

Meaningful World

The Association for Trauma
Outreach & Prevention (ATOP)

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Mindful Leadership and Forgiveness

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Visionary Speaker Arthur Jaffe leading participants through various stretches.

What is mindful leadership? How do we forgive? These and other vital questions were taught and discussed on 26 February 2022 at our monthly educational workshop. **Dr. Kalayjian** recited her new poem entitled **War 2022**, that reflected on the stresses and experience of trauma considering the war in Ukraine. She reflected on the psychological toll of collective war trauma in addition to the collective trauma of COVID-19. She discussed the inability to manage emotions, generational trauma and how the world might be different if world leaders took time to reflect on consequences of war to the 7-generations to follow. The content and skills taught in Saturday's workshop are meant to ensure that the next generation of leaders are mindful and conscientious.

Following the poem, Dr. Kalayjian provided information on the many things that can contribute to stress in one's life including 5 kinds of trauma: horizontal, generational, individual, vicarious, and collective; and the 5 shadows: poverty, environmental catastrophe, religious extremism, and technology. To transform the negative impact of these shadows we could benefit from increasing our service to divine father and mother, self, family,

community, and global community.

When individuals succumb to high levels of stressors, they become fearful and angry. Fear, according to Dr. Kalayjian, is a natural emotion and it may protect us in small doses, while it's detrimental when it's in high doses. Experiencing and facing our fears head on provides us with an opportunity to grow. We want to be able to manage our fear and other negative emotions for our health and the wellbeing of humanity. Forgiveness is another strategy to decrease our negative emotions, as it releases the anger, while uplifting ourselves and others. According to Dr. Kalayjian, *"Forgiveness is shifting from the automatic ego reaction (hurting back) to a mindful response of empathy; considering that the other is ALSO a human being."* Dr. Kalayjian can be seen teaching the 7-steps for practicing forgiveness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfSdr8WDrSw>

What do religions say about forgiveness? All religions except Buddhism promote and talk about the importance of forgiveness. Buddhism emphasizes human ignorance, and the importance of achieving nirvana. Judaism and Islam have a set of conditions and steps to achieve forgiveness: Admit you were wrong, apologize, pay reparation, when possible, promise not to repeat, and then serve your community. While other religions like Christianity, Jainism, and Hinduism promote unconditional forgiveness, radical forgiveness, and have specified days and prayers to promote it.

Closely related to forgiveness is development of mindful leadership through awareness. The 7 steps of generating awareness are

- 1) Assess your areas of development
- 2) Don't trust yourself when you know you are confused or conflicted
- 3) Don't be led astray by strong negative emotions like anger and fear
- 4) Transform past negative memories
- 5) Don't keep your feelings and thoughts bottled up
- 6) Don't harbor secrets
- 7) Resist images of worst-case scenarios (Chopra)

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is another method to nurturing mindful leaders:

1. NEVER stop learning
2. Watch the language
3. Build pathways
4. Get motivated to change
5. Train the gifted
6. Seek frank feedback
7. Gauge their awareness
8. Sniff out signals
9. Engage their demons
10. Let their guard down
11. Watch their culture
12. Find their voice
13. Know the score
14. Balance the load
15. Question authority, and
16. Surrender



Dr. Ani lecturing on forgiveness

Following this discussion, the group was led by our Visionary Speaker *Arthur Jaffe*, a Spiral Technique practitioner. He shared the science of the fascia (body's muscle tissue) and the importance of releasing trauma from our body to stay healthy. Arthur reminded us that sedentary lifestyles are extremely dangerous as they do not stimulate the muscle, which can lead to degenerating quicker and increasing the risk of injury. Arthur demonstrated several stretches to incorporate in our daily routine especially before sleeping in addition to eating fresh food and maintaining a healthy pH level. These stretches are called: Candle pose, proposal pose, and dead roach. Arthur also shared a book by Ming Chew, the *Permanent Pain Cure*, to help follow up with the recommended stretches.

After Arthur's demonstrations the group sat in a circle for a support group facilitated by *Nola Sheehan*, Meaningfulworld Intern at the United Nations. Participants expressed emotions such as guilt, frustration, worry, anxiety ranging from 3 to 6 levels on a scale of 1-10. As the support group progressed, empathy was shared, and lessons learned, there was a significant decrease in the negative emotions (down to 1-3). Some of the lessons learned included: the importance of exercising your mind, how being vulnerable is important in helping you work through emotions, and how sharing and empathizing can help decrease sadness.

Lastly, Dr. Kalayjian led us through our Soul-Surfing exercises focused on realigning the energy in the body's 7-energy centers (chakras). Each range of motion corresponds to a particular chakra, each chakra is represented by a certain color, and responsible to several organs. With mindful breathing, we stretched our body, and chanted specific affirmations corresponding to each energy center. The 7-chakras are Root Chakra, located at the base of the spine; Sacral Chakra, at the lower abdomen, Solar Plexus is above the navel and directly in the stomach area; Heart Chakra is at the center of the chest, Throat Chakra is in the throat area; the Third Eye Chakra is in the center of our forehead between our eyebrows; and the Crown Chakra, is located at the top of our head. We concluded with our signature **Heart-to-Heart-Circle of Love and Gratitude**, and a short meditation.



Presentation of the Certificate of Gratitude for Visionary Speaker Arthur Jaffe

On behalf of Meaningfulworld I express deep gratitude to all attendees, our Visionary Speaker, Arthur Jaffe, our facilitator, and all our supporters. Kindly do not miss our next workshop on 26 March, which will focus on ***Self-Care, Resilience, Mindfulness & PTG.***

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 and a half decades of global and local disasters. ATOP is committed to health, justice, peace, transformation and global education promoting state-of-the-art scientific theory on 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 of the self and humanity. Meaningfulworld Humanitarian Outreach Teams have helped rehabilitate survivors from over 48 countries and 26 states in USA, making a daily difference in people's lives and 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, artful collaborations, and establishing Peace & Forgiveness Gardens to create a new and Meaningfulworld view. We work locally and globally in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, the Middle East, The Caucuses, Europe, and South and North America.

Our Motto: When one helps another, BOTH become stronger