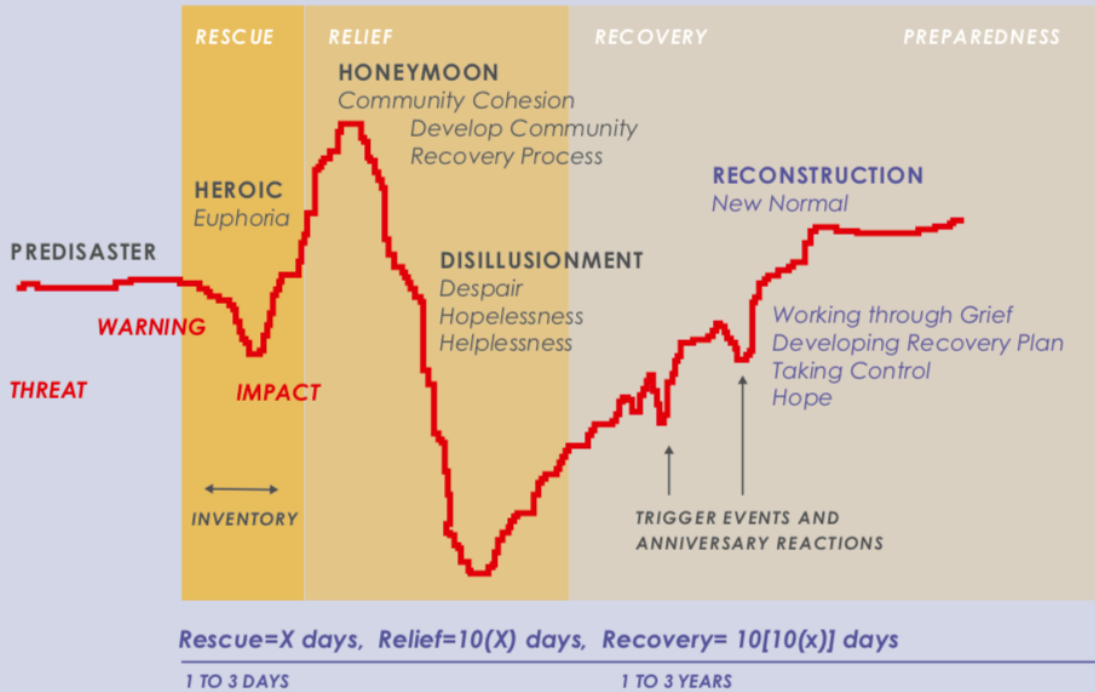


## PHASES OF DISASTER



Following the shock of the impact and assessment after disaster, there is often a spike in positive emotion and energy, a “can do” attitude. People often say, “We stick together and take care of our own. We’re not going to let this get us down!” As time wears on, the magnitude of the disaster starts to sink in and people become exhausted emotionally and physically. Challenges and problems that existed before the disaster are still present and even exacerbated. Snags in recovery efforts develop. Weaknesses in the systems become apparent. All these lead to a fairly rapid and steep drop into disillusionment, despair, hopelessness and helplessness. Sensitive assistance to survivors of disaster can bring hope as long-term community processes develop. Gradually, people work through the grief, develop recovery plans and reach a new normal. (From the “Congregational Disaster Preparedness Guidebook” published by Lutheran Disaster Response and available at [this link](#).)