



## **Reflections on The Champlain Towers South, Surfside Building Collapse**

**Presented by: Cassondra L. Feldman, Psy.D.**

**Sunday, February 26, 2023**  
9:00 am - 12:00 pm ET

Registration starts at 8:30 am ET  
Brunch to follow the presentation.

### **3 CE's Available**

Home of Barbara Lurie, Ph.D., LMFT  
Delaire Country Club,  
4700 Cherry Laurel Lane, Delray Beach, FL 33445



#### **PRESENTATION**

The Champlain Towers South Collapse in Surfside, Florida, claimed the lives of 98 residents and left traumatic loss, grief, and psychological sequelae in its wake. The initial crisis response involved practical, targeted efforts aimed at search and rescue, and providing psychological first aid for victims' families, witnesses, survivors, and community members. The long-term response consisted of grief counseling and trauma work. The collapse represented a unique opportunity for implementing an integrated strategy between two distinct groups of responders represented by numerous organizations. Mental health professionals embodied one group whose explicit role was to provide emotional support and containment. The other group comprised search and rescue professionals responsible for actively dismantling the collapsed pile, who ended up in roles requiring they also provide psychological containment. Response efforts were guided by existing frameworks for crisis response and evolved with the changing needs of those impacted. Upon reflecting on the tragedy, it became clear that the mechanisms by which the rescue and mental health response frameworks coalesced and functioned were more implicit and organically synchronous than explicitly coordinated and agreed-upon. This event highlighted the value and utility of integration and interdisciplinary work in responding to these types of disasters. As the rescue and support efforts were implemented, and a unique "Surfside Collapse Community" emerged, key themes became clear and revealed intrinsic links between the first-responder/search and rescue and psychological strategies. Relevant psychodynamic concepts underpinned, and were observed, in the integrated strategy that was utilized.

#### **PRESENTER**

Dr. Cassie Feldman is a licensed clinical psychologist in private practice in Bay Harbor Islands, FL and an adjunct professor in the College of Psychology at Nova Southeastern University. She serves on the board of directors as President of The Southeast Florida Association for Psychoanalytic Psychology. She also is an affiliate of Baptist West Kendall Hospital where she is responsible for training residents in the Family Medicine program. Dr. Feldman responded to the Surfside building collapse providing acute services to survivors and victims' families as a volunteer through Cadena International, a non-profit organization dedicated to rescue, humanitarian aid, and disaster response and prevention worldwide. She also provides ongoing, long-term care to those impacted by the collapse.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

Participants will be able to:

1. Participants will be able to describe therapeutic intervention tools that were used in the acute aftermath and as part of the long-term psychological response of the Champlain towers collapse including with respect to grief and loss.
2. Participants will be able to describe the importance of utilizing and implementing an interdisciplinary strategy in the context of disaster response including working with other first responders.
3. Participants will be able to articulate psychoanalytic concepts and themes that were relevant in the context of the collapse.

#### **CONTINUING EDUCATION**

This program, when attended in its entirety, is offered for 3 CE credits.

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MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY	EVENT RATE
MEMBER	\$35
NON-MEMBER	\$50
STUDENT MEMBER VALID STUDENT I.D.REQUIRED	FREE
STUDENT NON-MEMBER VALID STUDENT I.D.REQUIRED	\$10