

A protective factor in coping with hurricanes: about the positive effects of mental preparedness

Living in the Caribbean is exceptional as well as challenging.

The islands being in the hurricane prone zone creates the yearly threat of potentially natural disasters: hurricanes. Causing uncertainty and possibly triggering bad memories.

The sensation of tension, fear or other stress related symptoms is normal, considering these circumstances we live under part of the year.

Research shows that the experience of a natural disaster is the cause of mental health issues afterwards. Statistics show that an average of about 30% of the population of an affected area reports mental health issues or even Post Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms after the experience of a severe hurricane.

Research also shows that persons who have prepared themselves mentally to the reality of living in a hurricane belt and actively took part in mental preparations programs have lesser chance of developing mental health issues or PTSD afterwards.

Most existing preparedness programs have their focus on the practical preparation.

Inspired by the preventive effects on mental healthcare needs, MCA developed a hurricane preparedness program about mental preparedness and makes it freely available for the persons and communities living in a hurricane zone to benefit from.

Joining this program can lessen the chance to develop mental health issues and is helpful in building resilience.

The session gives insight in how our mind reacts and the information can result in feeling more empowered and able to cope with difficult situations in life in general.

Remember every person is different and every person experiences difficult situations in their own way. The reality of dealing with hurricanes and living in a hurricane belt is reportedly stressful for more than 99% of the population. Whether you start to feel the stress already with the arriving of the hurricane season itself, or only become worried when a severe system is threatening landfall at your shores, no matter which way and what level for you, it is common to experience some amount of stress.

It is our almost automated reaction to stress and the fact that we do NOT want to feel a certain way that gets the mind entangled in resisting and trying to fix a situation that is beyond our control. Instead of getting entangled the session will assist to make you aware of how you feel and to be ok with it and to gain insight in the mind and which techniques to apply.

The mental preparedness techniques and insights have proven effective and a calmer and more empowered sense of dealing with hurricane stress is noticed.

We look forward to welcoming you in the session online, which you can join and watch at your own convenience.

Working as healthcare professionals in the Caribbean, it is **MCA's** mission to share professional expertise & assist people in navigating life's challenges on the path towards a better one.

MCA specializes in developing healthy lifestyle programs for individuals & businesses in the region through teambuilding, mindfulness and empowerment programs.



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