

Trauma Recovery Team, New Zealand

Helping Samoa overcome trauma

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For Immediate Release

Lest we forget Samoa - Raising funds for Trauma Recovery

Following the tsunami that hit the southern coast of Samoa on 29 September 2009, many of the thousands of people affected are still suffering from depression, PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), insomnia, delirium and aggression. It was reported late last year that many communities have taken to the hills and are fearful of rebuilding in coastal areas.

At the invitation of the Samoan Ministry of Health, a team of New Zealand and international therapists will travel to Samoa on 25 February to train local mental health workers and counsellors, and work one-on-one with those requiring help.

The project has had some initial sponsorship (for an initial trip last December to meet with the agencies requiring help) from the Flight Centre, Air New Zealand and Aggie Grey's Lagoon Beach Resort and Spa in Apia.

The team now requires donations to fund their full trip in February. Funds raised will cover costs of flights, airport transfers/parking, island transportation, administration, etc. Accommodation is being provided by Aggie Gray's.

The Trauma Recovery Team is a group of nationally and internationally certified Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) Master Practitioners and Trainers experienced in working with victims of trauma, using ground-breaking techniques that provide profound and lasting relief from trauma and PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder).

The techniques the team employs have been shown to be the most effective solution to treating PTSD in war zones, and following the 9-11 events in the US.

Supporting research includes that of Dr David Muss who worked with 70 members of the British West Midlands Police Force, all of whom had witnessed major disasters such as the Lockerbie air crash. Of this group 19 qualified as having PTSD. The time between trauma and treatment varied from six weeks to ten years. All participants reported that after an average of three sessions they were completely free of intrusive memories and other PTSD symptoms. For most, one session was enough to solve the problem. Follow-up ranged from 3 months to 2 years, and all gains were sustained over that time (Muss, 1991). "This kind of success is almost unprecedented in the field of psychotherapy." says Dr Richard Bolstad, NLP Trainer.

Research is being started in the US following clinical use after 9-11, where NLP protocols relieved PTSD symptoms over 80% of the time in two to four hours. Cognitive-Behavior Therapy, the best of the researched methods, is effective 32% of the time and takes four to nine months (Frank Bourke, Ph.D. & Richard F. Liotta, Ph.D.).

NLP stands for Neuro Linguistic Programming, the study of excellence in a range of areas including therapy, personal change, communication and education. While NLP is still considered by many in New Zealand to be new and alternative, it is well established in other parts of the world, particularly in Europe where it is part of University programmes and national health services.

"Our mission is about helping people heal themselves so they in turn can begin rebuilding their communities" says Rachel Papaconstantinou, whose brainchild the project is.

ENDS

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You can find out more about our work at www.traumarecoveryteam.org.nz and about NLP at www.nzanlp.org.nz