



The Association for Trauma Outreach & Prevention (ATOP)

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Press Release

Meaningfulworld Ambassador Training Program: Self Care

Lyla Parvez

On Saturday, 26 September 2015, approximately 20 people gathered to be educated on humanitarian relief and self-care. The day included a presentation, visionary speaker on suicide bereavement, Heart-to-Heart Circle, Soul Surfing, the sharing of wisdom and encouragement for those expressing past traumas and essentially, acceptance, validation, empathy, and mindfulness. The tranquility and peacefulness ruminating throughout the space only strengthened the bond between the attendees, proving to be an open, loving and empathic space. Thus began the first day of Meaningfulworld Ambassador Training 2015-2016.

The United Nations has long been the poster child for positive political movement, international relief and is often the first responder to international traumas, whether natural or human-made. Through their unwavering support of the unification of nations they have established a framework of healthy assistance in the direst situations. Meaningfulworld is committed to a mutually beneficial, effective and advantageous collaboration with the United Nations, and has spearheaded Humanitarian Outreach Projects in over 45 countries around the world. The first training session of Meaningfulworld 2015-16 academic year provided an insight into the organization's framework, highlighting its collaborations with many likeminded organizations. Meaningfulworld provided attendees with an outline of the fundamental goals of the organization, the Sustainable Development Goals, the MHOP Project Goals and the SMART {(Specific) M (Measurable) A (Attainable) R (Reliable) and T (Timely)} goals. Additionally, information on the Mind, Body, Eco, Spirit Health Campaign was shared that was founded and spearheaded by Meaningfulworld.

Lorraine Simmons, Meaningfulworld VP of Clinical Programs, welcomed participants. She discussed the importance of filling out the pre workshop questionnaires provided to attendees, and emphasized the interactive nature of the workshop. **Dr. Ani Kalayjian** then led us into a grounding exercise, to achieve relaxation, mindfulness, connection with Mother Earth, and peacefulness within. **Dr. Kalayjian recited the following words, the philosophy that we all share at Meaningfulworld:**

*If I can throw a single ray of light across a darkened pathway of another
If I can aid some soul to clearer sight of like and responsibility,
And thus bless my brothers and sisters,
If I can wipe from any human cheek a tear,
I shall not have lived my life in vain while here.*

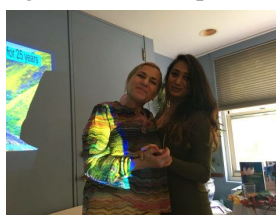
Raman Kaur, Meaningfulworld Ambassador in Teacher training, served as the facilitator for the workshop, highlighting various developmental research, gender issues, and self-care goals. She emphasized the impact of social support, cultural variables, developmental and moral stages, among various other related content on trauma healing, and self-care. The presentation was entitled: ***Self-care, Development, Meaning-Making, Mindfulness, and Integrative Healing***. The developmental research provided were Erickson's Eight Stages of Man (1998), Sullivan's 6 Developmental Stages (2013), and Kohlberg's 6 Stages of Moral Development (1971). Self-care goals included, but were not limited to, the 12 Steps for Happy, Healthy and Meaningful Life, Embracing Love and Forgiveness, Emerald Green Steps for a Healthy Planet, the 7 Steps for Empathetic Listening and the 7 Steps for Integrative Healing.



Raman Kaur



Dr. Ani Kalayjian



Dr. Ani Congratulating Raman

Joanne I. Harpel, M.Phil., J.D., our Visionary Speaker, spoke of suicide bereavement and psychoeducation. "About 90% of the people who commit suicide have some form of mental illness at the present time, some diagnosed some not diagnosed," lending credence to the statistic that mental illness when combined with suicide is an extremely volatile, debilitating, often life-threatening trauma. Case examples were provided of various individuals affected by suicide directly or indirectly, highlighting the various consequences and how to deal with feelings associated with suicide. Essentially, during health evaluations it is crucial to disclose any mental illness and/or suicide that occurred in the family for future generations.



Joanne I. Harpel – Visionary speaker



An organic, homemade and healthy lunch was then served, during which a film by Dr. Wayne W. Dyer, ***Ambition to Meaning: Finding Your Life's Purpose***, was screened. This film chronicled the lives of three diverse individuals, during which the essence of meaning and purpose of life was explained through the actions of all three individuals. As Dyer explains, in the present society ego means "who you are is what you have" as well as "what you do," this essentially equates to negative competition, promoting an unhealthy combative lifestyle.

Participants of this Continuing Education Training in Humanitarian Relief are required to present on their life and how they chose the path of Meaningfulworld. Two attendees, ***Irene Tananyan and Remi Alapo***, discussed their journey, respectively, one growing up as an Armenian in Moscow and migrating to USA and the other being of Nigerian descent, living in USA and serving in Haiti for two years. Their speeches were moving and provided an insight into their struggles, hardships, emotions, and ultimate life affirming goals. Both were in search of meaning, and finally found Meaningfulworld.



Irene Tananyan



Ubuntu Circle of Unity

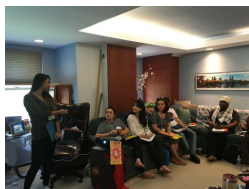


Remi Alapo

Raman Kaur then led us in a ***Soul Surfing***, energy balancing exercises, outdoors surrounded by trees. During the session, a lovely circle of openness and love was exhibited, while attendees were guided through body movements balancing the 7 chakras. During this exercise, attendees were asked to stretch in specific movements, which were associated with the 7 chakras; Root chakra, Sacred chakra, Solar Plexus chakra, Heart chakra, Throat chakra, the Third Eye chakra and Crown chakra. Through this exercise, attendees were able to experience each chakra, balance it, chant positive affirmations for further openness, became grounded, wholesome and relaxed.



Soul Surfing



Presentation



Soul Surfing

Group Healing, facilitated by Raman Kaur and Natalia Tomassini, provided a platform of disclosure, allowing participants to share their traumatic experiences, to release their emotions, to receive empathy and validation, to learn the lessons and discover meaning, to share resources, to connect with Mother Earth, and to release physical tensions. The 7 Step Integrative Healing Model was utilized. Multiple attendees opted to share past traumas, received much needed empathy, and released their pain and suffering. As one participant expressed “I am so grateful for having the opportunity to join such a force of Love for Healing, and as a commitment to loving myself more, I will commit myself to completing this training.” This session was followed by a 20 minute meditation, providing relaxation, integration, and peacefulness.

The last component of the training was ***Dr. Ani Kalayjian’s signature Heart-to-Heart Circle of Gratitude and Love***, where everyone held hands and placed their right hand on the heart of the person to their right. Dr Kalayjian, in a guided meditation, invited us to connect with the other, one heart at a time, and with each breath expanding our love and connection with all the hearts in the circle, then with all the hearts in New York State, then with all the hearts in USA, and then with all the hearts in the world, including animals and plants. Ubuntu circle of Oneness and Unity followed, ending with heart to heart hugs. Concluding the training, participants received certificates for their achievement in Self-Care program of Meaningfulworld. Next workshop is on 31 October; we welcome you all.



Heart-to-Heart Circle of Love



Group photo

Founded in 1990, Meaningfulworld, the Association for Trauma Outreach & Prevention (ATOP), affiliated with the United Nations, has achieved international recognition as a leader in training humanitarian outreach professionals as well as responding to two decades of global and local disasters. Meaningfulworld is committed to global education promoting state-of-the-art scientific theory, peace and consciousness research, 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 laypeople committed to service. Meaningfulworld Humanitarian Outreach teams make a daily difference in 45 countries in people’s lives helping to transform tragedy and trauma into healing through post-trauma growth, guidance, empowerment, mindfulness, and meaning-making through a new worldview. Ask yourself... Ask your friends... What makes your world more meaningful?

Our Motto: When one helps another, BOTH become stronger