



Entering a Season of Thankfulness

BY ANTHONY WALLS

Autumn has a lot of meaning. In many cultures it's a time associated with harvest, progressively shorter days, and many celebrations to name a few. Locally, one of the largest holidays is focused entirely on giving thanks. HFJ has much to be thankful for this season and it is from this place of gratitude that we write this update.

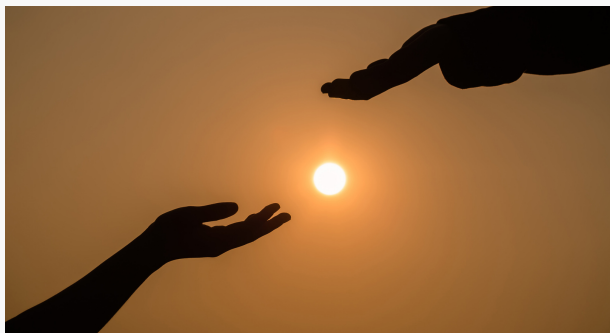


Two of our founders spoke at their alma mater, Azusa Pacific University, highlighting the work of HFJ! Our dream is that one day other communities would start similar locally based grassroots organizations to serve those in their area that the system inherently cannot; and what better way than to spread the news of HFJ.



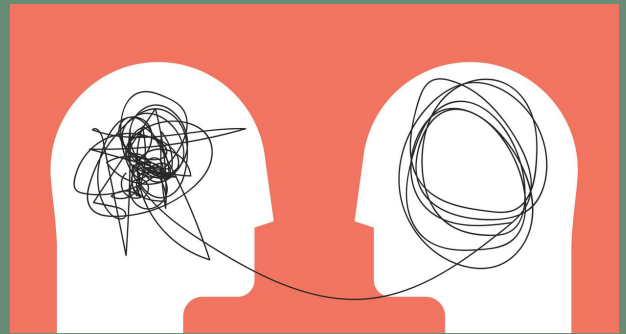
WE MET OUR GOAL!

In the past two months, two separate foundations made unrestricted grants to HFJ! It is because of these grants and our recurring donor base (that's you) that we met our goal to officially launch our trauma recovery program. The grants and your generous support have enabled us to partner with a local therapist and nurse practitioner who specialize in the many modalities needed to serve our patients. The best part is, there is no financial cost to our patients who are working to rebuild their lives. It is from this place we say, thank you!



Will you partner with us for the next season of trauma healing?

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OUR TRAUMA RECOVERY PROGRAM

For those interested in the specifics of trauma recovery and the current science behind it, here is the “deep dive” we shared a year ago. Over the last forty years, there has been significant advancement in medical knowledge of the pathophysiology and therapy for trauma. Psychological trauma, once thought to be merely a risk factor for mental health disorders, is now known to not only cause abnormal neurological responses but also persistently elevated levels of stress hormones all leading to increased risks for cardiovascular and other physical disease. On a more functional level, one’s nervous system becomes re-wired; instead of being able to rest, all too often non-threatening stimuli will trigger the ‘fight-or-flight’ response causing irrational fear, anxiety, panic, etc. And the opposite can be true; when a dangerous situation arises, the typical ‘fight-or-flight’ response is subdued and the opposite (paralysis or apathy) can and often does occur. More recently, physicians worldwide are learning that due to the complexity of psychological trauma medications are not a cure. While they can be a bridge to the right path for healing, the most effective approach in healing from trauma is a combination of interventions that help the nervous system to fix the ‘wiring problem’ over time. Nothing is 100% as of yet, but studies of eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) therapy, trauma-sensitive yoga and play (in the case of children) and/or martial arts, neurofeedback therapy, and various other modalities have shown great benefit.

WE ARE THANKFUL

Gratitude is both a trait (think of that person in your life who seems to always be grateful even for something that is typically mundane) and an action that we can practice (think of a parent encouraging their child to say 'thank you' when served). This trait and action is powerful; so much so that medical science has studied it for over a decade and shown it to be associated with decreased inflammatory biomarkers, improved sleep, improved emotional and social well-being, and less likelihood of suffering from psychopathology (see this most current review). So when HFJ receives feedback from our patients, such as "I just want to thank you so much for what you do ... we need more people like you in the world," we joyfully acknowledge that this gratitude is for all of us (including you) working to support the HFJ mission. Your partnership makes a difference!