

The Unsolved Psychological Consequences of Earthquake Aftershocks in Kermanshah City, November 2017

Dear Editor,

Natural disasters such as storms, floods, and earthquakes are inevitable events that sometimes create acute problems in countries across the globe.^[1] On November 12, a terrible earthquake, measuring 7.3 on the Richter scale, occurred near Kermanshah center causing significant financial losses and casualties. In nearby cities, such as Kermanshah, with a population of 1.5 million, people were overwhelmingly worried. A more serious problem was the frequent aftershocks that caused the people's fears to be fixed after that the major event. This forced them to be constantly on the streets and be disturbed regarding academic, occupational, and social life. The repetition of aftershocks resulted in the process of people's grief be more complicated and remain unresolved.^[2]

Grief is defined as being away from the state of health and well-being. According to Kubler-Ross, the process of grief involves five stages: shock and denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.^[3] When a fatal event occurs only once, the process of grief and mourning follows the normal procedure of solution. In case of repetition of disaster, the process of solving the problem is not natural. Repeated aftershocks during the first month after the event result in people constantly caught in the first three stages of Kubler-Ross model. Because of the inability to anticipate future aftershocks, people were involved in anticipatory grief, that is, the occurrence of a reaction before inevitable loss.^[4]

As Kermanshah city was not the focus of the earthquake and devastation, the mental problems of the people were not considered by any organization. In such a situation, intervention in crisis should be focused on ensuring people's mental security. Helping to solve anticipatory grief, providing appropriate solutions to increase safety from future earthquakes, teaching emotional control methods, and emphasizing support-oriented treatment methods by psychologists may possibly be effective in controlling the psychological consequences of similar events in future.^[5] Therefore, we recommend that if such events are repeated in the country, specialized psychological interventions^[5] and social work services^[1] should be designed based on the types of grief. Such interventions may be more effective in restoring psychosocial security to the public.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

Nothing to declare.

**Behzad Heydarpour¹, Ali Soroush²,
Mozghan Saeidi¹, Saeid Komasi³**

¹Cardiac Rehabilitation Center, Imam Ali Hospital, Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, Kermanshah, Iran, ²Lifestyle Modification Research Center, Imam Reza Hospital, Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, Kermanshah, Iran, ³Clinical Research Development Center, Imam Reza Hospital, Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, Kermanshah, Iran

Address for correspondence:

Dr. Saeid Komasi,
Clinical Research Development Center, Imam Reza Hospital,
Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, Kermanshah, Iran.
E-mail: s_komasi63@yahoo.com

References

1. Javadian R. Social work responses to earthquake disasters: A social work intervention in Bam, Iran. *Int Soc Work* 2007;50:334-46.
2. Hu XL, Li XL, Dou XM, Li R. Factors related to complicated grief among bereaved individuals after the Wenchuan earthquake in China. *Chinese Med J* 2015;128:1438-43.
3. Kübler-Ross E, Kessler D. On grief and grieving: Finding the meaning of grief through the five stages of loss. Scribner. Retrieved. 2007—via Amazon.
4. Garand L, Lingler JH, Deardorf KE, DeKosky ST, Schulz R, Reynolds CF, *et al.* Anticipatory grief in new family caregivers of persons with mild cognitive impairment and dementia. *Alzheimer Dis Assoc Disord* 2012;26:159-65.
5. Ekanayake S, Prince M, Sumathipala A, Siribaddana S, Morgan C. We lost all we had in a second: Coping with grief and loss after a natural disaster. *World Psychiatry* 2013;12:69-75.

This is an open access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

Access this article online	
Quick Response Code: 	Website: www.ijnmrjournal.net
	DOI: 10.4103/ijnmr.IJNMR_45_18

How to cite this article: Heydarpour B, Soroush A, Saeidi M, Komasi S. The unsolved psychological consequences of earthquake aftershocks in Kermanshah City, November 2017. *Iranian J Nursing Midwifery Res* 2019;24:81.

Received: March, 2018. **Accepted:** April, 2018.

© 2018 Iranian Journal of Nursing and Midwifery Research | Published by Wolters Kluwer - Medknow