



The Disaster Distress Helpline: A New Peer Support Program Promoting Collective Healing and Resiliency

The Disaster Distress Helpline is excited to offer a new and free opportunity for individuals impacted by both natural and human-caused disasters. A peer focused online peer support program, dedicated to providing individuals an opportunity to: unite, heal and rebuild. The DDH Online Peer Support Communities (OPSC) are at no-cost for members, easy to join and offered online via Facebook Groups. DDH Peer Supporters are staffed by Vibrant Emotional Health, and are available at varied days/hours of the week, between 6:00 am – 12:00 am Eastern Standard Time (EST).

Our Online Peer Support Communities are monitored 24/7/365 by an independently operated DDH networked crisis center, to provide crisis support through Crisis Support Over Messenger. Members are able to connect with a crisis counselor immediately if they are experiencing emotional distress and need crisis support. DDH Crisis Counselors use an intervention and evaluation approach, assisting community members to assess their level of emotional distress, and utilizing tools for de-escalation, collaborative problem solving and safety planning.

The DDH Online Peer Support Program is unique, providing the gold standard in peer support skills and practice. Peer supporters receive core training in fundamental principles of peer support, amplifying aptitude in areas such as: active listening, compassionate curiosity, and growth recovery language. Additionally, peer supporters encourage self-efficacy by refraining from being problem solvers during their interactions with members. Instead, they pose open-ended questions and help members create meaning from their own experiences. Peer supporters bring their lived experience and finely-honed skills in peer support social media moderation to enhance connection, community and resilience.

The DDH Online Peer Support Communities launched its first group in June 2021, dedicated to those impacted by Covid-19 to address the short and long-term effects of the pandemic. The DDH has two designated online peer support communities: Survivors of Mass Violence and Survivors and Responders of the Covid-19 pandemic.

To connect to one or both of our DDH Online Peer Support Communities, follow the links below:

Survivors and Responders of the Covid-19 Pandemic

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/survivorsandrespondersofcovid19>

Survivors of Mass Violence

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/survivorsofmassviolence>

The Disaster Distress Helpline (DDH) is a subnetwork of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, administered by Vibrant Emotional Health. For information about the DDH:

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline>

For information about the **Disaster Distress Helpline's Online Peer Support Communities**

<https://strengthafterdisaster.org/peer-support/>