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## Acupuncturists Without Borders

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WHEN MANY HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS THINK of acupuncture, they think it is mostly for treating physical pain. However, acupuncture is also good for treating symptoms associated with trauma. In addition to reducing pain, acupuncture can help people sleep when they are afraid or anxious. It can reset their nervous systems so they no longer suffer from tunnel vision, and can see beyond their immediate survival needs. The somatic reregulation and cortical facilitation provided by acupuncture can help people process their traumatic experiences at the emotional level. It helps these patients focus, solve problems, become more resilient, and move forward to rebuild their lives. Acupuncture is very powerful.

When you read stories written by humanitarian-aid workers, they describe refugees who have been in camps for a long time as people who have had the “stuffing knocked out of them.” It took everything they had to get out of the refugee camp. This not only applies to refugees, it can apply to anyone who has experienced life-threatening events, displacement, significant loss, or relentless systematic oppression. Traumatic events can be natural disasters or human-created catastrophes, such as war. Our colleagues, who provide acupuncture in disaster-impacted communities, are offering *trauma-informed, integrative treatment* to reduce pain and trauma. This treatment helps prevent cycles of unresolved trauma for individuals, families, and communities that can extend into future generations. At Acupuncturists Without Borders, we call this the Medicine of Peace—with Peace defined as a return to calm and tranquility rather than the absence of war.

For 18 years, Acupuncturists Without Borders has been a thought and action leader in our profession, providing clinical care and training acupuncturists and other healthcare providers to create integrative, trauma-informed care programs for communities affected by natural and human-created disasters. The organization is currently supporting health care practitioners serving their communities both in the United States and overseas. We support practitioners in the United States (such as in Florida and California) as well as in Haiti, Ukraine, Puerto Rico, the United States/Mexico border, Greece, Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Israel, and Palestine. This autumn, we will be providing mobile clinics and practitioner training in Turkey in response to the devastating earthquake of last February.

Work being performed by our colleagues in response to complex humanitarian disasters is represented in this issue. Although not highlighted in the current news cycle, the situation in Guatemala is considered a complex humanitarian crisis because of both natural and human-created calamities. In addition, the importance of teaching self-care and empowering our patients is discussed in this issue, specifically in maternal health care. We lose someone to complications associated with childbirth every 1.75 minutes. Acupressure has been found to help with many common maternal-health conditions.

We hope you will be inspired by the humanitarian work being done by your colleagues, both in their communities and around the world. You will see how acupuncture has helped frightened people sleep and eat again; helped them with anxiety and depression patterns to feel more like themselves; and supported them to move forward despite devastating challenges.

Thank you to each one of you for making your corner of the world healthier, stronger, and more resilient—every day!

In the spirit of service,

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