

Meaningful World

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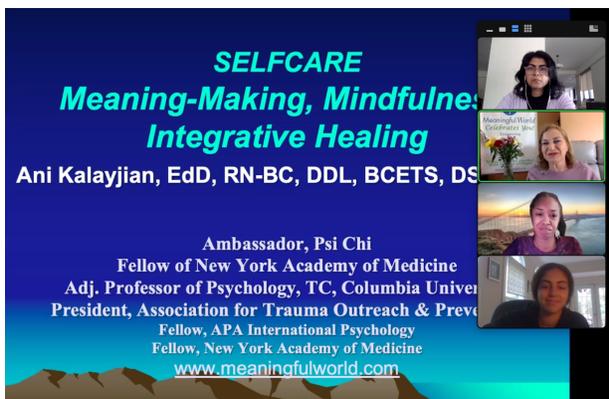
Self-Care and Healing Trauma Workshop 24 September 2022

Kristina Khrimian

We've all heard that self-care is important. At your doctor's appointment, maybe your physician recommends that you take more time to relax and recharge. After a harsh day at work, maybe your friends tell you to go on a walk outside. Whatever it is, we can probably agree that self-care is beneficial to our mind, body, spirit... but what exactly is it? And why is it important?

On Saturday, 24 September 2022, MeaningfulWorld's self-care and trauma healing workshop was a great success. Ms. Bhawna Bhardwaj (Ed-coordinator) began the workshop with a moment of silence. Dr. Ani Kalayjian (Founder and President) then shared a poem she wrote entitled 'fireworks' and elicited on how fireworks are like life itself ([access the poem here](#)). We start with passion and excitement, but then we may get bored, distracted, or clouded. Transitioning to the first objective, which was to identify the importance of self care, she discussed how to release one's emotions via talking with an empathic person, or writing in a journal, thereby letting go of the emotional waste and negative thoughts. Doing so helps to first detox the mind, followed by reframing it to a more positive state. Other examples of self-care include consistent exercise plan, 7-10 hours of sleep each night, proper nutrition, connecting with Mother Earth, and mindful meditation.

Next, we learned about the various developmental stages of life (Sullivan and Erickson). As people grow older, their age will continuously correspond to a certain developmental crisis. Traumatic events and crises challenge & stunt our development. These traumas may be human-made (war, abuse), natural (hurricanes, earthquakes), or even accidental (crashes). Resultantly, a common effect of trauma is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), but the positive side is that proper social support and healing can provide long-lasting benefits, which is called Post Traumatic Growth (PTG).



SELFCARE
Meaning-Making, Mindfulness,
Integrative Healing
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Dr. Ani then presented the 7-step Integrative Healing Model. It consists of assessing the levels of traumatic stress, expressing our feelings, seeking empathy and validation, discovering a positive meaning, gathering information, connecting with Mother Earth, and breathing deeply and movement exercises such as Yoga or our own special integrative model Soul-Surfing ([access the Soul-Surfing video here](#)). For this reason, it is crucial to evaluate one's emotions on a daily basis in order to become aware of them, and find ways to release and learn positive lessons.

Our Visionary Speaker was Dr. Douglas Scherer, who is experienced in multiple paths of technology leadership, learning, and healing. He is the author of the book F.O.R.G.E.D., which explains how leaders develop the attitudes, values, and approaches that will serve them well as they execute their roles. Dr. Scherer began by sharing a story about distress and suffering, while encouraging spreading compassion to others in pain. He guided us through a beautiful meditation, which focused on moderating the breath and thinking and moving openly. He also promoted self-care through Qi gong, which uses breath and movements to bring positive energy and to find freedom within.



Following a relaxing meditation, participants practiced empathy by openly sharing their emotions in a safe, non-judgmental therapeutic milieu. Each individual shared their feelings, while receiving validation and empathy from the others. It was found that most people who attended the workshop ended with lower negative feelings (such as anxiety, disappointment, sadness, etc) compared to the start of the session.

MeaningfulWorld also began free weekly zoom support groups in March of 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, and is continuing the practice to support people locally and globally.

Overall, the self-care and trauma healing workshop was very empowering. It contributed to a more healthy and peaceful state of the mind, body, and soul. Looking back at the wonderful time spent during the workshop, one can conclude that practicing self-care is important because it helps understand where negative emotions originate, how to release them, thereby reducing stress as we reframe our experiences.

In conclusion, self-care can include writing down thoughts and feelings in a journal, meditating, practicing empathy, Soul-Surfing, and mindfulness meditation. Our next workshop is on 29 October, focusing on Disaster Relief, Meaning-making, and Post-Traumatic Growth.

Our Motto: When one helps another, BOTH become stronger

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 49 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 Caucasus, Europe, and South and North America.