



Elah

Annual Report 2015

We are proud to present our annual report for 2015. During the report year we have continued our efforts towards providing tailored psychosocial assistance to each person and community in need, especially to those coping with loss and grief. We have developed and undertaken a variety of activities to support our clients and to increase their well-being and social integration, with the ultimate aim of strengthening our society. We have been able to give more than 4,600 people nearly 40,000 hours of services.

Letter from the Chairman

In 1979 the founders of Elah assumed that the organizations' services would be necessary for a limited amount of years. However, the number of people that need our assistance continues to climb, and our services do accordingly.

In 2015, we have redefined our areas of focus for the next five years, and decided to concentrate our chief efforts on the following:

Coping with loss and grief - The provision of therapy for people who have faced traumatic loss is our first area of focus. We have extended our services to Holocaust survivors and to 'grieving families'. Commissioned by the Ministry of Welfare, we have continued to operate six Help Centers for families of murder victims, while the Ministry of Defense commissioned us to provide assistance to people who lost close relatives in Israeli wars or terrorist attacks for the Ministry of Defense.

Therapy for everyone - By means of the "Elah for Everyone Fund" Elah will continue to try to provide subsidized therapy to socio-economically challenged individuals who are not eligible for financial support from other sources.

The Dutch community - Elah's original target group of Dutch immigrants remains central to the organization's operation, and we will continue with great commitment to provide therapeutic care, social groups, volunteer activities and national events for the benefit of the Dutch community.

I would like to thank all those who enable Elah to perform all these tasks: the board members, who voluntarily invest their time and efforts in our mission; Yaela Cohen and Bennie Leezer, who as a team successfully manage the organization; the staff members, who distinguish themselves by their enormous professionalism, creativity and enthusiasm. A heartfelt thank you is also due to our volunteers, as well as to the private donors, the foundations and public institutions. Their practical and financial support enables us to do our blessed work.

Yahel Shachar, Chair of the Board

לבית
האדם
הנצחי

2015

Tailored Psychosocial Support

Over the years, Elah has developed a wide range of therapeutic and social activities, which can be used separately or combined for the benefit of individuals and groups.



Having fun on the dance floor - sociocultural group in Hadera

Therapy

People turn to Elah with all kinds of complaints: loss and grief, anxiety and phobias, depression, relationship problems, integration difficulties, concentration problems or family issues. The therapist helps the client to understand his or her problems, cope with painful feelings and deal with difficult situations, with the ultimate aim of improving the quality of life. Therapy may be short- or long-term, individual, with a partner or with other members of the family, it may be given in one of the clinics of Elah or at the client's home. Elah treats clients of all ages.

To ensure the quality of the therapy, Elah's therapists take part in extension courses, and in individual and group supervision.

Psychiatric Consultation

Elah employs a psychiatrist, to whom clients can be referred for advice on medication for mental health problems.

Group Therapy

In the course of years, Elah has developed different types of group therapy. Some groups are conventional therapeutic discussion groups, while others use different media such as writing, literature, or drama to encourage the discussion of personal topics.

Elah's Target Populations

Elah provides services to the general population, with an emphasis on the following social groups: Dutch immigrants, Holocaust survivors, families of murder victims, individuals recognized by the Ministry of Defense who have lost family members in Israeli wars or terrorist attacks, people who have lost family members to illness, and people who are suffering from trauma and crisis, and are in need of mental support. Elah is an official supplier of psychosocial care for the Ministries of Finance, Welfare, Defense, and Foreign Affairs.

Community Work

The objective of community work is to promote the social integration of the individual in the community. Elah's community work is largely carried out by volunteers, who operate under professional supervision of Elah's social workers, and it consists of sociocultural group meetings, intergenerational groups, volunteer projects, lectures and workshops.

Ceremonies, Events and Special Projects

Elah organizes ceremonies and events for the Dutch community and other target populations. We also carry out projects for other organizations and government agencies, and we train external volunteers and professionals.



The "Wrinkels" group for 80+-year-olds and Dutch ambassador Caspar Veldkamp on a visit to the cheese farm in Tel Mont

Projects for the Israeli Community

In 2015 more than 2,000 people in Israel received a total amount of over 14,000 hours of psychosocial assistance.

Therapy

In 2015 more than 400 Israeli clients received individual, couple, or family therapy, either in one of Elah's clinics or at the client's home.

Since 2011 Elah is an official supplier of psychosocial care for Holocaust survivors for the Ministry of Finance. Due to the limited mobility of most clients, the therapy is often given at the clients' home. With the financial help of donors Elah also provides therapy to Holocaust survivors who are not eligible for state funding.

Elah is an official supplier of the Ministry of Defense of psychological care for people who have lost family members in one of the Israeli wars or military service. In this context Elah also assists second-degree relatives (grandparents, uncles or girlfriends) who are not eligible for funding of this service by the Ministry.

Elah receives many requests from other NPO's that render services to vulnerable populations, to accommodate their clients with subsidized therapeutic support. When our financial means allow it, we provide these clients with treatment through the "Elah for Everyone Fund".

Discussion Groups for Holocaust Survivors and the Elderly

Elah has developed a diverse range of discussion groups for Holocaust survivors and the elderly. In these groups we discuss vital questions and try to evoke memories in a creative manner, for example through drama, songs, photos or recipes. In most cases, municipal welfare departments invite Elah to entertain such groups in day care centers or clubs for senior citizens. In 2015 Elah led 26 discussion groups throughout the country, in which 283 elderly and Holocaust survivors received a total of 3550 hours of group activity.

Lectures for the Elderly and Holocaust Survivors

Elah staff members give lectures and workshops for the elderly and for Holocaust survivors on various subjects like dreams, humor, anger management, secrets in our lives, discrimination and prejudice, grand parenting in modern times, etc. At the invitation of the welfare departments of several municipalities, therapists of Elah gave 43 lectures and workshops for 733 elderly who received a total of 2,390 hours of activities.



Strong bonds develop in groups for the elderly

Intergenerational Writing Groups

Fostering intergenerational relations has always been one of our secondary goals. Therefore, since 2008 Elah has operated intergenerational writing groups in various cities. In 2015 Elah therapists led six intergenerational writing groups, in which the elderly (often Holocaust survivors) and high school students do writing exercises together, and then read and discuss their texts. All twelve meetings evolve around themes to which both young and old can relate, like first love, family, friendship, dreams or ambitions. These groups contribute greatly to closing the so-called "generation gap". They provide the young with historical insights, and an understanding of what it means to be elderly, while the older people get an opportunity to peep into the world of the young. In the end, participants come to the conclusion that there is little difference between old and young, and that each person ultimately lives with the same wishes, fears and successes.

To complete the course, Elah publishes booklets with stories written by the participants. In 2015 we published three such books with funding of the Ministry of Equal Opportunities and the Municipality of Netanya. To organize the groups, Elah worked together with various schools and municipalities, while financing was mostly provided by the Ministry of Welfare.



The Sneh Program - Assistance to Families of Murder Victims

In the report year, 1488 members of 509 families received support through the Help Centers.



Help Centers

Since July 2012 Elah coordinates Help Centers for close relatives of homicide victims. The loss of a family member as a result of crime is an extremely traumatic experience. Through the centers, relatives are offered psychological and legal counseling in order to process their experiences. The Israeli Ministry of Welfare has initiated the project and is responsible for finances and supervision, while the coordination of the aid (including individual therapy and support groups) falls under the responsibility of the directors of the centers, who are staff members of Elah. Centers are situated in Tel Aviv, Beersheba, Jerusalem, Haifa, Kfar Kana and Tira. In total 509 families were assisted in 2015. In addition, 206 family members received individual therapy, and 134 people took part in 16 support groups across the country.

Training

Elah trained lawyers, policemen and external therapists who assist relatives of crime victims within the context of the Sneh program.

Elah participated in the "Forum for Loss in Israel", along with representatives of other foundations and government agencies.

Ceremony

In December 2015 Elah organized for the third time an annual memorial ceremony for the victims of murder, with the title "We will forget no one", in collaboration with the "Foundation for Bereaved Families" association, the Israeli Ministries of Welfare and Justice, and the police. The relatives of murder victims feel greatly supported by this yearly meeting with their peers. They also hope that the ceremony will break the culture of silence that exists around victims of homicide and will stir public interest. At the ceremony families from all walks of Israeli society were present. One of the speakers was opposition leader Itschak Herzog, the former Minister of Welfare who ushered the creation of these centers. Seven families lit a memorial candle and shared their story with the audience. Afterwards, all participants had the opportunity to say aloud the names of their murdered loved ones.

More than 400 family members took part in the ceremony, including representatives of the police corps and the Ministries of Welfare and Justice.



FLTR Yaela Cohen (co-CEO Elah), Yahel Shahaar (chair Elah), Itschak Herzog (opposition leader), Bennie Leezer (co-CEO Elah) en Lara Tsinman (chair Foundation for Bereaved Families)



At the ceremony six next of kin light a candle for the victims



The six next of kin at the ceremony of 2015

Projects for the Dutch Community

In 2015 more than 1,200 people of the Dutch community in Israel received over 22,000 hours of assistance.

Therapy and Psychiatric Consultation

In 2015, 300 men and women of Dutch descent received individual, couple and family therapy, or psychiatric help from Dutch speaking therapists. Among the clients were Holocaust survivors, men and women of the so-called 'second generation', partners and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, and clients without war-related problems.

Group Therapy

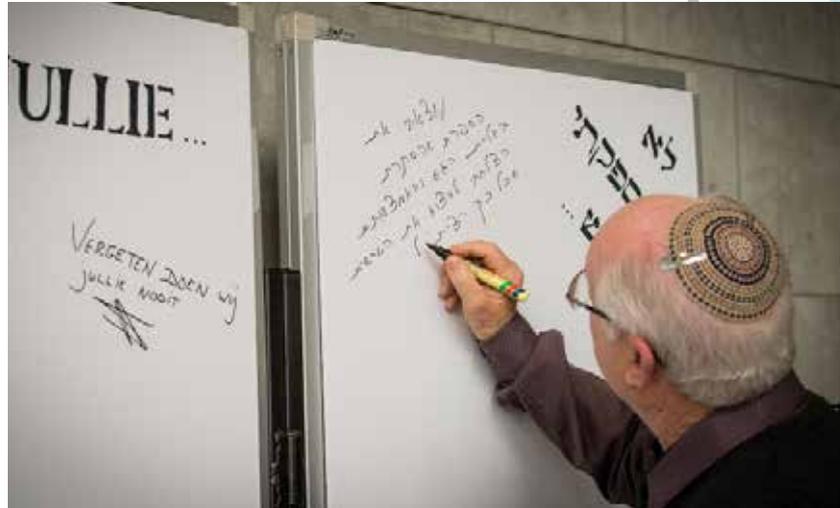
In the report year, nine therapeutic groups operated within the Dutch community, including a discussion group for second generation Holocaust survivors, writing groups, film groups, one group for child survivors and a bibliotherapy group.

Sociocultural Groups

In all regions of the country, age-related groups for people with similar cultural backgrounds are organized by community workers of Elah, in cooperation with volunteers. The meetings allow the participants to undertake activities with peers and build up social networks. In 2015, ten sociocultural groups were active within the Dutch community. Five groups were organized in collaboration with the Dutch Immigrant Organization (Irgun Olei Holland). In all a total of 300 people participated in sociocultural groups.

Volunteer Work

Elah is supported by more than 100 volunteers. These volunteers fulfill social, organizational and practical tasks within the organization and the community. Some volunteers visit the sick and elderly, others assist in the preparation of the activities of the sociocultural groups. There are also volunteers who manage mobile libraries with Dutch books, or drive elderly participants to group meetings. All volunteers receive individual and group counseling. That means they attend lectures about different aspects of volunteer work, and discuss their work experiences with the designated social worker. In 2015, volunteers of Elah worked 5,700 hours for the benefit of the community. They received approximately 800 hours of counseling by social workers. In June, 80 volunteers participated in a day of study and fun in Tel Aviv, organized in their honor.



An interactive exhibition as part of the program on Holocaust Memorial Day

Shoah Memorial Ceremony

As an organization that was established by and for Holocaust survivors, Elah makes every effort to mark and give meaning to the yearly Holocaust Memorial Day by way of a carefully designed memorial ceremony. This year, the commemoration took place in Beth Chel Ha'avir in Herzliya and was dedicated to the theme "I still wanted to tell you..." Following our tradition, 6 Holocaust survivors lit a memorial candle during the ceremony, and told the audience about their experiences during and after the Holocaust, with special emphasis on their ongoing relationship with loved ones who were murdered. The candle of hope was lit by a representative of the genealogical society "Akevoth", that assists Dutch Jews in researching their ancestry. The audience was then given the opportunity to name the names of murdered relatives. After the ceremony, the documentary film "Swing Me to the End of Life. Echoes of Johnny and Jones" was screened. More than 350 people took part in the ceremony.

Activities of "Friends of Elah" in the Netherlands

Obtaining funding is one of Elah's permanent concerns. Through the "Friends of Elah in the Netherlands" (STEN) organization, we have undertaken various fundraising activities in 2015. To keep in touch with private donors, we sent digital newsletters and other documentation, we upkeep our Facebook page and website, we produce publications in Jewish and professional media in the Netherlands, and, with the help of volunteers, arrange information tables at relevant conferences. Moreover, we give lectures to groups of tourists who come to Israel from the Netherlands.

Knowledge Sharing

In 2015 more than 500 colleagues, students and volunteers from other organizations received over 1200 hours of training.

Knowledge Sharing

Because of Elah's expertise in treating Holocaust survivors and others who deal with grief and loss, we are often invited to train volunteers and social workers from municipal and other institutions that work with similar target groups. In addition, Elah is regularly asked to present the insights and experience of the organization at professional conferences. In 2015 Elah provided 1,289 hours of training to 514 colleagues, students and volunteers from other organizations.

Supervision of Students from Tel Aviv University

Since 2014 Elah has been a recognized institution for the supervision of fieldwork by BA -and MA students of social work from Tel Aviv University. In 2015 Elah supervised 4 students.

Lectures for Students from the Netherlands

In November 2015 Elah hosted a group of students of the Christian University Ede-Wageningen and gave lectures on the treatment of Holocaust survivors.

Supervision of Volunteers

In 2015 Elah trained volunteers from the ORT school in Holon, as well as volunteers from the Eastern European immigrants association.

Supervision of Professionals

Elah continues the supervision of colleagues. In this context, we have provided training to secondary school teachers in Netanya and to the staff of the Latet organization. We have also trained attorneys working for the Sneh program (see above).

Publications and Research

Assisted by PR agency Peer Levin, we have expanded our public relations activities, with the aim of increasing Elah's public exposure and to reduce the gap between the large amount of activities of the organization on the one hand, and public unawareness of them on the other hand. In addition, we have published scientific articles, and 4 booklets with life stories of Holocaust survivors. We have published our digital newsletter Elah Infocus (in Dutch and Hebrew) on a monthly basis, and issued information about the organization and its services at conferences and in the media. Finally, thanks to advertisement sales, we were able to produce a pocket diary for the Jewish year 2015/6.



Elah in the Israeli Knesseth, where Ini Lederer and Amos van Raalte accepted the Medal of Light on behalf of the volunteers

Special events in 2015

Obituaries

To our great regret, we had to part with two dear people who passed away: Henk (Hanan) Nijk, one of the founders of Elah and a lifelong board member, and Mirjam Kan, social worker, community worker and therapist. Both of them have devoted much of their lives to Elah and Dutch immigrants in Israel. We will deeply miss their experience and knowledge. May their memory be a blessing.

Pension

Reynoud van Ginkel, who has worked for the Dutch-Jewish community for over 40 years, took his retirement in the fall of 2015. After working for the Jewish Welfare organization JMW in Amsterdam for many years, Reynoud moved to Israel and joined Elah. Reynoud was a central figure within the department of community work and organized numerous conferences and commemoration ceremonies.

Volunteers's Award

Elah's volunteers received the prestigious "Medal of Light", which was awarded to them by the Foundation for the Benefit of Holocaust Survivors in Israel, for their outstanding contribution to the country and to the welfare of Holocaust survivors. The prize was given at the Knesset in November, in the presence of Juli Edelstein (Chairman of the Knesset), Limor Livnat (chairman of the board of the Foundation for the Benefit of Holocaust Survivors, and former Minister of Culture), Avi Dichter (MK) and other dignitaries.

Conferences

Elah is regularly invited at professional conferences to present therapeutic models used within the foundation. In 2015 Elah staff members presented their work at 7 conferences.



Finances in NIS

Operating Turnover	8,934,024
Total Cost Activities	(9,360,031)
Net Cost	(33,599)
Net Result	(459,606)

Thanks to our donors

- The Arkin Family Foundation
- Bank Hapoalim
- Carel Abas Stichting
- Stichting Collectieve Marorgelden Israël
- Stichting Joods Algemeen Steunfonds
- Municipality of Tel Aviv
- The Israeli Ministry of Finance
- The Israeli Ministry of Health
- The Israeli Ministry of Eldercare
- The Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport
- The Ted Arison Foundation
- VEG Oldebroek
- and many private donors from The Netherlands and Israel

With many thanks to our dedicated and loyal volunteers

Help Elah, Support our Projects

As an NPO Elah is dependent on gifts from private donors and philanthropic organizations.

Support the Elah for Everyone Fund

This fund aims to provide psychotherapy to people who cannot afford treatment. The fee for each subsidized session is NIS 290. For NIS 5800 you guarantee half a year of psychotherapy.

For donations with credit card:

Call our office in Tel Aviv +972-3-6910921, or donate directly on our website www.elah.org.il

For donations by cheque:

U.S. tax deductible contributions may be sent to P.E.F. Israel Endowment Funds, Inc.
630 Third Ave, Ste 15th floor
New York, NY 10017

Donation cheques (of over \$25) must be made payable to P.E.F. Israel Endowment Funds with a recommendation that it be used for:

Elah – Center for Psycho-Social Support of Former Dutch Residents and their Families

R.A. nr. 580040947

For donations by bank transfer:

Transfer your gift to IBAN IL96012776000000225229
Swift code: POALILIT

About ELAH

ELAH Center for coping with loss is a professional NPO that offers mental support to all Israeli citizens. In times of personal crisis and sorrow as a result of loss, when loneliness and isolation become unbearable, we can offer support during the difficult grieving process. Our highly trained staff of professionals provides a wide variety of treatment methods for individuals and groups, as well as a large range of social activities.

Established in 1979 by Dutch immigrants, Elah is the most veteran NPO in Israel to provide psycho-social assistance to Holocaust survivors. Our field of operation has expanded with the years, and for the past decades Elah has been a leading institution in the treatment of loss, aiding thousands of people who suffered bereavement, trauma and mental difficulties. We operate nation-wide, without waiting lists, and with sensitivity to the specific needs and cultural background of our clients.

Elah cooperates with a large number of governmental bodies and NPO's and keeps developing new treatment approaches in accordance with changing needs, to advance professional care and to contribute to a better society.

Elah – Center for Psycho-Social Support of Former Dutch Residents and their Families
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