

Report of activities hold by REC with teachers after-war: individual and group counselling

By Guido Veronese (PsyHR).

The activities have been implemented by two clinical psychologists: Alaa Jaradah, MA (REC and Salaam school) who hold the group counselling activity, and Osama Hamduna, PhD (coinsellor and prof in counselling and clinical psychology at Alazar University, REC consultant).

The activities lasted from November 2014 and to the end of June (9 months).

20 teachers at Salaam school have been interested. All of them took part to the two weeks activities to build resilience and favor positive adjustment in teachers in the aftermath of the Israeli “protective edge” attack, and hold by Guido Veronese, PhD, clinical psychology and family psychotherapist (see report 1). This intervention ended with a follow-up phase in April/May 2015 with two days activities at Salaam School, Gaza Strip.

The counselling activity aimed at elaborating traumatic experiences and enforcing positive adjustments to the trauma in a Posttraumatic phase. The main problems reported by the teachers involved personal problems related to a disrupted Quality of Life in the Strip. Only one teacher reported signs of PTSD.

GROUP COUNSELING (Mr. Alaa Jaradah, psychologist)

9 sessions attended by 8/10 teachers in two groups (N=20). The sessions lasted from 2 hs to 2,30 hs.

1st /2^d session: has been dedicated to record the perceived satisfaction and effectiveness of the first counselling’s phase (see Dr Guido Veronese’s report). The teachers has been assessed with self-reported measures (same of the previous counselling phase): PANAS, WHO5-bref, IES-13.

The teachers have been asked to draw three scenarios (to be repeated at the end of the intervention). The first vignette must represent the teacher NOW, the second drawing the biggest problem she had to face ever, the third hopes for the future. The teachers have been invited to discuss the three drawings.

3^d session: after registered the teachers’ expectations, they have been trained in relaxation tasks led by imagery. This exercise will be repeated at the beginning of each session.

4th session: the third session has been dedicated in discussing the feelings, thoughts and episodes lasted the weeks before the beginning of the counselling program. The dimensions that emerged are strictly connected with QoL domains: economic problems, work problems, family and personal problems. A self-help methodology has been used. The teachers have been invited in joining a conversation in order to support the each one narrative. Psycho-education instruments on how to cope with uncontrolled emotions have been introduced.

5th session: has been focused on how to discover personal resources and potentiate them. The activities have been supported by meditation and imagination techniques with soft music.

6th session : has been dedicated in potentiating problem solving abilities. The teachers discussed one or more problem they had to face with during the war and strategies they used to solve them. Home works and task aimed at addressing the issue on how to generalize this abilities have been utilized.

7th session: has been dedicated to the family three and the positioning of teachers in their families. Who supports whom, supportive and problematic members.

8th session: the teachers have been asked to draw the family three, to discuss it with the colleagues' help. The information, with the consent of the teachers, has been transferred to the individual counselling.

INDIVIDUAL COUSSELLING (Dr. Osama Hamduna).

6 teachers attended the individual counselling (30%) for three sessions each one (Total 18 sessions). The most part of them reported personal or family problems. Only one has been diagnosed with PTSD. Every week two or three teachers met the counselor.

The two main models that have been used were Narrative and Cognitive approaches. Irrational thinking that diminish the ability to control emotion have been defused. The sessions have been characterized by a strong compliance and motivation; they didn't want to enter in depth in work issues.