



Jirasart Witthaya School
Ayutthaya, Thailand

Ruang Naam-Tuam
RONG RIAN
MA HAT SA JAN

Activity Workbook
for
Children, Families and Teachers

MY FLOOD STORY:

A GUIDED ACTIVITY WORKBOOK FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND TEACHERS

A simple and straightforward guide that encourages healthy expression, learning and coping. Use to help children, teenagers and families overcome bad memories and fears.

Edward Oklan, M.D., M.P.H.
and Gilbert Kliman, M.D.

Illustrations by Anne Kuniyuki Oklan, R.N.

Adaptation by Brett Baxter
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Guide for Parents and Teachers	1
Guide for Children and Teenagers	5
My Flood Story	7
Pictures to Color	
THE FLOOD	13
GLAD TO BE ALIVE	16
GETTING BETTER	17
SCARED FEELINGS	21
A CHILD DREAMING	23
A CHILD CRYING	26
SAND BAGGING, A CHILD'S DRAWING	28
DOWNTOWN FLOODING	30
BUILDING A LEVEE	31
CLEANING UP	32
CHILDREN PLAYING	33
RED CROSS SHELTER	34
RED CROSS SHELTER, A CHILD'S DRAWING	35
ASKING FOR HELP	43
Newspaper Clippings	44
More Things to Do	47
A Quiz about Floods	48
Suggested Reading List	52
Relief and Mental Health Services	53
Children's Mental Health Checklist	55
Who Wrote This Book?	57

If You Were Bereaved, or If You Were Made Homeless for a While or Permanently

Your children may benefit from brief preventive consultation. Help is available through the mental health services listed at the end of this book under "Relief and Mental Health Services."

For You, the Adults

Remember, even adults may find that using this book can help them understand better and cope better with their experiences during floods. You may add your own questions as well as answering the questions asked of the children. You may also find that drawing or coloring the scenes may help you become calmer or help you to remember your experiences and master them. Along with answers to "learning about floods" questions, the end of the book has a reading list for children and adolescents and a list of helpful relief services. Relief efforts might be able to use your volunteer help, and that of your teen-age children.

Finally, a Mental Health Checklist tells you what kind of behavior to be concerned about in your children or pupils following a disaster such as the recent flood, and where to get help when you or a child needs to be emotionally fortified.

Even older children may become more clingy or dependent if they have been traumatized. So be patient.

For Use as a Family

One very helpful way of using the book involves working together on it as a family. You may each individually work on the same questions (from several workbooks or on separate paper) and add them all together in one "Family Flood Story." Or you may all work on one book, contributing your own reactions. You should sign your own name to your entry, if you share the use of one book. Engaging in a "shared remembering" may help your children feel safer as they work on a joint project under your direction. This may also help bring your family closer together.

Use of Illustrations

The drawings throughout the book can be used by families, teenagers and children in a variety of ways to help strengthen normal coping after this catastrophe.

Young children (ages 2-4), *severely traumatized* children, and *learning disabled* or *learning specific* children (who may have a preference for visual as

trouble remembering what happened, or sometimes remember bad things that they would rather not think about at all. They might be afraid whenever they see a river, or have other special fears. But it is also normal not to get too upset, and many children might not even get worried.

About Using This Book

Talking to grownups and other kids about your feelings or worries and about what happened can help you feel better. It can also help you learn more about what to do to be safer if another flood comes along some time.

Using this book may help you to talk to others, and it may help you in other ways. By writing down or drawing pictures about what you remember, what you think about and what your feelings are, you can feel stronger. You'll make your own personal record of what happened.

If you can use this book by yourself, or with the help of a parent or a teacher, you can feel stronger and keep on learning more. And you could help others, too, if you share what you learn.

Look through this book and begin wherever you want. Fill in as many of the blank spaces as you can. Ask for help if you need it to understand the questions or to write down the answers. Try drawing pictures or coloring in the pictures that are already in this book. You can also make a scrapbook out of this book by stapling in extra pages. Use extra pages to hold newspaper or magazine clippings and paste in any photographs of floods or flood damage you take or can find. Answer the quiz questions if you are able to. Take your time. You can skip anything that makes you too upset and come back to it another time. Remember, you should definitely talk to a grownup if you become upset or worried, and also to share what you have learned. To learn even more about floods, go to your local library and use the reading list at the end of this book.

Why Learn About Floods?

In the summer of 1993 a tremendous flood started in the middle of the United States. Many people drowned. Many thousands of farms, schools, houses and factories were covered with water. A great fire happened when a barge hit a gas station, and there was gasoline burning on top of the water. Some good things happened, too. Prisoners from jails helped stop the flood. People from other parts of the country came to help, especially by building "levees" (a kind of dam) with bags of sand.

It was amazing that most people did not panic and that more people were not injured. Instead, almost everybody cooperated and kept calm. That is the biggest lesson of floods—and other disasters—that lives can be saved by people thinking ahead and by staying in control of their fear. It is also important to remember that staying safe is more important than saving things you own.