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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AGPA MEMBERS PROVIDE TRAUMA TRAINING AND PEER SUPPORT “VIRTUALLY” TO CLINICIANS IN MUMBAI, INDIA

NEW YORK, Feb. 5, 2009 – Thirty-five mental health professionals in Mumbai, India who are providing services in response to the terror attacks were trained in advanced trauma work and self-care on Friday, January 30, 2009 by specialists thousands of miles away in New York City. Working in a virtual classroom, made possible by Skype, trauma experts from the American Group Psychotherapy Association (AGPA), a national professional organization of more than 3,000 group clinicians, served as trainers and a source of peer support for these distant peers carrying out extremely difficult work.

“We had a collaborative and connective experience that was larger than the distance,” said Dr. Suzanne Phillips, Co-Chair of AGPA’s Community Outreach Task Force. “Working with our colleagues in Mumbai in planning and carrying out this training was a valuable experience for both groups.”

The mental health professionals in Mumbai wanted to increase their skill in providing a response to a traumatic situation as intense as the terrorist event while also insuring their ability to care for themselves in doing this difficult work.

“Friday’s experience was one of a kind,” said Siddharth Ashvin Shah, M.D., M.P.H., AGPA Member and Medical Director of Greenleaf Integrative Strategies, who coordinated the training from India. “The training and the enduring compassionate touch from the presenters together is something I and the attendees will carry with us as we do this work.”

Additional presenters included Robert Klein, Ph.D., ABPP, CGP, DLFAGPA of Connecticut, a former President of AGPA and Jeffrey Kleinberg, Ph.D., CGP, FAGPA, of Manhattan and Peekskill, NY and AGPA President-Elect.

The Group Psychotherapy Foundation’s goal is to continue this valuable work in India, China and other areas in need. To support this work, please visit our website at www.agpa.org to make a contribution to the Disaster Response Fund.

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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