Survivor Tales

AFTERSHOCKS

Real-life story! And what you can do to be a survivor!

This Survivor Tale is based on the real-life experiences of a disaster survivor.

Our heartfelt thanks to those individuals who have shared their stories with us in the hope of helping others prepare to be survivors.

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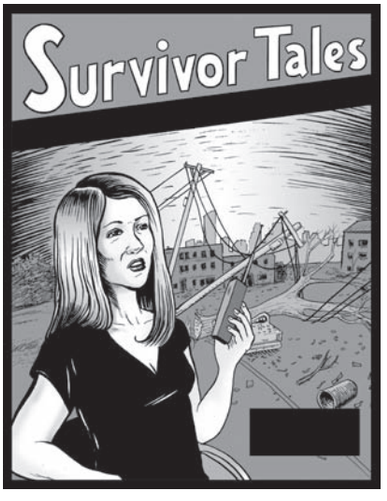
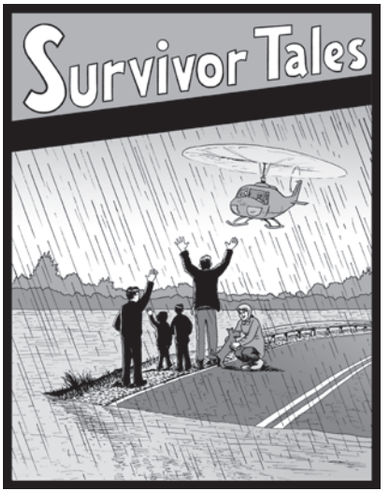
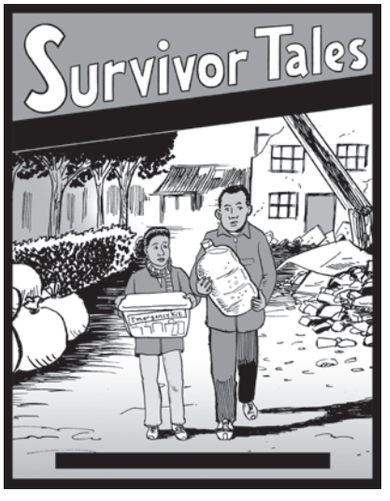
Read other Survivor Tales in this series:



#1: Eye Over Houston

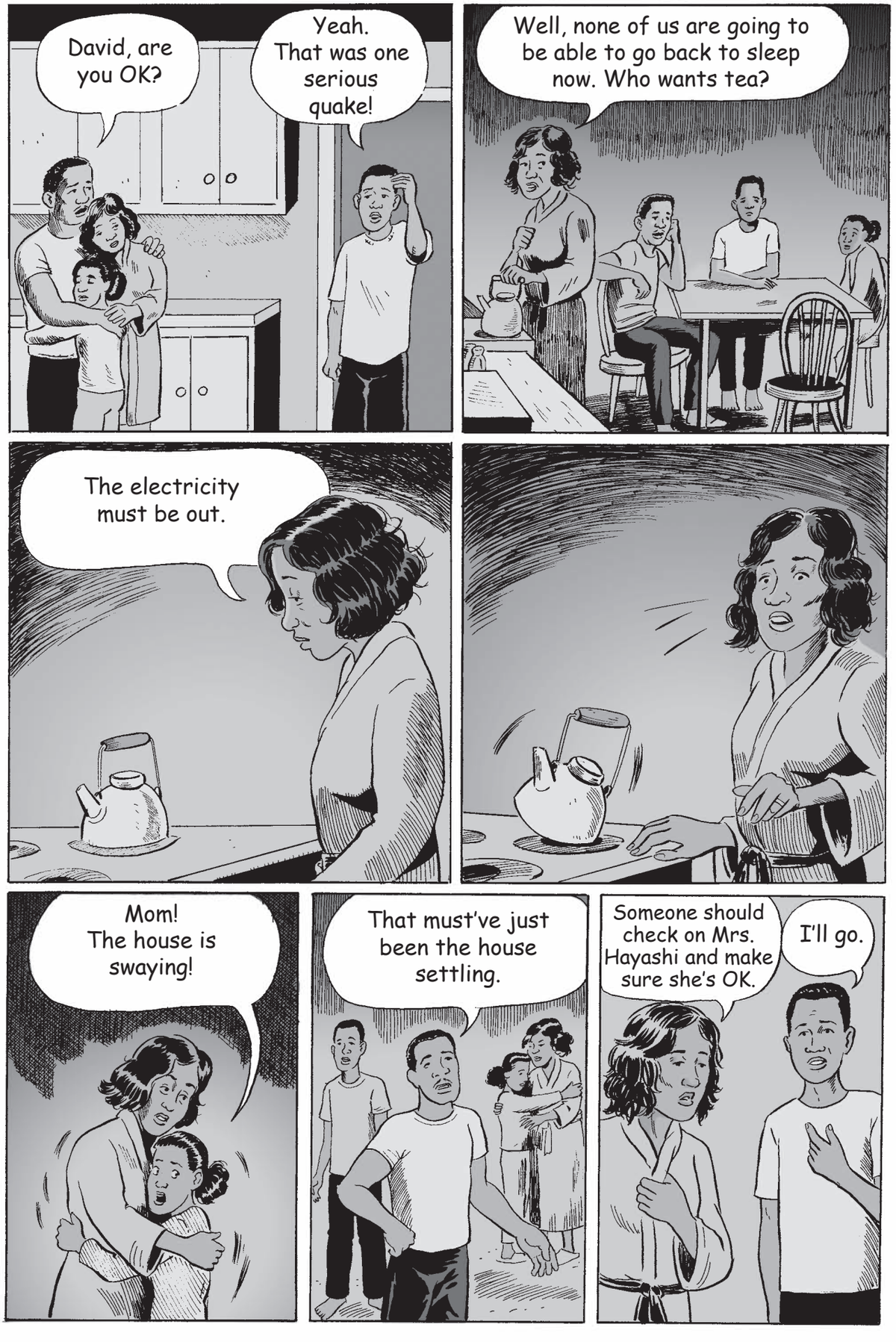


#2: In Deep Water



#3: Aftershocks

AFTERSHOCKS
In 1995, I was a 16 year-old American living in Kobe, Japan.
My dad was working for an American company in this busy port city.
January 17, 5:46 am.
WHOMP!
RUMBLE RUMBLE CREEEAK!

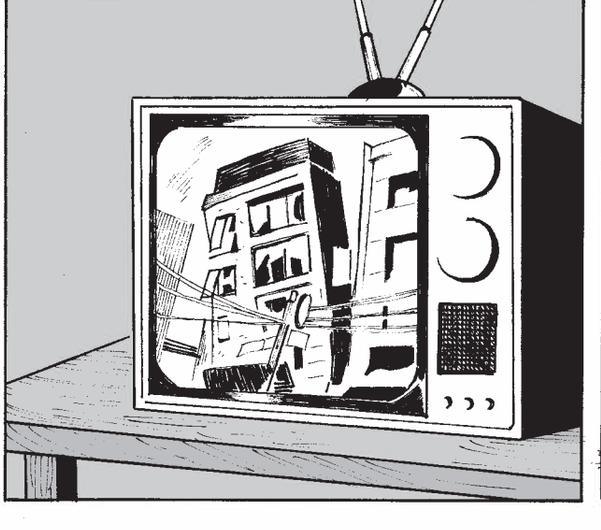

David, are you OK?
Yeah. That was one serious quake!
Well, none of us are going to be able to go back to sleep now. Who wants tea?
The electricity must be out.
Mom! The house is swaying!
That must've just been the house settling.
Someone should check on Mrs. Hayashi and make sure she's OK.
I'll go.

We were lucky. We lived on a part of an island where there wasn't a lot of damage. But we could see that it was much worse elsewhere in Kobe.

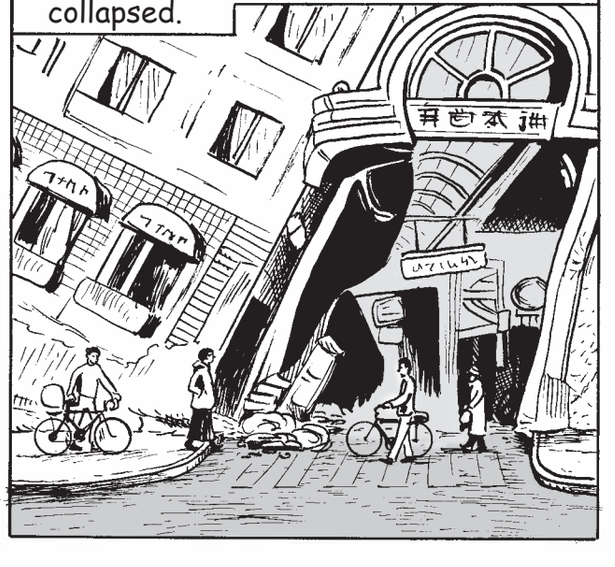
In some places, it looked like a giant had ripped up the ground.

Everyone pitched in to help each other.

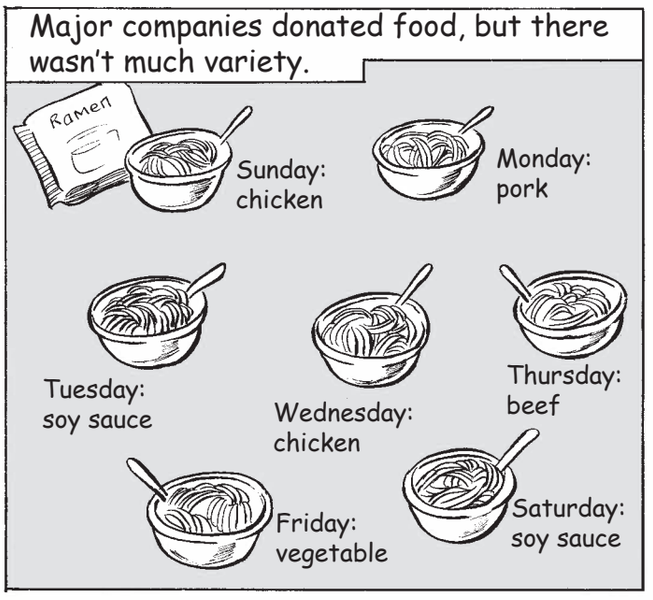
When the power came on that evening, the true horror of the situation became clear.

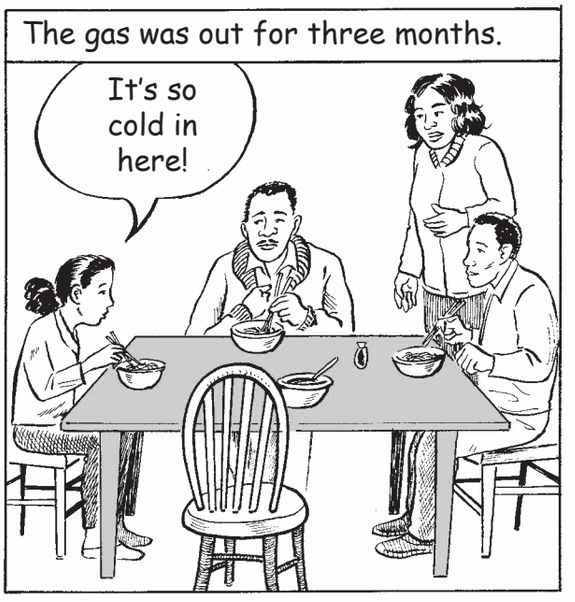


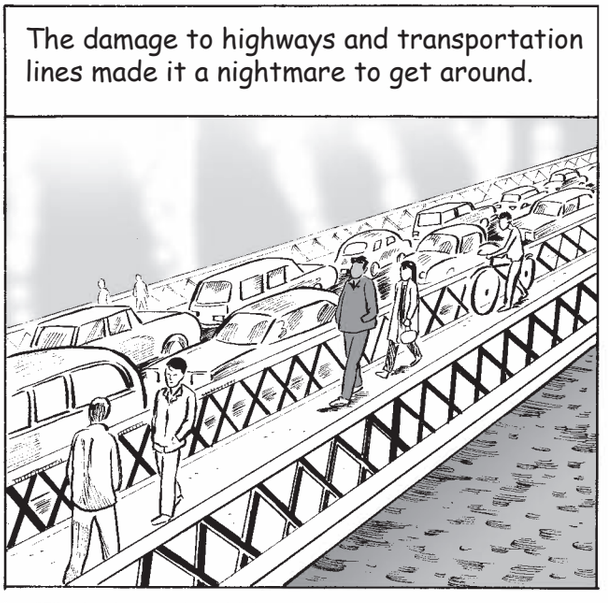
A downtown shopping arcade had collapsed.

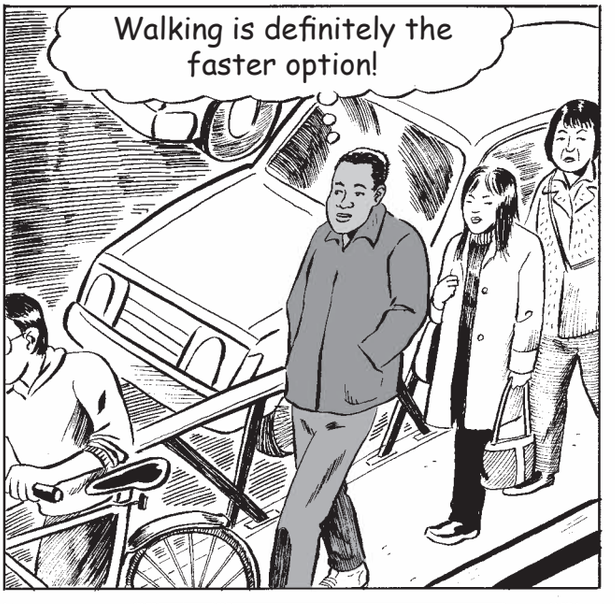


Part of a major highway had twisted and fallen.
Fires continue to burn throughout the city…
Are my friends OK? When will I see them?
This was only our fourth year living in Kobe, but we had come to love our new home. It was gut-wrenching to see those terrible images of destruction.
By the end of the week, I learned that my friend's mother was among the thousands who had died. The rest of my friends were OK, but life wasn't the same for any of us.
We had no water for a month, so we had to go to shower stations set up in neighborhoods.
How long is the wait?
About an hour or so.
Better than yesterday!
Each person only got 5 minutes in the shower, so I learned to scrub quickly.


Major companies donated food, but there wasn't much variety.
Ramen
Sunday: chicken
Monday: pork
Tuesday: soy sauce
Wednesday: chicken
Thursday: beef
Friday: vegetable
Saturday: soy sauce

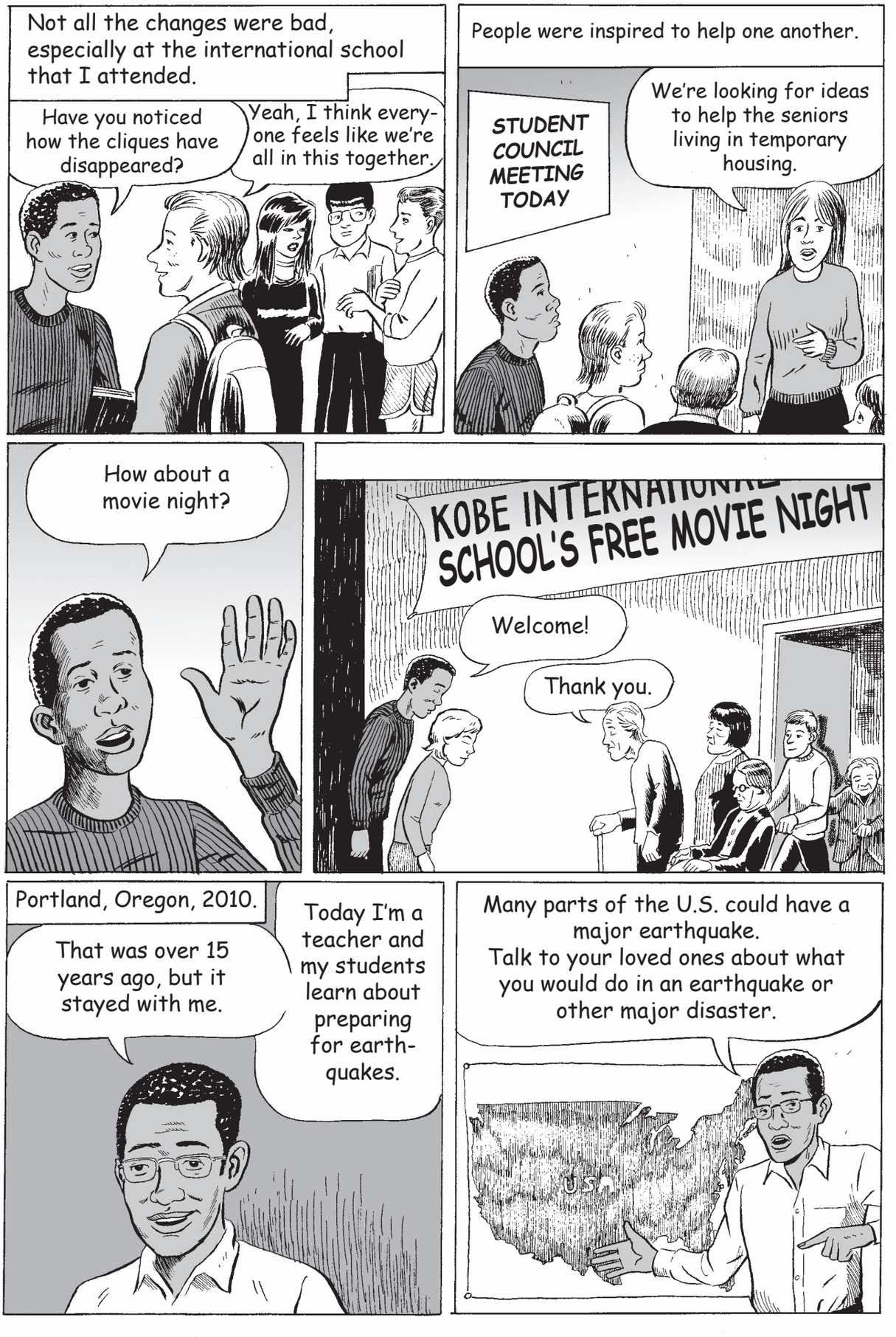

The gas was out for three months.
It's so cold in here!


The damage to highways and transportation lines made it a nightmare to get around.


Walking is definitely the faster option!

My daily hassles are nothing compared to the thousands who lost their homes.

Some seniors lost their homes. Our high school gym became temporary housing for them.
IONAL SCHOOL


Not all the changes were bad, especially at the international school that I attended.
Have you noticed how the cliques have disappeared?
Yeah, I think everyone feels like we're all in this together.
People were inspired to help one another.
STUDENT COUNCIL MEETING TODAY
We're looking for ideas to help the seniors living in temporary housing.
How about a movie night?
KOBE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL'S FREE MOVIE NIGHT
Welcome!
Thank you.
Portland, Oregon, 2010.
That was over 15 years ago, but it stayed with me.
Today I'm a teacher and my students learn about preparing for earthquakes.
Many parts of the U.S. could have a major earthquake.
Talk to your loved ones about what you would do in an earthquake or other major disaster.
USA

Have a list of people to call in an emergency, including someone who lives outside your state. That person can let others know you're OK if area phone lines are busy.

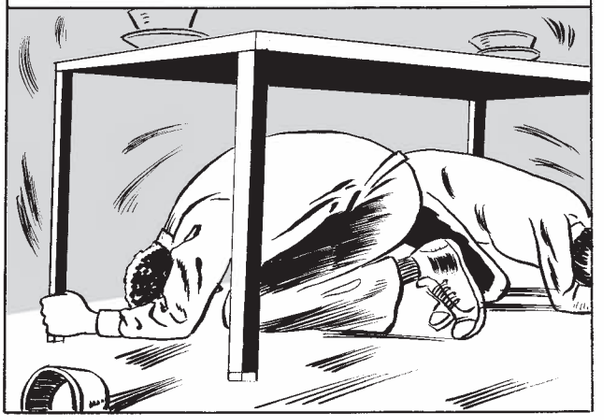
David in Oregon

Parents in Kobe

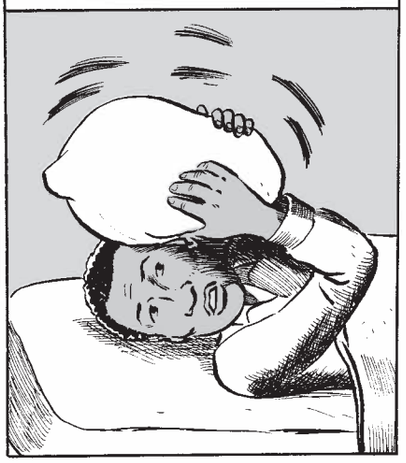
Sister in California

Friends

If you are indoors during an earthquake, DROP to the ground, take COVER under sturdy furniture, and HOLD on.



If you're in bed, stay there and cover your head with a pillow.



Glass from windows and mirrors can break during earthquakes.

Put a pair of shoes under your bed so you won't walk barefoot on broken glass.

I use empty pop bottles to store water for emergencies.

When food I like goes on sale, I buy an extra for my emergency kit.

You may never have to go through a major disaster…but won't you feel better knowing that you're ready?

Get Ready to be a Survivor

Make an emergency plan.

Learn what hazards can cause disasters where you live. Determine your family's needs and how you can survive these hazards. Consider the special needs of others, such as the elderly or persons with disabilities.

Develop and practice a communications plan. Would you know what to do if phone lines shut down? Have an out-of-state contact for family members to call if local lines don't work.

Develop and practice an evacuation plan should you need to leave home. Be ready to follow evacuation requests and orders issued by local leaders.

Build an emergency kit.

This is a list of basic items for your kit. Add more when you can.

- Water (1 gallon per person per day)
- Nonperishable food (3-5 days of food per person)
- Clothes (1 change of clothes and shoes per person)
- Medications (3 days worth)
- Flashlight and batteries
- Can opener
- Battery powered radio and batteries
- Hygiene items (soap, toilet paper, toothbrush)
- First aid (bandages, antiseptic, nonprescription medicine)
- Blanket
- Special needs items such as extra eyeglasses, charged batteries for wheelchairs and hearing aids, pet food, diapers

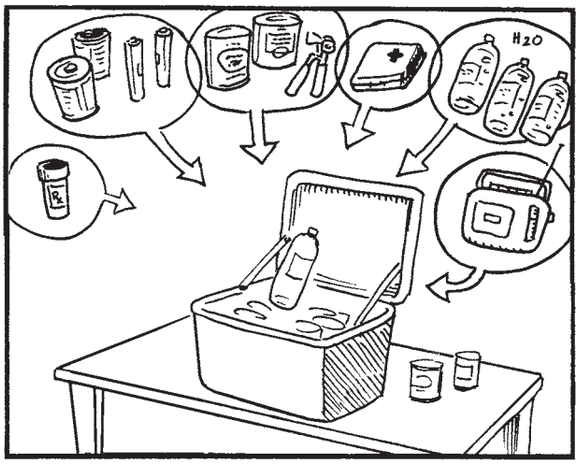
Get involved.

For more information about getting ready for emergencies:

American Red Cross
redcross.org
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
ready.gov
Centers for Disease Control
cdc.gov
Federal Emergency Management Agency
fema.gov

Public health planning resources for communities:

Seattle & King County Advanced Practice Center
www.apctoolkits.com
NACCHO Advanced Practice Center (APC)
www.naccho.org/topics/emergency/APC/index.cfm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