



July 2023—Issue No. 18

Association Newsletter

Empowering Members To Empower Us All

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Standing up for **FREEDOM**

“Each time a woman stands up for herself, without knowing it possibly, without claiming it, she stands up for all women.” —Maya Angelou

What does it mean to be free?

Freedom: noun:

1. the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants.

You could argue that women cannot truly achieve freedom—the power to act, speak and think exactly as one pleases—so long as systems of oppression and control remain in place at a macro level. Especially women of color, differently abled women, LGBTQIA+ women and non-binary folks. Freedom hemmed in by patriarchy, capitalism, classism, bigotry, and hate is not so free after all.

On the other hand, the very act of standing in one's power serves to unravel those systems of oppression from the ground up—one person, one voice, one life freed from violence at a time. We may not be able to change the whole world (not all at once), but we believe deeply that women standing in solidarity and strength can turn the tide of history.

How are you undermining systems of oppression through your ESD practice? Send a message to hello@esdprofessionals.org to let us know; we would love to share your thoughts in our next newsletter, social media, or blog!

A NOTE FROM MEMBER GENTIANA SUSAJ

ESD for Refugees from Ukraine

"ESD training takes refugees out of the vicious circle of vulnerability by significantly lowering their chances for becoming a target of abuse and exploitation."

– Ira Elan (from Latvia, residing in Israel, and conducting ESD workshops for Ukrainian women in Germany)

Over the last year, I have been training refugees in ESD and IMPACT, conducting training of trainers as well as working with groups of women and girls from Ukraine. As one of the leaders of the ESD movement in Europe, as well as Director for Europe for IMPACT Personal Safety Global, I have a background working in anti-human trafficking and refugee protection in Europe and Latin America. Still, it took to me four years to understand how important it is to bring Empowerment Self-Defense into the strategies and plans of actions for prevention of ill treatment, sexual harassment, abuse, trafficking, smuggling, exploitation, and all forms of violence.

"My personal mission is to make this world a safer place both for Ukrainians and for everyone who needs it."

– Tatiana Kolot (the first Ukrainian women who has become ESD instructor)

Forcibly displaced populations, migrants and refugees are particularly vulnerable to interpersonal violence due to the complexity of their situation, and thus especially important to consider in the strategic expansion of ESD. The current war happening in Ukraine has caused civilian casualties and the destruction of vital infrastructure, forcing people to flee their homes to seek safety, protection and assistance. According to UNHCR, millions of refugees from Ukraine have crossed borders into neighbouring countries, in addition to those displaced inside the country, and they are in urgent need of protection and support. An estimated 17.6 million people in Ukraine require urgent humanitarian support, including more than 5 million people internally displaced by the war. As of February 2023, over 8 million refugees from Ukraine were recorded across Europe.

"Since I became an ESD instructor, I've had the pleasure to train groups of Ukrainian and Romanian women, children, and some young men who were extremely appreciative of all the ESD techniques. What a joy to invest in these refugees and empower them to hold ESD sessions with their communities...."

—Daniela Draghici (Romanian ESD instructor and advocate for women's rights)

I believe that Empowerment Self Defense (ESD) can be a key tool for preventing violence and healing through empowerment during this time. More importantly, it is truly in demand. ESD and IMPACT trainings can address this and contribute to four main needs for refugees:

- Prevention before interpersonal violence happens.
- Addressing (and stopping) violence while it is happening.
- Healing.
- Reporting and asking for support.

ESD lends itself to these particular considerations through its participatory and discussion-based approach, and by highlighting to each individual that as the expert on their own experience, they are best equipped to choose the best tools for protecting themselves in any given situation. To further address these needs, I, along with ESD Global, have particularly focused on community building, resourcefulness, and restorative justice in adapting curriculums and programs for humanitarian workers and leaders in the forcibly displaced community.

We look forward to sharing more about our work with the broader ESD community even as we continue to learn and expand.

Thank you for your interest,
Gentiana

Stay connected with ESD Global Europe on [Instagram](#).

ASSOCIATION NEWS



FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024
GROWING ESD, THRIVING TOGETHER

Join us in April 2024!

WHO: Association of ESD Professionals
WHAT: First Annual Conference
WHERE: San José, Costa Rica
WHEN: April 19-20 (w/Member Meeting & Reception April 18 @5pm)

Registration for the Association's First Annual Conference in Costa Rica is now OPEN!

Extending Super Early Bird Pricing until July 31st

The Annual Conference will be held April 19–20, 2024 in Costa Rica. And for Association members, we are hosting the Annual Meeting and Reception the evening before, on April 18.

The Association conference is going to be a special opportunity to foster ties with ESD instructors from around the world, learn together, and deepen our ESD community. We are counting on many meetings of old and new friends, too.

Join us in Costa Rica to:

- Share experiences and learn from peers.
- Hear dynamic keynote speakers and panels.
- Grow together with member-led skill shares.
- Enjoy unique cultural and culinary experiences.
- Have fun with ESD professionals from all over the world!

[Register here.](#)

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Credentialing in 2023

We think your incredible work in ESD deserves recognition and celebration, don't you?

The Association Credentialing Exam will be offered twice more this year. Applications for both Exam Periods are now open!

- Exam Period 2: August 15-22, 2023
- Exam Period 3: October 17-24, 2023

Visit the [Credentialing Page of our website](#) to learn more and apply!



ESD in the Philippines

Read our latest blog!

"When you have the attention of 25 regional representatives, you need to instill a sense of responsibility and accountability in creating change."

—Antonella Spatola

[This month's blog](#) dives into the implementation of a Trainer of Trainers program in collaboration with the Department of Education. Written by one of the masterminds herself.

Have something to share? Feel free to reach out to [Toby](#) with a pitch!



ASSOCIATION NEWS

Our Career Center is Live!

Find Mission-Aligned Work & Workers

Are you looking for work (or new employees) aligned with your mission? We invite you to utilize the [Association's Career Center](#) as you seek your next job or hire. We know that empathy and ethics are key deciding factors for many ESD professionals, so we have sought to create a values-oriented career center where you can connect with your future employer or employee.

Check it out [here](#).



How to Get Return Participants

Our Latest How-To Guide is Available!

Are you struggling to find ways to get your students to come back after their first "Intro to ESD" class? Many of us have been in your shoes.

So then how do you get repeat students? How do you motivate students to commit to longer ESD classes?

In this How-To, we explore some essential steps to help you build your ESD practice in a way that encourages students to return as many times as they want or need.

Visit our [resources page](#) to download our latest How-To Guide.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

ESD Pro Tip of the Week

Make Empowerment Self-Defense fun. When you are inspired and passionate about your teaching—and having fun with it—that shines through.



www.ESDProfessionals.org

ESD Pro Tips of the Month

- Practice telling people about your work, and put your ESD out there!
- Remember that you have a lot of friends in ESD.
- Consider offering your skills in exchange, bartering your services for what you need.
- Make Empowerment Self-Defense FUN.

[Follow the Association on Instagram](#) for more tools, and strategies to build your ESD practice with ease!

Office Hours

Thursday July 27th, 12pm EDT | Online
29th, 12pm EDT | Online

This month our guest, Samantha Waterman, will be engaging participants in conversation and answering questions on all things concerning the legal aspects of starting an ESD business.

Want to join? Register [here](#).

Please reach out to [Modupe Poku](#) with any questions or suggestions.

OFFICE HOURS

LAST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH

This event is for everyone in the ESD community making critical decisions and facing business or management challenges with their ESD practice.

Guest experts will engage participants in conversation, answer questions, impart advice, and share their experiences.

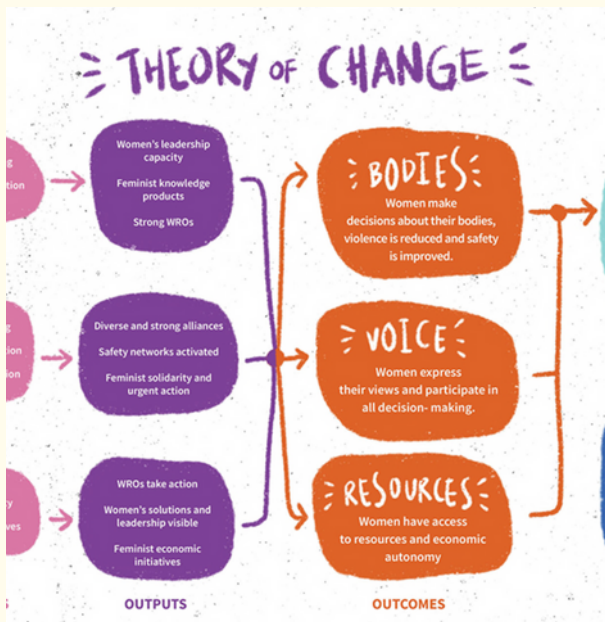
If you have questions about starting or operating an ESD practice or have wisdom to impart to colleagues, please join us!

ASSOCIATION OF ESD PROFESSIONALS
GROWING EMPOWERMENT SELF-DEFENSE

ESD WORLDWIDE

It's a small world, full of ESD... if you know where to look!

It is a pleasure to share ESD events, celebrations, and opportunities with all of you each month. Think something or someone should be included in next month's newsletter? Reach out at hello@esdprofessionals.org.



Job Opportunity!

Power Up! Senior Programme Officer

"Gender at Work is an international organisation that works in partnership with activists and researchers to bring together new knowledge on deep structures of inequality and discriminatory social norms to address barriers to gender equality."

The job is remote, with a preference for candidates based in Africa. Learn more [here](#).

Call for Applications

UN Women | through December 31st

Interesting consultancy opportunity for some ESD professionals? Why not apply to be included in UN Women's "Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Roster of Experts"! All qualified candidates with expertise in one or more of the areas of expertise outlined in the [Vacancy Announcement](#) are encouraged to apply.

Learn more [here](#)!



ESD WORLDWIDE



Virtual Child Safety

Conversations with member Melissa Fragiadaki

Children should be seen AND heard.

They have a right to use the voice they were born with.

They have a right to discover, explore, and set their boundaries.

They have a right to connect with their inner strength.

And all children deserve to develop their ability to navigate this complicated world with confidence, dignity, and a sense of security.

Member Melissa Despina Fragiadaki, a certified instructor through El HaLev and ESD Global, has been offering virtual child safety courses. If you have children in your lives whom you love and care about, please join her for a virtual conversation!

Find out more on her [website](#).

ESD WORLDWIDE



Where in the world is ESD?

Share your story here!

We are constantly striving to reflect the incredible, worldwide growth of the ESD movement in this newsletter. If you are doing something noteworthy (large or small, all news is welcome!), please do reach out to hello@esdprofessionals.org to let us know about it. We would love to celebrate you in one of our next newsletters.



TED Women 2023

October 11-13, 2023 | Atlanta, Georgia

Registration is open for TEDWomen's "Two Steps Forward" Conference, which seeks to amplify and accelerate ideas that build a better, more equitable future for all.

We think ESD should have a seat at that table... what about you?

Learn more [here](#).



ESD WORLDWIDE



Training for Women from Myanmar

Reflections by member Antonella Spatola on her recent ESD Training experience

"How do we approach the concepts of empowerment, the freedom to choose, and the strength within with women who have been exiled from their own country and have been under a military coup for the last two years?"

I was not naïve coming into this training; I had faith.

Many of the women participating in our recent ESD training did not have legal status in Thailand. Many could not show their faces in any photos; others were constantly looking over their shoulders in case there were spies ready to take them back and punish them for leaving Myanmar.

Sometimes I felt I was losing them and had to rethink my approach. But my instinct told me to keep going with how I teach, even though some topics were hard to face.

In the end, all the women, especially those who began dubious and questioning, came up to me and thanked me for one of the best trainings they had ever attended. For the first time, they gave themselves permission to seek within and not depend on others to define who they were and what they stood for.

This was one of the hardest trainings I have had to teach. But I knew if we didn't go deep and get uncomfortable, mindset shifts would not happen, and the uptake of the ESD methodology would not land."

WE ARE ESD PROFESSIONALS

Have you seen our ESD professionals [video](#), featuring many of you?!



We are passionate about supporting this movement by uplifting the amazing work you are doing around the world. Curious to know more about how the Association can support you? Reach out to Membership & Operations Lead [Modupe Poku](#) to start a conversation.



LET'S STAY CONNECTED!

Don't be a stranger! The Association of ESD Professionals is here for you.

Have a comment? Please contact us at [Hello@ESDProfessionals.org](mailto>Hello@ESDProfessionals.org) if you would like to share a celebration about your ESD work, learn more about the Association Credentialing Program, become a member, or explore other opportunities for collaboration. We always love to hear from you!

Be sure to stay in touch with us wherever you like to connect virtually, too:

