants who participated in this project on good faith that their interviews would remain strictly confidential. I understand that I have a responsibility to honor this confidentiality agreement. I hereby agree not to share any information in these transcriptions with anyone except the primary researcher of this project, his/her doctoral chair, or other members of this research team. Any violation of this agreement would constitute a serious breach of ethical standards, and I pledge not to do so.

_____________________________ ________________
Research Team Member       Date
Appendix VIII

Sample of Data Reduction
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXT</th>
<th>SELECTED DATUM</th>
<th>DIMENSION/CATEGORY</th>
<th>FIGURAL THEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VP#1 – 169-176</td>
<td>when I think of the eyes of New Orleans they are in pain</td>
<td>when I think of the eyes of New Orleans they are in pain</td>
<td>when I think of the eyes of New Orleans they are in pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP#6 – 19-24</td>
<td>The people that are still suffering today</td>
<td>The people that are still suffering today</td>
<td>The people that are still suffering today</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP#6 – 114-122</td>
<td>The human suffering here is just been unbelievable</td>
<td>The human suffering here is just been unbelievable</td>
<td>The human suffering here is just been unbelievable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP#7 – 430-438</td>
<td>I’ve lost my job, I’ve lost my church, I have no home, we’re living with friends, and he says, my children need to go to school and I can’t afford school supplies for them</td>
<td>I’ve lost my job, I’ve lost my church, I have no home, we’re living with friends, and he says, my children need to go to school and I can’t afford school supplies for them</td>
<td>I’ve lost my job, I’ve lost my church, I have no home, we’re living with friends, and he says, my children need to go to school and I can’t afford school supplies for them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTEXT</td>
<td>SELECTED DATUM</td>
<td>DIMENSION/CATEGORY</td>
<td>FIGURAL THEME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>afford school supplies for them, you know.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP#1 – 258-265</td>
<td>“My brother was shot last night” and of course we’re all just like not used to hearing that, you know</td>
<td>SUB-CATEGORY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>down there a lady in the church, at Faith Church, her brother’s trailer was shot up and he got shot and she came in the next day like, cause we were there all week, and she had been working with the clinic and doing stuff cause they had like a free doctor’s clinic trailer, um, like heart in hands or something like that, but she came in like just devastated and she was kind of sick; like she had a cane cause she had problems with her leg. And she was, and you could just like tell, the hurricane must have worn on her, just like it wore on everyone else and she comes in and she was like, “My brother was shot last night” and of course we’re all just like not used to hearing that, you know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-O Environmental Devastation #E8</td>
<td>she knew people wanted to rebuild but either didn’t have the funds or help needed to rebuild. In most instances, these houses have been condemned by the city and slated for destruction.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she knew people wanted to rebuild but either didn’t have the funds or help needed to rebuild.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP#6 – 331-339</td>
<td>I carry a scar</td>
<td>I carry a scar</td>
<td>it reminds me every day of the pain and the suffering that is still happening down here in New Orleans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I carry a scar with me from Katrina, because since I have been, 18 months later, look at my hands. I’ve had staph, they’ve investigated me for MRSA and it’s not MRSA, and I have repeatedly, and I’ve been to 8 doctors, three specialists and I’m still on a doctors care. I’ve been on steroids, I’ve been on antibiotics, and you can see my hands, and they contribute it to something I came in contact with in the flood water. So, every day when I get up and my hands have been dry all night. I wake up sometimes and my hands are bleeding and they’ve bled and I look and they’re still are bleeding. Every day it is a reminder. And, it is a good reminder to me because it reminds me every day of the pain and the suffering that is still happening down here in New Orleans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP#2 – 180-189</td>
<td>I jus started screamin and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTEXT</td>
<td>SELECTED DATUM</td>
<td>DIMENSION/CATEGORY SUB-CATEGORY</td>
<td>FIGURAL THEME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but after I eat a piece of candy cause I couldn’t eat cause I was sick at my stomach since I had all that water and I took a piece of candy and put it in my mouth and my throat jus started closing in on me and I was thang what’s wrong cause my throat was closing in and we get to Texas, we didn go to Houston, we went to CowTown Texas. And CowTown Texas, we got there an time I got there the man gave us a shot, I had to go get treated, an my throat was red and closin in and all swold, and he jus gaved me the shot an gave me some antibiotic and bedrest, and that was it. And then before I did that I had to take a shower and when I went in the shower, turn the water on I jus started screamin and hollerin cause I was drownin again….</td>
<td>hollerin cause I was drownin again</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident Letter – 46-47 I’ve been scavenging discards from trash heaps, doing most of the work myself &amp; depleting my savings for 2 yrs. now.</td>
<td>I’ve been scavenging discards from trash heaps, doing most of the work myself &amp; depleting my savings for 2 yrs. now.</td>
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<td>P-O Work #E11, Making a Difference #E6 wanted to talk about the groups we worked with and met. He prefaced his part of the presentation by saying he just didn’t realize how bad it really was. Nothing had prepared him for what he saw and experienced. When we returned, he personally wanted to organize events to raise money to finish the houses we worked on because he thought they would not get finished. He was relieved to know FDR had talked to Baptist Builders about finishing the houses.</td>
<td>he just didn’t realize how bad it really was. Nothing had prepared him for what he saw and experienced.</td>
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<td>P-O Environmental Devastation #22 All through the tour, team members were just in a state of shock. They could not believe what they were seeing. Few expressions were shared, just disbelief. It will take time to process it all. I think back to what I’ve previously described as taking a while for your brain to process what it sees. It will take them some time. I must plan for a debriefing</td>
<td>All through the tour, team members were just in a state of shock. They could not believe what they were seeing. Few expressions were shared, just disbelief.</td>
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<td>meeting when we get back.</td>
<td>when you take on someone else’s problems and you start to envision it as your own problems</td>
<td>envision it as your own problems</td>
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<td>VP#1 – 131-139</td>
<td>It’s hard to think about it because I wish I could be there, I mean I wish a lot that I could be there, I mean you think about it and you’re like I feel like I should be there all the time just helping do stuff and you can’t be, you know, it’s like we’ve talked about compassion fatigue and our class and how when you take on someone else’s problems and you start to envision it as your own problems that it just makes you, you know, really, really more affected than having the objective outlook and for me, I’m just one of those people. I would have compassion fatigue, it’s just, I can’t continuously put myself in that situation.</td>
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<td>VP#8 – 212-218</td>
<td>I just try to put myself, I mean the loss of jobs, where are you going to get the money to rebuild, how will, you know what kind of finances is it going to take to redo this and uh, I mean, I could just see an insurmountable problems, uh, I’ve just recently retired. I mean, if you had any retirement plans, uh, how are you going to be able to afford it, I just, you know, where’s the money going to come from? There’s no jobs. People were still out of jobs. And uh, how are they getting by? How are you living? Just the despair of, I don’t know, I just tried to put myself in their place</td>
<td>I just tried to put myself in their place</td>
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<td>SP#4 -- 25-28</td>
<td>I guess I have mixed emotions. I: Can you describe or elaborate on that. P: Uh, the, I think mixed emotions from the fact that when you get into bigger organizations that things don’t happen as well and as fast as they should. As I look back there are a lot of things we could have done differently to get more efficient, but we learned as we went because it was all new to all of us</td>
<td>I have mixed emotions.</td>
<td>I have mixed emotions.</td>
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<td>SP#2 – 374-382</td>
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<td>I was feeling guilty for</td>
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<td>I was feeling guilty for leaving. Umm, there was this sense of guilt feeling in me and it was just like we’re going to be letting people down</td>
<td>leaving.</td>
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<td>VP#2 – 173-178</td>
<td>It’s the government’s fault, it’s somebody else’s fault, I’m not going to do anything until somebody gives me something.” That was the major thing we heard all night, which, so we ended up shutting the radio off.</td>
<td>it’s somebody else’s fault</td>
<td>It’s the government’s fault</td>
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<td>VP#1 – 176-180</td>
<td>so much pain caused by our own people, our own government not helping and so much pain for things never being taken care of, people just setting in those trailers day after day and wanting to shoot people. I mean people were telling me that, “I want to go kill people,”</td>
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<td>SP#8 – 950-958</td>
<td>everybody’s trying to put in claims against the government and I’m going why does everybody look for a handout; till you realize they’ve been screaming about that levee for 30 years and they can’t do anything unless the feds let them cause the feds control, the Army Corps of Engineers and the feds control the levees and so it doesn’t matter what they said. Mystergo is closed, mystergo? Go over the big bridge. Yep, cause they built that in the late 50s early 60s and by ‘73 some environmentalist said “Do you know what you have done? Cause this is going to kill you.” And guess what, it did. But, they couldn’t stop it because of all those businesses, but if you’re not there you don’t know that.</td>
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<td>Resident letter – 41-45</td>
<td>If you don’t elevate your house to base flood elevation you can’t get a building permit. My house is brick &amp; 6” below that level so I</td>
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<td>If you don’t elevate your house to base flood elevation you can’t get a building permit. My house is brick &amp;</td>
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<td>appealed my damaged assessment of &gt;51% to get permit. Well, the road home won’t help you if you’re &lt;51% damaged, not to mention the $30,000 deduction for not having flood insurance &amp; the contract you have to sign that you won’t sell or rent your home for years if they help you</td>
<td>6&quot; below that level so I appealed my damaged assessment of &gt;51% to get permit. Well, the road home won’t help you if you’re &lt;51% damaged, not to mention the $30,000 deduction for not having flood insurance &amp; the contract you have to sign that you won’t sell or rent your home for years if they help you</td>
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<td>Resident letter – 47-49</td>
<td>Sure would like to know where the billions of dollars in aid people gave wound up. That would be a Nobel-winning piece of investigative journalism</td>
<td>Sure would like to know where the billions of dollars in aid people gave wound up.</td>
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<td>VP#1 – 377-383</td>
<td>I: I sense anger in you as well at the things that happened there. P: There is a lot of anger, a lot more frustration even than anger. It’s like, it seems it would be so easy for our country, who is like a very wealthy country, to do something and they just don’t. It’s like they’re choosing not to cause they have a choice and they’ve already made their decision. They’ve said no to it apparently because I haven’t seen anything going on down there by any officials, you know</td>
<td>I haven’t seen anything going on down there by any officials</td>
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<td>VP#8 – 103-108</td>
<td>Just the people didn’t, they were just in a quandary because, I don’t know what they call in their little community the organization or whatever, if there was disagreement amongst the people who made the decisions where they had to raise them 3 feet, just the, uh, indecision kept people’s whole lives on hold</td>
<td>indecision kept people’s whole lives on hold</td>
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<td>Resident letter – 40 Louisiana Road Home: 0</td>
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<td>SP#9 – 263-269</td>
<td>and the problem as I see anything other than a little bit of good and a little bit of not so good,</td>
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Katrina was tracked and the mayor came on and the governor came on; uh, they mentioned they could possibly be hit by a hurricane and we need to look at evacuating. And they wouldn’t say whether it was mandatory or not. However if you don’t leave, we would suggest…Mayor Nagin would say things like, “Get to higher ground, maybe go up in the attic.” He mentioned one time that, “If you don’t leave, take a hatchet up so you can cut a hole in your roof and get out, cause if the flood, if we’re flooded you need to get on top of you roof; get out your house.” Those were his suggestions. He suggested one time if you didn’t evacuate you should buy these, these bags, these body bags or something about body bags. He mentioned that. And, he mentioned that prior to…those were warnings. It’s indicative of him saying “you need to leave.” But, he can’t make anybody leave.

They are still short over 500 police officers. He said from over 300 schools they have around 50 +/- open, but of the school age kids back in the city, over 60% do not attend school.

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they’re caught between the insurance companies and whose going to pay for it

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<td>over but they’re caught between the insurance companies and whose going to pay for it and all that.</td>
<td>state farm dropped my homeowners’ policy for 2 claims within 3 years. I said “well, if I can’t have fire et al. protection, what am I paying this money for flood insurance for?”</td>
<td>my house is raised on piers several feet off the ground</td>
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<td>Resident letter – 5-12 My lovely 2000 sq. ft. home which I bought with my inheritance 12 years ago never had flooded in the 50+ years since it was built. When state farm dropped my homeowners’ policy for 2 claims within 3 years. I said “well, if I can’t have fire et al. protection, what am I paying this money for flood insurance for?” My home got no water from any storm. One day in 1995 it rained 15”. Some of my neighbors who have slab foundations got a little water but my house is raised on piers several feet off the ground, so although the street flooded, no water came into my garage, much less my house.</td>
<td>“That’s a little problem of mine.”</td>
<td>“That’s a little problem of mine.”</td>
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<td>SP#1 -- 159-161 he also wrote stories. And by the way, you can probably still go on the Faith Disaster Response website and still read them. It’s a year old story since it’s not been updated. That’s a little problem of mine,</td>
<td>you know you’re not going to make everybody happy all the time</td>
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<td>SP#2 – 290-296 you know you’re not going to make everybody happy all the time, but they, you really focus on why you’re here and we try to stress that in orientation, you know?</td>
<td>Let’s don’t just leave. Let’s be able to hopefully pass it on and make it sustainable</td>
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<td>SP#9 – 362-366 And then, and then, I’d like, I’d like sustainability. That’s really important too. I’d like us not to leave until we have been able to turn over whatever we’ve been doing so that we’ve kinda done what’s God’s had us do. Let’s don’t just leave. Let’s be able to hopefully pass it on and make it sustainable, so I think that was a real blessing.</td>
<td>I have to say I was a little angry</td>
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<td>VP#5 – 534-546 But I have to say I was a little angry because the plan was, I wasn’t going to take the kids back because I’m the one with the most</td>
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<td>experience on the job but they were to a point on the roof, we had two jobs we were working on the roof and on the inside, cleaning the inside and painting and all that stuff, the roof was pretty much under control, what they had to do was pretty easy, what they had left, and I had another leader there, no problem, he could finish it. But, what I was going to do, I was going to finish up, then I was going to pack up, and take a couple of the kids, and we were going to go over and help one of the other teams finish up a roof that they got started. We were going to take all of our stuff. Cameron was going to come over and meet us and we were going to go do that. And, when he got there I wasn’t there. Um, my other leader told me later he said Cameron was visibly upset that I wasn’t there but I didn’t know what else to do; none of the other leaders would take the kids back and I felt like we can’t not do this.</td>
<td>none of the other leaders would take the kids back and I felt like we can’t not do this.</td>
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<td>VP#7 – 120-126 I had a, uh, difficult time with one of the guys that was on our group [I: Oh] that was down there. Um, I uh, was able to, to uh, in my mind deal with when I was driving back. My, my wife was going to be leaving the day before I come back to go to uh, to uh, Boise Idaho where she has a sister lives and yeah, see, I drove her back through that night so I could see her before I left and in my uh, spiritual seeking I was able to uh, straighten that out with the fellow, pray for him and uh, feel good about that. So, that’s sort of a different side of that.</td>
<td>I had a, uh, difficult time with one of the guys that was on our group</td>
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<td>P-O Work #140, Conflict #37, Adapt #51, Relationships #146 I encounter part of my team in the dining hall, mopping. Those coolers I filled last night have leaked. There are some unhappy team members. This is just a fiasco. I can see Fred and Tom have been working hard. Fred is still convinced there are 15 or so FDR coolers; however, he can produce none of them right</td>
<td>There are some unhappy team members. This is just a fiasco. I can see Fred and Tom have been working hard. Fred is still convinced there are 15 or so FDR coolers; however, he can produce none of them right now. At least two of the coolers if not more</td>
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now. At least two of the coolers if not more I filled have to be completely refilled. The morning is not starting well. Thing is, I really do understand their frustration. I’m frustrated. But, I do not know what else to do. It is obvious it is too soon to really talk about it. All I can do is say I’ll speak to Randy.

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<td>P-O Coming Together #22, Conflict #35, Relationships #142, Adapt #49</td>
<td>The same one that has laughed late every night started laughing out loud way past when everyone was asleep and was waking others up. She did this not just once, but several times. I finally got up, went down the middle walkway and went back to where they were staying and said: “I don’t mean to be rude, but whoever is laughing loudly, would you please stop?”</td>
<td>P-O Coming Together #22, Conflict #35, Relationships #142, Adapt #49</td>
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<td>Everyone was immediately quiet and went to sleep, except for the NGO girls. The same one that has laughed late every night started laughing out loud way past when everyone was asleep and was waking others up. She did this not just once, but several times. I finally got up, went down the middle walkway and went back to where they were staying and said: “I don’t mean to be rude, but whoever is laughing loudly, would you please stop?”</td>
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<td>Ward comes over. He wants to look in the trailer, still convinced we have his fans. He takes two of the fans out of the trailer. We are unsure what to do, but it is not our place to argue with the homeowner. He sort of hangs around all day, asking us to do things a certain way. At one point he works on a window. We don’t know if he broke it or if it really was broken, but we think it will have to be fixed. He is an odd duck.</td>
<td>He wants to look in the trailer, still convinced we have his fans. He takes two of the fans out of the trailer. We are unsure what to do, but it is not our place to argue with the homeowner.</td>
<td>P-O Relationships #138, Conflict #34</td>
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<td>A large black woman met me and wondered if it was me that touched her clothes. She said if it had been a man she would have rewashed her underwear. So, my random act of kindness wasn’t received as such.</td>
<td>A large black woman met me and wondered if it was me that touched her clothes. She said if it had been a man she would have rewashed her underwear.</td>
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<td>SP#2 – 271-273</td>
<td>they said we think that the staff here is too young and they need, um, it wasn’t run very well and they need to better that, but nothing, it wasn’t like, well what was the problem. And, that’s why we viewed it more as a hurtful thing</td>
<td>too young</td>
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<td>VP#6 – 458-461</td>
<td>Mercy Response I’ve looked at but you have to be 18, habitat you have to be 16 and I have kids that are freshman and sophomores that want to take this trip and so I’m not going to say no to them. We’re going to try to find a group that can accommodate that age.</td>
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<td>VP#92 – 281-284</td>
<td>it was a sense only with in me, yes, I was the older person but there was no ‘keep him over there’, you know. It was, I hope you understand what I’m saying, [I: I do understand] it was from here (points to himself) not from them, OK? So, yeah, and there was no hassle with anything of the stuff that was going on.</td>
<td>I was the older person</td>
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<td>VP#92 – 243-253</td>
<td>I spent most of my time with Jack fixing stuff and making sure everything was running OK and then, uh, and don’t take this wrong, not a single one of those kids ostracized me in any way at all, BUT, I was 66 and they were 18, 19, 20 year old kids [I: Sure] OK? and they didn’t do anything wrong to me, it was just that they were groups of kids and they were just as friendly and just as nice as they could be, there was absolutely no “Look at the old man” nobody, nobody said that, including our group</td>
<td>BUT, I was 66 and they were 18, 19, 20 year old kids</td>
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<td>VP#95 – 152-165</td>
<td>this one gentleman, now that we’re talking about it I remember what really was ticked him off was that they came in and removed the house next to him but when they did they moved some of the dirt which caused run off to come into his yard, and so his yard, there</td>
<td>he was an elderly man and he was trying to shovel it away by himself</td>
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was standing water in his yard. And, he was an elderly man and he was trying to shovel it away by himself. And, we sent some of the kids down there and couple of adults, knocked that hill down, tried to smooth it out a little bit and did our best to clean up the yard right next to him which he had all the trouble with because they were having trouble with, I don’t think he said rats, but they were having trouble with vermin (laughter) down there and just keeping the grass cut. So they were kinda, that kinda, you know, we were working down there and we weren’t going to cut the grass that far up the street, but we went up, they cut the grass, they helped him knock out this,, this area that was causing the water to come over into his, when it did rain, when the water… and, so I think just our actions helped him to see, each time I would go in you would see some level; building up, tearing down, there was never any real improvement. It’s hard to say, but a lot of what was happening was, a lot of the people weren’t there, and what was happening was vandals would come in and see things not in as good of shape today as they were yesterday and it’s hard to understand but a lot of homeless folks were living in some of these homes now and as for, so you knew there was a lot of activity but it wasn’t necessarily good. Even for the people who needed to live there because they were homeless it’s not a good environment for them because of water and you know and all that stuff that contaminated, you know it’s not a good environment, so it’s not good for them to live that way but they didn’t have a choice but even as you were driving in you could see subtle little changes, something happened in here that wasn’t here two days ago, three days ago maybe and all and I would see that and that would not pick up my spirits cause I

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<td>knew, I knew that whatever was happening wasn’t as it should be and that saddened me because I new we needed to do more.</td>
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<td>RP#2 – 88-92 the hurricane was over with and my husband went outside and he say, “Well we made it.” And then he seen the water runnin up hill; water was runnin up hill. And it was when it was runnin up hill, that’s when he said, “Get back inside you all! Put the food and stuff upstairs because we gonna get a little rain and a little water.”</td>
<td>water was runnin up hill</td>
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<td>VP#1 – 45-53 the guy who was with us had taken us down to the 9th ward and he was like this is where it hit the hardest and we went and I can remember that was the first part of the disaster that I saw and I’d walk down and the first thing I saw was a sign on a tree and it said my home and it had the address and um, a little drawing maybe done by a little kid and it was on a tree and I looked and the tree was huge so I looked behind the tree and there was nothing. It was just like, nothing and I kept walking down the street and you’d see cement steps with the railing up on it and then nothing. It was just cement steps to no where and it’s just like you see houses on top of other houses and houses on top of cars and it’s all still like that down there</td>
<td>It was just cement steps to no where</td>
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<td>Team Internet Site Day 2, Picture 8 Lower 9th ward. Car in foreground destroyed, single two small white frame buildings which were once houses in background destroyed, trees down, utility poles bent.</td>
<td>Car in foreground destroyed, single two small white frame buildings which were once houses in background destroyed, trees down, utility poles bent.</td>
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<td>Team Internet Site Day 3, Picture 3 Another picture of the living room. It is obvious the sheetrock has fallen from the ceiling and the rafters are visible. A fireplace is bricked all the way to the ceiling and looks as if it was once white but is now dingy and moldy. Doors are laying on the floor</td>
<td>sheetrock has fallen from the ceiling and the rafters are visible. A fireplace is bricked all the way to the ceiling and looks as if it was once white but is now dingy and moldy. Doors are laying on the floor</td>
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<td>Throughout the room and are swollen. Wallpaper on the walls is water stained and hanging. In some areas debris appears to be 3’ or more deep.</td>
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<td>RP#1 – 343-349</td>
<td>It was just so overwhelming</td>
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<td>I know for my wife it did cause we were at that point, you know, we were struggling not knowing what tomorrow held for us, [I: Sure] uh, how to, we were getting day by day don’t you know, the house, the church and it was just so overwhelming and then we had… a chance to get away, get some rest time.</td>
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<td>RP#4 – 193-197</td>
<td>Living a virtual month in devastation</td>
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<td>New Orleans is my home. Never lived any place else. I love it, I really, really do. And, it was heart breaking to see this city like it was, you know, but, matter of fact, we came and we were one of the first people that had the trailers in our area, living a virtual month in devastation before lights were up, traffic lights wasn’t even working and a lot of stores and everything.</td>
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<td>Resident letter – 12 - 13</td>
<td>Not allowed back for an entire month, meaning stuff I might have salvaged molded &amp; rotted.</td>
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<td>I caught one of the last flights out of town &amp; was not allowed back for an entire month, meaning stuff I might have salvaged molded &amp; rotted.</td>
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<td>Resident letter – 16-18</td>
<td>Everything was gray &amp; dead, not even a bug. The mold was up to the ceiling. I couldn’t even open the door to gain entry due to swelling. I slept in a tent on my patio</td>
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<td>When I got back, there were only debris cleanup crews in Gentilly, every-thing was gray &amp; dead, not even a bug. The mold was up to the ceiling. I couldn’t even open the door to gain entry due to swelling. I slept in a tent on my patio</td>
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<tr>
<td>RP#2 – 234</td>
<td>Overwhelming needs</td>
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<td>Overwhelming needs, let me tell you</td>
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<td>SP#8 – 555-563</td>
<td>No, you’re not listening Cameron, the house is gone, the neighborhood’s gone, the sub-division is gone, by gosh there’s no Robins St anymore! It’s all plowed!</td>
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back. I said, “You sure about this address?”
“Yeah, it’s 719 Robins St, why?” “Well, it
aint here!” “Really, the house is gone?” “No,
you’re not listening Cameron, the house is
gone, the neighborhood’s gone, the sub-
division is gone, by gosh there’s no Robins St
anymore! It’s all plowed!” “Oh, well then
don’t go there.” (laughter) Yeah, so you can’t
make, you can’t make brand new ghettos, they
were all living in a ghetto and you can’t make
a brand new ghetto.

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<td>VP#6 – 33-36</td>
<td>entire structures were, instead of vertical walls they were laying diagonal or just flat horizontal on the ground</td>
<td>SUB-CATEGORY</td>
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<td>the 9th ward was, it was just like another level. Gentilly was bad but the 9th ward had the trump card for sure just because entire structures were, instead of vertical walls they were laying diagonal or just flat horizontal on the ground. I have never seen anything like that</td>
<td>VP# Environmental Devastation #11</td>
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<td>the neighborhood where we will work, there is evidence of more non-fixed houses than fixed and rows and rows of FEMA trailers. Water marks are still visible on many houses, as are the big painted X’s on the fronts of the houses representing the results of the house searches. I struggle to remember what each quadrant represents. The street of the house we are to work is almost impassible. It is full of potholes.</td>
<td>P-O Environmental Devastation #11</td>
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<td>Maybe out of every block there are 2-3 families living on it. The rest of the houses are uninhabitable.</td>
<td>P-O Environmental Devastation #12</td>
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<td>The conversation moves to smell. He talks about the smell of death and that when he first came down here all he smelled was death. He says he will never forget the smell. He tells us that when he came there was nothing living. No grass, no trees, no birds, etc</td>
<td>P-O Environmental Devastation #18, Personal Devastation #18</td>
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<td>for some of them it has this is a new reality</td>
<td>SP#1 -- 122-126</td>
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<td>Table A.7 Sample of Data Reduction</td>
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<td>Um, those that are here long-term I would say that for some of them it has numbed them in the sense that this is a new reality. Not a numbing in a bad way. But for everybody down here this is, this is the new reality for them: seeing FEMA trailers and seeing homes gutted; that is just part of dealing with it, however you deal with it. If you don’t get used to it, it would drive you crazy.</td>
<td>numbed them in the sense that this is a new reality</td>
<td>VP#2 – 202-210</td>
<td>you’re thinking they’re never coming back</td>
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<td>Now, I understand because of the bowl the water stayed there longer, I understand that; where in Mississippi and Florida, when we lived in there the water came in and the water went out and you fixed what was left. I understand they still had the water, but there just, there was no water in some of these places and there was nobody (laughter by participant), just nobody; that sat on me. There’s nobody there [I: Nobody] and there may not be anybody there again. It’s just the way, it’s just the attitude, it, there was nobody standing there with a sign saying that “We’re never coming back.” But it was just, it was just looking at this, uh, and saying.. you’re thinking they’re never coming back</td>
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<td>None of the neighbors she currently has were here when Katrina came. Her previous neighbor to the right is a nurse with the VA and had moved to Baton Rouge. However, the VA is going to reopen so they will eventually return. Her neighbor on the left is an elder man. His house is gutted, but he doesn’t know if he will return or not. He now lives in a condominium. Someone comes to pick her up and she leaves.</td>
<td>None of the neighbors she currently has were here when Katrina came.</td>
<td>P-O Relationships #61</td>
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<td>Only 52 out of more than 250 schools are currently open.</td>
<td>Only 52 out of more than 250 schools are currently open</td>
<td>P-O Environmental Devastation #E2</td>
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<td>When we got to Lowes, there were many Mexican men lining the drive. They were all hoping to be hired.</td>
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<td>P-O Personal Devastation #14, Relationships #93</td>
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Table A.7 Sample of Data Reduction

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<td>Mexican men lining the drive. They were all hoping to be hired. The parking lot is absolutely full.</td>
<td>still short over 500 police officers. He said from over 300 schools they have around 50 +/- open, but of the school age kids back in the city, over 60% do not attend school. That there have now been over 800 Katrina related suicides.</td>
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<td>P-O Personal Devastation #7, Environmental Devastation #6, Work #23, Relationships #30 an update on the infrastructure of New Orleans. They are still short over 500 police officers. He said from over 300 schools they have around 50 +/- open, but of the school age kids back in the city, over 60% do not attend school. This is an amazing statistic to me. He also said that there have now been over 800 Katrina related suicides.</td>
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<td>VP#3 – 53-57 I remember the way we had to suit up was because of all the devastation the way we suited up, you just had to be covered from head to toe because of the mold and all those. I remember thinking, I remember really being concerned for our, for our students we were taking because it was dangerous [I: um, um] to really be involved in all of that.</td>
<td>I remember really being concerned for our, for our students we were taking because it was dangerous [</td>
<td>it was dangerous</td>
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<td>VP#6 – 240-248 So you walk in, with the knowledge from the faith disaster personnel, knowing there could be Africanized bees, and there could be fire ants, and there could be poisonous snakes, there are compressed air, you know compressed propane, gas tanks, and whatever else is not friendly. And if you understand that it’s been 18 months since the storm, this person has not been in this house for 18 months, no one has touched this lawn in 18 months, things move back in after a year and a half. And, that was sobering for a lot of people. That first night that we were down there, that we got our little run through in training, I mean we had girls in tears..</td>
<td>knowing there could be Africanized bees, and there could be fire ants, and there could be poisonous snakes, there are compressed air, you know compressed propane, gas tanks, and whatever else is not friendly.</td>
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<td>P-O Work #92, Safety #24, Adapt #22, Danger #12 &amp; #13, Relationships # 83, Conflict #14 In the distance we notice dark rain clouds gathering and watch the front move swiftly in.</td>
<td>We wonder if there is a storm warming somewhere and realize we have no way of knowing. Not very safety conscious of us.</td>
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It is getting cooler. For that we are thankful. We wonder if there is a storm warning somewhere and realize we have no way of knowing. Not very safety conscious of us. I trust Cameron would let us know. At least I hope so. It begins to sprinkle. We barely make it in the house before a downpour begins. We have to close all the windows. It is dark. It is difficult to work. Fred decides he knows how to rig the electricity from the FEMA trailer to the house. I am stunned when I walk in the dining room/living room area and a light is on. I look in the corner and there are two wires, each with an exposed end in the plug in at the wall running the other exposed ends into an extension cord plugged into the trailer. I wonder about the safety of this, but the guys seem content with the arrangement. Later, when I tell Cameron about it, he is horrified and talks about how dangerous that is. What I didn’t tell him was that Fred blew the breaker and lost electricity to the homeowner’s FEMA trailer. He had to go fix it and then ran the cord from the electric box on the pole. He decided it wasn’t OK to bypass the electric. I’m relieved!

P-O Work #114
The house is getting so tight from all the insulation that it is just stifling in there. No air is moving at all. This contributes to our heat problems.

P-O Work #120, Danger #21, Safety #41
Matthew is starting to look hot and is getting into trouble with heat. We keep him behind to rest. I put a cold wet cloth around his neck, set him in front of a fan and keep a close watch. He sets while we work.

P-O Safety #69, Danger #40
The other team didn’t bring enough water with them. We offer them some of ours.

P-O Safety #71, Danger #41, Conflict #60, Relationships #215
Instead, when the traffic stops he turns left and begins driving the wrong way on the

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<td>It is getting cooler. For that we are thankful. We wonder if there is a storm warning somewhere and realize we have no way of knowing. Not very safety conscious of us. I trust Cameron would let us know. At least I hope so. It begins to sprinkle. We barely make it in the house before a downpour begins. We have to close all the windows. It is dark. It is difficult to work. Fred decides he knows how to rig the electricity from the FEMA trailer to the house. I am stunned when I walk in the dining room/living room area and a light is on. I look in the corner and there are two wires, each with an exposed end in the plug in at the wall running the other exposed ends into an extension cord plugged into the trailer. I wonder about the safety of this, but the guys seem content with the arrangement. Later, when I tell Cameron about it, he is horrified and talks about how dangerous that is. What I didn’t tell him was that Fred blew the breaker and lost electricity to the homeowner’s FEMA trailer. He had to go fix it and then ran the cord from the electric box on the pole. He decided it wasn’t OK to bypass the electric. I’m relieved!</td>
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<td>Figural Theme</td>
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<td>Matthew is starting to look hot and is getting into trouble with heat.</td>
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<td>median. Tom is driving. We think he is waiting for the traffic to stop so he can cross the median. Instead, when the traffic stops he turns left and begins driving the wrong way on the blvd. There are three lanes. Almost everyone gasps and hollers at him as he is going the wrong way. He says he’s getting gas. For the first time we notice there is a gas station by the restaurant and he is turning</td>
<td>blvd. There are three lanes. Almost everyone gasps and hollers at him as he is going the wrong way.</td>
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<td>P-O Safety #73</td>
<td>We hold the elevator for Fred. He is the only one missing. We wait and wait. We are just about ready to go ahead without him when he comes in, exclaiming the van is unlocked. We say several times we know but we are coming right back out. He can’t hear us. He is talking too loud. All week we have told him things but he isn’t hearing us</td>
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<td>P-O Safety #74, Dangerous #42</td>
<td>We get to Jackson, most of us are awake, but by now Matthew is laying down, as is Tyler. All of a sudden I realize we are in trouble. It is clear the traffic ahead of us in our lane is coming to a sudden stop. Tom has been traveling at a fast speed. I wonder if we will be able to stop in time. I further wonder if we will be rear ended or otherwise hit. At the last minute he veers into the next lane. It becomes clear what has happened. A young lady, perhaps an older adolescent or in her early 20s, has stopped right in the middle of her lane. She is out of the car. Just as we slide past her she jumps up on the median. It is obvious she is scared to death and with good reason. The car right behind her managed to stop. I couldn’t even look to see what was coming, I had just braced myself for the hit. I have no idea how we missed being in a truly awful accident. God was with us! We don’t know what happened. To have stopped at that moment would have increased the risk of an accident for those behind us. We had been in the far outside lane. We</td>
<td>All of a sudden I realize we are in trouble. It is clear the traffic ahead of us in our lane is coming to a sudden stop. Tom has been traveling at a fast speed. I wonder if we will be able to stop in time. I further wonder if we will be rear ended or otherwise hit.</td>
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<td>pulled off at the next exit. We were all a bit shaken.</td>
<td>it’s like a hostile situation because the people in New Orleans are mad, they’re geared up</td>
<td>VP#1 – 251-257</td>
<td>it’s like a hostile situation</td>
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<td>People think it’s fixed. They think that it’s done, like all the houses are rebuilt and everything is taken care of and every time I talk to anyone and I tell them when I was down there at Christmas and they’re like “Oh, how was it? Did you have fun?” “No, I didn’t have fun. It was sick down there. Houses still have body counts on them. You think that’s fun? You think that’s OK? It’s not.” Like, it’s, you know, it’s, to me it’s like a hostile situation because the people in New Orleans are mad, they’re geared up and I’m just like afraid</td>
<td>“I was actually afraid,” some of the places he went. This is not necessarily a safe city.</td>
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<td>actually you’re down there for a while and I mean you start driving like the New Orleanians, [I- that’s scary], and they don’t know how to drive, and you start driving like they do, you start, you know, not taking things as seriously or as cautiously as we did when we first went down there, I mean we’d say we probably shouldn’t have been in, but we’d become acclimated, you know to that part of the city. Probably, which is what we should have done was become a part of that city but we probably should have been a little more cautious, but we weren’t. I’d go places, Cameron would go places, I mean there were times when Cameron, I mean, he told me he said, “I was actually afraid,” some of the places he went. This is not necessarily a safe city. But then my gut, New Orleans where we were living and down the hill you’ve got this other area, it’s like two different worlds, the haves and have nots.</td>
<td>It is a dangerous area.</td>
<td>SP#9 --</td>
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<td>We talk a bit about security. It is a dangerous area. Brittany asks him if he is packing tonight and he is not. He says at one time he carried 3 knives with him, two in his boot and</td>
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<td>P-O Safety #64, Danger #36</td>
<td>we pass the police station, if that is what you can call it. It is a double wide trailer, non-</td>
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one in his back. As he is talking we pass the police station, if that is what you can call it. It is a double wide trailer, non-descript with a wood sign that rests on the parking lot. It has a wrought iron fence around it. Cameron tells us there are still at least 300 national guard in the city to help maintain order and security.

P-O Safety #66, Danger #38
As we transition to the lower 9th ward, he tells us we are driving through the area where there is a murder a night. Usually it is drug dealer or turf battles, but there are those caught in the cross-fire. We hear Fred locking the doors.

VP#8 – 11-14
Utter hopelessness for the people down there. Just, I just couldn’t believe all the devastation and how it must have upset their lives, probably forever and I just felt probably what little bit I was going to do wasn’t going to help the whole area. I just felt utter hopelessness.

VP#5 – 280-291
I think the hopelessness comes from because you become so narrow focused on the disaster life you’re walking through. It helps to see it’s so much bigger, someone else always has it worse than you, but I don’t know, down there, there are a lot of people that have it really bad so I don’t know how you could even say, so…um, but uh, without us even saying, um, I would say almost across the board they knew we were from a church.

VP#7 – 154-156
Well, I think I understand, at least part, that they pretty much were without hope or had very little hope and uh, so, so I guess what I was thinking, hey, anything I can do to kind of encourage, encourage the people then, then it was worth my time.

VP#8 – 198-204
this one, it’s just the total devastation, the hopelessness that’s there, at least what I see as hopeless. On my other trips we’re going and

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<tr>
<td>VP#7 – 154-156</td>
<td>they pretty much were without hope</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP#8 – 198-204</td>
<td>it’s just the total devastation, the hopelessness that’s there, at least what I see as hopeless. On my other trips we’re going and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
we’re trying to build something or uh, I, I uh, I just, that hopeless, well I guess in some ways the situation might be hopeless but we’re going there to build up and I guess we were kind of cleaning up and not cleaning up, uh, and some of the guys, uh, would have liked to have done that thing too, but, there like our area just weren’t able to do that yet till after the first of the year, so it was just tear out it’ll just never be the same again

VP#1 – 287-294
it’s like anchor people and I’m not, I guess I am blaming them but, they don’t want to offer hope to people; they want to scare people. They want to put people in panic or in fear or in sadness because those are the strongest emotions that can happen. They don’t see happiness or hope or goodness or something. When you turn on the news there’s like 20 stories about shootings and burglaries and a little girl was raped or molested and blah, blah, blah and then you have one story about “Oh, and this child started a fund raiser in their town” and you’ll hear one story to like, it’s like a ratio of like 20 to 1. they don’t want to offer hope to people; they want to scare people

SP#3 – 549-551
I just always go back to the thought that maybe we didn’t do enough and maybe I didn’t say enough at the right time, my opportunity was lost to truly restore hope my opportunity was lost to truly restore hope

SP#2 – 362-364
we’re here to restore hope to these people um, and I’ve really, really thought about, you know, when we say this do we feel it? Do we believe it ourselves, you know? Do we believe it ourselves, you know?
Appendix IX

Permissions
Dear Debbie,

I am excited about your interest in the Herth Hope Index (HHI) and your proposed dissertation work. I have attached a copy of the HHI, scoring instructions, and several reference lists I have compiled on hope.

You have permission to use the Herth Hope Index in your dissertation study. I ask that upon completion of your dissertation that you send me a summary of the findings and any psychometrics related to the Herth Hope Index.

I am very excited about your project so if I can be of any further assistance please don’t hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes!

Dr. Kaye Herth

Kaye A. Herth, Ph.D., R.N., F.A.A.N.
Dean, College of Allied Health and Nursing
124 Myers Field House
Mankato MN  56001
507-389-6315
kaye.herth@mnsu.edu

From: Deborah Persell [mailto:dpersell@astate.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, April 03, 2007 12:33 PM
To: Herth, Kaye A
Subject: Permission to use Herth Hope Index

Hello Dr. Herth

I am writing to see your permission to use the Herth Hope Index in my dissertation research. The title of my dissertation is: The Lived Experience of Faith-Based Disaster Response: A Qualitative and quantitative Analysis. I have examined a number of hope scales and believe HHI is the best fit for my research. I am happy to provide you with any additional information you desire to assist with your decision. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Debbie Persell
Thank you for your email request. Permission is granted for you to use the material below for your thesis/dissertation subject to the usual acknowledgements and on the understanding that you will reapply for permission if you wish to distribute or publish your thesis/dissertation commercially.

Best wishes,

Laura Wilson.
Permissions Controller
Wiley-Blackwell
PO Box 805
9600 Garsington Road
Oxford
OX4 2ZG
United Kingdom
Fax: 00 44 1865 471150

From: Deborah Persell [mailto:dpersell@astate.edu]
Sent: 04 March 2008 15:49
To: Journals Rights
Subject: Permission Request

Hello

This is Deborah Persell and I am completing my dissertation work titled: The Experience of Faith-Based Disaster Response. In my dissertation I use the work of Betty Neuman and would like to include a figure contained in the following article:


The figure is page 200 of the journal and is Figure 1: Elements of the Betty Neuman systems Model.

Your permission to include this figure in my dissertation would be greatly appreciated. The dissertation is the first completed in the new homeland security nursing concentration at the PhD level at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Thank you for your consideration.

Deborah Persell
Appendix X

Comparative Literature Review on the Impact of Event Scale - Revised
Table A.10 Comparison of Literatures on the Impact of Event Scale - Revised

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact of Event Scales</th>
<th>Theoretical Underpinning</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Time since event</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Test-Retest</th>
<th>Content Validity</th>
<th>Construct Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horowitz, Wilner &amp; Alvarez, 1979</td>
<td>Intrusion and avoidance extracted from in-depth patient clinical evaluations and interviews. No specific theoretical underpinning identified</td>
<td>66 adults seeking psychotherapy r/t bereavement, violence, illness, surgery or accidents Literate, lower-middle class, diverse ethnic origins 16 men 50 women</td>
<td>20 Reduced to 15</td>
<td>Average 25 weeks</td>
<td>Total Scale = 0.86 Intrusion = 0.78 Avoidance = 0.82</td>
<td>11 week average with range of 3-31 weeks</td>
<td></td>
<td>Within a week:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25 physical therapy students with recent cadaver experience</td>
<td></td>
<td>Range of 1 – 136 weeks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>110 medical students with freshman year cadaver experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chung, Farmer, Werrett, Easthope &amp; Chung 2000</td>
<td>Hypothesis was there would be a high level of traumatic stress and that emotion-focused coping would be the predictor to distress</td>
<td>66 community residents Near train disaster</td>
<td>15 items</td>
<td>7 months after the disaster</td>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td></td>
<td>Compared with Ways of Coping Scale and the General Health Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph 2000</td>
<td>Research question was to determine if utilization of the IES is still warranted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelvin, Hunt &amp; Robbins 2000</td>
<td>Compared three models of IES</td>
<td>731 World War II and Korean War veterans</td>
<td>40 – 50 years earlier</td>
<td>Total Scale = 0.91 Intrusion = 0.87 Avoidance = 0.90</td>
<td>Factor Analysis Models using LISREL Correlated with General Health Questionnaire = all correlations significant but stronger to intrusion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix XI

Participant-Observer Informed Consent
INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT
For
Participant-Observer Experience

The Experience of Faith-Based Disaster Response: A Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

I am a doctoral student at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. I am conducting my dissertation research. I am studying the lived experience of faith-based disaster response.

You are being invited to participate in my research study. If you agree to participate, this means you agree that I may record my observations as a volunteer working with Faith Disaster Response. This will require no additional time on your part and you may ask me to not record any observations about you. The following paragraphs further explain the study.

You are being invited to participate in a research study of faith-based disaster response. This research involves human participants and has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The purpose of the study is to discover and understand the experience of faith-based disaster response for: those staff members who organized and provided disaster assistance; those who volunteered their time to provide assistance and for those who received assistance.

You are being asked to participate in the study by allowing the researcher to work with and record observations of a Faith Disaster Response volunteer team providing services in New Orleans, Louisiana. The researcher will work with you, eat meals with the team and stay with the team at the faith-based disaster response headquarters in New Orleans. The researcher will not record your name or otherwise identify you in the observation notes.

You will not be asked to devote any additional time to the study nor will you be asked to do any activity above what the faith-based disaster response staff asks you to do. You have the right to ask the researcher to not record observations of you, even though the researcher may have permission to record observations of other team members. Refusing to participate in the study will not impact your ability to be a respected and active member of the volunteer team or receive services of Faith Disaster Response.

There is no overt physical risk to you by participating in the study. It is possible you may initially feel uncomfortable about being observed.

There are no specific benefits to you from participating in the study other than contributing to the science of nursing.

All of the recorded observations and study records will be kept confidential. No information which could identify you will be recorded. No one outside the research team will have access to the research records. All records will be securely stored in a locked cabinet. No references will be made in oral or written reports of the research that could link you to the study.

_____ Participants Initials
You will not receive any compensation for participating in this research study.

The University of Tennessee does not "automatically" reimburse subjects for medical claims or other compensation. If physical injury is suffered in the course of research, or for more information, please notify the investigator in charge, Deborah J. Persell at 870-972-3318. If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study,) you may contact the researcher, Deborah J. Persell, at PO Box 910, State University AR 72467, and 870-972-3318. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the Office of Research Compliance Officer at (865) 974-3466.

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at anytime without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed you data will be returned to you or destroyed.

_____________________________________________________________________

CONSENT

I have read the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature ______________________________ Date __________

Investigator's signature _____________________________ Date __________
VITA

Deborah J. Persell was born in Kankakee, Illinois. She attended elementary schools in the following Missouri communities: Moberly, Hurdland, Huntsville, and Clarence. She attended the following high schools in Missouri: South Shelby High School, Macon High School and Arcadia Valley High School from where she graduated in 1971. Her pre-nursing courses were taken at Mid-America Nazarene University with her BSN awarded from the University of Kansas at Kansas City, Kansas in 1976. She continued her education at the University of Missouri at Kansas City where she received a Masters Degree in Nursing, Pediatrics, in 1978. During her graduate education she was a National Health Service Corps Scholar and fulfilled the requirements for service as a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner with the U.S. Public Health Service in Monticello, Arkansas.

Upon completion of her service to the U.S. Public Health Service she moved to Olathe, Kansas where she taught pediatric nursing at Mid-America Nazarene University for two years. During this time she also practiced as a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner in rural areas nearby. In 1983 she moved to Bel Air, Maryland and taught nursing at Harford Community College for eight years. In 1992 she became the clinical educator for the Women’s and Children’s Hospital with Sinai Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland.

In 1993 Deborah moved to Des Moines, Iowa and taught at Iowa Methodist Nursing School with a concurrent pediatric practice in public health clinics in rural Iowa. A move to Goodlettsville, Tennessee in 1996 brought a new academic career at Tennessee State University. There she coordinated the Family Nurse Practitioner program and engaged in private practice with a federally funded clinic in downtown Nashville and later in a private practice setting.

In 2000, Deborah moved to Howell, Michigan and taught as an instructor at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. There she taught graduate courses in the nurse practitioner programs. From Howell, she moved to Jonesboro, Arkansas in 2001. At that time she accepted the position of Assistant Professor in Nursing at Arkansas State University. In 2006, she was tenured and promoted to Associate Professor.

During her career at Arkansas State University she has coordinated the didactic and clinical pediatric education, has been instrumental in the development of the
Multidisciplinary Minor in Homeland Security and Emergency Management, has initiated and coordinated the Regional Training Center for Disaster Life Support. She has authored and co-authored numerous articles related to disaster preparedness and homeland security concerns. She has also become a national and international speaker on these topics.

This dissertation completes the final degree requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing with a concentration in Homeland Security. The degree is to be awarded May 2008.