

### **Life adaptation after the earthquake in China**

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On May 12, 2008, a 7.9 magnitude earthquake occurred in the eastern part of Sichuan, China. Up to date, there are over 70,000 people dead and more than 374,000 injured. Countless people lost their homes and possessions. Most studies in persons who have experienced major earthquakes have focused on post-traumatic stress disorder. However, how do these people react to a major quake in which caused significant physical, psychological, and social changes? How do these people adapt to the lost of their occupational roles and functions? We lack understanding of the extent these individuals suffer from psychological distress, as well as physical injuries in major quakes. We also do not fully understand how these people respond to the challenges caused by major quakes in order for them to adjust and adapt to the changes.

The purpose of this study is to explore and to examine the adaptation process in those who experience a 7.9 magnitude earthquake in China. We hypothesize that adaptation is a dynamic process occurring throughout lifetime; and each individual develops unique adaptation strategies to life changing events.

We plan to use a mixed method research design for this study. Quantitative information will be collected on self-efficacy, self-mastery, and life satisfaction from participants. Qualitative information will be collected by a structured interview with questions focusing on adaptation process and strategies. Participants will be recruited from one of the rehabilitation stations near the city of YongXing and from nearby villages. Inclusion criteria of participation are age 18 years old and older, sustained physical injuries during the earthquake last year and currently receive rehabilitation services, and able to communicate verbally. Results from this preliminary study will enrich our understanding of those who experienced a major life challenge and their adaptation strategies. Results will also be used as a guide to develop a treatment intervention for those who experience a major life changing event to enhance their ability to adapt.