

Help Ukraine Folder

Dear colleagues!

Throughout the years of the war, which has placed Ukraine on the brink of survival and threatened the entire existing world order and security, the EFPP has provided Ukrainian psychologists and psychotherapists with unwavering support and assistance. On behalf of the Association of Psychotherapists and Psychoanalysts of Ukraine, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the EFPP Board, especially Hansjorg Messner and Cristina Calarasanu, for their active involvement in the vital initiative "Help Ukraine". We are also grateful to all EFPP colleagues who have contributed in the form of financial donations and participation in the events of the Ukrainian EFPP National Network.

Ukrainian psychologists and psychotherapists, like all citizens of Ukraine, are in an extremely difficult situation, experiencing chronic, ongoing stress. The incessant heavy fighting across the enormous length of the front line, the general mobilization, the daily heavy losses in killed and wounded; the huge number of displaced persons, refugees, people who have lost their close ones, their homes and jobs; daily air raids with massive missile and drone attacks across the whole country; the destruction of energy infrastructure; mass emigration; the degradation of the economy in a country that is fully working for the war and dependent on external aid; existence in a situation of alarming uncertainty, the threat of personal death and loss of independence of our state – this is an incomplete list of factors that cause mental trauma in the entire population.

During the war, our Association strives to make its feasible contribution to helping our people, primarily specialists in the field of mental health. They are currently faced with the challenge of providing psychological care to an increasing number of seriously disturbed patients, while they themselves are experiencing chronic stress and lacking specialized knowledge, skills and psychological support.

The maintenance and support of regular APPU training programs, in addition to their educational role, has become an important tool for maintaining a work routine, a center of belonging and orderly, organized activity in the midst of the tense, anxious chaos of everyday life at war.

Along with this, APPU has organized and continues to conduct on an ongoing basis a number of charitable projects specifically designed to provide psychological assistance, training in working with trauma, supervision, creating a space for reflection, professional exchange, sharing and processing difficult emotions.

1. The sandwich project "Walking together through difficult times" was initiated in March 2022. The project is held in a block setting. During each block, sessions of a large analytic group alternate with sessions of small analytic groups that work in parallel. Conductors of the large analytic group are Robi Friedman and Tammy Elad (Kathrin

Albert co-conducted the large group before Tammy for over two years). Regular conductors of small analytic groups are group analysts from APPU and other Ukrainian professional associations (Iryna Baiguzina, Halyna Biryukova, Olena Bondar, Anatoliy Dobrodnyak, Serhiy Korzh, Tamara Kryvonis, Taras Levin, Lesja Loriashvili, Oksana Lychova, Natalia Pilhuk, Iryna Ratzke-Rybak, Inna Yavorska, Vitaliy Yeliseyev and Larysa Yenko). The project was held fortnightly from April till August 2022 and monthly from September 2022 till present. In addition to this, training staffs are held three times every month. Each block gathers from 50 to 80 participants from among more than 600 mental healthcare professionals registered on the project. Participation in the event is free of charge. All conductors of large and small analytic groups as well as the event organizers work on a volunteer basis, without reward.

2. The «Trauma and Childhood» project includes two Work Discussion Groups that operate in the Tavistock model in blocks of 4 weekly sessions. The groups began their work in March 2022 and continue to do so on a regular basis to this day. The groups are led by specialists in working with childhood mental trauma – Monica Cardenal, Banu Ismail, Carlos Vasquez and Carlos Tamm. The groups have a relatively permanent membership of 26 Ukrainian specialists working with traumatized children and their parents. All group conductors as well as the event organizers work on a volunteer basis, without reward.

3. The Organizational Consultancy and Supervision Group for the APPU staff members was established shortly after the start of the full-scale military invasion in March 2022. The group pursues the following objectives:

- To enable the heads of sections and organizers of training projects of the APPU to meet with each other from different locations in different parts of the country and the world, where they face different threats and problems that affect their lives and their work;
- To provide mutual support and exchange of experiences;
- To allow those who are in the country and those who have found refuge in other countries to maintain bonds of trust and mutual care and to make joint efforts to overcome the challenges of wartime;
- To draw attention to the impact of war fatigue and constant exposure to danger on colleagues, patients and participants in educational programs;
- To support a professional worldview, using professional disciplines and people's resources to the best of their ability for the general well-being of the population of Ukraine;
- To work against humility and despair;
- To prevent emotional burnout;
- To develop approaches to organizational and educational activities taking into account the specifics of wartime;
- To begin reflection on post-war reconstruction in the design and development of mental health services, especially in the role that dynamic psychotherapy and group forms of psychotherapeutic work can play.

The group meets weekly on a regular basis under the conduction of John Schlapobersky. The group conductor and the event organizers work on a volunteer basis, without reward. The group members transfer the amount equal to the cost of

participation in the group to the account of a Ukrainian charitable foundation to help victims of war.

4. The psychodramatic support group led by Mauricio Gasso and Judith Teszari was organized at the end of 2024 and continues to operate on a monthly basis. The event is designed for the participation of specialists in psychotherapy, psychological counseling, first psychological aid, crisis counseling, psychological correction and other types of psychological assistance provided to residents of the country who have suffered as a result of military actions. The purpose of the event is to strengthen internal resources, prevent emotional burnout, receive competent support from colleagues and valuable professional recommendations, and engage in the exchange of experience. The group is attended by 23 Ukrainian participants free of charge. All group conductors as well as the event organizers work on a volunteer basis, without reward.

All of the above projects are financed by the APPU from the donations received through the EFPP "Help Ukraine" program in 2022 and 2023. The main expenditure items are the translators' fees (the projects are provided with simultaneous interpretation and written translation of scientific articles and supervision cases), the cost of the Zoom payment plan and technical support during Zoom conferences.

Currently, the funds available to the Association are coming to an end. We are very grateful to the EFPP Board, which decided to announce an additional fundraiser that will allow us to continue our activities.

On behalf of the APPU,

Taras Levin, EFPP Group Section delegate.