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Welcome!

Meaningfulworld represents all the activities of the Association for Trauma Outreach and Prevention (ATOP) and the Armenian American Society for Studies on Stress and Genocide (AASSSG). Both organizations are dedicated to fostering a meaningful, peaceful, and just world in which every individual enjoys physical, mental, and spiritual health. A sense of meaning, peace, and justice, although unique to each individual, is achieved through a transformative journey that integrates knowledge and experience with a sense of responsibility and reflection. This transformative process takes shape through healthy relationships that nurture open, honest, and transparent communication, insight into forgiveness, love, spiritual connections, and active collaborations.

Meaningfulworld facilitates this journey through providing information on formal lectures, opportunities for informal networking, humanitarian outreach programs, research and publication. Individual and collective opportunities for change, development, and transcendence are also provided through workshops, clinical interventions, and referrals.

At Meaningfulworld.com, our ultimate goal is to prepare a generation of conscientious individuals who are guided by love, peace, passion, and meaning.

Message from the President Finding Meaning despite the Turmoil



Dr. Anie Kalayjian at the Temple of APOLLO in Greece

While visiting the Apollo in Greece, I felt overwhelmed by the ongoing war between Israel and Hezbollah.

I meditated for peace. As I was meditating, I was filled with an overwhelming sadness and darkness, the more I meditated the darker and more upset I became and I ended up crying for the entire 30 minutes that I was meditating. When I came down from my mediation, I was still sad, and sought out a friend with whom to process these emotions.

On my way back from Greece I had a six hours layover in the Frankfurt airport and I thought the best way to use my time was to take a paper and pen and start randomly asking travelers what their thoughts and feelings were about the war in Lebanon, and what their ideas of a real peace in the Middle East were.

Not surprisingly, the majority expressed sadness, fear, and helplessness regarding the conflict, and very few people felt there was any real hope for peace. The travelers expressed gratitude an empathetic listener was interested in their thoughts. In addition, there was a paper written as a result of this survey. Those interested in the article please visit www.meaningfulworld.com

Hurricane Katrina: One Year Later



Abandoned house in New Orleans, Aug. 14, 2006

Although downtown New Orleans has recovered, many areas affected by Hurricane Katrina remain untouched. There is debris everywhere; many houses remain empty as they slowly fall to the ground, and bodies are still being found. While the federal government has allocated \$122 billion toward rebuilding, only \$44 billion has been spent.

Dr. Anie Kalayjian, president of the Association for Trauma Outreach and Prevention (ATOP), recently visited New Orleans while participating in the 2006 American Psychological Association (APA) Convention. During her stay, she ventured into the areas most affected by Hurricane Katrina and conducted research via interviews with the survivors there. Many survivors were frustrated with the government and had no other option but to rebuild without federal or national support. Many survivors were using their retirement money, leaving them with nothing if another disaster strikes. Psychologically, Dr. Kalayjian found that many New Orleanians are showing signs of very mild Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. "Many survivors reported less nightmares and flashbacks than a year ago. But a high level of anger, apathy, and disenchantment continues to be directed towards leaders, FEMA, insurance

companies and others involved in the relief effort,” Dr. Kalayjian reported.

Survivors continue to tell their rescue stories and still can't believe they were able to survive. “This is not a natural disaster, it is a human-made disaster” stated Dr. Kalayjian.

Dr. Kalayjian recommends that New Orleans hire private contractors who can complete the work expeditiously. It is important that New Orleans be cleared of debris quickly so that tourism—a major part of New Orleans’ economy—can be restored. Many taxi drivers expressed how crucial tourism was for the recovery, and how grateful they were for the APA who, in spite of the hurricane, decided to have their convention in New Orleans.

Dr. Kalayjian also urges those concerned to volunteer in New Orleans. There is a huge need for medical and psychological services. Although the storm passed a year ago, New Orleans has only begun to rebuild physically, psychologically, and financially.

The 1st Annual Transforming Trauma through Psychospiritual Healing Gala



The 1st Annual Transforming Trauma through Psychospiritual Healing Gala will be held on Wed. November 29, 2006 at Fordham University, 113 W. 60th Street, 12th Floor Lounge from 7-10pm.

The Transforming Trauma Gala is the main partnership event to celebrate the Association for Trauma Outreach and Prevention (ATOP) and the Association for Spirituality and Psychotherapy (ASP)'s mission to assist disaster survivors and provide means of healing and coping through spirituality and psychotherapy.

Please consider being part of our work in bringing relief to the devastated. Information about purchasing tickets and tables will be posted online after September 1, 2006 or you can contact ATOP at 201-941-2266 or email Georgina Galanis, Vice President of ASP and Fundraising Coordinator at 718-777-2167.

Reactions to the Israeli & Hezbollah conflict

By Anie Kalayjian and Luke Anable



Ten Israeli soldiers were killed and at least nine others were wounded when a Hezbollah rocket slammed into a group of reservists in northern Israel, medics and Israeli media said. (Ronen Zvulun/Reuters)

There are some remedies worse than the disease.

--Publilius Syrus

In a war which justifies itself historically, the cyclical nature of a traumatized national psyche becomes apparent. As Israeli military personnel launched attacks from fighter jets and

Hezbollah militants fired rockets under the cover of civilian roofs, it was clear that civilians will have born the heaviest burden of this war. This particular type of violent conflict which holds the innocent responsible for the actions of the few represents a new struggle for the public consciousness.

On August third, Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora reported that over 900 Lebanese have been killed since the July 12th abduction of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah guerrillas, one third of whom were children. Reuters later reported that around 1,000 people in Lebanon, mostly civilians, and 154 Israelis, including 114 soldiers, had been killed.

In the end, Lt-Gen Dan Halutz made good on his July 12th promise to “turn Lebanon's clock back 20 years,”¹ in response to the initial kidnappings. Lebanon’s only international airport remains disabled, major supply routes and bridges bombed to rubble, and environmentalists are qualifying the mass oil spills and wide spread forest fires as cataclysmic, part of “the worst environmental disaster in Lebanon’s history.”² Justifying its attacks on power stations and transit routes as possible avenues for Hezbollah armament, Israeli military isolated a terrified population of Lebanese refugees many of whom have been left homeless.

During a layover in Frankfurt, Germany, Dr. Anie Kalayjian, president and founder of meaningfulworld.com and

¹ “Israel authorizes 'severe' response to abductions”, CNN World News, <http://www.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/meast/07/12/mideast/>

Wednesday, July 12, 2006; Posted: 10:27 p.m. EDT (02:27 GMT)

² “Casualties of War: Lebanon’s Trees, Air and Sea” by Hassan M. Fattah, The New York Times (July 29, 2006)

The Association for Trauma Outreach and Prevention, interviewed randomly selected individuals in an attempt to gauge the public’s emotional and psychological response to the war. With only minor variation, the general theme of the interviews was overwhelmingly clear: the public felt sad, hopeless, helpless, fearful and confused. For the majority, the psychological struggle was to express the unique mixture of these emotions; a difficult task as interviewees attempted to articulate and reconcile on one hand the poignant grief they felt at the loss of innocent life and on the other a degree of withdrawal and resignation to what they understood to be the self-perpetuating and unsolvable nature of Middle Eastern conflicts.



A Lebanese woman attempts to keep her balance as she climbs over rubble from the remains of a building in the southern suburbs of Beirut. The densely populated residential area was bombed repeatedly by Israeli forces during the conflict. (AP Photo/Matt Dunham)

Few felt there was hope for a lasting peace in the Middle East. While some qualified this response as ‘cynical’ others felt there was no need, assuming that the impossibility of peace for Israel and her neighbors was common knowledge. “This is a 2,000 year old conflict,” said a 43-year-old man making his way home to Norway, “I can’t care about it, it would not make a difference. There is no solution, only fantasy...”

A 15-year-old polish boy didn't hesitate to confirm this sentiment, answering unwaveringly "This isn't anything new, the area will never be in peace." He continued, "I feel sad but am not surprised...there are two things that could happen to achieve peace, either they annihilate each other, or there is *miracle*. It is all part of a larger economic plan and a power struggle."

While the participants' backgrounds varied, the small majority European, and their ages ran the gambit from 15 to 65, these demographic variations didn't correlate strongly to any specific differentiation in response. Unsurprisingly, Israelis were more prone to defend their state, but even this population focused more on the seemingly unstoppable nature of the conflict and the darkness of the future which loomed ahead, "I feel uncomfortable, I don't know what will happen and I fear for my friends who are fighting this war...I never thought it would come to this," lamented a 17 year old Israeli Women.

Almost three quarters of those interviewed said they felt hopeless or that there was little to no hope for the future, the majority of this group feeling cynical, pessimistic, or disempowered. Though this 'overwhelmed resignation' was difficult to articulate, few felt they be sincerely optimistic, "There is nothing new here, it is the same old struggle between two countries that do not recognize each other, accept each other, or respect each other and who want the other destroyed so they can live there alone. No peace can happen if they don't want to change their mentality of being chosen nations. I am sorry, I am so bitter and hopeless since I feel so powerless," said a Greek man who went on to speak about Greece's past dark relationship with Turkey and the slow but necessary process

of forgiveness taking place there which was absent in the Israel-Palestine conflict. To read the entire story go to www.meaningfulworld.com

To help alleviate this trauma, Dr. Kalayjian is pursuing an opportunity to mobilize the Association for Trauma Outreach and Prevention's (ATOP) Mental Health Outreach Project (MHOP) in Lebanon. MHOP would provide counseling to those traumatized by recent events and train local mental health practitioners in trauma intervention and psychotherapy. MHOP is aiming to send the first team of mental health volunteers in January. For more information about ATOP and past MHOPs, please see <http://www.meaningfulworld.com/projects.htm>

Salute to our Summer Intern



Luke Anable is currently a senior at the University of Chicago where he studies English Language and Literature. His interest in trauma studies coupled with his

experience in the not-for-profit world brought him to ATOP where he performs a wide range of tasks from drafting letters of inquiry to potential funders, to editing ATOP statements and designing materials for public dissemination. Upon graduation, Luke plans on continuing his studies in graduate school.

Outreach in Darfur



Sudanese internally displaced people line up outside an aid distribution point waiting to receive clothing in West Darfur, October 2004. ©2004 EPA PHOTO.

For the past four years, the people of Darfur, Sudan have been suffering death, increased poverty, pain and psychological distress due to the armed conflict between the Government of Sudan and the indigenous African tribes of Darfur. Everyday millions of Darfurians are displaced from their homes and over 180,000 have been killed. U.N officials have labeled the crisis in Darfur as the “worst humanitarian crisis on the globe”.

Although the media has brought some attention to the ongoing massacres, the international community has not intervened because it fails to recognize this crisis for what it is, “genocide”. Meanwhile, until the international community decides what to call this crisis, thousands of men, women and children will continue to be killed, displaced and raped. What makes this “genocide” even more appalling is that rape is being used as a tool for ethnic cleansing. *Amnesty International* documented nearly 500 cases of rape in only one month.¹

In light of these events, Dr. Kalayjian has begun collaborating with several NGO’s to bring psychological assistance to survivors in Darfur. Of particular

interest to Dr. Kalayjian is the Darfur Peace and Development Organization, a US-based non-profit, nonsectarian organization established in 2002 by expatriate Sudanese from the Darfur region of Sudan. Pending grant approval, this NGO will set up a Darfur Women’s Center in Kalma IDP. This center will provide counseling to survivors of rape and sexual abuse. Also, in an effort to heal these women and fully reintegrate them into their families, the Center will have *Dara Dialogues*, the traditional forum for communal discussions, with Sudanese men. Dr. Kalayjian hopes to assist in training 100 women in victim assistance and income-generating programs.

For more information on the war in Sudan, please see the following website: <http://www.darfurpeaceanddevelopment.org/>

¹ Darfur Women’s Center, Proposal for Funding, Darfur Peace and Development Organization

Upcoming Conferences/Workshops

*Dr. Kalayjian either organizes or presents at these events

September 5, 2006

International Psychology in NYC
Fordham University, 3-6 pm
New York, NY

September 6-8, 2006

59th Annual DPI/NGO Conference
Unfinished Business: Effective
Partnerships for human security
and sustainable development
United Nations, New York.
*Dr. Kalayjian will be chairing a
workshop on Forgiveness on
Thursday 7th at 1:15- 2:45pm.
www.undpingoconference.org

October 21, 2006

Post-Traumatic Healing & Meaning Making workshop
Fordham University at Lincoln Center, New York, NY

Photo-Exhibit: Psychologists in Focus – Seeing Global Diversity
The Callahan Center at St Francis College, Brooklyn, NY

November 3, 2006

Rutgers College: Nursing Center for Professional Development has organized the Third Annual Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases
Dr. Kalayjian will give a key note address from 1-1:45 PM
<http://nursing.rutgers.edu/cpd>

November 10, 2006

18th Annual Conference on Behavioral Research
St. Francis College
Brooklyn, NY

November 13-17, 2006

One by One Conference
"Transforming the Legacies of Conflict, War and Genocide through Dialogue"
The Passionist Center
Riverdale, NY
www.one-by-one.org

December 8, 2006

6th Annual Pre-Holiday Spiritual Healing Circle
Fordham University, 7-10pm
New York, NY

(For more information on any of these events go to www.meaningfulworld.com or email us at akalayjian@meaningfulworld.com)

Call for Papers

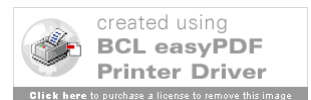
The 18th Greater New York Conference on Behavioral Research is set for FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10th at St. Francis College in Brooklyn Heights. Undergraduate and graduate students and faculty from across Greater New York (NY, NJ, CT, PA) in the behavioral sciences (psychology, sociology, related fields) are invited to submit papers for possible presentation. This annual Conference also includes free workshops and details on student participation in the 8 professional organizations that jointly endorse the Conference.

Tentative Conference schedule is as follows:

Welcome and Refreshments	12:30 – 1pm
Scientific Panels / Symposia	1:00 – 4pm
Awards Ceremony	4:30 – 5pm
Reception	5:00 – 7pm

Presentation proposals (300 word abstracts or full papers) are due by 5pm Friday, October 6, 2006 to Conference Chairperson, Dr. Jennifer Lancaster of St. Francis College at gnycl8@msn.com Submissions should be in MSWord or RTF format and must include complete details: Author name(s) and affiliation(s), address and phone number of key presenter, name of faculty mentor (if any). Only full papers (not abstracts) are eligible for a student research award.

Potential presenters may consider organizing a one hour symposium on a relevant topic; including presenters from several different institutions is of particular interest. Anyone wishing to present their work as a poster instead of a paper should indicate the same on the abstract submission. Please note that posters will only be accepted if there is sufficient interest. Direct any inquiries to Jennifer Lancaster at 718-489-5323 or



gncy18@msn.com OR Conference Director, Harold Takooshian, at 212-693-6393.

Recent Events

On April 28, 2006, Dr. Anie Kalayjian was a keynote speaker at **The California Council on Family Relations** annual conference in San Diego. This year's theme was "Families and Children dealing with Disasters". Dr. Kalayjian presented on "Coping with Disasters: Biopsychosocial and Spiritual Impact".

On May 1, 2006, the Armenian American Society for Studies on Stress & Genocide held a **Generational Transmission workshop** in Burbank, CA. The workshop was entitled Generational healing after mass trauma: The case of Armenian survivors of the Ottoman Turkish Genocide. Read more about this event at www.meaningfulworld.com.

In June 2006, the **Worldwide Network for Gender Empowerment** (WNGE) had its annual board meeting. WNGE is a community of networks of scholars and activists from around the world, who are committed to research and action in support of knowledge and change, related to women's and gender issues. For more information on this organization go to <http://www.fielding.edu/wnge/index.htm>

On July 8th 2006, a diverse group of 16 self-identified healers gathered at Fordham University's Lincoln Center to attend Dr. Anie Kalayjian's **Post-Traumatic Healing & Meaning-Making workshop**. Intended to disseminate information about the psychosocial effects of natural disasters in world communities, share personal field experiences and begin training attendees to work with traumatized populations in the hope of

recruiting future volunteer participants. To read a press release about our last training see: <http://www.meaningfulworld.com/index.php>

On July 20, 2006, Dr. Kalayjian attended the **26th International Congress of Applied Psychology** in Athens, Greece. She presented on the Association for Trauma Outreach and Prevention's Post-tsunami Mental Health Outreach Project along with Judy Kuriansky, Beth Hedva, & Artemis Pippinelli.

On August 3, 2006, Dr. Kalayjian was invited to speak at **CUNY Dispute Resolution Consortium Breakfast Roundtable** on Trauma and transformation.

On August 10-13, 2006, Dr. Kalayjian attended the **2006 APA Convention New Orleans**. Dr. Kalayjian organized and chaired a symposium on "Disaster Responses around the World -- Social Justice Efforts and the "Psychosocial Recovery from Disaster: Lessons Learned from Recent Natural Disasters." She was a discussant on a panel on Disasters around the world: Social Justice Issues; she chaired a conversation hour on Disasters in the International Suite, presented on a panel on International Adoption on adopting children from Armenia, as well as participating on a panel discussion on Sex Trade Trafficking and the United Nation's involvement in the issue of trafficking women and children." For more information on other panels Dr. Kalayjian participated in please go to http://www.meaningfulworld.com/lectures_past.html.

Volunteer Opportunities

ASSOCIATION FOR TRAUMA OUTREACH AND PREVENTION (ATOP)

*All internships are conducted under the supervision of Dr. Anie Kalayjian - Founder and Director of the ATOP

The following positions are available:

Fundraising Intern

- Assist with current fundraising initiatives i.e. Katrina and Rita Hurricanes, and Earthquake in Pakistan
- Prepare tsunami drawings for auction
- Plan a fundraising event
- Contact local organizations for material donations, t-shirts, office supplies, etc.
- Contact corporate sponsors for grants and monetary donations in collaboration with PR.

Public Relations Intern

- Maintain and update list of contacts -news, past and future donors, volunteers, etc.
- Write and sent press releases, letters of solicitation, gratitude, invitation, updates, etc.
- Edit newsletter
- Maintain contact with country representatives from past outreach programs
- Contact local school/churches/hospitals to plan events, fundraisers, lectures, raise awareness
- Contact other similar not-for-profit organization for collaboration.

Videography and Photography Intern

- Edit tsunami video and create short film with raw footage
- Prepare video clips for website page
- Videotape and photograph events as needed
- Create short film with volunteer interviews
- Photograph members of committees for website and newsletter and photograph events of the Association.

Research Intern

There are several research projects available: Spirituality, tsunami follow-ups, earthquake in Pakistan, Hurricanes Andrew long term follow-up, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita immediate impact and one year follow ups, impact of long term trauma such as Genocide, Vicarious Traumatization, generational transmission, forgiveness, etc.

- Assist with obtaining information/literature regarding any current and ongoing research projects
- Enter data - SPSS
- Maintain list of relevant lectures, education opportunities, presentation/publication opportunities, etc.

* Any creative contributions are welcomed and greatly appreciated

Kindly send your resume and a short statement of purpose and length and kind of internship needed to:

Dr. Kalayjian: E-mail: kalayjiana@aol.com or akalayjian@meaningfulworld.com and follow up with a call to make an appointment at 201 941-2266.