

American Friends of NATAL Launches Mental Health Affinity Group to Support Mental Health Professionals

The AFN Mental Health Affinity Group is a professional and supportive community created to support mental health professionals and the work of NATAL.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, February 27, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [American Friends of NATAL](#) (AFN) announces the launch of the [Mental Health Affinity Group](#), a professional and supportive community created to support mental health professionals and the work of [NATAL](#), an apolitical non-profit organization that offers psychological and emotional treatment and support to victims of trauma due to war and terror.

AFN is an apolitical organization dedicated to supporting and strengthening NATAL's critical work in supporting individuals and communities affected by trauma, related to war and terror in Israel. With 27 years of experience in trauma and mental health, NATAL has developed proven methods and resources to help individuals navigate the impact of crisis and long-term trauma.

Through the new affinity group, AFN is bringing valuable tools and resources to U.S.-based professionals, providing a dedicated space for connection, resource-sharing, and strategies to navigate the unique challenges of mental health work while prioritizing the well-being of those who help others.

"Our mission has always been to provide care and support to those affected by trauma and crisis," said Maayan Aviv, CEO of AFN. "With the launch of the Mental Health Affinity Group, we are extending that support to the professionals who dedicate their lives to helping others. Their



American Friends of NATAL (AFN) announced the launch of the Mental Health Affinity Group, a professional and supportive community created to support mental health professionals and the work of NATAL.

well-being is just as important as the care they provide, and we are committed to fostering a community that uplifts and empowers them. It is also an opportunity for members to show their support for the work NATAL does.”

This initiative follows the success of AFN’s Real Estate Affinity Group, which has built a strong community of industry leaders committed to philanthropy and NATAL’s mission.

Launch Event Led by Resilience Expert

The Mental Health Affinity Group officially launched with a series of in-person events led by Rotem Yanai, an expert in resilience-building and therapeutic group facilitation.



The AFN Mental Health Affinity Group extends support to professionals who dedicate their lives to helping others. Their well-being is just as important as the care they provide.”

*Maayan Aviv, CEO of
American Friends of NATAL
(AFN)*

resilience strategies.

- A specialized session for New York-based mental health professionals, including hospital therapists and social workers supporting underserved communities.

These immersive workshops set the foundation for the ongoing work of the Mental Health Affinity Group, offering professionals innovative approaches to strengthen resilience, process trauma, and implement holistic mental health practices.



The Mental Health Affinity Group officially launched with a series of in-person events led by Rotem Yanai, an expert in resilience-building and therapeutic group facilitation. He was joined by Sharon Yeheskel Oron, Director of NATAL Global.

Rotem holds an M.A. in Group Facilitation with Arts Integration, is a certified Nature and Adventure Therapy facilitator, and serves as Israel’s representative on the International Nature and Adventure Therapy Committee (ATIC). He is also a Science of Happiness facilitator and LiCBT-ACT therapist, specializing in resilience-building through arts, play, adventure, and nature-based journeys.

Among the highlights of the launch events were:

- A workshop for the United Nations Secretariat Mental Health Leadership Team, held at the Bahá’í International Community, focusing on mental health leadership and

Monthly Sessions Led by Expert Facilitator Vivian Reutlinger, MSW
The Mental Health Affinity Group will be facilitated by Vivian Reutlinger, MSW, a veteran NATAL Israel therapist with 18 years of experience in trauma and resilience work. Participants will benefit from monthly virtual meetings, expert guidance, and a network of like-minded professionals dedicated to mental health and trauma recovery.

Mental Health Affinity Group Program Curriculum

The Mental Health Affinity Group program curriculum covers critical topics in trauma, mental health, and therapist well-being. Sessions include The Impact of Timelines on Stress and Trauma, focusing on understanding stress, trauma, and timelines, as well as psychological first aid, the BATHE model, and group work.

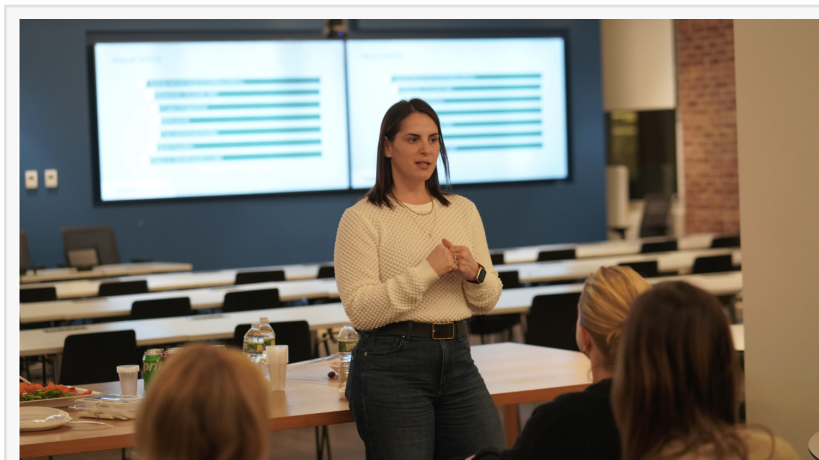
Participants will explore implementing self-care practices with techniques for realistic and sustainable self-care, and structured group trauma interventions, utilizing Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) with trauma survivors. Additional sessions address trauma in teens and young adults, exploring the challenges of working with young people, including those on college campuses.

The curriculum also includes Loss and Grief sessions, supporting both adults and children through traumatic grief. Another key focus is Dealing with Antisemitism in Therapy, covering intergenerational and collective trauma, with case studies and group discussions on building dialogue. The program concludes with Shared Traumatic Reality & Post-Traumatic Growth, providing guidance on managing countertransference and supporting therapist well-being and post-traumatic growth.

Vivian Reutlinger, MSW, Group Facilitator

Vivian Reutlinger is a social worker and psychotherapist specializing in trauma, bereavement, and couples therapy. With advanced education in psychology and social work, as well as specialized training in cognitive-behavioral and emotional therapies, she has worked in diverse settings, including private practice, schools, hospitals, and regional councils.

Her experience includes working with trauma survivors, including soldiers, families, and communities affected by conflict and emergencies. She has facilitated group therapies, supervised social workers, and contributed to international relief efforts, with a focus on resilience, emotional healing, and holistic therapeutic approaches.



“Our mission has always been to provide care and support to those affected by trauma and crisis,” said Maayan Aviv, CEO of AFN as she addressed members of the affinity group.

Program Details: How to Join

- Monthly Meetings: 2nd Monday of each month at 10:00 AM EST, beginning February 10
- Suggested Membership Donation: \$180 (flexible options available)
- Eligibility: Open exclusively to mental health professionals

To learn more and register for the Mental Health Affinity Group, visit:

<https://afnatal.networkforgood.com/events/80485-mental-health-affinity-group>

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