

Transforming Horizontal Violence in the Middle East in Israel, Palestine, Jordan, and Lebanon through Forgiveness and Peace Gardens

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We will share ATOP Meaningfulworld's latest humanitarian mission to the Middle East: Israel, Palestine, Jordan, and Lebanon to promote peace, healing and transforming humiliation to dignity through forgiveness. Most of communities we worked with are characterized by chronic trauma due to prolonged and continuous exposure to conflict, war, poverty, and oppression. We will highlight the perspectives and experiences of the vulnerable and marginalized groups including children, women, students, prisoners, and refugees; and the challenges to envisioning and embodying peace and forgiveness in the midst of ongoing conflict. The modality of the outreach was based in multicultural approaches to health, healing, peace-building, and happiness grounded in the 7-step Integrative Healing Model (Kalayjian, 1999, 2002, 2012) and made possible with the collaboration and partnership of community leaders, non-profit organizations, academia, governments and the media. Our assessment shows that although people appear to cope with the extreme stressors there seems to be high levels of suffering, high levels of trauma and humiliation, and hopelessness for any positive change. We will conclude with recommendations for research, clinical practice and policy revisions especially placing emphasis on the United Nations Declaration for Human Rights, as well as the United Nations Day on Happiness.

The Association for Trauma Outreach and Prevention (ATOP) Meaningfulworld has received international recognition responding to two decades of global and local disasters. Meaningfulworld Humanitarian Outreach teams have helped rehabilitate survivors from over 45 calamities, helping to transform trauma of into healing and meaning-making through post trauma growth, resilience, emotional intelligence, mind-body-eco-spirit health, forgiveness, empowerment and artful collaboration through a new world view. ATOP Meaningfulworld's global presence aims to raise consciousness and nurture resilience and sustainability among local and global communities. We will offer insight into the development of remedies focusing on collective and individual needs with the promotion of health, unity, and peace by mind, body, and spirit integration. Special addition is our Forgiveness & Peace Gardens that we helped develop around the globe to help bring in an added mindfulness to the practice of peace.