

Trauma Recovery Volunteers

Marawi, Lanao del Sur – January 14 to 21, 2018

SITUATION:

As a result of the 5-month siege by ISIS extremists, the City of Marawi was heavily damaged and more than 300,000 Internally Displaced People (IDPs) suffered from war shock. There was more than a thousand casualties and thousands more injured, resulting to physical, mental and spiritual trauma.



“The battle left the city in ruins with 95 percent of the structures within the 4 square kilometers (1.5 sq mi) of the main battle area to be heavily damaged or completely collapsed.”



SOLUTION:

Trauma Recovery Volunteers was formed to address the situation. We are comprised of 13 professionals from different fields who are trained in trauma relief methodology and made a commitment to help lessen the pains and sufferings of our Muslim brothers and sisters.

In cooperation with The Way to Happiness Philippines Foundation, Department of National Defense, Mindanao State University, Department of Internal and Local Government, and Philippine National Police – 2 training sessions were conducted to train individuals in applying the therapy techniques of Assists (Contact, Nerve, Touch and Locational Process), Dianetics peer-to-peer counseling, and The Way to Happiness moral recovery.



"Briefing for Marawi volunteers at Dianetics Philippines office."



"Volunteers preparing materials for Trauma Recovery Training in Marawi."

JANUARY 14:

We left Manila through the use of military plane C130, courtesy of Department of National Defense and Philippines Air Force, bound for Laguindingan Airport which is 100 kilometers from Marawi. We arrived late afternoon at Iligan, where we were housed by Mindanao State University.



“Trauma Recovery Volunteers arrival at Laguindingan Airport.”

JANUARY 15:

Early morning, we traveled from Iligan to Mindanao State University Marawi Campus where our first training will be held. Mindanao State University Marawi is a stone’s throw away from the Ground Zero where the militants were holed up during the siege.



We were provided with military escorts to ensure our safety as militants are still active in some areas of Marawi, still recruiting members in the name of violent extremism.

First batch of Trauma Recovery Training was conducted inside one of the buildings of Mindanao State University, the CHARM building (College of Hotel And Restaurant Management). Attendees were composed of more than a hundred faculties, teachers, admin staff and students of MSU. Materials were given to them to be used as guide in the training.



Most of them have been directly affected by the siege – their houses completely destroyed, they sheltered inside the campus as the fight was ongoing and witnessed the bombing of their city. Because of this, they saw the need for this kind of training for them and they were eager to learn.

We were introduced to the attendees by Dr. Samson Anonas, Assistant to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. We started off by emphasizing that our group is non-religious, non-political and non-sectarian and that we were there to help them deal with the trauma using 3 steps approach:

1. Immediate relief from “Physical Injuries, Stress and Illnesses” through touch healing techniques known as “ASSISTS”.
2. Removal of deep-seated traumatic experiences using peer-to-peer counseling called “DIANETICS”.
3. Moral recovery and ethics as a long-term solution to the violent extremist ideology through the use of the book “THE WAY TO HAPPINESS”.

ASSISTS TRAINING:

Assists are simple techniques that can be used immediately to someone suffering from a physical pain or mental stress. They “assist” the individual in healing himself by increasing his communication and awareness of his body and environment.

Four different kinds of Assists were taught to the attendees – Contact, Nerve, Locational Process and Touch. They are applicable to persons who has injuries, headache, can’t sleep, under shock or panic, pain, grief, fever, and much more.

After teaching each Assist, a demonstration was done and then practicals as needed for them to have personal experience how each Assist works and feels. Participants reported feeling very relaxed doing the Nerve Assist demonstration as that is the primary purpose of that Assist. They were in awe on the simpleness and ease of application.

Attendees were encouraged to apply what they have learned to their families when they get home that night to have more certainty about the workability of the Assists.



“Nerve Assist demonstration and practicals of the participants.”

DIANETICS TRAINING:

After lunch, we started with the Dianetics trauma counseling – the methodology to go deep into the mind and remove the effect of the past traumatic experiences.

Instructional videos were played showing the theory and step-by-step procedure of Dianetics. After each video, there was a short discussion with the participants about each chapter. Questions and clarifications were answered by the lecturer to the satisfaction of the attendees.

When the videos were done, attendees partnered up to apply the basic procedure of Dianetics shown in the video. Dianetics is done with a friend who acts an auditor (Dianetics practitioner – one who listens and computes) while the other one acts as the patient. Trauma Recovery Volunteers helped guide their sessions, making sure the auditor is doing the procedure right and that the patient is getting the benefits of the therapy.

The sessions were done in English, Filipino and Visayan as materials translated to these languages/dialects were available for ease of communication between the participants.



Pain and trauma were released through the grief, tears and negative emotions until the person being processed felt those things disappear and were replaced by cheerfulness and laughter.

Thus, the first day ended – to be continued the next day.

FEEDBACK ON THE 1ST DAY:

- Prof. Rohanie Sultan, College of Education:

“This session taught us new knowledge, skills and attitude that are relevant to the current situation in Marawi City. Particularly in the family whom they need a lot of help emotionally and physically... I’m interested given the fact that my fellow Muslim’s and citizens need the help to overcome the pain and trauma they have experienced during the siege and the present time as their adjustment in the new lives.”

- Instructor Nico Caballes, College of Education:

“My favorite part of the training was learning the nerve assist because I learned to do the it and it was a stress relieving... This training was literally suited and important especially to the affected to the people in MARAWI city where people was in trauma and had difficulties to overcome it.”

- Intan Macabalang, College of Hotel and Restaurant Management

“As an auditor in Dianetics session, I have successfully done my part, followed the basic steps and procedures efficiently with extra care by using the Auditor’s Code. Fortunately, my preclear was so happy when the session ended... she felt happy no more pain, feels good! It was a very successful session though first timer but it helped.”

- Teresita Sanchez, College of Hotel and Restaurant Management

“The videos were clear, the lectures were fun and encouraging. The physical assists namely: contact, nerve assist, locational assist, touch assist. Especially the Dianetics of L. Ron Hubbard was releasing and very therapeutic. I will apply this to myself. Then to my children, friends, colleagues subjects and other friends who need help.”

- Professor Analyn Marjorie Padogdog

“I like the lecture on the different ways to lessen or totally heal the person who is suffering or experiencing pain. I really appreciate how contact assist, nerve assist, locational processing assist, touch assist, etc helped a lot in relaxing our body and letting git free from the pains it feels without taking medication that may cause adverse effect... On Dianetics, I really would like to apply it to my children and to my students for them to free themselves and let go of the pains they feel in the past.”

JANUARY 16:

Early morning, we started the second and last day of Trauma Recovery Training. A lot of the participants used the Assists they learned yesterday and reported tremendous success with the application.

One participant said she applied the Nerve Assist to her husband and children. Husband was skeptical in the beginning but requested for more after a round. He said he felt relaxed by the procedure. Her husband and children had a very relaxed sleep afterwards. Similar stories were told by the other trainees.

Department of Student Affairs, Guidance counselors and College of Education faculty were very interested and stating that this is what they really need in the school. They wanted to set up a separate Trauma Recovery training for the students and student leaders of MSU.

Professor Edgar Alvin Flores from College of Education said they want to have their own Dianetics Center in the campus and they want the Dianetics DVD filmed locally to connect more with the Filipinos.

We discussed the plan to have 20 of them trained in our Dianetics Center in Manila, for them to be certified Dianetics professionals to the creation of a Trauma Recovery Volunteer Center in Marawi – the first of its kind – responding to the needs of the people of Marawi and of Mindanao. It will be a source of livelihood at the same time with them capable of giving counseling sessions and trauma trainings.

Half of the attendees are interested with the proposed training as they can see the need of this technology in their area and be the pioneer in the region and in the Philippines. They want to go for training during summer break which is June and July.

Review of key videos then another round of Dianetics auditing followed as more pain and traumas were successfully released.

THE WAY TO HAPPINESS:

Dr. Jerry Perez de Tagle, National Chair of The Way To Happiness Philippines, graced us in the afternoon to teach The Way To Happiness based on a book with the same title.



He shared the success of other countries who used this book to drastically lower their crime rate, with an emphasis on the “Colombian Miracle”.

The 21 precepts of the book will serve as a replacement to the violent extremist ideology being endorsed by ISIS militants, starting with the students of MSU who are likely target candidates by the militants.

A video showing and discussion of the precepts ensued, giving some precepts special attention – such as “Take Care of Yourself” and “Respect the Religious Beliefs of Others”.

CLOSING:

We asked the participants to share what they have learned in the 2-day training for Trauma Recovery. One student opened up about how she realized that Dianetics therapy is very much needed in schools to lower the instances of suicides. She said that this is the answer to that problem.

A faculty member shared that she was very happy to have received a Dianetics session to one of our volunteers and she can't believe that she felt relaxed and happy. She has been stressed for a long-time being a battered wife and she can't sleep at night as there are a lot of thoughts in her head. But after the session, she felt relieved for the first time in a long time. She said that we were Allah-sent and profusely thanked us.

FEEDBACK AND SUCCESS STORIES:

- Lilia Mamaco, College of Hotel and Restaurant Management

"My favorite part of the training was the demonstration of different kinds of assist. I learned a lot. And of course I like the auditing because with that you will feel better and relieved. **The trainings are totally amazing because you will learn a lot.** With this kind of experience, I am so thankful that there are seminars and trainings like this. Thumbs up!"

- Norhanna Cana, OAVCAA

"I really like the DIANETICS PROCEDURE, kasi na experience ko maging auditor na feel ko iyong effect na gumaan loob ng Preclear habang ina apply ko sa kanya iyong napanood ko sa video I think more pang tao na nangangailangan ang pwede ko matulungan. {because I experienced how to be an auditor and I felt the effect on the Preclear when I applied it to her, she felt relieved. I think there are a lot more people who needs this and I can help them.}

"Gusto ko ito mai-apply sa mga friends at close family na sobrang depress kapag makita ko na may pinagdadaanan sila lalo na iyong nagdaan sa Trauma sa Marawi Seige kahit sa pamilya ko lang na mai apply sa kanila para unti unting mabawasan pain nila sa Trauma. {I want to apply this to friends and close family who are super depressed when they are going through something especially those traumatized in Marawi Seige even just to my family I can apply it to them so that little by little the pain from the trauma will be gone}"

- Rohanie Sultan, College of Education

"I'm very interested to learn this type of therapy and techniques to help, guide and assist my fellow Maranao's and I will be more able to handle their emotions. **Through that it minimize or totally avoid conflicts and therefore lasting peace in Mindanao may achieve.**"

"I feel satisfied in the performance practicing auditing is a quite challenge. I really want to be a qualified auditor in order to help my preclear in which there are many in this university both students and employees who were all victims of conflicts.

"Thank you so much for the group! Congratulations!"





NEXT STEPS:

Selection of candidates for scholarship to be trained as Professional Dianetics practitioner and Assists specialist. Includes training on The Way to Happiness program, Overcoming Ups and Downs In Life, Communication, Personal Values and Integrity.

Fundraising to cover the training fees, room and board of the scholars for 2 months.