Sometimes times of crisis can force our minds to do some strange things.
The stress of a disaster like the April 24 tornado can be hard for even the strongest person to bear.
At first I thought that the City of Yazoo's overall response to the worst disaster in this city's history was lackadaisical at best, but lately it occurred to me that they could actually be executing a brilliant plan to help residents recognize the signs that the stress from the storm might be affecting their judgement.
Consider the following symptoms:
Rushing into bad decisions:
Just two days after the storm our city leaders, with Ward 2 Alderman Jack Varner strongly objecting, placed their faith in a Jackson-based engineering firm to oversee debris removal. State officials were already on the scene and federal help was sure to come, and they accepted the first sales pitch they heard without even speaking with the larger agencies.
That would be kind of like a private citizen affected by the storm handing over his insurance check to the first guy who showed up wearing a tool belt and asking to handle the repair work.
Our city officials seem to want to distance themselves from the decision to work with IMS now that allowing the Corps of Engineers to oversee the work has proven to be the only reasonable option. But the fact is that the best service they have provided so far is giving Yazoo residents with an outstanding example of the wrong way to handle business following the storm.
Going on a
spending spree:
Pulling out the credit card and heading for the mall might seem like a great way to escape from your problems, but in the end it only makes things worse.
Take a look at the city's decision this week to hire a financial administrator to handle duties that were previously the responsibility of the city clerk at a cost of $21 an hour. Add that to the $30,000 position created for a "warrant officer" who happened to be a top campaign worker for two aldermen and the mayor and you've got a nice little shopping trip going.
Let's hope all this construction and cleanup activity offsets the lost revenue from the businesses that are still boarded up.
Speaking
incoherently
During the Board of Aldermen meeting Monday, citizens had to complain several times that they

were unable to hear what the board members were saying.
Citizens who care enough to come to the public meetings have a right to know what's going on.
An inability to
take action:
Some people when confronted with what seems to be an overwhelming task find themselves unable to take any action at all.
Our city leaders have provided a great example of this phenomenon through their handling of the debris removal.
One month after the tornado, not one stick from the tons of fallen trees citizens have been told to pile along the roadsides had been moved. Fortunately they snapped out of it this week and allowed the Corps of Engineers to step in.
This public service announcement is provided as a free service of the City of Yazoo. If you find yourself exhibiting any of these symptoms, please seek professional help immediately.
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Jason Patterson is the managing editor of The Yazoo Herald. He can be reached by email at managing1@bellsouth.net.