

Dear ACEP members:

With the recent events in the US following Katrina, many members have been wondering how we can help. Here are our recommendations:

NATIONALLY:

- We do not recommend that psychotherapists travel to the sites directly affected by Katrina. Housing is so scarce that FEMA has already been criticized for taking motel rooms from families in need who had been residing there. Also, unless there is a request from a local sponsoring organization, there is no certainty that the therapists would be utilized. A recent article by a Harvard psychologist assailed psychotherapists' response to 9/11, noting that for many weeks following the attacks in New York, there were more therapists than patients present. The victims were more concerned with immediate needs such as food, housing, medical treatment and infrastructure than they were with being treated for any psychological issues. Additionally, the available science suggests that early interventions may do more harm than good, both because some people seem to do better if they avoid talking about their recent traumatic memories, and because some early intervention may prevent individuals from recovering more naturally with the help of their community and themselves. We can remind ourselves that most people (perhaps 85%) will recover from Katrina on their own. Most people are resilient.
- We have been told that TFT/EFT has been used in all **Green Cross** deployments to traumatized areas. Due to the urgent need, Green Cross is now offering provisional certification. Please go to <http://www.greencross.org/katrina.htm> for more information and to sign up. Then write info@gcprojects.org to let Karen know you are ready to deploy. Once you are in you can seek info on deployment availability at deploy@gcprojects.org.

LOCALLY:

Much can be done on the local level, in part because many Katrina survivors are moving to other geographic areas, in part because networking is easier on a one-to-one, local basis. Some suggestions:

- Our experience tells us to **be tentative and cautious** in offering assistance; when we do, we can inform people that 'we have treated persons in similar situations with EP and often found the results to be very positive'. It is important not to promise too much, and to avoid even the appearance of imposing treatment on others. See above: some people are better off when they avoid thinking of the critical event. However, if someone requests your assistance, we believe that request deserves a response.
- If your area has a **critical response team, contact them**. The main goal at first might be to network, to build relationships, to gain trust, to get to know the front-line providers. You can also quietly and respectfully inquire about their openness to counselors, therapists, energy psychology, and so forth.
- The local **Red Cross** is an alternative contact group, and can be asked the same questions. If they are skeptical of EP or therapy, the first job would be to educate them. They can make or break a therapeutic response.
- Feel free to **offer information**, either through stories from people you have treated, or by offering written information. Offer to demonstrate the EP techniques, and offer to train emergency personnel.
- Be alert to the needs of **emergency crews and first responders** as well as to the direct victims of the hurricane. Look for ways to introduce the notion of vicarious trauma/compassion fatigue. Use your best clinical hunches to decide if and how to offer them a brief treatment using an EP approach. Using normalizing words such as "stress reduction," "relaxation techniques," and "a simple method for staying balanced amidst all of this chaos" will probably be more welcomed than words such as "trauma."

ACEP RESPONSE:

- Humanitarian Director John Hartung will send to anyone interested a **free copy of a book** he has published that describes TAT, EFT, TFT, and several other brief treatments. He has used this in

several countries affected by the Asia tsunami and the response suggests that the book is easy to follow and can be employed for self-use. The book could be copied in sections so that a pared-down, simple version of EP techniques could be available in a small booklet.

- ACEP will create a Web page with links to any member's website that provides free information, whether it is demonstration of a technique, or a free downloadable brochure, video, training etc. Please contact our Communications Director Maryam Webster at communication_director@energypsych.org if you would like your website to be linked. Rather than listing all of our generous members, we will also refer victims to our membership directory, and you can individually decide if you would also provide a free consultation. As you know, you can use your password and edit your own listing at any time, adding this information.
- Beginning Friday, September 17, and every Friday thereafter, ACEP will sponsor a free one-hour **teleconference** to help spread the word about Energy Psychology and trauma. You can call in and ask questions or share ideas, and help anyone who calls in for information or referrals. We may also do some simple tapping work in a borrowing benefits type style. See www.energypsych.org for dates, times and phone numbers. This project **needs YOU** to help staff these lines! If you are an ACEP member who really wants to help the victims of the hurricane and practices EP, or who works with groups, or knows how to conduct Borrowing Benefits type gatherings, please contact Maryam Webster at communication_director@energypsych.org to volunteer.
- ACEP continues to **network** with Green Cross and other humanitarian organizations. Although gaining acceptance, some of these organizations are cautious about Energy Psychology and are looking for some type of "certification" in Energy Psychology, which is why ACEP is working so diligently on that project. As these humanitarian projects unfold, we will send an email out to the membership asking for volunteers. In the meantime, if you have time to assist John Hartung in organizational or networking efforts, contact him at humanitarian_director@energypsych.org. We need you.
- Any **economic assistance** will be appreciated to cover ACEP's direct costs for humanitarian efforts. All treatment services will be provided by volunteers, and reimbursable expenses will be limited to actual overhead costs (website, at-cost books, rental for training sites, etc.).

If you are wishing to donate, please send a check payable to **ACEP Humanitarian Fund**, P.O. Box 910244, San Diego, CA 92191-0244. You can fax Visa or MC info to Tamra Rutherford at 760-804-3704. We will send you a confirmation letter for tax purposes. I can personally promise you that the funds will only be used for humanitarian projects, and our books are open for your review at any time.

Please consider your present efforts on a local level to be a possible investment in the future. Our experience has also been that several weeks or months following the crisis, persons who continue to show signs of posttraumatic stress will often seek help. If at that later time local sponsors, emergency workers, or the victims themselves have already established a relationship with you, it is that much more likely they will look to you for assistance when it becomes timely.

For example, the ACEP Humanitarian Director, John Hartung, recently returned from Asia where he trained providers in four countries affected by the tsunami. Eight months after the earthquakes and tsunami is not too late: people at all of the tsunami sites are actively seeking assistance, and provider groups are highly motivated to learn EP techniques to help them in their other work. You might keep in mind that the best contribution you will offer may be several months from now. Our best conclusion from all of this is that we attend both to immediate needs, and to the longer term which may be the time when our services as EP practitioners will be most needed and requested.

Finally, we all know the power of our focused intentions and heartfelt prayer. In unity, our hearts and prayers go out to all the people affected by this and other tragedies. I promise to keep you posted as we continue to make our methods available for the healing of mankind.

Namaste,

Mary Sise.LCSW
ACEP President