

HEALING WORLD TRAUMA: Can the media be the answer?

Passionate about healing the cycle of trauma and violence, author and counselor Gina Ross' solution is insightful: let the media play a role.

“Mass trauma needs mass healing, which requires mass information and the help of the mass media,” says Ross in her new book *“Beyond the Trauma Vortex: The Media’s Role in Healing Fear, Terror and Violence.”*

“Trauma resolution at mass levels is the key for world peace,” says Ross. Statistically, 90% of the world population has suffered some sort of traumatic event in the last century. Twenty percent (one out of five) people will have been seriously impacted by it. A small but significant number of them will turn to violence. Secondhand trauma, i.e., trauma from ongoing exposure to coverage of violence, affects the public and keeps it mesmerized.

An expert on trauma, Ross believes the media is extraordinarily positioned to help the public cope with all these aspects of trauma. She makes an appeal to the media for their help, and proposes a timely collaboration between media and trauma professionals to stem the tide of trauma and violence.

“The media are the most logical vehicle for bringing the message of hope and healing to the public,” she says. While Ross' book discusses the issues of “second-hand” trauma and its effect on the public, she is especially sensitive to its effect on journalists and provides guideline or suggestions for those who are themselves questioning their own roles in reporting stories.

Ross' book and its associated guidelines and workshops have already provided healing help in Israel, Palestine, and Brazil. Palestinian, Israeli and other foreign correspondents in the Middle East have taken her course as well. “Journalists, camera operators, media members, and other professionals can be taught simple yet cutting-edge techniques that promote healing.”

“The techniques I propose provide simple answers and don't involve therapy,” she says. In her book, Ross clearly explains how the media has a role in educating the public about trauma and its subsequent impact on individual behavior and on political processes. It can also play a major role in preventing traumatization.

“The trauma vortex is contagious,” says Ross, “but so is the healing vortex. My book provides easy to understand information on the nature and characteristics of trauma and emphasizes there is a message of hope for stopping the trauma-violence cycle.”

A frequent lecturer and expert on trauma, Ross is available for interviews at the phone and address above.