THESIS

IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM EMOTIONAL NEEDS AND RESPONSES:

EXPERIENCES OF SURVIVORS OF THE 2012 HIGH PARK FIRE

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

GRIEF AND LOSS EXPERIENCES OF SURVIVORS OF THE 2012 HIGH PARK FIRE

The present study investigated the experiences of individuals impacted by the 2012 High Park Fire in Larimer County, Colorado. The purpose of the study was to begin to understand the emotional needs of survivors of large-scale wildfire incidents. Ambiguous loss, traumatic loss, and family stress theory informed the theoretical basis for the study. A sample of survivors of the High Park Fire were recruited for in-depth, face-to-face or phone interviews to explore their experiences during and after the disaster. Thematic coding was used for data analysis. Findings indicated while individual differences existed among survivors, all participants expressed a desire for additional information on the status of their homes during the evacuation phase and this information was needed sooner rather than later, regardless of whether it was good or bad news. Stress of the unknown was identified as the most difficult emotional challenge, and adequate social support was an important component leading to better coping. An ongoing desire to have the losses and challenges associated with the fire incident acknowledged by the broader community was discussed by the majority of survivors as an important part of healing from their grief.   The findings of this research project will be available to professionals within the Colorado State University Extension system to guide in the development of a new section of an Extension website, focusing on grief and loss resources for Colorado wildland fire victims.

Keywords: wildland fire, High Park Fire, evacuation, grief and loss, trauma, natural disaster

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Wildland fires are an increasing concern as more and more Americans are making their homes in the wildland-urban interface (WUI)—the area where homes meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland vegetation. The WUI in the United States covers 9% of the land area and contains 39% of all houses or approximately 44.8 million housing units (Radeloff et al., 2005). Protection of structures is the most difficult within the WUI, and this is also where the largest percentage of human-caused fires occur (Radeloff et al., 2005). In 2003 alone, over 4,200 homes were destroyed by wildland fires within the United States, nearly all of them within a single month and in a single geographic area of southern California (Radeloff et al., 2005). The devastation begins with blackened trees and scorched earth, but extends to the loss of homes, livestock, property (including range land, outbuildings, etc.), livelihood, and even loss of life. Given the prevalence of these disasters, it makes sense to invest the time and resources needed to understand the impacts these events have on individuals, families, and communities (Botey & Kulig, 2013).

Although natural disasters differ widely, most share risk factors for psychopathology and mental health issues for the survivors. Threat to life or injury of self or loved ones as well as property loss are all identified risk factors (Papanikolaou, Adamis, Mellon, Prodromitis, & Kyriopoulos, 2011). At the height of fire activity, there tend to be numerous resources available to those who need to evacuate their homes. The American Red Cross typically arrives within the first days of the start of a major incident. Meals are provided for firefighters and victims, and emergency shelter is made available for those evacuated from the fire area. The Red Cross often acts as the source of ongoing informational updates to citizens, they provide for the bulk distribution of emergency supplies, and they are the source of much needed relief and recovery

information (http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/wildfire). The Red Cross also manages a Safe and Well website (http://safeandwell.communityos.org) to provide information about the safety and location of individuals impacted by the emergency. Churches and other community groups provide support by gathering donations of food, clothing, lodging, and replacement goods. After the fire is controlled, the Red Cross and other resources that have responded to the incident must move on to serve at the next emergency location. Oftentimes, those impacted continue to need support in their physical, social, and psychological coping long after these resources have left the area. As fires continue to burn homes and impact the lives of people worldwide, it is important to understand these psychological and social effects as well as the interventions that may be useful in supporting survivors.

The present study investigated the experiences of individuals impacted by the 2012 High Park Fire west of Fort Collins, Colorado in order to begin understanding the emotional needs of both evacuees who lose their homes in major wildland fire incidents and those evacuees who are later able to return to surviving homes in the fire zone. Ambiguous loss, traumatic loss, and family stress theory provided the theoretical basis for the study as well as the development of the questions posed to residents recruited for in-depth, face-to-face interviews. Questions focused on exploring residents' experiences during and after the fire as well as resources these residents believed were lacking in the county's response to their needs.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Wildland fires are becoming an increasingly common occurrence as a result of drought conditions across the United States and, as more and more people are choosing to live in the areas between urban developments and undeveloped wildland areas, these fires are impacting individuals, families, and communities more regularly. While research on wildland fire and its impacts on humans is historically quite sparse, the literature (e.g., Flynn, 2004, Hussain, Weisaeth, & Heir, 2011; McDermott, & Cobham, 2012; and Pietrzak et al., 2012) related to other types of natural disasters and the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in New York City can supplement and guide our understanding of the likely effects of these events on individuals. Traumatic loss, ambiguous loss, and family stress provide the theoretical basis for an understanding of human reactions to disasters. Additionally, the psychological and social impacts of disasters, the role of evacuation on coping, risk factors for developing psychopathology, gender differences and similarities, and possible interventions were explored.

Natural Disasters and Traumatic Loss

Traumatic loss events are dangerous, frightening, unpredictable, and uncontrollable. Lives may be at risk and serious injuries may result. Threats may be experienced directly, witnessed happening to others, or experienced vicariously, and they are often accompanied by strong emotional reactions of fear, helplessness, and horror (American Psychological Association 2000, as cited in Drescher & Foy, 2010). Most natural disasters and other traumatic events affect families as a whole rather than individuals (Davis, Harasymchuk, & Wohl, 2012), and relatives and extended family members experience substantial levels of distress as a result (Johannesson, Lundin, Hultman, Frojd, & Michel, 2011). Annually, 22% of the population of the United States experience a natural disaster (Briere & Elliott, 2000, as cited in Scher & Ellwanger, 2009) with

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exposure frequently accompanied by fear and anxiety, and greater disaster impact relating to generally poorer adjustment (Scher & Ellwanger, 2009). The more intense the experience of trauma in terms of severity, duration, or frequency, the greater the likelihood for developing psychopathology, particularly symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD (Drescher & Foy, 2010). These symptoms may include distressing memories or dreams, depression, detachment, reckless or self-destructive behavior, hypervigilance, concentration issues, and irritability (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).   Characteristics of the disaster that may be tied to enduring psychological effects include the amount of forewarning available, the scope of the impact, and the potential for recurrence (Keane, Pickett, Robinson, Lowery, & McCorkle, 1998). Human-caused traumatic incidents are reported to have a more profound effect than natural disaster (Galea, Nandi, & Vlahov, 2005; Norris & Sloane, 2007, as cited in Johannesson et al., 2011) and are particularly distressing when there is loss of life as well as property (Papanikolaou, Leon, Kyriopoulos, Levett, & Pallis, 2011).

Theoretical Basis for Work with Disaster Victims

Traumatic loss, ambiguous loss, and family stress theories contribute to an understanding of human reactions to disaster and guided the development of research questions for this study. While recent literature has applied these theories to terror attacks in New York City, all three also apply to the experience of surviving a wildland fire incident.

Traumatic Loss. Therese Rando's (2003) work, while focused primarily on traumatic bereavement in the face of the public tragedy of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack, has application to survivors of natural disasters as well. Wildfires, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, and other types of natural disasters tend to be highly publicized by the media, and, as such, have the potential to complicate grieving for individuals impacted by the incidents. The extensive

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media coverage can cause direct and indirect problems for those evacuated from their homes during natural disaster events. While media coverage can be an important source of information, it has the potential to retraumatize when images of an individual's destroyed home or community are seen over and over and over again. The coverage can be so extensive that it has the potential to generate stress even in those who are not immediately involved. Evacuees may not want to be labeled as "victims" and others may resent the loss of their individuality as they are grouped together with other evacuees. This may inhibit the ability to address anger and resentment. Well guided support indicates caregivers should keep in mind the trauma may need to be attended to in addition to the actual physical loss.

      Ambiguous Loss. Pauline Boss' (2004) work on ambiguous loss in response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack (9/11) also has application in work with those impacted by natural disasters such as wildfires. Many people who are evacuated from their homes during a large fire event struggle with the stress of not knowing when they are unable to confirm the status of their home within the fire perimeter. Similarly, many around the country struggled after 9/11. Families were uncertain whether their loved ones had perished or were simply missing in the confusion following the attacks. Ambiguous loss is defined as physical absence with psychological presence or physical presence with psychological absence (Boss, 2006). While this model was originally conceived with human loss in mind, it is applicable to physical loss as well. As families cope with evacuation during the height of a wildland fire, information is often lacking as to which homes have been burned and which remain standing. Without proof of a loss, family members do not know whether to hold onto hope or move on. The ambiguity of these unknowns may lead to feelings of hopelessness and an inability to cope with the stress of the situation. The grief process stalls and daily tasks may be left undone, parenting roles may be

ignored, and rituals and celebrations may be cancelled as a family copes with evacuation, loss of a home, and relocation.

During the aftermath of 9/11, Boss (2004) found normalizing the stress, confusion, anger, helplessness, and ambivalence to be helpful. Victims were provided a safe and familiar environment to meet with others where they were able to share information about the event and simply talk with others who were experiencing similar emotions. One long-term goal of those responding to the 9/11 disaster was helping family members find meaning in the experience. Sometimes that meaning was just that there was no meaning in the loss, and this may be true for fire victims as well. Sharing stories of loss can help in the healing process and through this, new connections are formed through common experience. Rituals are essential in healing from loss, so families should be encouraged to continue with their celebrations during times of evacuation and possible relocation. This signals permission to go on with life in a new location despite the sometimes massive losses.

Family Stress Theory. Family stress is defined as a disturbance in the organization and process of family life, created by pressure or tension within the family system (Boss, 1988) and can be positive or negative. Family stress theory provides a framework for examining and understanding the ways families cope with life stressors and change as a result. Families are seen as passing through four stages when faced with major life stressors; crisis, disorganization, recovery, and reorganization (Hill, 1949 as cited in Smith et al., 2009). In the case of a wildfire incident, the stress-provoking event or crisis might be the actual fire, the evacuation of a home, or the loss of livestock resulting in loss of livelihood. A period of disorganization follows the crisis event as the family attempts to cope with the event and the losses. The period of recovery may be short or long and this is followed by the family reorganizing in some way afterwards.

This reorganization may result in the family being better or worse off than before the event (Smith, Hamon, Ingoldsby, & Miller, 2009).

Hill's (1949 as cited in Smith et al., 2009) ABC-X model of stress forms the foundation of family stress theory. The stressor event is the "A" of the model. Once a stress-provoking event occurs, the family must rely on available resources and existing family strengths to determine how they will cope with the situation. This is the "B" component of the model. The family's ability to pull together in the face of disaster and to be flexible are important resources, as is any available social support. Community resources and the support of family and friends can provide a buffer to minimize the effects of stress and are an important part of the family's resources. The family's perception of the event and the meaning they attach to it are the "C" of the model. Optimism is an important component, as is a belief that good things can come from bad situations. The more optimistic a family is, the better able they are to view the event as a challenge to be overcome rather than as a threat to their survival. An important part of the process is how the family breaks the stressor down into manageable tasks, focusing on one thing at a time to avoid becoming overwhelmed. Whether or not the family enters crisis, "X", is dependent upon the A, B, and C components of the model. Not all stressors lead to crisis and some families are more cohesive and exhibit better functioning after a crisis than before.

Individual significant events are viewed in the context of timing in a family's event history. A pile up of significant events within a short span of time may be even more stressful and can result in overload and decreased ability to cope (White & Klein, 2008).

Psychological Impacts Associated with Disasters

The ability to cope with disaster varies across individuals and is influenced by a number of factors, including whether or not an evacuation is necessary. While most people are resilient

in the face of disasters and experience minimal psychological symptoms, psychopathology can range from anxiety to severe depression and even suicide.

Psychopathology and Mental Health Issues. Given the recent increases of both devastating natural disasters and terrorist attacks across the globe, it behooves social scientists to invest the time and effort into studying the impacts of such events on individuals, families, and communities (Botey & Kulig, 2013). We know that those exposed to natural disasters such as wildfires are shown to have higher incidence of psychopathology and distress than controls (Papanikolaou, Mellon, Adamis, & Prodromitis, 2011), and rates of prolonged grief and mental health problems are higher among those with direct exposure to disaster (Johanneson et al., 2011). In combination with risk to one's own life, this direct exposure has even more serious consequences. The resultant psychopathology may present in individuals as anxiety, depression, somatization, paranoia, obsessive-compulsive behaviors, or hostility, and symptoms can range from very mild distress to severe reactions such as major depression or suicide (Papanikolaou, Mellon et al.).

Suicidality, alcohol abuse, and depression are the most common outcomes after exposure to natural disaster with lifetime prevalence rates of 26%, 25%, and 23% respectively. Panic disorder has the lowest lifetime rate at nearly 4% (Pietrzak et al., 2012). Sometimes symptoms disappear after a few months, but exposure can cause problems 18 months after the event or longer. The vast majority of individuals exposed to natural disasters are found to be resilient to long-term mental health issues, especially when they have been previously exposed to other types of natural disasters. PTSD has been associated with disaster survivors from as long ago as the 1907 earthquake is Messina (McFarlane, van Hooff, & Goodhew, 2009) and is the most studied outcome in disaster survivors. Most people experience more than one traumatic event

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over the course of a lifetime and, if they develop PTSD symptoms, they do so in relation to the "worst" of those traumatic events (Pietrzak et al., 2012). Individuals who experience wildfire disasters and then have additional future life stressors are at higher risk of developing PTSD symptoms in later years (Papanikolaou, Leon et al., 2011).

Wildfires involve intense sensory cues (i.e., dense smoke, fast-moving flames, strong winds, blowing embers, intense "campfire" smells), uncertainty related to proximity and progression of the fire, graphic media alerts and images of ongoing damage, urgency related to evacuations, lack of information about and separation from significant others, and the presence of fire and emergency personnel and equipment. Even in the absence of immediate threat, the smell of smoke can generate distress, especially in younger children (Sandoval & Brock, 2002 as cited in Miller et al., 2012), the very old, or those who have respiratory issues and may potentially result in a panic reaction.

It should be noted that children and adolescents are as much at risk as adults with 5-10% of those assessed after a disaster meeting the criteria for a full DSM-IV diagnosis of PTSD (McDermott & Cobham, 2012). These children have less emotional maturity and fewer cognitive skills to respond to the challenges related to evacuation and relocation post-disaster so parents have an influential role in children's learning how to cope effectively with these events. Parent's ability to regulate their own emotional responses is key as it has been found that children's long-term PTSD symptoms after wildfire disasters are more predicted by their mother's responses to the disaster than by their direct exposure to the fire (McFarlane, 1987).

The Role of Evacuation on Psychological Coping. Evacuation heightens the degree of distress associated with a natural disaster as evacuation orders are only given to those whose homes are in immediate danger of destruction (Miller et al., 2012). The time-sensitive nature of

an evacuation order adds to the atmosphere of chaos and high danger. There is a perceived risk

to self and an uncertainty regarding personal safety. The necessity to stay away from home for

an undetermined length of time adds distress and is associated with lowered mental health.

Individuals who are required to evacuate differ from those who do not on nearly all variables of

interest. They experience greater uncertainty about the safety of their homes, more stress related

to wildfire events, more overall psychological distress, and they rely more on communal coping.

Displacement increases the likelihood of PTSD and depression at both six weeks and nine

months post-disaster, but later on is the most influential factor in the development of symptoms

of PTSD (Sundram et al., 2008).

Evacuation facilities lack a predictable routine and are often chaotic places where

families share personal space with strangers. Privacy is limited, the lights never go off, and

people never stop talking. Most are not used to living within such close quarters with limited

ability to withdraw in order to take care of themselves (Ursano, Cerise, DeMartino, Reissman, &

Shear, 2006). Children are exposed to a range of both adaptive and maladaptive coping

strategies. Parents are emotionally taxed and tend to have little time or energy remaining to

address children's needs. Children are typically very scared during evacuations and may have

reactions including nightmares, crying, anxiety, fighting, and anger, all of which are symptoms

of internalizing stress (Botey & Kulig, 2013). These reactions may be present 4-7 months after

the actual danger has passed. Strong winds or the smell of smoke can retraumatize children and

bring up fears that it can happen to them again. Preparedness prior to mandatory evacuation

improves the overall effectiveness of evacuation efforts and results in lowered stress, fear, and

anxiety in children, particularly when those children are involved in the preparedness activities

(Miller et al., 2012). Children who have experienced fire or other natural disaster previously are

more sensitized to and alert more quickly to disaster information and are much more likely to request proactive disaster coping such as wanting to evacuate more immediately or seek shelter earlier. Children may express a desire to be physically close and may require a lot of reassurance from their parents that they are safe.

Social Responses Associated with Disasters

In addition to the psychological impacts of exposure to natural and human-caused disasters, there may be a variety of social responses as well. Loss of trust in institutions, particularly the government, has been found to be another possible response to devastating wildfires (Papanikolaou, Adamis, Mellon, Prodromitis, & Kyriopoulos, 2012). This may be the result of outside agencies imposing different ways of solving problems and different ways of interacting on the residents of the fire area. Low levels of trust inhibit cooperation and may reduce support. Those who have more or more significant losses from the fire are more likely to lack trust in any institution, including the church.

Religious beliefs can be impacted both positively and negatively in the face of a disaster with victims either increasing or decreasing their attendance at services or possibly abandoning faith altogether. In the event that a disaster is viewed as a distinct, time-limited stressful event, religiosity is not likely to be impacted. Those who hold religious beliefs pre-disaster may be more likely than others to see a strengthening of their beliefs as a coping strategy (Hussain, Weisaeth, & Heir, 2011).

A significant number of people use alcohol, drugs, and other medications to cope (Flynn, 2004). Exposure to a natural disaster is suspected to increase the risk for both alcohol abuse and alcohol dependence (Pietrzak et al., 2012). In areas that experience long-term devastation in the wake of disaster, victims may develop feelings of hopelessness and lose their desire to rebuild.

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In these cases, alcohol related problems may be exacerbated and victims may experience isolation as they avoid social contact (Sundram et al., 2008).

Risk Factors for the Development of Psychopathology in the Wake of Disasters

There are both risk and protective factors associated with the development of psychological symptoms in those exposed to natural disasters such as wildfires. Papanikolaou, Mellon et al. (2011) found marriage and a higher level of education played a protective role for the development of any psychopathology. Youth also seemed to be a protective factor while gender did not seem to play a role. Older people and women tended to be at higher risk for somatization after disasters, and those with lower levels of education were the most likely to have symptoms of somatization, depression, and anxiety. Fires identified as being caused by human error or arson are likely to result in more anger, hostility, paranoia, and mistrust and are particularly distressing when there is loss of life as well as property. These fires have the highest risk of long-term psychological symptoms for victims (Papanikolaou, Leon et al., 2011). During the actual incident and before an investigation is complete, even rumors of the fire being human-caused can result in increased anger and hostility (Papanikolaou, Mellon et al., 2011). Fires caused by natural events such as a lightning strike may result in more feelings of helplessness and of being beyond one's control (Papanikolaou, Leon et al., 2011). The way survivors appraise their circumstances influences their outcomes with negative appraisal found to be highly predictive of mental health issues (Keane et al., 1998). Survivors reporting events are determined by luck, chance, supernatural forces, or other persons are more likely to report greater psychopathology and psychological disorders, as are those living in areas of greater damage (Mellon, Papanikolaou, & Prodromitis, 2009).

Gender Differences and Similarities in Coping with Losses

Stroebe (1998) found that identifying "patterns of grieving among men and women helps one to understand the grieving process in general, and improve support for bereaved people, be they male or female" (p. 6). Much of this research centers on marital bereavement and partner loss but has been found to apply to gender differences and similarities in other types of losses as well (Stroebe, Stroebe, & Schut, 2001). It is important to consider gendered coping patterns in order to understand that interventions offered in the face of disaster may need to be tailored differently for the men and women impacted if we want to provide the most effective support. In bereavement, men have been found to increase alcohol consumption where women tend to show more signs of depression (Stroebe, 1998). Men are relatively more vulnerable to physical health problems such as diseases of the circulatory system, accidents, and cirrhosis of the liver, as well as to increases in suicide risk. They also tend to be more socially and emotionally isolated in times of grief and show a desire to rely on their own resources. Women, who are generally more expressive of emotions and emotional sharing, tend to seek social support. Those who are depressed are often more willing to talk, either to friends or to those in the helping professions such as therapists. Teaching men and women to cope in the manner most often adopted by the opposite gender (teaching men to focus on their emotions and teaching women to focus on concrete problems) has been associated with lowering levels of distress (Stroebe, Stroebe, & Schut, 2001). Encouraging a healthy mix of both male and female methods of coping—a confrontation and an avoidance of both emotions and problems—seems to be essential.

It should be understood that the majority of research in gender differences and similarities in bereavement and coping has been conducted with White European American participants. A 1992 cross-sectional study found some interesting differences between Blacks

and Whites with Black women faring worse that Black men and White men faring worse than White women (Williams, Takeuchi, & Adair, 1992). These cultural differences were suspected to be the result of the higher levels of support that Black men tend to receive from family and friends in times of loss.

For wildfire disasters specifically, gender is not considered a risk for the development of psychopathology, however females are more likely to develop somatization symptoms (Papanikolaou, Adamis et al., 2011). PTSD symptoms are also found to be more common in women than in men when relocation is necessary for the family after the disaster (Keane et al., 1998).

Interventions that Help in Coping with Disasters

The literature suggests a number of interventions found to be helpful during disaster response. When survivors are provided adequate information, both during and after the disaster, especially in conjunction with community gatherings with others who are experiencing similar stresses, individuals are found to cope more successfully (Flynn, 2004). For those with religious affiliations, opportunities for faith-based ceremonies and gatherings can be comforting (Hussain et al., 2011). Supportive social networks (Meilman & Hall, 2006) and special support for those with children are also critical (McDermott & Cobham, 2012).

Providing Information. Research has shown there are interventions that help people cope in the face of disasters. The need for information often extends beyond the immediate crisis management stage whether or not an individual is directly exposed to the disaster. Mental health problems are increased when survivors are made to wait for confirmation of their losses whether it be the death of a loved one or the loss of home or property (Kristensen, Weisaeth, & Heir, 2010). When emergency responders are able to provide accurate information about the

event and work to find ways to interpret the event in such a way to promote recovery, resilience, and hope, this reduces stress (Flynn, 2004). Cognitive reframing is useful when people can be reminded that it is unlikely a disaster will strike the same location twice.

Religion. Religion or spirituality can be a source of comfort for those impacted by disasters, making suffering more understandable and providing a means of coping with extreme stress. Religious ceremonies and community prayer vigils are often found to be a source of support, particularly in the wake of large scale disasters (Hussain et al., 2011).

Community Support Meetings. Community Support Meetings (CSMs) are an idea that has found support on college and university campuses across the nation (Meilman & Hall, 2006). These meetings were originally developed in response to the psychological impacts of student suicides on campuses, but they have also been used to address other national and international events including fires. Group facilitators follow a specific format as they open the meetings with an assurance of confidentiality, provide information about the event, acknowledge the importance of the meeting for healing, emphasize the importance of grieving in the wake of the event, provide a handout of suggestions for survivors, and identify community resources that may be of help. On-going training of facilitators is provided in order to be ready to respond to events on very short notice.

Support for Parents. Support for parents and families is critical as children rely on the adults in their lives for support, and these same adults will typically have been affected by the same natural disaster. The capacity to support their children is often significantly decreased as a result with increased levels of irritability and conflict between family members reported (McDermott & Cobham, 2012). Parents' primary goal in the aftermath of a disaster is often stated as a desire to return to a 'normal life' which is defined as a situation where things happen

as they used to before the disaster (Botey & Kulig, 2013). Normalizing the stress, confusion, and helplessness of the situation and providing a place for family members to listen to one another's concerns and perceptions of the situation helps them to find meaning in the losses they are facing. When tolerance can be nurtured it tends to result in families learning to normalize their feelings for each other over time (Boss, 2004). Narrative traditions such as traditional storytelling are particularly helpful for children and teens and sometimes help to overcome the reluctance to express negative feelings.

Social Support. Social support is an important facet of community response to disasters and an outpouring of help is what most people expect in times of crisis (Kaniasty, 2012). Those who have better support networks or who receive more social support from the community immediately after a disaster report higher perceived social support later in the recovery stages of the disaster. These people report being healthier, feeling less alienated, being happier in their marriages, and being more involved in meaningful activities when they feel they have been supported by family and friends. Receiving support allows victims to view their world as reliable, caring, and trustworthy which helps in their long-term recovery from the trauma.

Research Questions

Based on previous research and the theoretical frameworks of ambiguous loss, traumatic loss, and family stress, this study investigated the experiences of those who lost property or incurred some other non-property related losses in the 2012 High Park Fire. Data from in-depth, face-to-face interviews were analyzed for themes to aid in understanding the grief and loss needs of survivors of major wildland incidents and to contribute to the development of needs-based resources for Larimer County residents. The overarching research questions for this study included:

1) What are the loss experiences of people who have survived the High Park wildland fire disaster?

2) What are the immediate and long term grief and loss needs of people impacted by wildland fire incidents?

3) How are people's grief and loss needs impacted by various factors such as:

    o the number and severity of the losses

    o partial versus total loss

    o children versus no children in the home

4) How could a web-based resource have best met grief and loss needs during and after the High Park Fire?

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

The present study consisted of exploratory interviews with Larimer County, Colorado residents impacted by the 2012 High Park Fire. The purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of these residents during the disaster and in the two years after the event. Further, the overarching goal of this research was to contribute to the development of a web-based grief and loss resource for the Colorado State University Extension system for those individuals who have and will experience wildland fires in the state.

Researcher

The researcher for the present study previously fought wildland fires for four seasons with the Larimer County Interagency Wildland Crew. She has remained connected to the wildland community through a business she owns in Fort Collins which sells gear for wildland firefighting. Additionally, she has clinical training as an individual, couple, and family therapist. These attributes were shared with study participants at the outset of each interview as a way to join with them and instill confidence in the researcher's ability to understand the participant's experience. The researcher's firefighting experience and expertise allowed her to confidently discuss fuel models, fire behavior, fire management tactics, and burn severity with participants. Her clinical training allowed her to help participants effectively manage the emotions that arose in the interviews by validating and normalizing their experiences.

Participant Recruitment

Participants in the present study included 10 adults over the age of 18 who were impacted by the 2012 High Park Fire either by needing to evacuate their homes or having some loss associated with the wildland fire. These participants were recruited by way of convenience sampling whereby individuals voluntarily respond to recruitment materials (Gliner, Morgan, &

Leech, 2009). Participants responded to the recruitment flyer (see Appendix A) sent through the

Rist Canyon Fire Department list-serve. This e-mail was picked up by a resident who posted the

flyer to a Twitter feed and further shared it via the Tree Farmer e-mail list-serve. The researcher

contacted fire personnel from the Colorado Department of Fire Protection and Control who were

involved in the suppression of the fire and who were willing to share the flyer through office e-

mails and bulletin boards. The researcher also contacted a real estate agent who offered to

forward the recruitment flyer to all agents associated with The Group, Inc. in northern Colorado.

Snowball sampling, a modification of convenience sampling was also used. Here,

participants are from a population that is rare or whose members are unknown to the researcher

(Gliner et al., 2009). These might be persons possessing unusual attributes that do not belong to

a known group with identifiable lists of members, for example, those who have survived wildfire

incidents. Identified participants are asked for names of others who may fit the same category.

This technique was used through means of asking respondents to refer other residents who may

have been interested in participating in the present study. Within one week of the Rist Canyon e-

mail blast, a total of 30 people had contacted the researcher indicating interest in participating in

the study. Informed consent forms (see Appendix B) and research questionnaires (see Appendix

C) were mailed or e-mailed to each of these respondents, and the first 10 individuals to return

these forms and qualify through the screening protocol (see Appendix D) were invited to

schedule interview times with the researcher.

Participants

The participants in the current study were 10 White adults ranging in age from 39 to 78

years of age. Of those taking part in the study, four were men and six were women. All had

attended some college, with six of the 10 participants achieving a graduate degree. One

participant was single, three were divorced, five were married, and one reported being in a committed relationship. Three of the 10 participants reported having had children in their home at the time the fire broke out. All of the participants reported being evacuated from their home and losing the contents of refrigerators and freezers due to power outages during the evacuation. Of the 10 participants, four suffered a complete loss of either their primary residence or another home they owned, including all of the contents. Seven of the 10 individuals reported loss of at least one outbuilding, and nine participants reported the view from their property had changed as a result of surrounding forest land burning. Three participants reported being impacted by the death of a friend or acquaintance who died either during the fire event or in the recovery phase. These recovery phase deaths were reported as being directly related to the fire.

Procedures

The researcher conducted 10 in-depth interviews, approximately half of which were with individuals who lost their homes in the fire and half of which were with individuals who evacuated their homes but were able to later return to those homes within a damaged area. Participants were asked to choose an available interview time to schedule their face-to-face interview. Skype or telephone interviews were offered as an alternative to face-to-face interviews for those participants who found it logistically difficult to travel to Colorado State University, and two participants were interviewed in this manner. Participant names, phone numbers and addresses, gathered at the time of initial contact with individuals who responded to recruitment flyers, were logged and kept in a locked file in the Behavioral Sciences Building during the initial phase of the study. This log was maintained to allow the researcher to thank participants for their assistance with the study and will be shredded once the study report is finalized in order to ensure participant confidentiality.

Participants were asked to fill out a demographic questionnaire prior to their interview and meet the researcher at the Gifford Building for an interview at the Center for Family and Couple Therapy. The interviews began with the researcher going over the informed consent form and answering any questions the participants had. The informed consent form included permission for the interview to be digitally recorded for accuracy during transcription and coding. The digital files were accessed only by the researcher until transcription and coding were completed, and were then moved to a locked file in the Behavioral Sciences Building. Interviewees were asked to reflect on their experiences relating to grief and loss responses and the services offered both during the fire event and in the two years since the fire. All participants were asked the same 10 questions from the researcher's interview guide (see Appendix E). The researcher expected to glean information regarding which services were most helpful during the fire and which services and supports were lacking but would have been helpful to residents.

Descriptive Data Collection Measures

In addition to an in-depth, face-to-face or phone interview, each participant in this study was asked to complete a questionnaire comprised of two sections; demographic information and loss due to the fire event. The information gleaned from these questionnaires aided in assuring the sample contained variability in the participants and their loss experiences. The questionnaires also provided information allowing the researcher to accurately describe the sample for the final report.

Demographics. A questionnaire pertaining to participant demographics was administered to all respondents. Questions such as participant age, gender, level of education, and type of community of residence were included (see Appendix C, Section 1).

Losses due to wildland fire. For the purposes of the present study, fire loss was measured by asking participants to circle applicable losses from a list of options included as section two of the questionnaire (see Appendix C, Section 2). Although it was anticipated that individual differences would exist in the way fire loss was experienced and defined, participants were asked to circle all options that applied to their experience of the High Park Fire. If participants experienced a loss not listed, they were asked to identify their specific loss by writing a brief description of the loss in the space provided.

Data Preparation and Analysis

At the time of initial contact with the participant, a unique research number was assigned to each interviewee and noted on the participant log. This unique number was noted on the research packet sent to the participant, the informed consent form, research questionnaire, and digital recording taken at the time of the interview. This was how the participant was identified throughout the study to assure confidentiality of the participant and the research data. No identifying information was used in any transcripts, reporting, or write-ups.

In order for the researcher to gain the necessary understanding of the data, each interview was transcribed into a Word document by the researcher herself. The interviews were transcribed word for word, including verbal pauses, descriptions of any notable participant emotion, and validation and clarification by the researcher during the interview. This was followed by a systematic analysis by the researcher and her advisor of one transcribed interview, identifying important words, phrases, and quotes that stood out. The research questions and the theoretical perspectives guiding the study were kept in mind at all times during this analysis. After reviewing the same interview and comparing for validity or trustworthiness of interpretation, the researcher continued analyzing the remainder of the interviews. Participant

responses were combined in a series of ten additional Word documents, one for each interview

question, thus further consolidating the data. A report was then written, combining identified

codes that emerged from the data with supporting participant quotes. Developing codes includes

a process where data are grouped within the interviews to easily summarize the data and, in

particular, "codes show how you select, separate, and sort data to begin an analytic accounting of

them" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 43). This information will be shared with Colorado State Extension to

guide the development of needs-based resources to be included in a future Colorado State

Extension website.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

The current study is based on in-depth face-to-face interviews with 10 survivors of the 2012 High Park Fire in Larimer County, Colorado, aged 39 to 78 years old. Of the participants, all experienced a mandatory evacuation of their property, four suffered the complete loss of a home or family homestead along with their personal property, and eight of the ten participants lost at least one outbuilding. All participants indicated a significant impact to the view from their home or property which was described as a primary reason for moving into the wildland-urban interface (WUI).   The research study was designed to solicit information from these participants that would inform the wildfire disaster literature's understanding of the emotional needs of survivors of large scale wildfire incidents occurring with increasing frequency in the WUI throughout Colorado, nationally, and internationally. Additionally, the study would provide insight and knowledge to inform the development of a web-based resource through the Colorado State University Extension system for survivors of these types of incidents.

As the researcher conducted the interviews and then transcribed and analyzed the data, it was evident that though each participant experienced the fire event differently, there were also a number of similarities in their emotional needs. The findings of this study are organized by the 10 interview questions asked of each participant: (1) describe how you first heard about the fire and your immediate emotional reactions to the news that there was a fire in the vicinity of your home or cabin, (2) describe the losses you experienced as a result of the fire, (3) describe any grief responses you remember having during or immediately after the fire, (4) describe your immediate emotional needs connected to these grief experiences or losses during or immediately after the fire, (5) describe how family, friends, professionals, or the community responded to your grief during and immediately after the fire, (6) were there needs that you had that could

have been responded to more effectively by anyone, (7) describe any longer term grief responses you can directly connect to the losses you experienced as a result of the fire, (8) what did you need from others to help you with this longer term grief process, (9) what resources may have been missing that you may have found most helpful with the grief you experienced, and (10) if a web-based grief/loss resource specifically designed to help you cope with the grief of a wildland fire had been available to you during and after the fire, would you have accessed it and what specifically would you have found helpful to have been included? Each section is descriptive and includes a few in-depth quotations from the participants to support the findings.

Pseudonyms are used to maintain the confidentiality of the participants. These pseudonyms were randomly selected and assigned to the 10 participants. Only the researcher knows the identity associated with each pseudonym. Demographic information on each participant by pseudonym is provided in Table 1.

Description of Initial Emotional Responses

A majority of the survivors acknowledged an awareness of having chosen to live in a fire-prone area along with an understanding that evacuations for fires were a possibility. Hunter, a seasoned wildland firefighter, reported a high level of awareness of the existing conditions and what that meant to residents of the area. He stated:

> I always knew, living up there, that that was a possibility. . . I played that scenario in my mind over the years many, many times, of what I would do when the big fire came, if I was there . . . and how I would respond—whether I'd . . . stay in place and defend the house, burn out around the house. I had all this in my head . . . of what the possibilities were.

Six of the 10 participants had previous experience with being evacuated from their homes, most within the previous 12 months for the 2011 Crystal Fire. This previous experience did not necessarily translate into a heightened readiness, despite drought conditions indicating continued fire activity was likely. Cole stated he was very aware of the current fire risk, however, he reflected, "I think, in total honesty, how prepared were we? On a scale of one to 10, zero."

Most participants reported having early notification of the fire, either through having noticed the smoke themselves, or through notification by friends or family who saw the smoke plume from Fort Collins and called or texted to alert them. Several reported having called 911 to report the smoke but all those who did were told the fire had already been reported and authorities were responding. Earlier notification of a fire in the vicinity of their home tended to lead to less concern at the time the participant became aware of the event, though not in all cases. Andrew indicated he joked with the friend who called him about the fire, saying, "Well, I guess we'll be at your house tomorrow!" as he anticipated a possible evacuation. After checking in with a volunteer staged at Rist Canyon Fire Department (RCFD) and hearing the fire was in the Paradise Park subdivision, Cole's response was, "Oh, that's hell and gone from here, no big deal." Alternately, Sarah, who also had early notification, reported being too worried to function at work after customers came into her workplace talking about a fire in the foothills. Sarah and her husband had experienced fire previously. "We've been terrified by fire three or four times before this one. So we left pretty early . . . just because we were so worried. How I felt? Pure terror and panic."

The most common emotional response reported by participants was stress related to having to evacuate their property. All of the survivors in the sample were given enough advance

notice of the fire and the need to evacuate that they were able to gather some personal belongings to take with them. For some participants, the packing progressed as a strategic gathering of heirlooms and important documents. For others, packing was somewhat more frenzied with friends or family going room to room asking what items should be taken. Becca, who had been on pre-evacuation notice for the Crystal Fire the year before stated, "We knew where everything was, where all of our treasures were, what we wanted to get out, where they were. . . . We've got this part. We can get the stuff." Despite that sense of readiness, she indicated an increase in adrenalin as the time to leave approached and final decisions on what to pack and when to leave were being made with her husband. In contrast, Sue's experience was somewhat different as she had friends come up from Fort Collins to help with her evacuation.

> They just started going from room to room—do you want this? Do you want that? Do you want . . . . I lost track of what's valuable and what isn't, particularly. And it was just chaos because they were just . . . taking and literally throwing it in the truck.

> Participants with pets at the time of evacuation reported additional stress and worry, with

the safety of their pets taking precedence over material possessions when space and time were limited. Meagan indicated she fostered animals for the Larimer County Humane Society and had a guinea pig in addition to her own pets to worry about when the High Park Fire broke out.

> One little guinea pig in a giant cage. And I have a four-door Jeep, and five dogs, although at the time I think maybe we had four, or maybe even three . . . . But basically I have the giant guinea pig cage that takes up the entire back of the Jeep, and then the back seat with the three or four dogs, so I think I basically have the front passenger seat to pack stuff.

An additional concern with pets was where they might stay during the evacuation and whether or not the pets and the family would be able to stay in one spot. Kaitlin reported having a cow, two dogs, cats, chickens, and a pigeon at the time of the fire.

> Got the dogs rounded up. Got the chickens in my car with the dogs. And she (daughter) got the cats and a few other things. I had my uniforms and the shorts and t-shirt that I had on . . . . and so my cow . . . she's 2000 pounds and I couldn't fit her in the car. . . . and down we went. And at 11 o'clock I finally got a place for my chickens. . . . and then I found a place for me, and the cats, and the dogs after that and still went to work the next day at 3:30 p.m.

Losses as a Result of the Fire

Participants in the current study reported a variety of losses directly associated with the fire event. Three of the 10 participants reported complete loss of a home and all contents. One participant lost her family homestead cabin. Three participants reported having had a friend or an acquaintance die in the aftermath of the fire. Seven participants reported loss of at least one outbuilding and its contents. The majority reported a significant loss of the view from their home as a result of surrounding forest land burning. For many, this view or the landscape surrounding their homes was a primary reason for their decision to live in the area. All participants reported loss of time in their home or cabin due to a mandatory evacuation. All whose homes survived the fire reported the loss of food stored in refrigerators or freezers due to power outages. Other losses, though reported by just one or a few of the participants, were no less impactful than other losses. These included the loss of friends who chose to leave the area after the fire, loss of income or career, loss of a spouse's health and the relationship enjoyed when healthier, loss of insurance coverage after the event, loss of freedom, loss of energy and

effort at work, loss of a sense of security and safety in the world, and loss related to the time required to clean-up and rehabilitate property after the incident.

For those who lost a home or an outbuilding in the fire, this loss was followed by the frustrating process of working to get a settlement from an insurance company to cover the structure and its contents.   This resulted in the loss of time, energy, and effort spent completing detailed inventories of the contents that had burned. Hunter described this process and the time required:

> You know you could get screwed. . . . not all insurance companies are bad, but there are a lot that are . . . . so for me, going into that next stage . . . that was a stage that was not an emotional stage but was probably the most difficult for me . . . going through that whole process with insurance. They want to know the date you bought it, how much you paid for it, how much it's worth now, what kind of condition it's in, where you bought it, for everything you've owned. Every paperclip, every pen. . . . if you want that money, you've got to account for everything. Everything. . . . some companies will give you six months to do this and emotionally, you just can't do it in six months. . . . in the beginning you start working on the inventory and 15-20 minutes and you put it aside. I mean, you really had to. It was still too fresh, too new, too raw. . . . it took me a year and a half to do all of that.

For many, the loss of a home was considered the only legitimate loss when speaking about the High Park Fire. Those who had lost outbuildings or the view from their homes struggled with feeling guilty describing their situation as a loss, given that others seemed to have lost so much more. Becca, whose home and outbuildings survived, expressed devastation in the

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loss of the view and landscape from her home. She reported the following after speaking to a close neighbor who also had a home that survived:

> He said what I was feeling, and . . . hadn't spoken to another person . . . but it was like . . . we can't be in the situation of those people who lost everything, but in some ways it feels just as bad, because we have to come back and our property values have plummeted . . . and why we came to live there is completely gone. We have to rejuvenate the whole thing, because we can't move . . . we're under water. . . . you feel guilty about that.

Of those who did not lose their home, there was a sense of being very fortunate, of others being in a much more difficult place. For all there is now a sense of hope in the green that has replaced the black. Hunter shared:

> It's interesting. It really is. And even after the fire, we started getting some rain. I think, right in July. So my place burned down on the 17th and by the first couple of weeks of July, we started getting the monsoons, and by the middle of July, the grass was starting to green up again.

Rachel reported a similar situation on her property after her house was lost:

> The plants there, the ones that were close to the house, were roasted. We had had some rain in the meantime, before we got back up there, remember . . . . there were some new green shoots coming up—my penstemon plant and I just. . . . said to everybody, "they've got roots and I've got roots and they're coming back and I'm coming back." And there was no doubt.

Tyler reported similar hope when he hiked his property toward the end of the summer of 2012:

> I had this one little aspen grove and all the trees got consumed and there were some really old trees there too. It's kind of in . . . a boggy area. There were aspen shoots coming up

the first day I was back. I mean little ones then. As I hiked the property, if there was a

single aspen tree somewhere, there were just hundreds of shoots everywhere. And in

September, there were some that were four feet tall . . . . that one event was probably the

biggest thing that I was like, ok, everything is going to be okay.

Grief Responses During and Immediately After the Fire

The grief responses experienced during and immediately after the fire were as individual

as the participants themselves, however, there were also similarities. The majority of survivors

expressed sadness either over their own losses or when thinking of the losses others had

sustained. This presented as crying, wailing, or bawling for three of the participants. Eight of

the ten participants experienced heightened stress or anxiety, often as a result of not knowing

whether or not their home had burned or in anticipation of the work that would be required in

cleaning up property after the fire. Half of the respondents experienced a noticeable change in

their cognitive functioning either presenting as an inability to register information coming in, an

inability to think clearly, or an unwillingness to trust one's ability to make good decisions.

Unanswered questions led to stress and anxiety for the majority of participants. Virtually

all of the survivors said the lack of reliable information, which occurred at various stages from

evacuation through recovery, was a cause of stress for them. Cole expressed this well when he

said:

One of the things that we were told early on that was really stressful and caused a lot of

anxiety and grief was that they were saying months. It could be months before we would

be able to go back.

Several participants expressed frustration with the way information was disseminated through the community briefings at The Ranch. Tyler relayed his experience from the day residents were advised of the status of their properties:

> I know we were not given as much information as they knew about our property. I had a neighbor . . . and they said . . . we have a friend who has access to satellite photographs . . . that was my first indication that the cabin probably did survive. . . . and then we went to one of the briefings and totally unbeknownst to me anyway . . . but they said, "Today we're going to tell you if your structure survived". . . . on the walls they had put up in big letters everybody's address. And I can't remember if it was if your address was in yellow, then it survived and if it was just an outline of the address, then it was gone. Or if it was reversed. But they dropped those down . . . . I was glad I didn't know they were going to do that because I would have been on pins and needles coming in . . . . people were wailing all around you . . . . at least some of the people were informed if their structures were lost ahead of time.

Becca gave another perspective of that same community meeting:

> There was a lot of frustration around not knowing, while we were evacuated. We found, have you heard about this? Where we had to go to the wall to see? Oh, my God. If you were yellow, that's fine. If you're grayed out, you're burned down. That's when we found out, was at that community meeting. . . . it was hard to . . . watch your neighbors who saw the grayed out line. . . . it's an awkward situation. . . . that was hard. Because you want to be happy, because . . . our house is standing. Oh, your neighbor right there is burned to the ground. . . . I was telling people it was standing. . . . I don't know what that means. . . . Nobody knew what that really meant. . . . And grayed out? Is it pitted?

Completely burned to the ground? We didn't know. But it didn't take long. We knew what that meant when we took that ride up the canyon for that first time. . . . And driving past those folks, watching them . . . meet with that? It was hard. I was crying for them, because watching them just devastated, it was hard to see what that grayed out thing, now they know what that means.

Other grief responses that occurred during and immediately after the fire for one or more of the participants included feelings of overwhelm, detachment, irritability, devastation, despair, and Post-traumatic Stress (PTSD)-like symptoms.

One participant, Hunter, had a significantly different response, perhaps due to the insider knowledge and access he had to the area as a result of his job as a Public Information Officer (PIO) assigned to the fire. He was able to be right in the vicinity when the fire reached his home, with an understanding of the wind conditions and fire behavior, and he was able to go in to the area to survey the damage immediately when it was safe enough to do so. His experience may give us reason to pause and consider the role information may play in the emotional responses to events such as the High Park Fire. He relates:

Not a lot of emotion in this whole thing for me. . . . It's probably . . . from having done fire for so long in so many places and seeing so many burned houses over the years and being in similar situations. It's like I'd already seen this play out in other places. And it sucks that is was my place that it happened this time. I'm sure you've interviewed people on this who went through all the stages (of grief) and I didn't. You know, it's always been OK. Not that I like it, the outcome of the fire, but it's always been OK.

Emotional Needs Connected to Grief Experiences

Without fail, the survivors all indicated they needed more information in order to help them process their grief. As Cole reflected, "Information could provide relief or it could provide anxiety." For many, information was provided, but the flow was slower than they wished. Becca reflected:

I need information. I need as much information as I can get. Even if it's going to be bad news, I just want to know. . . . Be it from the insurance company, be it from the Sheriff and the fire department, I just wanted to know . . . sooner. I wanted that information sooner.

Social support was identified as necessary for addressing the emotional needs of eight of the 10 participants in the current study. Friends and family offering a safe place to stay, a shoulder to cry on, or an ear to listen were very much appreciated in the evacuation period and the months of recovery. Becca stated, "I needed my family and my friends to hear, listen, and just be there for support." Willing hands to help rake the ashes and clean out the refrigerators and freezers full of rotten food were also welcomed. Friends gathered to help Cole and his family in the days after they were able to return to their home and Cole described that experience this way:

So many people in town had wanted to do something and so for our friends to be able to come and do something related to the fire felt good for them and sure was a lifesaver for us. We had about 20 people put in about five hours of work up here . . . about 100 hours of work changed a lot of things in a hurry and that was a cool experience.

For some, action was the most helpful way to deal with their grief. Hunter said, "And then immediately I had to start taking care of things. . . . I found myself talking to a lot of people

who had lost (homes) . . . and trying to explain, to help them process . . . based on what I'd been through." Rachel, an avid gardener whose home burned to the ground, was excited to see some plants survived the blaze. She said:

> We had rain . . . before we got back up there, remember . . . . There were some new green shoots coming up. My penstemon plant . . . it was just so incredibly moving. . . . it's nature . . . coming back and I'm going to come back . . . . I was fussing around with the plants and I said, "I've got to get my scissors and next time I come up I've got to cut off this part and I've got to do this and that."

Rachel got busy in other ways as well. She served on a panel for the Northern Colorado Rebuilding Network to help other residents make decisions as to whether or not to rebuild on their properties. She also went shopping to replace all of the items she had lost when her home burned, stating, "I realized that it was my therapy."

Survivors struggled when asked what their emotional needs were during and after the fire. Sarah responded, "Emotional needs? What did I need? I don't think I even knew what I needed." Kaitlin indicated it would have eased her stress to have people make offers of specific help rather than asking if there was anything they could do as she wasn't able to articulate what would be the most helpful assistance. Others said they simply needed to be home, with time alone to process what they had been through. The majority expressed that it was important to know they were not alone and there was someone else that cared about them and recognized their losses.

Responses by Others to Survivor's Grief

Survivors experienced a variety of responses to their grief by family, friends, professionals, and the community which were as varied as the individual participants themselves.

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Five of the 10 participants said their friends reached out with offers of physical help, particularly in the clean-up phase after residents were allowed back in to their homes, and this was reported as emotionally supportive. Some participants found their co-workers to be very supportive of their grief, while others did not. Hunter indicated firefighters who lost their homes received a lot of immediate emotional support from the fire—from overhead and from fellow firefighters. In contrast, the response from his full-time employer was reported to be pretty cold emotionally. He said that was "probably the only area where I feel emotional needs were not met." Andrew reported a lot of supportive responses from family and friends but he indicated this was lacking from co-workers, or the responses did not seem as genuine. Meagan reported family and friends responded with "what do we do?" and "how do we help?" which she did not find to be helpful with her grief. She reported receiving adequate support with physical needs and clean-up but not with her emotional needs.

There was a mixed response to the grief support offered at gatherings within the community. Tyler indicated there were ample offers of counseling services and therapy for those who were grieving. He said, "I felt like the way they did it was totally fine and adequate for my needs, which was at the citizen's briefings." Hunter had a somewhat different view of the meetings, saying, "As a part of these meeting, it was a lot of catharsis for people, and there was a lot of venting," which he did not find helpful. Cole responded similarly with his description:

> The community grief process, that wasn't all that helpful in a lot of way because so many
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> people were really negative. Their experience was different from ours whether it was
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> because they didn't have the resources or they chose not to have the resources or
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> whatever it might be. So sometimes it was hard to be around everybody who was kind of
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> in that loss mentality. . . . But folks who were really caught up in, for lack of better term,

kind of the drama of it all, that wasn't helpful, and . . . I got real concerned about the kids.

I didn't want our kids to take on a victim's mentality in all this. . . . going down the woe

is me path, where there were moments where it certainly felt like that, it didn't help me to

get engaged with more people going down that path.

The response to support from the American Red Cross was similarly mixed with the three

participants who reported having interactions with the organization. Sarah reported a high level

of frustration with the Red Cross as a result of her interactions with the organization when she

reached out for tax help and counseling resources. She reflected:

I was at the point where I couldn't figure out my taxes, and I realized I was going to need

counseling . . . . I was hitting the bottom . . . they suggested a crisis hotline and that I

should call the IRS. . . . That's not what I need. . . . they are taking all of the money

people are donating, and where does it go? How is it getting to the fire victims? We

didn't see any of that.

Becca, however, had a much different interaction with the Red Cross:

I actually was really grateful for the presence of the Red Cross. . . . they came around

with water. That touched me to have them doing that . . . it was meaningful. . . . just

being there to support us. . . . talk about isolation. It was the most bizarre experience. . . .

we were completely isolated. . . . they said they were taking their vacations to come and

help us. I think that's what touched me.

Additional supportive responses from others included a granddaughter offering to come

and sleep with one participant during the evacuation phase, opportunities to speak with survivors

of previous wildfire events, Hotshots reaching out to share hope that a portion of the burned trees

would survive and flourish the following year, and family and friends calling to check in and express their concern.

Unmet Emotional Needs of Survivors

When asked if there were needs survivors had that could have been responded to more effectively by anyone, there were individual differences to the answers, but there were also some commonalities that emerged from the data. Information was a key issue for the majority of participants. As can be expected, learning the status of their home was a primary concern for virtually every participant. There was stress associated with the unknown until news was received that the home was either standing or had burned. In all cases, people wanted that information sooner rather than later. Andrew relayed frustration with what he perceived as a media circus as he said, "The way they held onto the list of houses that burned down and waited to make a big presentation out of it with the news at the fairgrounds. . . . It seemed like there were better ways to handle it."

After news about home status was disseminated, the need for information remained. Two of the 10 participants specified additional help and support were needed to guide survivors in submitting insurance claims, as this was seen as an overwhelming and stressful process. Both Hunter and Sarah mentioned the non-profit group, United Policy Holders, which was established after a 1995 fire near San Diego, as a supportive resource. The group provided a detailed inventory spreadsheet developed to aid in the process of documenting a household inventory for an insurance claim; an inventory that most often must be done from memory. A sample of this document is attached as Appendix F. Kaitlin suggested information in the recovery phase would be best disseminated at a slower pace with the recognition that survivors are overloaded and unable to take in the vast amounts of information about available resources, even if needed.

Kaitlin and Tyler both indicated they would have liked to have had access to someone who had lived through a previous fire that they might have talked to. Kaitlin suggested this person would be a good resource to help survivors with direction on how to take care of what needed to be done as residents cleaned up and began again. Both mentioned it would have been emotionally supportive to be able to talk to someone who understood their plight because they had been through a similar trauma.

There were a number of other unmet needs reported by only one participant that warrant attention. Sarah suggested it would be helpful to choose a location for community meetings that was closer to the fire area as residents had to travel quite a distance to the Larimer County Fairgrounds and that was scary and somewhat dangerous at a time when cognitive functioning was impaired by stress and anxiety. Sarah also mentioned that other resources and vendors such as banks and internet and cable providers should be offered training as to the realities of fire and what survivors may be dealing with, so as not to create additional overwhelm for residents. Her bank insisted she provide tax records in order to obtain replacement checks, apparently not realizing that the very records they sought had been destroyed in the fire. Her dish company repeatedly insisted she send back her dish that had been incinerated in the fire. She reflected, "You're just at such a low level of functioning, and then you're asked to do so much more."

Cole maintained his needs were adequately addressed by his own support network but he recognized, through others, that that was not the case for everyone who was evacuated during the High Park Fire. He reflected:

> I think the one thing that I recognize with some of our friends though, that's challenging, is that when . . . it affects your community, then you don't have those people who are your community, because they're dealing with their stuff too. . . . so community, faith

communities, and external communities are so vital to those folks. . . . We weren't

showing up to each other's houses to do the work. If you didn't have community exterior

to this community, it was pretty hard. . . . we had resources that we could tap into . . .

some folks . . . literally didn't know what to do. They were standing there with their bags

in their hands going, where do we go? What do we do?

In looking back at the response by the community, Cole had this to say:

There was so much frenetic energy . . . in the community of Fort Collins, of all these

people wanting to help but no one slowing down to say what needs to be done or what's

the . . . big, long-term piece of this? I think there was a lot of people going off on their

own tangents, organizing things, doing things that were . . . and some were really great . .

. but then there's a point where people need to just be, too, and it seemed like . . . people

were in a big hurry to get everyone feeling OK and meeting their needs, which was a

great thing. But sometimes I don't think people even knew what their needs were yet or

they knew what they were and some of the efforts towards that were kind of like, we

really don't need that. . . . Fort Collins has that party mentality and if the party is going to

be about helping people with the fire, then let's throw a party for that. . . . There were a

lot of good intentions that were ill-informed that were floating around during that time.

Two participants, Kaitlin who was a caregiver for her elderly mother at the time of the

fire, and Sue who was caregiving for an ill husband, both indicated a lack of resources and

support for themselves and for those they were caring for. Caregivers are already stretched thin

with their responsibilities to their charges. Having to evacuate and then clean up after an

incident like a fire added additional stress to an already stressful living situation. Both of these

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women indicated a need for emotional support and said additional resources for counseling or

therapy would have been helpful.

Meagan's home did not burn in the fire though she lost an outbuilding, personal property,

and the view from her home. She reflected:

> It's not what people could have done, but . . . it's the things that people say to you that
>
> aren't right. The major thing for us was 'Oh, how's your house?' and it's like, well, my
>
> house didn't burn down, but my house wasn't the important thing to me. I think that for
>
> people looking to help with the fire, it's just . . . about the house. Whether the house
>
> burned down or not. . . . I don't actually live there because of the house. I live there
>
> because of the trees and the mountains. So for me, having that loss was . . . big.

Longer Term Grief Responses for Survivors

Longer term grief responses vary more among the participants. The most common

response came from four of the 10 participants who cited lingering sadness connected to the

losses they had experienced on the fire or stress and anxiety related to memories of the

experience. Two participants, Sarah and Tyler, reported PTSD-like symptoms of recurring

nightmares and flashbacks when another fire burns in the area. Sarah reflected, "It's scary with

people who ask about it. At some point, I just say I don't want to talk about it, because it just

brings back all the grief." Becca reflected on additional losses which have surfaced over time

that triggered more emotional responses in her such as the first Christmas after the fire when she

and her husband realized the tree on their property that they had decorated for years had burned

during the fire.

Other long-term grief responses noted by one or two participants may warrant

mentioning. Sarah and Rachel both reported ongoing symptoms of depression they are

managing. Cole and Sarah both reflected on the ongoing challenge to feel safe and secure in their home environment. Two participants, Rachel and Sarah, cited relationship stress. Cole cited concern for his daughter who continues to exhibit fear of fires. Becca and Meagan both reflected on the overwhelming amount of work involved in reclaiming their land. Meagan stated, "The work now is beyond ever doing." Cole noted it has been difficult to watch a beloved elderly dog's deterioration during and after the necessary evacuation away from his home environment. In addition, Cole made a poignant reflection on his thoughts about continuing to live in a fire-prone environment:

> And the other grief response or long-term effect maybe is kind of your capacity for . . . if we have one more catastrophic thing happen . . . there's only so many times that you cannot be sure if your house is there or your road is there or what's happening to your house. Do you want to go through it before you're just, I'm done with this?

Needs Related to Longer Term Grief

Six of the 10 participants cited a desire to have the broader community acknowledge the anniversary of the fire with an annual memorial. Participants longed for the community to recognize that survivors continue to be impacted by their losses even now, two and a half years post-incident. Kaitlin suggested:

> A reminder here and there, in the newspaper or on the news. This is what this area looks like still today, what it looked like six months ago, and this is what it will probably look like in a year. . . . Realizing that the fire is done for them, but it will never be done for us. Our fire chief . . . said from now on, everything will be before the fire and after the fire. . . . It was like the fire's done, everything's back to normal.

For Kaitlin, part of the community conversation would be an acknowledgment that for many, losing possessions in the fire amounted to losing a loved one again, since what was lost in the fire may have been all that was physically left of that person. It would be important to acknowledge that houses that were lost were more than just houses, they were homes filled with the history of the family and oftentimes with sentimental pieces which can never be replaced.

There is a "new normal" for many of the survivors, with changes in neighborhoods, landscape, and, for some, their homes. Participants noted the community expectation of getting things back to normal as quickly as possible was particularly difficult given the trauma of their experience. Cole expressed it this way:

> You just want people to go, let's just go ahead and close the office. Let's not try to make like as normal. Let's just call this what it is and it's big and it's overwhelming . . . . You don't need to come to work. You really don't need to come to work. Or those things we keep on trying to . . . keep everything normal and going and functioning and . . . for some people . . . it helps to slow that down and go, you know what? What if we don't do things normally? For some people it's really important for their grief process to be able to do things normally, and for some people it's let's not try to force our way into showing up to the office and doing what needs to be done during this time. Of finding balance in that. So I think it's complex. You know, grief is complex.

Half of the participants expressed a desire to have an ongoing opportunity to talk about the fire with family or friends as a way to continue processing the experience. They also indicated having someone available to talk to who had been through a similar experience would be helpful.

Missing Resources

Participants in the current study were asked to reflect on resources that may have been missing that they may have found helpful in coping with the grief they experienced. Fully half of participants indicated their satisfaction with the grief and loss resources made available during and after the fire. The American Red Cross, citizen's briefings at the Larimer County fairgrounds, the fire recovery center at Colorado State University, and the Mountain Outreach Team were all cited as examples of resources survivors accessed for grief help during and after the fire. Tyler stated, "I felt like the way that they did it was totally fine and adequate for my needs, which was at the citizen's briefings." Becca reflected, "I feel like there was a strong presence of grief support. I felt like that presence was clear and repeated often."

While the available resources went a long way toward addressing the grief and loss needs of many of the participants in the study sample, there remained several suggestions for improvement. Sarah suggested finding ways to join victims together by offering calming activities such as yoga classes, swimming memberships, or other ways to get the body moving as exercise is a good natural stress reducer. Another idea she offered was to provide storytelling opportunities for survivors to share their experiences with each other and the community. Practical suggestions included help with job issues and support for creating new resumes. Sarah and Kaitlin both indicated a need to change the county policy regarding dump fees as survivors were charged double the normal fee when they brought fire debris and ash to the dump. This was regarded as an unreasonable burden on those who had already lost so much. Becca indicated a desire for some "Lessons Learned." She requested access to the results of this study as well as a review of the fire from the Sheriff's perspective and some feedback in terms of

anything that was learned from High Park that may be been used when fires broke out near

Colorado Springs barely a month later.

Lastly, the participants wanted their experience to benefit others who may be impacted by

fire in the future. There were hopes the present study would serve to inform future fire

responses. Cole put the High Park Fire in historical context when he said:

> Part of what happened here is all tied to the Peshtigo Fire in Wisconsin and the Big Burn
>
> in Montana and the fact that we fire-suppressed for so many years. That was a grief
>
> response. That was a loss response for the Forest Service to respond with saying we are
>
> going to remove fire, all fires out by 10 a.m. and we've spent a hundred years
>
> suppressing them. That was a grief and loss response. It was a fear response that we
>
> actually made policy on at a landscape level.

Ideas for an Internet-based Grief and Loss Resource

Participants had a mixed response to the idea of a web-based or internet-based grief and

loss resource specific to wildland fire incidents. Half of the participants in the current study

expressed a resounding yes when asked if they thought they would have accessed such a

resource had it been available during the High Park Fire. Other participants either said no, they

would not have accessed that type of a resource, or they were ambivalent.

Those who were enthused about the idea of an internet-based resource for grief and loss

related to fire offered several suggestions. Two participants suggested the special needs of at-

risk populations be addressed, particularly children, caregivers, and the elderly. Andrew was

specifically interested in including information that might help parents discuss the event with

children. Sarah, Becca, and Meagan all thought it would be beneficial to include information to

normalize grief responses commonly seen in disaster survivors, including possible PTSD and

trauma responses. Cole suggested including reminders of what to expect, from a landscape perspective, as well as lists of what to do in the clean-up phase after the fire. He maintained that action helps the grief and said, "That would have helped me with my anxiety and my grief in that." Hunter's suggestion was to tie in with all of the resources gathered at CSU, upload them to a website, and then pull up the website at the community briefings and provide the audience with a tutorial where survivors were gathered. Becca suggested the local site could be linked to the National Wildfire Coordinating Group's InciWeb site as many were already directed there for updated fire information. Tyler and Meagan both suggested an interactive website including a chat function would have been attractive to them, particularly with a moderator who had also lost a home during a wildfire incident. Meagan suggested it was important to give survivors permission to whine a little. She summed it up by saying:

> You just have to have like maybe an hour a week or 15 minutes a day to bitch and moan and cry and say, "This f-ing sucks" because it does. . . . I have this little . . . piece of me that is . . . crabby, because I never really get to just be "this sucks" and then get back to like, OK, I am a lucky person and life is great, but this piece did suck and it does still suck.

Summary of the Chapter

Although all of the participants in the present study are individuals with differing experiences, similarities also emerged from the data. Participants reflected on their grief experiences and all expressed a desire for additional information on the status of their homes during the evacuation phase. The majority requested this information to be provided sooner rather than later, regardless of whether the news was good or bad. Most reported stress over the unknown as the most difficult emotional challenge and adequate social support as an important

factor contributing to better coping. An ongoing desire to have losses and challenges associated

with the fire incident acknowledged by the broader community was cited by the majority as

being an important component in the healing process.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of individuals impacted by the 2012 High Park Fire in Larimer County, Colorado in order to understand the emotional needs of survivors of large-scale wildfire incidents which have been occurring with increasing frequency in the wildland-urban interface (WUI) throughout Colorado, nationally, and internationally. Additionally, the study aimed to provide insight and knowledge to inform the development of a web-based resource for both future citizens who suffer property and livelihood losses due to major wildland fire incidents and those citizens who are later able to return to surviving homes and property in the fire zone. Interviews were conducted with 10 adult survivors of the 2012 High Park Fire, aged 39 to 78 years, who identified themselves as having either lost a home in the fire or evacuated and later returned to a home within the fire perimeter. Findings included initial emotional responses to the news there was a fire in the vicinity of the participant's home, losses as a result of the fire, grief responses during and immediately after the fire, emotional needs connected to grief responses, responses by others to survivor's grief, unmet emotional needs of the survivors, longer term grief responses, needs associated with longer term grief, missing resources during and after the fire, and ideas for an internet-based resource for survivors of major wildland incidents.

In the next section, the findings of this study will be considered in light of existing research studies on wildland fire disasters, other natural disasters, and the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in New York City. In addition to answering the research questions for this study, limitations of the study, recommendations for future research, policy recommendations for emergency managers, and implications for clinicians working with similar populations will also be presented.

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Overview of the Findings

The first two research questions for this study were, what are the loss experiences of people who have survived the High Park wildland fire disaster and what are the immediate and long term grief and loss needs of people impacted by wildland fire incidents? The findings of this study support previous literature addressing natural disasters. For example, traumatic events such as wildland fires are often accompanied by strong emotional reactions (American Psychological Association 2000, as cited in Drescher & Foy, 2010), and greater disaster impact leads to generally poorer adjustment (Scher & Ellwanger, 2009). More intense trauma leads to a greater likelihood for developing PTSD symptoms (Drescher & Foy, 2010). Participants in the current study reported losses ranging from needing to be out of their homes for a period of time to complete loss of a home and all contents. These losses resulted in increases in anxiety and stress for all participants, as well as fear and sadness, frustration, and uncertainty.

Immediate and longer term grief and loss needs reported by participants in this study included declines in cognitive functioning, relationship distress, and even PTSD symptoms (i.e., in the cases of only three participants). Keane et al. (1998) reported the amount of forewarning available prior to a disaster, the scope of the impact, and the potential for recurrence may be tied to enduring psychological effects for survivors. Participants in the present study reported an understanding of the risks involved in living in fire-prone areas and those with earlier notice of fire activity at the outset of the incident reported less stress associated with packing up their belongings in order to evacuate. Although Scher and Ellwanger (2009) indicated greater impact from a disaster would indicate a greater likelihood of poorer adjustment among participants, this was not true in all instances in the present study. For example, a participant lost his home, several outbuildings, and virtually all of his personal possessions in the High Park Fire and yet

he indicated he was having no difficulty adjusting after the fire. This participant pointed to his ability to access detailed fire information, his previous evacuation experience, and the extensive exposure to fire loss through 37 seasons as a wildland firefighter as the explanation for his ability to process these losses so well. This corroborates the report of all participants who requested better information throughout the experience and the need for that information to be provided to them earlier rather than later.

The third research question for this study was how people's grief and loss needs may be impacted by the number and severity of the losses, partial versus total loss, and children versus no children in the home at the time of the loss. The participants in the present study reported a tendency to rank their losses with loss of a home and personal possessions being rated as most severe. Several participants noted feeling guilty complaining about their loss if they thought someone else had sustained a more severe loss. Complete loss of a home and possessions did not inevitably lead to worse coping, though it did lead to added stress in needing to navigate insurance settlements. Families with children in the home at the time of the fire expressed concern regarding their children's coping and suggested they would have appreciated having more resources focused on responding to the grief and loss needs of children.

The final research question for the study was how might a web-based resource have best met the grief and loss needs of fire survivors? Participants in the current study were mixed as to whether or not they believed an internet or web-based resource would have been something they might have accessed to address their grief and loss needs following the High Park Fire. Half of participants responded that they would have wanted an online resource to help with normalizing the grief and loss responses they were experiencing. Knowing what to expect both in terms of their emotions and from a landscape perspective would have given a sense of control back to

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those who were impacted by the fire. The other half of respondents expressed a preference for resources regarding grief and loss to be delivered face-to-face rather than online.

Implications of the Study for Current Theory

Boss' (2004, 2006) work on ambiguous loss in response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack provided the theoretical foundation for examining grief experiences of High Park Fire survivors for this research study. Without proof of a loss, family members do not know whether to hold onto hope or move on. This ambiguity may lead to feelings of hopelessness and an inability to cope with the stress of the situation. Every participant in the current study described a need for information regarding the status of their homes during the evacuation phase and reported resulting stress as the most difficult emotional challenge related to the fire.

Further, Boss (1988) defined family stress as a disturbance in the organization and process of family life created by pressure or tension within the system and thus family stress theory provided a further framework for understanding the experiences of High Park Fire families. For example, future research might utilize Hill's (1949 as cited in Smith et al., 2009) ABC-X model of stress to further explain the four stages survivors may be expected to experience when faced with major life stressors; crisis, disorganization, recovery, and reorganization. High Park survivors who participated in the current study reported the fire and resulting evacuation as a stress-provoking event. These individuals necessarily relied on existing strengths and available resources as they determined how they would cope with the situation. Recovery varied based on available social support and other resources, with those reporting adequate resources tending to fare better.

Limitations of the Study

Although this study contributes to the research discourse examining experiences of survivors of major wildland fire incidents separate from other natural disasters and the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in New York City, the findings are limited to those experiencing the 2012 High Park Fire in Larimer County, Colorado and therefore cannot be generalized to all individuals who experience a loss due to disasters. Fort Collins, Colorado is considered to be an affluent community with a highly educated populace due to a number of institutions of higher education in the area. All participants were White and had attended college, with six of the 10 participants reporting earning an advanced degree. Expanding the diversity of participants by including a sample of individuals from other areas of Colorado and other areas of the country who were from other racial backgrounds and who possessed more diverse socioeconomic status and educational achievements would likely provide a wider range of grief and loss experiences related to wildland fire.

Recommendations for Future Research

Findings from this study reveal survivors of wildland fire incidents tend to prefer getting more information as to the status of their home during the evacuation phase of the fire incident. Most participants in this study indicated a preference for this information to be available sooner rather than later, regardless of whether the news was good or bad. Media coverage of fire incidents showing homes engulfed in flames invites the question of how survivors respond to this method of learning their home has been lost. To fully explore the preference for more information, future researchers would benefit by including questions to determine the manner in which participants received information on the status of their home, how they reacted to the specific delivery of the news, and how the delivery of the news tended to affect their long term

coping. In this study, the one firefighter survivor who participated had significantly greater access to information about the status of his home throughout the evacuation period and his grief response was much less dramatic even though he lost his home, several outbuildings, and all of his possessions. Future research exploring the firefighter survivor's perspective would help to clarify whether this added access to information about the status of one's home truly does impact emotional coping in positive ways.

Thirty people responded to the initial recruitment flyer, indicating an interest in taking part in the study. However, a number of these volunteers failed to follow through in returning their completed informed consent form and research questionnaire and scheduling an interview. Future studies may benefit by exploring how those who respond to opportunities to discuss their experiences with a fire event may be different from those who choose not to respond. Researchers may want to ask questions related to motivation to take part in research as well as why some survivors initially volunteer to take part in the research and then do not follow through with interviews. It may also be helpful to explore if survivors are involved in recovery efforts or if they have moved away from the area.

In light of the findings of this research, it is important to understand that safety of pets tends to take precedence over material possessions during the evacuation phase of wildland fires when space and time are limited, adding additional stress and worry to the experience. Examining whether or not pet owners were able to evacuate their pets to the same location as the owners would be the next step in understanding how the ability to have pets with you affects coping in the experience wildfire evacuation.

Policy Recommendations for Emergency Managers

On the basis of these findings, professionals responsible for disseminating information to wildland fire evacuees may want to consider both the timing and the manner in which they are notifying residents of the status of homes within the fire perimeter. While it is understood that fire behavior and suppression activities may dictate the availability of information during the initial phases of the fire incident, efforts to provide known structure status should begin as soon as possible in order to minimize stress for evacuees. Several of the participants praised Rist Canyon Fire Department's Chief, Bob Gann, for his tireless efforts to provide this information, noting his availability at citizen's briefings and his willingness to share what he knew of the situation with those who approached him. At the same time, citizen briefings located in venues as close to the neighborhoods impacted as safely possible may benefit evacuees with a decline in cognitive functioning affecting their ability to safely drive longer distances.

In addition, county officials should review their policies related to disposal of fire debris in light of the extensive losses already incurred by residents with property inside the fire perimeter, and consider waiving rather than doubling landfill fees during the recovery period. As discussed by participants in this research study, such policies would extremely benefit not only their financial losses from the fire, but aid in reducing the feelings of victimization experienced as a result of existing county policies. Furthermore, efforts to educate service providers who work at banks, utility, and cable/dish companies regarding the inability or difficulty of survivors to produce documentation of any kind in the aftermath of a wildland fire disaster would assist in reducing resident's stress as they begin the process of rebuilding their lives after the fire. These policy recommendations will work in tandem with suggestions for professional practice.

Implications for Professional Practice

Mental health professionals working in areas prone to fire activity should recognize the emotional stressors associated with surviving a wildland fire incident, whether or not a home and possessions were lost. As evidenced by the reports of participants of this study, survivors do not always acknowledge their losses as legitimate if their home survived, but they benefit from having their individual experiences normalized and validated as losses deserving to be grieved. Wildland fire incidents are traumatic experiences and survivors may also benefit from having a professional normalize any trauma responses. Therapists should be aware survivors may fail to recognize their emotional needs during the fire, in the immediate aftermath, and in the years following the incident as the physical requirements of evacuating and recovery efforts often take precedence. Further, the societal emphasis on getting things back to normal as quickly as possible may be difficult for those whose grief processes require more time. Helping survivors understand there is no timeline for their grief may be beneficial. Special attention should be paid to assure at-risk populations such as elderly adults and those providing care are able to access the resources they need during and after incidents. Finally, professionals working with wildland fire evacuees and survivors should further assess reported emotional responses with their clients to better understand their experiences, while offering support.

Unlike other disciplines that focus on the individual client, marriage and family therapists (MFTs) are trained in family systems theory, a broad conceptual model emphasizing the interdependence of family members rather than focusing on individuals in isolation. When MFTs find themselves working with survivors of wildland fire incidents, attention should be paid to the broader family system as emotional repercussions from the experience may impact extended family members more significantly or differently than the immediate survivor.

Processing the experience in the context of the system may help all family members feel more supported and understood. In light of the findings of this study, future research may benefit from incorporating family systems theory as well as the ambiguous loss, traumatic loss, and family stress theories used here.

Conclusion

This qualitative study provided insight into the emotional needs of individuals impacted by large scale wildland fire incidents, a topic which has previously received little attention in the wildfire and natural disaster literature. Given the prevalence of major wildland fire incidents in the United States and abroad, as well as the impacts these incidents have on individuals, families, and communities, it makes sense for social scientists to devote the time and effort into better understanding these emotional impacts in order to be able to respond to and support survivors. The findings from this study support and add to the current literature on emotional responses to natural disaster, specifically with regard to fires in the wildland-urban interface. The experiences of participants support the understanding that stress impacts natural disaster survivors in significant ways, with information being a critical component to successful coping in stressful situations. Mental health professionals working in fire prone areas are encouraged to become educated on emotional needs specific to wildland fire survivors and be prepared to normalize trauma responses associated with the event. Additionally, incorporating the MFT's lens of viewing individuals as part of the broader system may help all family members feels supported and understood both during the crisis and in the recovery period. Recommendations for future research highlight questions regarding the impact pets may have during disaster as well as the timing and manner in which information on home status might be best addressed in order to minimize the stress for survivors.

Table 1

Participant Pseudonyms and Demographic Information

Pseudonym	M/F	Age	Education	Residence Type	Loss
Cole	M	39	Graduate	5 acres	Outbuilding
Hunter	M	58	Graduate	10 acres	House, Outbuildings, View, Landscape
Sarah	F	54	Assoc/Bachelor's	7 acres	House, Outbuildings, Income, View
Andrew	M	55	Bachelor's	1/3 acre	Time in Home, View, Food in Refrigerator
Rachel	F	75	Graduate	17.5 acres	House, Outbuilding, View
Kaitlin	F	58	Some College	Ranch	Outbuilding, View, Personal Property
Tyler	M	60	Graduate	Acreage/ Cabin	Outbuilding, Time in Cabin, View, Personal Property
Becca	F	47	Graduate	Acreage	Partial Loss of Residence, View, Time in Home
Meagan	F	49	Associate's	40 Acres	Outbuilding, View, Personal Property, Time in Home
Sue	F	78	Graduate	Acreage	Homestead, View, Personal Property, Time in Home

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Grief and Loss Experiences of Survivors of the 2012 High Park Fire

INVITATION TO PARTICIPANTS

Who can join this study?
Participants must be 18 years or older and have experienced a loss related to the fire.

What will I be asked to do?
Participants will be asked to complete a short demographic survey and then take part in a 1-hour interview about their experience with the High Park Fire including what resources he/she might have needed but didn't get. Interviews can be conducted in person on CSU's campus or by Skype or phone.

Why should I join this study?
Participants will be contributing to the body of knowledge regarding what survivors need when they are going through major wildland fire incidents.

How do I join this study?
If you are interested in being involved in this study, please contact Diane Bauer, listed below.

Who is the Principal Investigator?
The Principal Investigator is Jenn Matheson, Ph.D.
Affiliate Faculty, CSU, Human Development and Family Studies
Jenn.matheson@colostate.edu

PLEASE CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION

Diane Bauer (Co-Principal Investigator)
Master's Student; Human Development and Family Studies
970-222-5415
dkbfelix@rams.colostate.edu

Colorado State University

November 21, 2014

Dear Participant,

My name is Diane Bauer and I am a graduate student at Colorado State University (CSU) in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies. We are conducting a research study on the grief and loss experiences of survivors of major wildland fire incidents. The title of our project is "Grief and Loss Experiences of Survivors of the 2012 High Park Fire Incident." The Principal Investigator is Dr. Jenn Matheson, PhD, LMFT and I am the Co-Principal Investigator.

We would like to ask you to participate in an in-depth interview regarding your experiences during and after the 2012 High Park Fire. Interviews will take place in a private room in the Gifford Building at CSU or by phone or Skype if traveling to CSU is logistically too difficult. The interview is expected to last approximately an hour. Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participation at any time without penalty.

Privacy and confidentiality will be maintained by keeping all records of contact with you and all audio recordings and transcriptions locked in files or on password protected computer drives in a locked office at CSU. These files will only be accessed by the principal investigator and the co-principal investigator until coding of research data is complete and then they all will be destroyed. Your name will never be associated with any of the responses you give to the demographic questionnaire, the research questionnaire, or the interview. While there are no direct benefits to you, we think some may feel some satisfaction from discussing their experience of these events and feel good about him or herself for helping us learn about some of the grief and loss needs of survivors of wildland fire incidents to benefit people in the future.

We anticipate there are no serious risks to anyone who participates in this study. It is possible that as a result of discussing the experience of living in and being impacted by the fire, grief-related symptoms could be triggered and you could experience mild psychological distress. It is not possible to identify all potential risks in the research procedures, but the study researchers have taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential, but unknown, risks.

If you would like to participate or have any questions before deciding, please leave a confidential message for Diane Bauer at dkbfelix@rams.colostate.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the CSU IRB at: RICRO_IRB@mail.colostate.edu; (970) 491-1553.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jenn Matheson, PhD, LMFT   Diane Bauer

Principal Investigator   Co-Principal Investigator

Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Colorado State University

TITLE OF STUDY: Grief and Loss Experiences of Survivors of the 2012 High Park Fire

Principal Investigator:
Dr. Jenn Matheson, PhD, LMFT
Human Development and Family Studies
Colorado State University
1570 Campus Delivery
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1570
970-491-7472
Jenn.Matheson@colostate.edu

Co-Principal Investigator:
Diane Bauer, M.S. Candidate
Marriage and Family Therapy
Human Development and Family Studies
Colorado State University
1570 Campus Delivery
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1570
970-491-5991
dkbfelix@rams.colostate.edu

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?
Researchers are interested in learning from adults who were impacted by the 2012 High Park Fire west of Fort Collins. Individuals who are 18 years of age or older and experienced a loss related to the fire are invited to participate in the current study. The goal is to assess the experiences of grief and loss that individuals and families experienced during and after the fire and determine which resources may be helpful in the event of future fire events.

WHO IS CONDUCTING THE STUDY?
Dr. Matheson and Ms. Bauer will be conducting the current study. Ms. Bauer is a graduate student in the Marriage and Family Therapy program at CSU, and Dr. Matheson is her advisor on this thesis project.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?
The purpose of this study is to assess the physical, emotional, social, and relational needs of people impacted by wildland fire incidents when they may need to evacuate their homes in the face of a fire and when they may ultimately lose their homes or experience other related losses due to fire incidents.

WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?
Individual interviews will last approximately one hour and will take place in a quiet, private room in the Gifford Building on CSU's campus or by phone or Skype if traveling to CSU is logistically too difficult for individual participants. Prior to the interview, participants will be asked to complete a research packet that contains a research questionnaire that may be completed where and when is most convenient for each participant. It should take no more than 15 minutes to complete this questionnaire.

WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO?
Participants will be asked to do several things: 1) sign up for an individual interview; 2) before the interview session: complete the research questionnaire and read through the informed consent form; 3)

bring the completed questionnaire and consent form to the interview (or return the signed consent and completed questionnaire in the pre-stamped envelope provided to participants who will be interviewed I Skype or phone); 4) at the interview session: ask any questions you may have about the study and confirm your willingness to participate by signing the consent form; and 5) answer the interview questions while being audio-recorded.

ARE THERE REASONS WHY I WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?
Participants will not be allowed to participate if they were not personally impacted by the High Park Fire. You will not be included if you are not at least 18 years of age. Individuals who did not experience some sort of a personal loss related to the fire will not be permitted to participate. Individuals who do not consent to having their interviews audio-taped will not be permitted to participate in the study.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?
We anticipate that there are no serious risks to anyone who participates in this study. It is possible that as a result of discussing the experience of living in and being impacted by the fire, grief-related symptoms could be triggered and you could experience mild psychological distress. We will encourage all participants to talk with a personal therapist or counselor about any symptoms of distress brought on by participation in the study and we will provide referrals to local therapists if requested. A CSU Center for Family and Couple Therapy brochure containing a coupon for a free therapy session will be provided. It is not possible to identify all potential risks in the research procedures, but the study researchers have taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential, but unknown, risks.

ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?
While there may be no direct benefit to you associated with participating in this research, it is possible that through discussing your experience, you may better understand the significance of the experience of evacuating, living with the uncertainly faced during the fire event, the losses you have experienced, and the roles that all three play in your recovery process. You will also have the opportunity to contribute to the body of knowledge being generated regarding the grief and loss needs of individuals locally, nationally, and internationally who are impacted by wildland fire. The study is intended to better understand individuals' grief and loss experiences related to wildland fire incidents. That is, the grieving process and grief-related symptoms caused by a need to evacuate a home or experience any type of a loss related to wildland fire will be explored. It is also possible that you may experience feelings of relief during and after the individual interview as you share the unique experiences (both challenging and rewarding) that you have had.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?
Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also decide to only answer certain questions and not others, which is also completely up to you.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT I GIVE?
We will keep private all research records that identify you, to the extent allowed by law. For this study, a unique research number will be assigned to your questionnaires and your interview transcript. Therefore, the only places that your name will appear in our records are on this consent form and the interview sign-up sheet, neither of which will be linked with the unique research number that you are assigned.
Ms. Bauer will conduct all interviews in a private room at the Gifford Building or by phone or Skype. Following the completion of all individual interviews that will be conducted for this study, the researcher will hand-write each participants' name and corresponding unique research number (1-12) on a sheet of paper. Next, the researcher will use a permanent marker to black-out the participant's name on the

questionnaire and the interview transcript. This process will be repeated until all names have been blacked-out. These procedures are intended to protect and maintain participants' confidentiality. Only the research team will have access to the information you provide. All materials associated with the study will be kept in a locked file cabinet only accessible to the principal and co-principal investigators. The digital audio-recordings from the individual interviews will be destroyed immediately after the exact words are transcribed into a Microsoft Word document. Participants' responses to the questionnaire will be typed into an Excel spreadsheet using the corresponding research number. Again, only the participant's assigned unique research number, not name, will be used. The only exception to the above is if we are asked, for audit purposes, to share our research files with the CSU Institutional Review Board ethics committee. Even if audited, no one would be able to link you to your responses.

CAN MY TAKING PART IN THE STUDY END EARLY?
If you do not participate in the individual interview or do not complete the questionnaire, you may be removed from the study. In the event that you are participating in the interview and feel the need to leave before all questions have been asked, whether or not you are excluded from the study will depend on how early-on in the interview you choose to leave.

WILL I RECEIVE ANY COMPENSATION FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?
No compensation is being offered.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?
Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind before the interview. Questions can be directed to Diane Bauer (970-491-5991). Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact the co-principal investigator, Diane Bauer, at dkbfelix@rams.colostate.edu
If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the CSU IRB at: RICRO_IRB@mail.colostate.edu; 970-491-1553. We will give you a copy of this consent form to take with you.

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?
Involvement with this study will require several steps:
1. Inform the co-principal investigator (Diane Bauer), of your interest in participating, either by phone at (970) 491-5991 or by email at dkbfelix@rams.colostate.edu
2. Pick-up your research packet available at the Gifford Building, 502 W. Lake Street, Fort Collins, or provide Ms. Bauer with your address and she will mail a packet to you.
    a. Thoroughly read this informed consent form and complete the questionnaire found within the research packet and bring them to your scheduled interview.
3. Review and sign this informed consent form with the researcher while at the interview.
4. Attend and participate in the individual, face-to-face interview

Your signature acknowledges that you have read the information stated and willingly sign this consent form. Your signature also acknowledges that you have received, on the date signed, a copy of this document containing 4 pages.

_____   _____

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study   Date

_____

Printed name of person agreeing to take part in the study

_____   _____

Name of person providing information to participant   Date

_____

Signature of Research Staff

Research Questionnaire: High Park Fire

Section 1: Demographic Information

Age: _____   **Year of Birth:** _____

Gender: Male   Female   Other: _____

Level of Highest Education:

☐ grade school/middle school

☐ high school diploma or GED

☐ some college/university

☐ associates/bachelor's degree

☐ graduate degree

Relationship Status:

☐ single

☐ committed relationship

☐ married

☐ separated/divorced

☐ widowed

Children? Yes_____ No_____   **Children at home during fire?** Yes_____ No_____

Number of family members in the home at time of fire:

_____

Zip Code: _____ **Years/Months at current zip code:** _____

Type of Community of Residence:

☐ Neighborhood where homes are on 1 acre or less

☐ Ranch or Acreage

☐ Other: _____

Occupation: _____

Ethnicity:

☐   Hispanic or Latino

☐   Black or African American

☐   White

☐   American Indian or Alaskan Native

☐   Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

☐   Asian

☐   Other: _____

Section 2: Losses Due to Wildland Fire

Please check all of the types of losses you experienced as a direct result of the 2012 High Park Fire (check all that apply):

☐ Loss of Family/Recreational Time due to need to evacuate home

☐ Loss of Natural View or Landscaping

☐ Loss of Outbuilding

☐ Loss of Limited Amount of Personal Property

☐ Loss of Pet/Farm Animals

☐ Loss of Income

☐ Loss of Employment

☐ Loss of Life (neighbor/friend/relative)

☐ Partial Loss of Residence

☐ Complete Loss of Residence

☐ Loss of Connection with Neighbor Due to Need to Relocate

☐ Loss of Child's Classmate Due to Relocation

☐ Other Loss (Please specify)_____

APPENDIX D
Screening Protocol

The Screening Protocol included the following questions:

5) Are you 18+ years old? (if no, not eligible)

6) Were you living in one of the evacuation areas during the 2012 High Park Fire? (if no, not eligible)

7) Did you lose a home during the 2012 High Park Fire? Yes/no (want half who did, half who did not)

8) If you did not lose a home, did you lose any animals, outbuildings, view, landscape, or any person who moved because of the Fire? (if no to all, not eligible)

9) When you think about all the losses you incurred during the High Park Fire, how disturbing are the memories of those losses today? 1=not at all disturbing today 10=as disturbing as they could be today (those who are a 7, 8, 9, or 10 are not eligible and will be provided referrals)

10) Do you use electronic means for communication and information gathering such as email and internet (either in the home or in a public place)? (if no, not eligible)

Proposed Interview Questions for Grief Response to the High Park Fire Research Study

I'm interested in hearing about your experience during the 2012 High Park Fire.

1. First, can you please think back to where you were in late June/early July 2012 when the High Park Fire first broke out and tell me how you first heard about it?
2. Next, can you please describe for me the losses you experienced as a result of the High Park Fire? By losses I am talking about any loss of property personal items, animals/pets, or any emotional losses such as the loss of your sense of safety.
3. Now that you've told me about the losses you experienced as a result of the fire, can you tell me about any grief response you remember having during or immediately after the fire? What I mean by a grief response is any emotional reactions such as sadness, depression, despair, confusion, or irritability you had that you can directly connect to the experience of the High Park Fire.
4. What were your immediate emotional needs connected to these grief experiences or losses you had during or immediately after the fire? PROBE: support, listening, information, therapy/counseling, sense of safety?
5. How did family, friends, professionals, or the community respond <u>to your grief</u> during and immediately after the High Park Fire? PROBE: How about others? Was the timing about right or was it too soon or too late? If the response to grief in particular is not explored, ask about that specifically again.
6. Were there needs that you had that could have been responded to more effectively by anyone? If so, by whom and how?
7. What longer term grief responses did you have that you can directly connect to the losses you experienced as a result of the fire? By longer term grief responses I mean 6 months to 2+ years later.
8. What did you need from others to help you with this longer term grief process? By others I mean friends, family, colleagues, professionals, community members, helping professionals, etc.
9. What resources might have been missing that you and your loved ones may have found most helpful **<u>in coping with the grief you experienced</u>**?
   a. How would you have liked to have found out about these resources?
   b. How would you have liked for those resources to have been presented?
   c. Where and when would you have liked to have them available to you and your loved ones?
10. If a web-based grief/loss resource specifically designed to help you cope with the grief of a wildland fire had been available to you and your loved ones during and after the fire, what specifically would have been included in it that you would have found helpful?
11. Those are all of the questions I have for you at this time. Is there anything else about the grief you may have experienced during or after the fire that you'd like to share with me?

Additional anticipated probes:

Tell me more about . . .

Give me an example of how . . .

How were family and friends impacted by . . .?

APPENDIX F
United Policy Holder's Insurance Spreadsheet Sample

UP Blank Home Inventory
Bdrm

Description of Property	Type	Room	Year Acquired	Qty	Cost Each	Total cost	Condition of Item	Additional Notes or Link to Picture:
example: Item 1	type 1	Bedroom	2005	4	3	12		
Artwork	Accessories	Bedroom				0		
Purses - casual, evening	Accessories	Bedroom				0		
Books - hardcover, softcover	Books	Bedroom				0		
Cash	Cash	Bedroom				0		
Bandanas	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Bathrobe	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Belts	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Bike shorts	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Coats, rain, heavy, dress, sport	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Dresses	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Exercise clothing	clothes	Bedroom				0		
Exercise warm up suits	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Fleece Jackets/shirts	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Gloves, mittens, mufflers	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Handkerchiefs	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Hats, sunhat, baseball cap	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Jackets, winter, jean, parka, wind	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Letterman jacket and pins	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Pajamas	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Pants - casual, dress, jeans	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Polo shirts	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Shirts - dress, casual	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Shorts	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Sports uniforms	clothes	Bedroom				0		
Suede jacket	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Suits, mens, womens	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Sweaters	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Sweatpants	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Sweatshirts	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Swim shirts	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Tights	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
T-shirts	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Underwear	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Underwear, thermal	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Vests	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Lingerie	Clothes	Bedroom				0		
Boxer shorts	Clothes, mens	Bedroom				0		
Sports coat	Clothes, mens	Bedroom				0		
Ties	Clothes, mens	Bedroom				0		
Tuxedo	Clothes, mens	Bedroom				0		
Boots, winter	Clothes, outerwear	Bedroom				0		
Hats, winter	Clothes, outerwear	Bedroom				0		
Silk thermals	Clothes, outerwear	Bedroom				0		
Ski bibs	Clothes, outerwear	Bedroom				0		
Ski gloves, mittens, hats	Clothes, outerwear	Bedroom				0		
Ski jacket	Clothes, outerwear	Bedroom				0		
Ski pants	Clothes, outerwear	Bedroom				0		
Ski socks	Clothes, outerwear	Bedroom				0		
Swimsuit, cap, goggles	Clothes, outerwear	Bedroom				0		
Wetsuits	Clothes, outerwear	Bedroom				0		

Description of Property	Type	Room	Year Acquired	Qty	Cost Each	Total cost	Condition of Item	Additional Notes or Link to Picture:
Blouses	Clothes, women's	Bedroom				0		
Bras, undergarments	Clothes, women's	Bedroom				0		
Clothing protector bags	Clothes, women's	Bedroom				0		
Gowns - evening	Clothes, women's	Bedroom				0		
Poncho, shawl, wraps	Clothes, women's	Bedroom				0		
Scarves - silk	Clothes, women's	Bedroom				0		
Skirts	Clothes, women's	Bedroom				0		
Socks	Clothes, women's	Bedroom				0		
Undergarments, panty hose	Clothes, women's	Bedroom				0		
Undergarments, slips, camisoles	Clothes, women's	Bedroom				0		
Underwear, control briefs	Clothes, women's	Bedroom				0		
Vests	Clothes, women's	Bedroom				0		
Workout clothes, lycra	Clothes, women's	Bedroom				0		
Computer	Computer	Bedroom				0		
Computer monitor	Computer	Bedroom				0		
Computer printer	Computer	Bedroom				0		
Computer speakers	Computer	Bedroom				0		
Cable box	Electronics	Bedroom				0		
CD player/radio	Electronics	Bedroom				0		
Cell phone	Electronics	Bedroom				0		
Clock radio	Electronics	Bedroom				0		
DVD player	Electronics	Bedroom				0		
iPod, MP3 player	Electronics	Bedroom				0		
Phone	Electronics	Bedroom				0		
Remote control	Electronics	Bedroom				0		
TV	Electronics	Bedroom				0		
VCR	Electronics	Bedroom				0		
Beanbag chair	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Bed, rollaway	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Bench, foot, storage	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Futon	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Hope chest and contents	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Rocking chair	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Bed twin, full, queen, king	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Bedside table	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Bookshelf	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Ceiling fan with lights	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Chair	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Closet organizer system	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Cube organizer	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Desk	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Dresser	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Footstool - maple with storage	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Mattress set - twin, full, queen, king	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Shelves	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Side table	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
VCR/DVD stand	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Window dressing small	Furniture	Bedroom				0		
Baskets, organizer	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Beauty case	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Belt organizer	Housewares	Bedroom				0		

Description of Property	Type	Room	Year Acquired	Qty	Cost Each	Total cost	Condition of Item	Additional Notes or Link to Picture:
Belt Rack	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Bookmarks	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Candles and holders	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Cedar Chips or Blocks for Closets	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Clothes Hamper or Basket	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Clothes Hangers (i.e., Standard, Skirt, Slack	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Computer programs, games	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Corkboard	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Curtains	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Dresser Organizer (for Keys, Change, etc.)	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Extra Clothing Hooks (Screw-type or Stick-on	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Framed Posters	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Garment Bags	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Garment protector bags	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Hamper	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Jewelry boxes	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Jewelry cleaner	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Jewelry hooks necklace	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Jewelry trays	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Jewelry box	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Jewelry organizer	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Lamp bedside	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Lamp, floor	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Mirror, full length	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Music box	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Pendants - decorator	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Phone	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Photo albums	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Photos - framed	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Pictures and frames	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Pictures, framed and matted	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Piggy bank	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Scarf hanger	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
School supplies	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Shoe forms	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Shoe Racks and/or Hangers	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Space bags, vacuum	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Storage boxes	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Tie organizer	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Tie Rack	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Under-the-Bed Storage Unit	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Window twin fan	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Wrapping paper	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Wrapping paper storage box	Housewares	Bedroom				0		
Bracelets	Jewelry	Bedroom				0		
Cufflinks	Jewelry	Bedroom				0		
Earrings	Jewelry	Bedroom				0		
Money clip	Jewelry	Bedroom				0		
Necklaces and pendants	Jewelry	Bedroom				0		
Pins	Jewelry	Bedroom				0		
Rings, costume	Jewelry	Bedroom				0		

UP Blank Home Inventory
Bdrm

Description of Property	Type	Room	Year Acquired	Qty	Cost Each	Total cost	Condition of Item	Additional Notes or Link to Picture:
Rings, fine jewelry	Jewelry	Bedroom				0		
Watches, mens, ladies, kids	Jewelry	Bedroom				0		
Baby down comforter	Linen	Bedroom				0		
Bed pillows	Linen	Bedroom				0		
Bedding (i.e., Bedspread, Quilt, Comforter or	Linen	Bedroom				0		
Blankets, comforters	Linen	Bedroom				0		
Duvet & Duvet Cover	Linen	Bedroom				0		
Extra Pillows & Shams	Linen	Bedroom				0		
Mattress Pads	Linen	Bedroom				0		
Pillow Cases	Linen	Bedroom				0		
Pillow/Back Rest	Linen	Bedroom				0		
Pillows	Linen	Bedroom				0		
Pillows, decorative	Linen	Bedroom				0		
Quilts	Linen	Bedroom				0		
Sheets (Fitted & Top)	Linen	Bedroom				0		
Throw blankets	Linen	Bedroom				0		
Throw pillows	Linen	Bedroom				0		
Wallet	Personal	Bedroom				0		
Sunglasses	Personal	Bedroom				0		
Shoes	Shoes	Bedroom				0		
Shoes, boots	Shoes	Bedroom				0		
Shoes, clogs	Shoes	Bedroom				0		
Shoes, dress, casual	Shoes	Bedroom				0		
Shoes, flip flops	Shoes	Bedroom				0		
Shoes, hiking	Shoes	Bedroom				0		
Shoes, sandals	Shoes	Bedroom				0		
Shoes, slippers	Shoes	Bedroom				0		
Shoes, sneakers	Shoes	Bedroom				0		
						0		
						0		
						0		
						0		
						0		
						0		
						0		
						0		
						0		
						0		
						0		

TOTAL $0

77