

ATFT's Trauma Relief Team

The Third Time's a Charm (Just like the First and the Second)

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QUESTION:

Why would a busy Psychologist from Honolulu Hawaii, and another busy Psychologist from West Los Angeles California, and an equally busy Clinical Social Worker from Sedona AZ leave their envied tourist-destination environments, hop on a series of planes and head for the once-tourist- destination but now bruised and battered city of New Orleans? And for the third time this year?

No, we weren't mad. We were in love. After two previous visits this year we had fallen in love with the people and the city of New Orleans. And if we had had any doubts about the wisdom of this third visit, they disappeared as the three of us looked at the sea of faces that had gathered to attend our second algorithm training given free of charge this year to helping professionals in this traumatized city.

We were at Oschner Hospital looking out at 63 faces eager to learn how to use Thought Field Therapy to help themselves and to help others. Some of the attendees had heard about Thought Field Therapy after our ATFT sponsored trauma relief team effort earlier this year when in January, the ATFT team reached out to Medical Doctors, Nurses, Social Workers and New Orleans City Police, who had experienced trauma first hand and then experienced secondary trauma as they continued to help others in the aftermath of Katrina. The ATFT team's main focus had been Charity Hospital, where over 100 employees were treated in a series of brief presentations followed by individual TFT treatments.

The TFT Treatments had been so popular that the ATFT trauma relief group was asked to do an encore at Charity Hospital before the January ATFT deployment came to an end.

Caroline Sakai, PhD; Nora Baladerian, PhD and had proudly participated in this first official ATFT deployment. Some of the attendees peering up at us from the crowd gathered for the Oschner training had heard about TFT

from Charity Hospital employees and other medical professionals who attended the ATFT sponsored algorithm training at Charity Hospital earlier this March. The medical staff at Charity had requested the training so that



This is a picture from the January ATFT Trauma Relief deployment to New Orleans. We are standing in front of the New Orleans Convention Center where Charity Hospital was set up inside in MASH tents. A tent had been set aside for us to use to treat staff members. We gave 5 minute presentations on the hour followed by Thought Field Therapy® treatments.

From left to right are: Minnie O'Banner, MSSW (a local assistant volunteer), Nora Balderian, PhD., TFT-Dx (our team leader on the ground in New Orleans and bilingual consultant), Herb Ayers, MA, LMHC, TFT-Dx (our TFT media man), John Detillier, Jr., TFT-Dx, (local resident and volunteer), Suzanne Connolly, LCSW, LMFT, TFT-Dx (team trainer), Oneyda Maestas, TFT-Dx (our second bilingual representative), Lois Sugarman, RN, PhD, TFT-Dx (our team nurse 24/7), Paul Oas, PhD, TFT-Dx (team Chaplin), Caroline Sakai, PhD, TFT-Dx (assistant trainer and lead therapist), Melody Pritchard (our hostess and our liaison with Volunteers of America and Adult Protective Services), Ecoee Rooney, RN, MSN (our other hostess and Inservice Instructor at Charity Hospital), Dottie Webster, TFT-Dx (assistant trainer). Not pictured are Nikki Edwards, Nora Balderian's assistant who is taking the picture and Bette Dee Mule who is John Detillier's assistant.

A special thanks to Norma Gairdner, MA, DHMS, ATFT Trauma Relief Chairperson.

there would be Charity professionals readily available to continue offering Thought Field Therapy treatments to staff members. Dr Sakai and I presented this training and Dr. Baladerian simultaneously led the trauma relief efforts as this second ATFT trauma relief team also treated other helping professionals in the larger community.

The group before us now was composed of helping professionals from several different hospitals and other social service agencies.

Algorithm Trainers, Dr. Caroline Sakai, Dr. Nora Baladerian, PhD, and myself worked together in a way that seemed scripted (but wasn't) to present

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the two-day training. We explained, told stories, answered questions, explained again, supervised small group practice, explained again and did demonstrations. As always the real hit-of the day was Rosie who demonstrated that we are all connected and that the body's electrical system is very real indeed.

At the end of the two-day weekend training we knew that our work for this deployment had just begun. Our team leader Dr. Nora had not only managed to gather the 63 workshop attendees, but she had also promised the staff at Charity Hospital in Lafayette, Louisiana that we wouldn't leave them out.

The next day we took the two and one half hour drive to Lafayette with our fearless leader behind the wheel. Dr. Nora had agreed that we would treat employees at the Lafayette Campus of Charity Hospital, many of whom were displaced after Katrina and some of whom had stuck it out at Charity in

New Orleans when the levees broke and employees were trapped for almost an entire week. The over 20 employees we treated in Lafayette gave us overwhelmingly positive evaluations.

The next day it was off to Kingsley House, a large conglomerate of Social Service agencies such as Head Start, a day care program for the elderly, and Marriage and Family Services.

Caroline, Nora and I treated 53 people in individual 30-minute sessions during the one-day we were there. The helping professionals treated included Head Start teachers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Social Workers.

Diana Farthing, Associate Director for Administration for Kingsley House recently emailed: "If you all plan to come back again in the future, we would love to have you back. Our staff is over 100 and we have several tenants, so we probably could fill at least a half day in the future, maybe an entire day."

"Thanks, again. The growing mental health needs in the area are being recognized more and more -- we appreciate your help for caregivers, donating your time and expertise to assist a community that is resilient but definitely needs support."

Daina's e-mail reflected the tone of the many Thank You's our group received verbally, via formal letters and e-mails.

"If you all plan to come back again in the future, we would love to have you back."

Daina Farthing, Associate Director for Administration for Kingsley House

It was my last day in New Orleans (Caroline and Nora were staying on for another day) and time for a night out on the town. While driving around the French Quarter, Caroline hinted that she would like to see the water. This water turned out to be the Mississippi River and we were all excited to take a look.

Nora spotted a white car and said, "Maybe I'll follow that car. They look like they know where they're going." I wisely observed, "It's going somewhere!" Caroline smiled.

Soon we found ourselves laughing hysterically on a ferry unexpectedly crossing the Big Muddy. It was a great view of the City and after a very brief stay on the West Bank (of the Mississippi that is), we re-crossed the river and found a very good place to eat. I commented on what a noisy restaurant we had chosen. Caroline pointed out that with all our laughing about the impromptu ferry ride, we were actually the noisiest group at the Red Fish Grill.

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