**Example 1:**

**What is Confirming, What is Supprising**

To success in being prepared, respond, and mitigate in a disaster requires the whole community approach. What Amanda Ripley, the author of the Unthinkable,  confirmed to me is that there are always good people who are willing to help genuinely, and volunteer to respond to meet a need in a crisis when you guide them to the right path, and tell them what is required to settle down the issue. An excellent example of this is the story of the eighty years old Katie Little and her friends, who worked to collect money over a year until they managed to get $ 1.5 million in state money to fund building a floodwall to protect their town. On the other hand, I was surprised by Amanda’s explaining on how people would react and interact to get out of any disaster alive. My primary thought was that people would run for their lives individually, to random ways with no rational decisions. In contrary, according to Amanda, people move in groups during disasters, and they look out for one another, and they maintain hierarchies.

**What is Influencing**

As to what influenced me in the present , by now, I believe my reaction should be active and confident regardless of the type of disaster, and I should  arm myself with a fighting spirit and the hope that I can overcome any situation. I also learned that when a catastrophe occurs, victims go through three stages, namely denial, deliberation, and decisiveness. The last step pushes the victim to act. I learned that I should understand my instincts when I am involved in a crisis so that I move past the stages quickly to act. Amanda dissects human speculation and fear from how survivors responded to major historical disasters which form strong references for her exposition. We should not be inadequate in our responses to disasters because our brains can do so much more if they are trained to in this context.

**Lessons Learned**

There are lessons learned from the book, and what I learned about how people react in a disaster event is that in contradictory to the popular myth, people tend to move in groups during a disaster, and would not run for their lives individually. They will look out for one another, and they maintain hierarchies. Also, it is apparent that people need to be aware of the responsibility they hold regarding their reactions to a disaster. I learned that the survivors of the World Trade Center bombings took an average of six minutes before they left the building that was hit by the terrorist airplane. Their movement was slow downstairs, which is contrary to the way I thought they fled. We should start training our minds to act fast in case of a disaster because if we become docile due to shock, our chances of surviving will be very narrow. Amanda added to my understanding of what goes through the minds of the people caught in disasters, with emphasis on what should go through the minds of victims to escape death. The psychology of crisis and survival is a critical topic that should be expounded through further research. I think Amanda was quite relevant to the issue because disasters can happen anytime and anywhere.

I was fascinated by Amanda’s approach to overcoming disasters because I realized that I have the power to reinforce my survival instincts in any situation. This realization changed my perspective of thinking that the government and the rescue teams are 100% responsible for any issues before, during, and after a disaster. Also, I had a great feeling when I read that the survivors of epic disasters in history can still narrate their stories and answer questions with strength and a positive outlook.

**Sharing Thoughts**
I lost my 18 years old cousin in a terrorist attack, a few years ago, and I have a friend who suffers from the same attack, and he is diagnosed with post-trauma attack syndrome. The story started when a suicide bomber had attempted to gain access to the local mosque, at Saudi Arabia, but had been prevented from doing so by my cousin and his friends who volunteered as security guards to protect the worships before the bomber detonated his explosives vest resulting in the deaths of four victims. Hence, I can easily relate to the circumstances and the points in Amanda's book. I love it because it offers hope for disaster survivors like my friend. No doubt If there is one thing I to share with my friend, it would be ‘The Survival Zone.’ ‘We have an outstanding second defense that we can learn from experience, Amanda said.

**Meditation**
Finally, I pulled out the following picture from the book. The image took me a while to meditate on how a striking disaster can be shockingly destructive, to destruct almost everything, as quick as a flashlight. (see the picture below, the scene two minutes before the disaster,).

Exampler 2:

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 One of the most eye-opening sections of the book was that Luck is Unreliable. More and more do we see the erection of sky rise buildings, condominiums, and other structures, however, they are not being built to be more resistant against disasters. Also, neither are the people who are going to occupy those spaces. The Twin Towers during 9/11 were targeted because of the size and importance of the buildings. Having these large stationary targets full of people who are counting on luck to protect them from disasters. Society has become so dependent, whether that is on technology or other people that individuals do not know how to fend for themselves. This includes the use of robotic vacuums that clean for you or having a computer reorder your groceries society is becoming childlike again. We tend to view all these things as good and better for the community. How about when the community does not know what to do when something goes wrong, and they have to rely on their selves?

            For the United States to be such a wealthy country, one would think since we’ve had so much experience with disasters that residents would be better prepared. This section highlights some downfalls of globalization and technological advances. The author states, “disasters are predictable, surviving them is not”(Ripley, 2007, p.161). Knowing that these events will happen is half of the equations knowing how to live through it is the other piece. I think that society places a heavy emphasis on disaster recovery and not prevention/ survival. Many agencies focus on after-action instead of empowering individuals to prepare themselves.

Reference

Ripley, A. (2009). *The unthinkable: Who survives when disaster strikes-and why*. Harmony.

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**M Basilio**

**RE: Week 3**

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Very well put. I agree that we rely too much on luck. When I asked my parents about their preparations they had the mindset of "it won't happen to me", which I think is probably pretty common. I think that your point on how society is changing due to technology was salient too. While I agree that we are becoming more child-like and dependent on technology, I think those things are helping us too. Take the technology for buildings in California to help them withstand earthquakes and the software that helps us track patients during an MCI for examples. Great points, I enjoyed reading your post!

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**Hamed Amdi**

**RE: Week 3**

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Hello,

A great post this week.  As you illustrate terrorist target large buildings which attract masses of people for business, recreation and other functions. Indeed, the Twin Towers 9/11 event perpetrated by Al-Qaeda terrorists had many deaths because individuals from all over the world would converge there for business and other activities due to its varsity in capacity. Despite advancement in technology and manpower in human doing, people are less conscious to disasters and they have never established means of handling cases of disasters’ happening which are inevitable. As a result, many inhabitants in the building were unconscious when the terrorist attack occurred the freaked and became tensed because they never knew how they could handle such (Amanda, 2009).

As you articulate in your post disasters are predictable but it is difficult to predictable the survival rate for the individuals struck by the disaster. The cumulative effect of different types of disasters is significant. We lose many lives from car accidents, food poisoning, drowning, Alzheimer disease, and terrorism among other disasters (Amanda, 2009, p.160). More than often the most deaths occur from the less fatal disasters despite the farther the US has grown in terms of technology and economy. Therefore, despite the intensity and magnitude of a disaster the damage that occurs is unmatchable because many people are unprepared.

Reference

Ripley, A. (2009). *The unthinkable: Who survives when disaster strikes-and why*. Harmony.

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Example 3:

**Week 3 DB**

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*The Unthinkable: Who survives when a disaster strikes and why*is a book were, we can see how different someone’s behavior from others can be when a disaster occurs. At the same time, as well as disasters, even though there are some common factors or patterns between them, we are all unique individuals. I enjoyed reading this book because it was written with real incidents and survivors. One of the stories that most impacted me was Turners’ death. He refused to leave his home with the idea that if he survived once a similar event, he could survive it again. His house made it through the hurricane, but he died from a heart attack. Now, stories like this one make me think about not only the risks we decide to take when a disaster is about to happen or during it. It also makes me reflect on every single decision we make daily. How prone are we to take risks without even considering the consequences?

The author also used several examples of airplane crashes. I have some background in aviation and aerospace, not only because I took classes but mainly because my family in one way or another is involved in that field. Two weeks ago, when I was flying back to Philadelphia, I was one of the passengers responsible to open the exit door in case of an emergency. I always pay close attention to the instructions and even read the pamphlet in front of me, simply because I still feel that I may have missed some information. Through my mind came the same thought that the author mentioned. Many of the passengers do not pay attention to the safety instructions. The flight attendants ask for verbal confirmation, but does that mean that the passengers understand or will be able to open the door? At the same time, will I be able to open it?

Delay and fear were also two of the topics that I found fascinating. We are all different, and depending on our backgrounds, we may also respond differently. My friends always say I am in an alert mode, and if something happens, they want to be with me. Every time they repeat those words I fear not only for them but, also for me. The book presents many examples of survivors whose previous experiences and training helped them to overcome the situation. I think that the more we know, the better. I see it as backup power for our body. Positively or negatively, our bodies will still react to the incident. I prefer my brain to connect fear and experience to get me moving in the right direction, not otherwise.

To my loved ones and peers, I would say not to fear the wrong things and do not take anything for granted. For example, do not fear a tornado, fear not knowing what to do. Do not worry about a hurricane, fear not being prepared. My parents have always given me the reasons and importance behind every no and yes. So, I agree with the author in that we should be direct and openly honest with the people, even with children. However, respect and tactfulness must always be considered. Again, we are all different.



6 days ago

** Morton**

**RE: Week 3 DB**

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Hi Nel,

Fear can either make or break a persons decision-making capabilities. Some people are motivated by fear, knowing that something could or is about to happen, kicks their senses into focus mode. The person motivated by fear is able to use quicker processing and is able to achieve what they think is necessary at that moment. This thriving fear person can also be dangerous and have increased risks. Waiting till its too late unsafe to decide that they need to react to an event. The person who is paralyzed with fear can also be dangerous, rendering them unable to protect themselves from the aftermath of the destruction.

            While these are too extreme fear definition, I think that it is impossible not to have some semblance of fear. Fear can be a positive thing driving you to accomplish something, especially in a disaster and leaving the home that you’ve always lived in and facing the possibility of never returning. That is fearful; however; you left facing all the possibilities because you know the risks outweigh the possible benefits. Fear is compelling; I do agree that a person should not dwell in fear, or unfortunate events but be prepared just in case they happen.

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5 days ago

**Ali Siwar**

**RE: Week 3 DB**

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Hey Nel,

I agree that people react to disasters differently because of their unique behaviors and mental capabilities. Fear and denial can delay response to disasters. Most people who perished during the 9/11 disaster, for example, delayed leaving the building due to mental shock. However, I believe that some people can delay deliberately to save others. During emergencies and disasters, we need individuals who are mentally strong and healthy to assist others. It is rewarding to put life on the line to save more lives. From a moral perspective, it is acceptable to engage in actions that result in the greater good.

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