



Book Review

Zieva Dauber Konvisser, *Living Beyond Terrorism: Israeli Stories of Hope and Healing* (Jerusalem, Israel/New York, NY: Gefen Publishing House, 2014), 356 pp., US \$ 26.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-9-6522-9643-6.

Reviewed by Dr. Joshua Sinai, Senior Analyst, KGH

This is an important account, within the Israeli context, of the psychological and emotional consequences facing those who survive terror attacks. It includes an analysis of the impact of such incidents beyond their direct victims and their families to wider circles in society. This explains the finding that when an attack occurs in a specific geographical locality, its impact reverberates to the wider society, with people in other jurisdictions thinking that such attacks can occur against them anywhere they might be, as well.

These issues are examined by answering questions such as: “How do Israeli survivors and families of survivors and victims live with the constant threat of terrorism and the social and economic disruptions of their lives? How do they develop coping skills and adapt to their situation? What do these changes look like and how are they manifested? What accounts for the fact that so many of them did as well as they did? Was their recovery due to certain pre-trauma personality traits and inner resources and/or to their post-trauma environment – their families, their communities, and the organizations with which they had contact?” (p. 262).

These questions were posed to the study’s sample of twenty-four Israelis who had survived Palestinian terrorist attacks between 2001 and 2003, with the interviews conducted in 2004, and with follow-up interviews held in 2007 and 2013.

The book consists of an introductory overview of terrorism and its impact on its victims and others in society, which is followed by an account of the personal stories of the survivors. The concluding chapter presents the author’s findings, for example, that with the help of support networks consisting of families, friends, and professional mental health counseling, such individuals can transition from experiencing post-traumatic stress to post-traumatic growth and resilience. (p. 262). The Appendices include an explanation of the study’s research methodology, a chronology of major terrorist events in the Arab-Israeli conflict, a glossary and a selected bibliography. The author is a Fellow of the Institute for Social Innovation at Fielding Graduate University, in Santa Barbara, CA.

This book is recommended as a valuable resource for those studying the psychological consequences of terrorist and active shooter attacks and the psychological techniques necessary to remediate their negative impacts and restore their psychological well-being.

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