

AMERICAN GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY ASSOCIATION, INC.

25 East 21st Street, 6th Floor

New York, NY 10010 (212) 477-2677

Toll Free: (877) 668-AGPA (2472) Fax: (212) 979-6627

E-mail: info@agpa.org Website: www.agpa.org

Dear Colleagues:

Just before the Christmas holiday, Bob Klein submitted a letter to the New York Times in response to the front page article "A Flood of Troubled Soldiers is in the Offing, Experts Predict" (published December 16th). This letter to the Editor was printed (December 30th) and indicated that group treatment developed historically and has been particularly useful when casualty rates have threatened to overwhelm existing mental health resources. Little did we know that just a few short days later the worst natural disaster in terms of casualties in our lifetimes was about to occur.

Since the December 26th tsunami, we have been coordinating AGPA's contribution to the relief efforts. As you know, the death toll continues to rise with the numbers already exceeding 150,000. This is an overwhelming devastating tragedy. Our recent 9/11 experiences have prepared us to be able to provide direct clinical services to victims, training for those on the front lines, and support and supervision for the caregivers. There is little doubt that there will be enormous need for these and other services. Now the primary focus is on providing food and water, shelter, medical supplies and care, etc. However, already the focus has begun to include the psychological needs of those who have survived.

Next week, AGPA will release ten modules in a Trauma Training Manual developed as a result of our 9/11 experiences. These modules have already been shared with an AGPA member who is en route to India. Other inquiries from India as well as Thailand are in the process of being responded to and the trauma training materials and other resource materials are being sent as requests come through. Several of us are willing to be on call for support and supervision as well. We are in the process of reaching out to IAGP, the Red Cross, others involved in the relief efforts, personal contacts, and association members in those areas that have been most affected. The media have also been in contact with us to enlist our members' expertise for commentary. Our Community Outreach Task Force, under the leadership of Jeff Kleinberg and Kathy Ulman, is working to insure an AGPA coordinated response.

We believe it is appropriate for all of us in AGPA to take whatever part we can in contributing to the relief efforts. The purpose of this note is to try to assess our members' capacity to become involved in relief efforts initiated by AGPA, or anything we do in conjunction with other organizations to coordinate efforts. As is always the case in situations like this, personal contacts can be quite valuable. In this immediate period, please let us know whether you have contacts that will further facilitate the contribution of our expertise. That may include those in agencies and governmental units involved in the relief effort here and abroad, local community groups sustaining losses, etc.

Several of our members already have expressed interest in joining whatever contribution we are able to mount. We know that we can count on your support as we move forward. Let's be sure to keep one another informed as needs arise.

Robert Klein, Ph.D., CGP, FAGPA

AGPA President

And

Marsha S. Block, CAE, CFRE

AGPA Chief Executive Officer