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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AMERICAN GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY ASSOCIATION OFFERS RESOURCES TO MANAGE STRESS DURING DIFFICULT ECONOMIC TIMES

NEW YORK, Dec. 4, 2008 – In the midst of the volatility of the national and global economies, the American Group Psychotherapy Association (AGPA) reminds the public, mental health clinicians, and media that it offers on its website – www.agpa.org a wide-range of resources on managing stress through group interventions. The continuing instability of the economy can be experienced as a traumatic event by many people and as such can result in symptoms such as anxiety, feelings of vulnerability or helplessness, outrage and anger and can be accompanied by additional stressors such as insomnia, family strife and substance abuse (particularly for those with a history of such abuse).

Many of the coping mechanisms for dealing with trauma are useful in this current situation, including:

- Realizing that most reactions to stressful events are normal
- Paying attention to one's reactions and feelings and putting experiences into words
- Avoid downplaying or minimizing what is happening
- Seek the support of friends and family as well as those who have had similar experiences
- Manage anxiety in practical ways by seeking expertise and guidance from trusted advisors such as accountants and job recruiters
- If faced with the prospect of unemployment, see the layoff as not based on one's performance but rather on the economic downturn; engage in a resume update and networking and other tangible activities
- If necessary, consult with a mental health professional; support groups can be very beneficial in times of major stressors

The AGPA website contains a number of other resources, including feature articles directed towards the public which provide tools for recognizing trauma and stress, suggestions on finding an appropriate caregiver (including an online database of Certified Group Psychotherapists searchable by geographic location) and coping strategies. Resources for mental health practitioners include guidelines on using group psychotherapy as a trauma and stress treatment tool and information on how caregivers can make sure to care for themselves.

“The severity of the economic crisis has affected all of our lives,” said Jeff Kleinberg, Ph.D., CGP, FAGPA, AGPA President-Elect and noted trauma expert. “AGPA is dedicated to providing supportive tools for the public and the professional mental health community as well as information and resources to media outlets which they can share during these challenging times.”

For more information on group interventions to respond to trauma and stress, please contact Diane Feirman, CAE, at (212) 877-668-AGPA (2472) or via e-mail at dfeirman@agpa.org.

About AGPA

The American Group Psychotherapy Association is the foremost professional association dedicated to the field of group psychotherapy, operating through a tri-partite structure: AGPA, a professional and educational organization; the Group Psychotherapy Foundation, its philanthropic arm; and the National Registry of Certified Group Psychotherapists, a standard setting and certifying body. This multidisciplinary association has approximately 3,000 members, including psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurses, clinical mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists, pastoral counselors and creative arts therapists, many of whom have been recognized as specialists through the Certified Group Psychotherapist credential. The association has 31 local and regional societies located across the country. Its members are experienced mental health professionals who lead psychotherapy groups and various non-clinical groups. Many are organizational specialists who work with businesses, not-for-profit organizations, communities and other "natural" groups to help them improve their functioning.

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