

Email received after experiencing the aftershock in Haiti

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"It is about 6:00 am on Wed Jan 20th morning here in Port Au Prince, Haiti.

We have just had a large aftershock (the USGS has reported it to be a magnitude 6.1). People in the area where we are staying are all outside of their homes again, if they are still standing. People are talking loudly, some crying. My heart is racing, my emotions high.

After spending the past 5 days seeing, feeling and smelling the destruction and massive loss of life from the earthquake just over one week ago, I am deeply moved.

I realized that I would never have made it out of the house had this structure collapsed. I would have been one of the multitude that would have been crushed under tons of debris, either severely injured or even killed. It is a sobering thought.

Today as they continue to remove bodies from the collapsed buildings and take them to mass graves, or just burn their bodies in the streets I pause and remember that these corpses were once someones son or daughter, mother or father, husband or wife. They do not even know the names of the dead any longer, they are just bodies. When they tear down the collapsed buildings the corpses are torn apart and they only count the heads to determine how many died in the building. This seems so inhumane to me, men and women, now only body parts that need to be removed. It is hard for me to deal with.

There will likely be more partly collapsed or weakened buildings that will have come down. It is not safe to be in those buildings, and this will bring more people to sleep outside.

These dear people have been on an emotional roller coaster."