“Dr. Miller brings to this comprehensive and much needed text decades of on-the-ground experience as a post-disaster responder in settings across the globe in the wake of multiple types of disasters. Miller’s personal and clinical insights from his first-hand experience are combined in this book with a well-theorized perspective that locates both the fact of disasters and responses to the disasters in contexts, an ecological perspective often cited in social work but not so often applied.” —Yoosun Park

“This book is essential reading for disaster workers. Lucid and compelling, it offers a masterful synthesis of theory, practice and personal experience. In place of narrow, individualized approaches, it shows how resilience, self help, culture, meaning, and collective action support psychosocial well-being in the growing array of disasters facing the world.” —Mike Wessells

Disaster responders treat more than just the immediate emotional and psychological trauma of victims: they empower individuals and families to heal themselves long into a disaster’s aftermath. This requires rebuilding the ability of survivors to meet their emotional and psychological needs, not only for themselves but also for others, and necessitates a careful consideration of survivors’ social, economic, and political realities so healing and recovery can outlast the reverberations of disaster.

This comprehensive book integrates Western mental health approaches and international models of psychosocial capacity building within a social ecology framework, providing practitioners and volunteers with a blueprint for individual, family, group, and community interventions. Joshua Miller focuses on a range of disasters, both large and small, involving natural, technological, and other complex factors at local, regional, national, and international levels. Case studies from throughout the world explore the social, psychological, economic, political, and cultural issues affecting various reactions to disaster, such as how an individual, family, or community may interpret its meaning, and illustrate the importance of drawing on local cultural practices to promote empowerment and resiliency.

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