

Africa & The Sanative Professional By Eric Gentry

san·a·tive *adjective* \ 'sa-nə-tiv\

Definition of SANATIVE: having the power to cure or heal: curative, restorative¹



J. Eric Gentry presenting to Faith Leaders in Mombasa, Kenya in 2014

In early 2014 several of us began work on a certification curriculum to train non-clinical professionals and volunteers to help survivors of trauma in their recovery process. We envisioned the importance of this as two-fold. For North America, we believe that by helping non-clinical professionals—such as case managers, faith leaders, law enforcement personnel, nursing assistants, etc.—to more effectively assist and participate in multidisciplinary treatment teams, will significantly improve care for these trauma survivors and their families. Internationally, there are very few places that enjoy the mental health infrastructure that we have in the US and Canada. In developing and underdeveloped countries, these non-clinical professionals provide most of the services these survivors of trauma receive. Most of these professionals and volunteers are underprepared and ill-equipped to confront the ongoing horrors of trauma. The demand that these sentient professionals feel to alleviate suffering, coupled with their never having received any training in the understanding or treatment of traumatic stress, leaves many of them bewildered, fatigued and burnt out. We are endeavoring to change that.

Dave Forestier (Recovery Coach and owner of O2 Recovery Service); Rev. Laurie Kraus, D.Min. (Coordinator of Presbyterian Disaster Services); Robert Rhoton, Psy.D.; Andi Fetzer, M.A. (owner and clinician at Arizona Trauma Institute); and J. Eric Gentry, Ph.D. (Vice President of IATP), formed a committee that has been working on this initiative over the past year. The training is a comprehensive emersion into trauma recovery coaching and resilience. The first two days focus upon understanding and delivering trauma-informed care. The second two days are focused upon teaching participants skills for helping survivors continue their process of recovery without delving into trauma memories. We have hybridized the IATP Structure for Trauma Empowerment and Resiliency—a model to help clinicians more effectively manage and execute the treatment process with their clients—into a non-clinical model that activates and utilizes

the “active ingredients” of *all* effective trauma treatments in a coaching process instead of therapy.

After many hours of videoconferencing, we have nearly completed the course curriculum and training manual, with a late March target to finish. We hope to launch the training program and certify our first Sanative Professional in mid-summer 2015.

However, Laurie and Eric are headed to Nairobi and Mombasa, Kenya, in early February to facilitate a prototype of this training. East Africa experiences a great deal of violence and many of the faith leaders of that region are called upon to provide comfort and services for the survivors. The demands of the suffering upon the faith leaders, paired with the lack of skills and the overwhelming nature of trauma, has taken a significant toll upon the spiritual leaders of the area. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, which has been training faith leaders in resiliency for over 15 years, committed resources to offer this training to their pastors in Kenya and East Africa. **They who?** traveled to Kenya in September 2014 to offer a Compassion Fatigue Prevention & Resiliency training and there was an overwhelming demand and excitement about the Sanative Professional training and certification. The 60 faith leaders attending the training in Mombasa February 9 – 12 will become the first to receive this certification making IATP truly an international training and certification organization.

¹ "Sanative." *Merriam-Webster.com*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 2 Feb. 2015. <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sanative>>.