

Meaningful World

2018 Meaningfulworld Humanitarian Mission to Haiti

Humanitarian Empowerment, Healing, Transforming Horizontal Violence, Meaning-Making, and Establishing Peace and Forgiveness Gardens

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The 13th Meaningfulworld Mission to Haiti involved numerous challenges including poor infrastructure resulting in travel delays, car trouble, frequent power outages, as well as political tension, “Crab in the Bucket” syndrome, and penetrating a culturally ingrained bias towards women, resulting in rampant domestic violence. Bearing this context in mind, the Meaningfulworld team expanded the goals for their 13th mission in Haiti from transforming horizontal violence, establishing Peace and Forgiveness Gardens, nurturing sustainable education in regard to emotional intelligence (EQ), establishing neighborhood associations, and nurturing resilience, to include supporting the founding of a Meaningfulworld local chapter to create a more sustainable educational and healing foundation, and outreach to the Minister of Education for implementing EQ training and education on disaster preparedness.



400 people at CESSA Conference



Dr. Ani conducting a workshop



Fr Wismick & Dr Renee, Mental Health Ministry

Dr. Ani, as the last speaker before a crowd of 350 individuals at the CESSA conference, injected her warmth and energy into the conference by encouraging the participants to practice some self-care by getting up, stretching, and moving around for a few moments. The audience was incredibly receptive to her energy, eagerly responding to Dr. Ani’s questions, following her instructions to love one another as they all warmly embraced those near them. Encouraging the audience to return the next day for a deeper look into the 7-step integrative healing model, the audience erupted into applause as Dr. Ani finished her incredibly animated and interactive presentation. The following day, Meaningfulworld was able to conduct a small workshop for about 50 people in a span of 1 hour. The team, balancing and syncing with one another, was able to deliver a powerful and impactful workshop that led additional participants to join as the workshop progressed. Dr. Ani’s energy was electrifying and entrancing as people joined in to take part in the movement portion of the workshop. Meaningfulworld Ambassador, Sowmya Thakur, eloquently summarized Dr. Ani’s lecture in one word, “Magnetic.” Special gratitude to the organizer & Chair, Fr Wismick, also the VP of University of Notre Dame.

The days following the CESSA conference consisted of the team making daily hour long trips to **the Institut Universitaire de Formation des Cadres** for the start of its 4 day intensive training course – focusing on Self-Care. Dr. Ani pushed them to think beyond the conventional methods of education, inviting them to share, reflect, and expand the ways in which they would generally approach challenges and traumas in life. Intense, emotional, and eye-opening revelations came to pass in each group, reinforcing the dedication the group had for the people they serve, witnessing firsthand the amazing changes that can be brought about by the 7-Step Integrative Healing Model as well as the use of aroma therapy, flower essence, and alternative remedies. One of the participants expressed feeling calmer and more peaceful after taking some flower essence. Finishing with the Heart to Heart circle, the love, gratitude, and peace felt within the room was palpable as they sent off their positive healing energy out into Haiti, and the world.



Meaningfulworld Interfaith Alter

Sowmya & Bryant contributing

Group photo of intensive trainees

During the training, the team discovered over 90% of those present claiming they have either witnessed, experiences, or heard of domestic violence. Probing deeper, the group expressed this sense of hopelessness to ever bringing about change due in part to a lack of economic independence and a lack of legal consequences. Culturally, it was described as a way for men to assert their superiority over women. Transitioning into the group sessions, the afternoon offered more breakthroughs with those sharing, learning lessons of self-awareness, the benefits of deep reflection, and empathy. Touching up on the subjects of the previous two day's lessons, the training concluded with over a 90% pass rate. Sowmya Thakur, gave a succinct description of the day's end stating how she felt "the Universal power of human connection."

Arriving to **Life is Wealth Orphanage**, the team witnessed firsthand many of the poor living conditions of the girls. Many of them were without shoes, there was no running water, a lack of beds, sanitation, and still others were visibly ill without any signs of receiving medication. As the teaching began, the energy from the children was infectious, especially with the youngest age group. Engaging the children with games to demonstrate empathy, small cards to aid with conflict transformation, and demonstrating communication skills, the participants demonstrated numerous of the lessons learned during their training. The lessons revealed much about the children including how over 90% of the oldest age group reported feelings of sadness and shame, the root of which they did not feel comfortable discussing, as well as over 50% of all the girls reporting feelings of sadness. With occasional, gentle guidance from the Meaningfulworld team, it was heartwarming to see the impact of the past 3 days in a real time. All the children's groups responded unanimously positively, to the Soul Surfing Exercise at the end of the day with the participants, giggling and smiling during various movements. Special gratitude to the **Director Yverlens Louis** who is also the principal for over 1,000 children.



Children at the Life is Wealth Orphanage Children surrounding Sowmya with love ~ Dr Ani & Lorraine at Radio 100.5

Despite the stifling heat and humidity the following day, and while all media was obsessively reporting and watching World Cup soccer for Americans and football for the rest of the world, our Meaningfulworld team managed to have a live radio interview on 100.5 FM, another interview on Channel 4, reconnected with radio and TV Metropole, National TV of Haiti, thanks to **Theodore Wendell**, Radio Caribbean, 98.5 FM, SCOOP 107.7 FM radio and more!

Working at **Maison Des Enfants, in Ganthier**, an hour drive to the North East, Meaningfulworld had an amazing workshop with administrators, school principals, church members, and other orphanage directors. Special gratitude to **Ms Valmond**, the director, who has saved about a hundred boys and girls ages 4-18 as well as **Sheyla Maximilien** for driving us to the location and translating with passion. Participants loved the focus on EQ, how we approached forgiveness, talked about transforming Horizontal Violence, as well as generational trauma, laughter therapy, hugging with unconditional love, and they loved the Soul-Surfing exercises! Hungry for more psycho education, the group's most consistent feedback was for a longer 2-day training for the following year.

The following day was spent with the orphanage, **Bonjour Timoun Yo**, with 25 orphans. The children ran to embrace and hug the team, remembering us from previous years. They sang as we fed them snacks, gave them water, and engaged them in play with toys! We sponsored 4 children: **Bruno Brulande, Mutamar Antoine, Makendy Destine, and**

Maxon Pierre. The team also donated toys, crayons, school supplies, clothing and much needed hygiene supplies. Gratitude to **Madam Vania Pierre** for her warm reception!



Training at Maison Des Enfants



Bonjour Timoun Yo Orphanage



We sponsored these 4 adorable children

The heat weighed heavy in the morning – a challenge for the team as it entered its final few days in Haiti. Transportation delays allowed for a blessing in disguise, providing an opportunity for greater planning when it came to the remaining days. Phone calls, agenda planning, and workshop preparation for their training with the Haiti Police and Coast Guard kept the team occupied until their police escort arrived. With a burly set of body-guards in tow, the team headed to the station for the training.

Those attending the training were responsive to the questions and 100% reported having either seen or experienced domestic violence. This realization led to many of them committing to forming men’s groups to pass on what they learned today regarding managing one’s anger. When it came to anger, a majority of them expressed the underlying reasons to be frustration, anxiety, or disappointment. Learning the 4 Agreements and 5 steps of assertiveness, the police group was able to add new tools for effective communication and emotional management.

A tense return trip to the hotel ended the day for the team as the possibility of a politically motivated riot led to additional precautionary measures being taken by the police escort. In particular, it gave the team a visceral glimpse into the danger and consequence of not continuing their work in Haiti. More than ever the team, especially first time Haiti visitors, Meaningfulworld UN Fellows Sowmya and Bryant witnessed the importance of the trainings they pass on to the Haitian people and the necessity of them continuing the cycle to pass on what they learned. Special gratitude to **Pastor Ramino Clement** for organizing the program.



Police & Coast Guard proud of certificates



Meditation and mindfulness session with the teachers @ Children Academy

Meaningfulworld rendezvoused with Alain of the Haiti Chapter, the next day, and arrived to the Minister of Education’s office to meet with Director of Curriculum **J. Rood Karll Fleurant**, ready to present once again, their proposal on integrating their teachings into the curriculum for Haiti children. Going over previous challenges of delays, objectives, and generating buy-in from the Haitian government, the meeting was able to move forward as the Minister proved more enthusiastic about implementing the revised curriculum on the primary education level. The Minister of Education conveyed the sense of urgency for Meaningfulworld to train teachers in the North, Northwest, and Northeast sections of Haiti, asking for the trainings to take place ASAP with a tentative timeframe set for November.

Day 13 led the team to **Children’s Academy** where they would present a 7 hour training on EQ, empathy, mindfulness, assertiveness, the 4 agreements, and the 7 step integrative healing model. 20 teachers attended the training, positively reflecting and eagerly engaging with the soul surfing exercise which many claimed would be useful for the children they teach. Many of the teachers remarked on the aspects of the training which they found most useful including: tips on emotional management, the benefits of offering empathy to traumatized individuals, the importance of empathy,

and the value of soul surfing for both the body and the mind. Special gratitude to **John and Merline Engle and Haiti Partners**. The final full day led to another training for parents and in the afternoon for children on EQ, mindfulness, and Soul-Surfing. While Dr Ani had a program on radio/TV Metropole with anchor **Theodore Wendell**, another interview at Radio 98.5 FM with **Mr. Herold Jean-Francois and Mr. Joseph Kenel**, and met the President of the Mental Health Society, and a UNICEF representative for setting up collaborations. Focus was placed on prevention and preparedness for trauma, Emotional Intelligence, education, training, policy revision and entire community working together to make Haiti strong, united, healthy, and clean and the role of individual Haitians, neighborhood associations, family, schools, government and media, while transforming Generational, individual, family, Horizontal and community violence. We also shared about the new **Haitian chapter of Meaningfulworld** for continuity and sustainability, and emphasized the importance of SDG's especially the first 5 Goals, public vigilance to ask Haitian Government to be accountable to these goals! The day was concluded with the hopeful collaboration with Minister of Education and Health and the UNICEF Chief of Communication **Ms Cornelia Walther**, who echoed our curriculum emphasis, reinforcing that a recent pilot study revealed that Haiti needs more training in EQ, transformation of secondary trauma, stress management, disaster preparedness, and environmental health. It was an insightful teaching and learning day.



Haiti Partner's Children's Academy



Bryant & Lorraine giving gifts



Dr Ani on Radio/TV MetroPole

Meaningfulworld's 13th humanitarian mission was an overwhelming success. 15 days and 13 workshops later, the team was able to directly impact 800 people and through radio/TV interviews, potentially an additional 11 million listeners. Furthermore, through our shared rule of three, we encouraged each person to share what they learned with 3 people and then ask them to share with 3 more. This means Meaningfulworld indirectly touched the lives of over 7,000 people in Haiti. In addition to completing their primary objectives, Meaningfulworld, thanks to their generous donors, was able to witness the joy of running water once again being reintroduced to the Life is Wealth orphanage, 8 years after being left without, since the earthquake in 2010. Connecting with UNICEF also allowed the team to plant more seeds of sustainability with a fruitful meeting signaling the potential for the Haiti Chapter to collaborate on conducting their own trainings for UNICEF and its extended network. Government buy-in was also generated after meetings with the Minister of Education, resulting in a budget proposal on a 6-day training to reach all the teachers in Haitian primary schools in their northern departments (North, Northwest, and Northeast) set for later this year. Additional collaboration was planted with INUFOCAD University for training in mindful leadership. The mission was more than a success and left the team optimistic for the future to come.

Meaningfulworld extends our gratitude to all our generous donors, special thanks to those who gave 100+; Xanthly Tsakrios, Shulamit Lazarus, Lisa Schiller, Kevin Ucaryan, Art Jaffe and multiple donors who wish to remain anonymous.

Fe yon vre ayisyen rale youn ak lot monte! Ou pa bezwen yon crab nan bokit la rale youn ak lot desann!

Founded in 1990, the Association for Trauma Outreach & Prevention (ATOP) Meaningfulworld, charitable organization affiliated with the United Nations Dept. of Public Information, has achieved international recognition as a leader in training humanitarian outreach professionals as well as responding to two decades of global and local disasters. ATOP is committed to health and global education promoting state-of-the-art scientific theory, peace, forgiveness, consciousness research, internship, and the development of technical skills to train mental health professionals, teachers, psychologists, art therapists, nutritionists, alternative medicine practitioners, clergy, nurses, mediators, interfaith ministers, and lay persons committed to service the self and humanity. Meaningfulworld Humanitarian Outreach Teams have helped rehabilitate survivors from over 46 countries, making a daily difference in people's lives helping to transform tragedy and trauma into healing and meaning-making through post trauma growth, resilience, emotional intelligence, mindfulness, mind-body-eco-spirit health, visionary leadership, empowerment and artful collaboration through a new world view.

**Our Motto: When one helps another BOTH become stronger
Le-youn ede lot TOUT de vin pi fo**