



ATOP Meaningfulworld Monthly Workshop

Post Trauma Healing and Meaning-Making

Mandi Kollmeier and Dr. Ani Kalayjian

ATOP Meaningfulworld hosts monthly workshops for empowerment, healing, emotional intelligence, and mind-body-eco-spirit health. Our last workshop was on 27 March 2021 focusing on post-trauma healing and meaning-making. Each participant was invited to introduce oneself and envision that we are sitting in a circle. Dr. Meira Yasin, Educational Coordinator, began with a moment of silence. Dr. Ani Kalayjian followed with a poem about her life experiences as an Armenian-Syrian immigrant in the United States, entitled “I am a Syrian Refugee.” <https://meaningfulworld.com/news/blog/i-am-a-syrian-refugee>. These life experiences propelled her to dedicate her life to help those suffering to transform trauma into meaningful lessons.

After the poem, Dr. Kalayjian gave an informative and lively presentation that highlighted the post-trauma humanitarian missions we have conducted, as well as rehabilitation and meaning-making. Our work integrates education and outreach in 3-prong approach: 1. Education & Healing 2. Research & Publications, and 3. Policy revisions. Didactic lecture included suggestions to two natural resources that enhance well-being, such as turmeric and magnesium to address and heal inflammations and relax the body from negative emotions. Stress and other negative emotions have been shown to impact the physical well-being, and as such it is

important to heal from trauma to live a healthier life, as well as to ensure that trauma is not passed on to fourteen generations through DNA.

Dr. Yasin then welcomed our visionary speaker, Laura Cerrano, Feng Shui practitioner. Her presentation included eight categories to be mindful in our environment: 1. career changes and gratitude; 2. wisdom, knowledge, and spirituality; 3. family and new beginnings; 4. wealth and abundance; 5. reputation; 6. romance and relationships; 7. health, children, and creativity; and 8. helping people. By being mindful of all these aspects of our environment, we can balance ourselves better energetically, and perhaps be able to discover a new meaning in our lives. This wonderful presentation was followed by our interactive support group, based on the 7-step Integrative Healing Model (Kalayjian, 2017). <https://meaningfulworld.com/products-page/product-category/forget-me-not-7-steps-for-healing-our-body-mind-spirit-and-mother-earth>.

Group facilitators were Mandi Kollmeier and Diego Bustamante, Meaningfulworld Interns at the United Nations. The first three steps were focused on identifying our feelings, measuring our feelings, and describing and releasing them, to receive empathy and validation. Frequently expressed feelings were stress, anxiety, and worry. Many participants empathized and held group members in a safe and therapeutic environment of acceptance without judgment.

In step 4, where we shared lessons learned, based on Viktor Frankl's Logotherapeutic principles. Frequently expressed lessons learned were: Sharing our feelings in a non-judgmental therapeutic environment is a helpful way to relieve it and accepting our past, and not fighting with it. If we do not have the non-judgmental friends, then we could use journaling, writing our feelings down, and sublimating through writing poetry, painting, or drawing.

As our motto affirms: Shared sorrow is half sorrow, while shared joy is double joy.

In step 5, we shared information and resources to help uplift and support one another. These resources were: a book on *Forget Me Not: 7 Steps for Healing our Body, Mind, Spirit and*

Mother Earth by Dr. Kalayjian, <https://meaningfulworld.com/products-page/product-category/forget-me-not-7-steps-for-healing-our-body-mind-spirit-and-mother-earth>;

essential oils such as lavender, rosemary, and turmeric to nurture our bodies, flower remedies such as mustard, star of Bethlehem, and White Chestnut, and the Headspace app for meditation and Gratitude app for practicing gratitude. Here are other resources provided by Meaningfulworld to our participants:

1. Here is a 10 minute film we prepared to help strengthen the immune system.

<https://youtu.be/WET34N9htNw>

2. When you cannot go out to parks or to gyms, due to physical distancing, we invite you to do this short exercise in the comfort of your own home called Soul-Surfing! For mind-body-eco-spirit health.

<https://youtu.be/nk-aedntLWs>

3. How to manage stress, worry, fear, and anxiety.

<http://voiceofarmenians.com/programs/dr-ani-kalayjian-how-to-manage-stress-and-anxiety-during-this-time-of-crisis>

4. How to manage fear, anxiety and distress in times of global pandemic! APodcast.com. Adrian Sinclair interviews Dr. Ani Kalayjian on integrative healing & discussing next steps “How do we transform crises into opportunity.”

<https://youtu.be/z7WJaeDN8i8>

5. What is after COVID-19? Nurturing Ecological Consciousness.

https://youtu.be/aC8XQ2Z_YGE

6. Host Daren Jaime sits down with the Founder of the Association for Trauma Outreach and Prevention (ATOP) Meaningful World, Dr. Ani Kalayjian discussing the systemic oppression affecting people of color, the psychological impact of COVID-19, and how people can deal with loneliness. <https://youtu.be/ur1m30vD90Y>

In step 6, we celebrate Mother Earth, and declare ways to nurture Mother Earth. The following were shared: going for walks and being one with nature, planting herbs and flowers, and opening a window to let in fresh air. As Hypocrites said, “Nature is our best medicine.”

After sharing our feelings of stress, anxiety, and gratitude, we invited participants to stand up and take an active part in our Soul-Surfing exercises and affirmations. Irene Tananian with the assistance of Dr. Kalayjian guided the Soul-Surfing experiential session.

We thank everyone who participated in our workshop and look forward to our next workshop on 24 April 2021 focusing on peace building, upholding United Nations declaration for Human Rights and the Genocide Convention. We also look forward to seeing you join our weekly zoom support groups on Thursdays at noon EST!

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View

Ani Barsamian

ATOP MeaningfulWorld

Dr. Ani Kalayjian - ATOP Meaningf...

Laura Cerrano

Lorraine Simmons

Irene T

Andrew Dolinar

Jorge Garcia

Isha Parupudi

Diego Bustamante

Vianca Soriano

Mandi Kollmeier

Rachel Davidovich

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