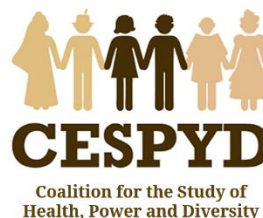




UNIVERSIDAD
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POSTTRAUMATIC GROWTH INTERVENTION FOR REFUGEES IMPLEMENTATION MANUAL





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PREFACE

To begin with, it is important to consider that everyone could become a refugee at any time and it is the context of their home country, the migration process, and the difficulties they face after their arrival that make ordinary people subject to psychological interventions.

The past decade has been characterized by an ever-increasing influx of forcibly displaced people all over the world. In 2020, according to the UN refugee agency (UNHCR, 2021), these numbers have doubled in comparison to 2010. Worldwide, 26.4 million people have been displaced globally, and 48 million sought refuge in their home country. The dangers and psychological stressors not only connected with the migration process but also with the situation they face after their arrival at the host country leave a considerable mark on the individual's psychological state (Kirmayer et al., 2010).

The community-based intervention outlined herein was designed to help individuals who were forced into displacement deal with these psychological stressors and improve their situation. It follows a mentorship and peer support approach, in which members of the community are trained to become mentors for recently arrived refugees. On a psychological level, the intervention is meant to make participants aware of the strengths and positive changes they have gained and experienced as a result of their migration process, thereby fostering posttraumatic growth.

In a pilot study, this intervention program has been implemented successfully with a refugee population in the south of Spain (Paloma, de la Morena & López-Torres, 2019; Paloma, de la Morena, Sladkova & López-Torres, 2020). Because the positive effects of this intervention program have only been tested in a refugee population, it is currently limited to implementation with refugees and asylum seekers. It can be expected, however, that migrants in general may benefit as well from the program. Similarly, in the interest of simplification, in this text, we use the term refugee to refer both to refugees and asylum seekers, being fully aware of the difference in definition and consequences that this legal status entails for the individual. With the development of this implementation manual, we hope to provide a guide for professionals who want to implement the posttraumatic growth intervention for refugees in different contexts. It was designed to be implemented by psychologists or social workers, given the emotional complexity the group moderator is confronted with during the sessions. The nature of the intervention design allows its implementation in different cultures. However, adaptations can and should be made depending on the context of intervention.

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”

The thing is that I value myself a lot more through this experience... I feel that I am stronger, more confident, I trust myself more and I know my weak points and my strong points and so I can use them for whatever I need, because... I was in a difficult situation and I have to search within, how I can do it, because the only thing that's going to help me is myself and therefore, this thing [the program] is very good.

27-year-old Sahrawi woman



I. INTRODUCTION

The Intervention

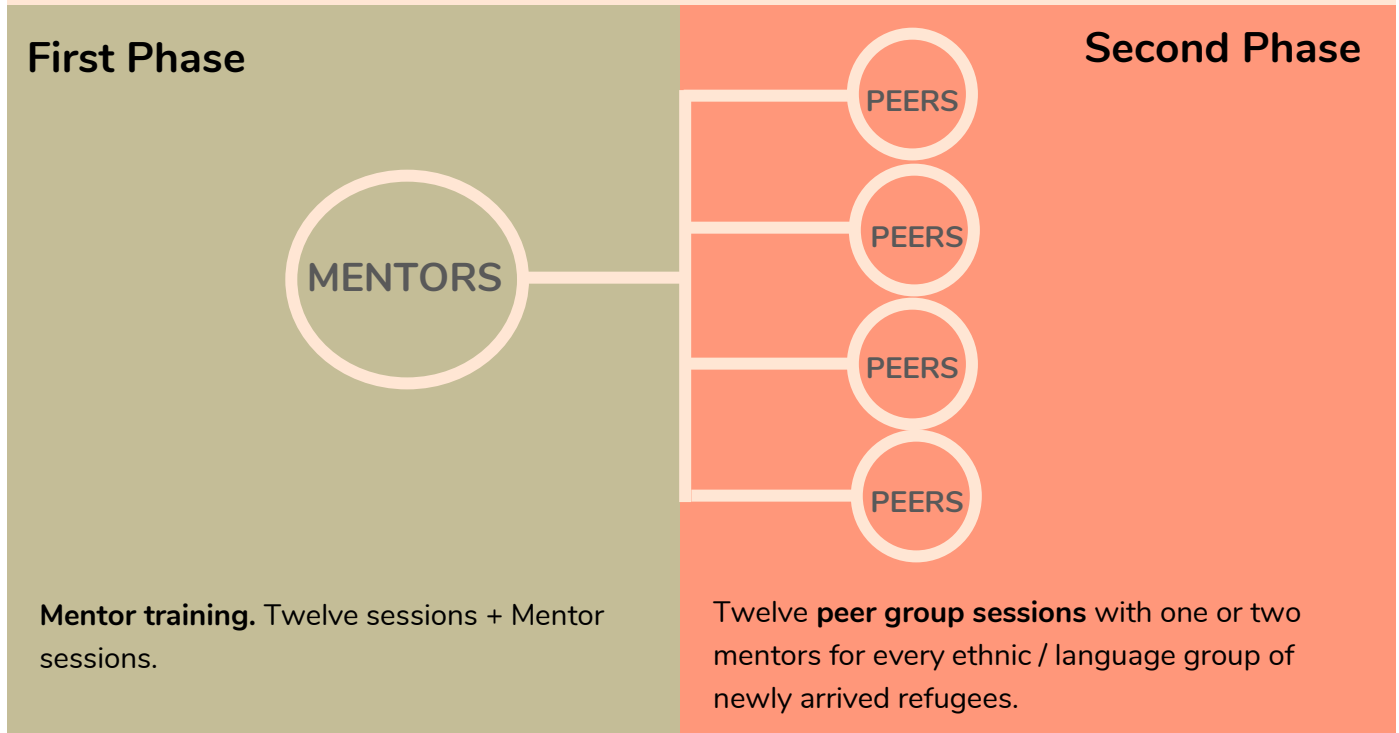
The posttraumatic growth intervention for refugees is a community-based intervention that makes use of the resources that are in the local refugee community in order to improve their well-being in different aspects. For the most part, its objective is to foster posttraumatic growth (PTG) in refugees by making participants focus on the positive aspects of the migration project. It is, however, unlikely that PTG will be the only outcome of the intervention. The following paragraphs will introduce the main idea of this psychological intervention and how it can help to empower refugees to take action, learn about their strengths, and make use of the personal and collective resources they have.

The program is based on a peer-support and mentorship format, and the three key elements are guided relaxation, the sharing of migration stories, and the sharing of community resources (all

described in more detail below). The content of this intervention program is oriented towards the main needs identified in the literature: social network, language, land and culture, status, the ethnic group, and health (Atxotegui, 2000; see content below). A general theme of the program is to achieve a positive perspective of these challenges and to appreciate the positive developments that participants may have undergone. In fact, later sessions focus specifically on these positive changes and strengths gained due to the migratory experience.

The general idea of this program is to create a safe space that allows participants to share and acknowledge their migratory experiences in a group. By sharing their narratives, they are more likely to experience an increased sense of community and social support. The group moderator adopts a facilitating role, allowing participants to learn from each other.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE



The intervention is set up for 15 weeks with three-hour sessions twice a week. It is divided into two phases of eight and seven weeks (see session structure). The first phase is mentorship training, in which previously selected refugees are trained to become mentors for newly arrived refugees. In twelve sessions, the mentors explore different topics related to the migration process and reflect on them on a personal level in group discussions. In the last two sessions, they learn about mentorship skills, session content, and how they are supposed to moderate the sessions during the second part of the intervention. The second phase is dedicated to the peer-support groups. The mentors who have previously received the training now provide the same sessions to their cultural group and in their own language. Apart from the last sessions, the second phase is thematically and structurally the same as the first phase. Although the professional who is implementing the intervention does not lead the peer sessions, he or she will meet the mentors on an ongoing basis to assess the progress of the program, cover possible needs or evaluate together how to overcome certain challenges. It is important for mentors to feel supported throughout the whole process.

For participant selection, in the case of the mentors, certain criteria apply: 1) They are supposed to have lived at least one year in the country of intervention. 2) They need to have proven language proficiency. 3) They should have shown some degree of social awareness as well as active engagement and leadership skills in social activities. The last criterion can be demonstrated by volunteer activities, having an activist profile, or previous job experience in the third sector. One should also pay attention to mentors' psychological state; that is, only psychologically stable individuals should be selected as mentors. In the case of the peer group members, the only criterion is that they should be selected from a pool of participants who have resided in the country of intervention for not more than six months. This will increase the probability that they will benefit from the intervention, as they do not yet know or have access to community resources, nor is it likely that they have a vast social support network.

All participants need to sign an informed consent form in which they express their voluntary participation. Furthermore, it needs to be made

clear that the data collected during the intervention is used solely for research purposes and that the information shared by other participants is to be treated confidentially. A letter of recommendation for mentors and a diploma of successful completion for mentors and peers alike can be issued at the end to facilitate session attendance. Both documents should be signed by all collaborating parties and include the activities carried out. For mentors, a personalized description of the participants' engagement should be included. Additional efforts and incentives to facilitate session attendance can be made.

Mentors and peers benefit from this intervention in two different ways. First, as mentioned above, by learning about their strengths and positive changes they have developed during the migration process, both groups learn to value their achievements after arrival and gain a positive perspective of their migration project. The mentors will have the additional benefit of leading a group through a transformative process. Apart from developing their leadership skills, they will feel empowered not only to make a positive change in their community but also to take action to change their own situation.

By combining the peer support and mentorship approach, this intervention makes use of the existing resources in the community, such as the participants' language or personal experience. This allows the program not only to be more cost-efficient, as it does not require external resources such as interpreters, but also more culturally appropriate. Mentors know the background of the group they are assigned to, speak their language, and have probably undergone similar experiences during their migration process. In addition, the intervention follows a bottom-up approach, in which the community becomes its own agent of change. The learning process participants are going through during this program is, therefore, more effective and sustainable in the long run, because it is built on the intrinsic motivation of the community and makes use of ideas and experiences of that specific group. Participants are not being helped by an external source, but instead, they are helping one another to grow, which makes them less dependent on outside help in the long run.



TIME TABLE

FIRST PHASE

WEEK 1

Session I - Introduction
Session II - Reason for Migration

WEEK 2

Session III - Family and Friends
Session IV - Language

WEEK 3

Session V - Culture
Session VI - Land

WEEK 4

Session VII - Status
Session VIII - Ethnic Group

WEEK 5

Session IX - Physical Risks
Session X - Strengths and Self-Esteem

WEEK 6

Session XI - Taking Action
Session XII - Future

WEEK 7 AND 8

The Mentor Sessions

- Working on skills for group revitalization
- Creation and translation of material for each cultural group
- Getting to know availability of mentors

SECOND PHASE

WEEK 9

Session I - Introduction
Session II - Reason for Migration

WEEK 10

Session III - Family and Friends
Session IV - Language

WEEK 11

Session V - Culture
Session VI - Land

WEEK 12

Session VII - Status
Session VIII - Ethnic Group

WEEK 13

Session IX - Physical Risks
Session X - Strengths and Self-Esteem

WEEK 14

Session XI - Taking Action
Session XII - Future

WEEK 15

Closing Ceremony

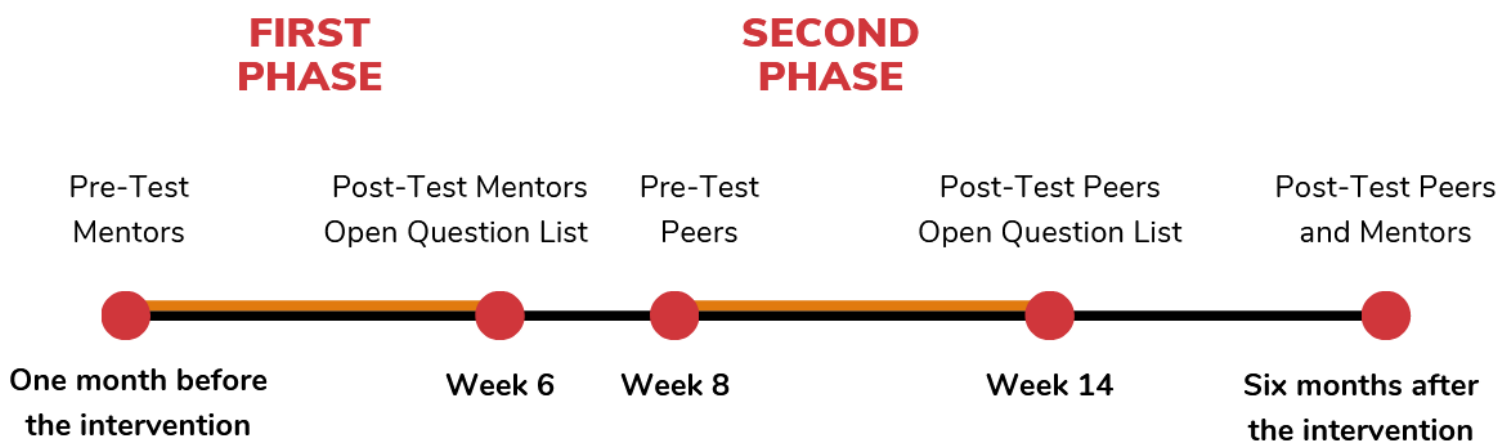
Program Evaluation

The type of evaluation conducted is subject to the interests of the professional who implements the intervention. It is suggested, however, to evaluate the program with a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods (see figure below for a time reference). Ideally, a comparison group from the same pool of participants should be used to establish that the changes participants' experience are, in fact, a result of the intervention.

For the quantitative assessment, variables of interest could be PTG, anxiety, and depression. Prior to the first session and after the last session, participants should complete an evaluation questionnaire, which consists of the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996), the STAI6, a six-item version of the state scale of the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI; Marteau & Bekker, 1992) and the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9; Kroenke, Spitzer & Williams, 2001), which measures depressive symptoms. If time permits, the evaluation could also include the Refugee Health Screener-15 (RHS-15; Pathways to Wellness, 2011), a tool for assessing emotional distress and mental health in refugees, which has been translated into 17 languages. Also, the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-28; Goldberg & Hillier, 1979) can be applied to detect symptoms of depression, anxiety, social dysfunction or somatic symptoms. Ideally, six months after the last session, a follow-up questionnaire with the same questions should be

sent out to participants in order to evaluate the long-term effects of the program.

In addition to these quantitative measures, a qualitative assessment with open questions (project evaluation, see appendix) should be administered at the end of the program. This assessment consists of a list of open questions, that can be given out to participants for them to write down their answers. However, it may also be included in a group discussion, following the list of questions. Apart from the pre and post measures, a continuous assessment and monitoring should be carried out (represented in orange below). The last 15 minutes of every session should be dedicated to a quick evaluation of the session content, satisfaction with the respective session, and whether it was useful to the participant. The group moderator can record this part of the session with the consent of the participants. Also, the group moderator brings an evaluation sheet (see appendix) to every session in which he or she can note down the attendance, how he or she felt leading the session, what progress the group made on this day, and additional observations. The goals of every session should be considered when describing the observation and progress made during the session. The evaluation sheet should be filled out after every session and, in the case of the mentors, returned to the professional who is implementing the intervention program on a weekly basis, in order for him or her to monitor the program implementation.



TERMINOLOGY

Posttraumatic Growth

Posttraumatic Growth refers to the positive cognitive, emotional and behavioural changes that an individual may go through as a result of a traumatic event (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004).

Resilience

A process by which individuals develop intrapersonal changes that allow them to successfully adapt to and/or withstand inevitable adversity. Resilient factors include hope, self-efficacy and coping responses (Gillespie, Chaboyer & Wallis, 2007).

Empowerment

The process by which an individual takes action to change those elements that hinder their well-being and that of their community (Brodsky & Cattaneo, 2013). In the case of refugees, empowerment consists of 1) critical awareness of the oppressive conditions in the host country; 2) a perception of control in sociopolitical contexts that are relevant to the individual; 3) active participation in order to gain control over inequalities in one's community (García-Ramírez, de la Mata, Paloma & Hernández-Plaza, 2011).

Peer-Support

A group of participants belonging to the same culture or community (hence, peers) supports each other mutually, and, in the case of this intervention, with guidance from peer-mentors.

Mentorship

Here, mentors are people from the same community who have priorly been trained by a professional to conduct the sessions.

Refugee

"Someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion." (UN General Assembly, 1951, p. 3). This is not to be mixed up with an asylum seeker, who applies for asylum but does not necessarily have an official refugee status granted by a government or the United Nations.



II. TECHNIQUES

Guided Relaxation

The guided relaxation exercise forms a crucial part of every session of this intervention program. The positive effects of guided relaxation on the individual are numerous. For example, reduced stress, anxiety levels, and depressive symptoms, and improved subjective well-being have all been observed in groups that received guided relaxation, yoga, or meditation sessions (Bershinsky, Trumpfeller, Kimble, Pipaloff & Yim, 2014; Chen et. al., 2012; Chiesa & Serretti, 2009).

At the beginning of every session, the guided relaxation is meant to induce a calm state, free from anxiety, in participants. This, in turn, increases their likelihood of opening up during the group exercises. The relaxation sheet (see relaxation document of every session) is read out slowly and calmly by the group moderator and is accompanied by music or natural sounds.

Migrant Stories

The telling of personal stories related to the migration experience forms the largest part of every session. Sharing narratives has several benefits at the individual and group levels. At the individual level, it helps people to make sense of their lives by structuring and becoming aware of the information stored in their memory (Monk, 1997). Thus, negative perceptions held by oneself or others can be relativized or disconfirmed. At a group level, it strengthens the community by building trust among group members (James, 1996). In the case of historically marginalized groups, it can also have an empowering effect, as the sharing of stories about the dominant culture is likely to challenge these established ideas (Williams, Labonte & O'Brien, 2003).

The sharing of migrant stories is always built on an individual exercise in which participants reflect and learn about themselves, their beliefs, their past, future, country or the culture they are living in (according to the respective session topic). In

these exercises, they are often encouraged to use their creativity to present a more individualized perspective. The individual exercise is important for participants to form an idea or opinion themselves before they hear stories of other group members.

The information and insights they receive from these individual exercises are subsequently shared with the whole group. It should be emphasized that this is not only a sharing exercise but first and foremost a listening exercise, in which every participant should pay attention to the emotional details of their peers' stories, reflect on them and provide feedback if they feel so inclined. To ensure that no member of the group feels disadvantaged, the time dedicated to each individual story should be clearly structured and communicated in advance.

Participants will realize that their experiences are often not very different from the ones of other refugees. The exchange of stories fosters group cohesion and the perceived social support of the other participants. While reflecting on their personal stories, they will also focus on their past achievements. By giving each other advice and sharing strategies on how to cope with difficult situations, they will realize how much they have achieved and recognize the value of their experiences. Together with the group moderator, who should always encourage a positive group atmosphere in which everyone feels safe and comfortable sharing, participants will gain a new positive perspective on their life and migration project.

Community Resources

Limited access and lack of knowledge about community resources are an often-cited problem that refugees face on arrival (Ventevogel, Schinina, Strang, Gagliato & Hansen, 2015). One goal of this intervention is, therefore, to facilitate information about community resources covering the most relevant needs of refugees in a new environment. By having better access and knowledge about these community resources,

participants are likely to be more resilient when faced with difficulties.

The idea of sharing community resources is that every participant shares the resources that helped them to overcome the difficulties corresponding to the topic of each session. Before providing resources, the group moderator should therefore always ask participants which resources they are already using. Likewise, when resources are shared with the group, all participants should have the opportunity to add the resources that they feel are missing or comment on the ones mentioned. It is important for the group moderator to be knowledgeable about the services provided by associations, websites, apps, and other tools that can help refugees with their challenges. The list should be exhaustive and updated to the place and time of intervention.



III. SESSION DESCRIPTION

General Overview

Every session follows a more or less similar structure (see session outline below), with small adaptations depending on the topic. The group moderator should start with a short introduction and leave time for questions about the last and current session. Then, a guided relaxation exercise follows. The group moderator guides the group through the relaxation exercise, which should be combined with background music. The largest and most time-consuming part is the sharing of refugee stories, in which participants first work individually on a topic related to the migration process and then share their experiences in group discussions. Subsequently, community resources related to the given session topic are shared. Participants' suggestions and participation can be very informative during this part.

Every session ends with a short evaluation of the session and suggestions and doubts about the upcoming sessions. This section is especially

important for the first phase of the intervention, as mentors need to be instructed on how to lead the same session with their cultural peer group. The evaluation is always based on the goals of each particular session, and guiding questions are provided. It is recommended to record this part of the session to collect qualitative data.

Regarding the materials needed for each session, the group moderator should always carry the evaluation sheet in which he or she writes down the attendance and important notes of the session. It is recommended to use a visual presentation that includes the session plan, instructions for every exercise, community resources of the respective session content, and evaluation questions (please contact the authors for example slides).

Finally, for the first phase of the intervention, the materials should be handed out to the mentors after every session. These should be translated by

SESSION OUTLINE

Activities

TIME: 3 hours

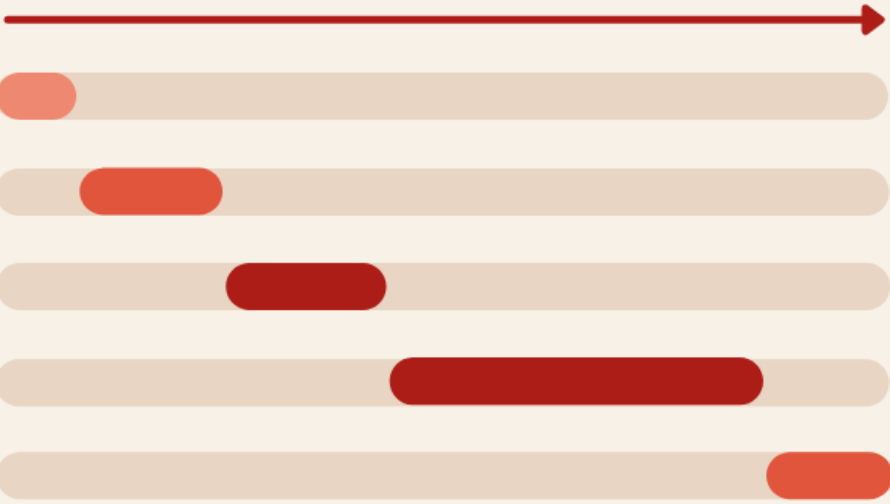
Open round of questions

Guided relaxation

Individual exercise

Sharing refugee stories

Community resources and evaluation



them, so they can use them for their peer group in the second phase of the intervention, where they guide the group of newly arrived refugees through the program.

Before the first session of both the first and second phases, there should be a first meeting with all participants of that phase and the group moderator(s). This first meeting is meant to give a general idea of the intervention, an overview of the planned activities, and the structure of each session, as outlined in this manual. A visual presentation should be used to guide participants through the intervention process and motivate them for participation. The first meeting is also a chance for the group members to get to know each other and to foster group cohesion. Therefore, before addressing the content of the intervention, a short presentation and team-building activity, in which people can get to know

each other, should be included. For example, all participants are placed in groups of two. They will introduce themselves by telling each other their basic data and some identifying or unexpected detail or something they like or dream about. Next, the whole group will meet and each member of each pair will introduce the other member.

In the following section, each session will be described in detail. As mentioned earlier, the content is the same for mentors and peers. Only the last two sessions of the first phase are dedicated to mentor training.

1 Introduction: Consequences of migration

2 Reasons for Migration: political, economic, social and personal aspects

3 Social Network after Migration: family and friends

4 Language: challenges and opportunities

5 Culture: coexistence between one's own culture and the new culture

6 Land: differences between one's homeland and the new land

7 Status: comparing past, present, and future

8 Ethnic Group: dealing with discrimination and racism

9 Health: understanding the concept of health

10 Strengths and Self-Esteem: recognizing the positive changes

11 Taking Action: overcoming barriers to change one's situation

12 Expectations for the Future: a new perspective for the future

SESSION I - Consequences of Migration

Objectives:	Creating a safe space Fostering group cohesion Identifying the positive and negative aspects of migration Normalizing initial psychological reactions and difficulties after migration as part of the adaptation process Highlighting the positive aspects of the migration experience Emphasizing the coping strategies carried out during the migration process Providing information about the psychological consequences of migration
Materials:	PowerPoint presentation (session one) Guided relaxation "the waterfall" Blank pages Copies of "the balance" Pens Evaluation sheet Voice recorder World map Speaker
Duration:	Three hours

The first session follows the same structure as every upcoming session (see outline above). The main idea of the first session is to analyze the main difficulties participants have faced or still face due to their migration. Before the session starts officially and if it has not been done priorly, the informed consent and pre-questionnaire should be filled out by participants.

Although the group members should already know each other after the first meeting, the session should begin with a short group presentation. Everyone says their name, time in the host country, origin, and reasons for emigration to the host country. Everyone gets the chance to indicate on the map (PowerPoint) where they come from and put their name in the country of origin. Next, the program with all planned activities will be presented and explained using the PowerPoint presentation.

Then, for the first time, participants will be guided through the relaxation exercise (see guided relaxation – the waterfall). In order to introduce the actual session topic, the individual exercise "The Balance of Migration" is presented. Each person must write in the document the negative and positive aspects of the migratory experience. This forces participants to not only focus on the negative aspects and to create a balance, and probably more realistic, view of their situation. Furthermore, the individual exercise ensures that every participant thinks about this issue, even if they do not share it with the group.

After everyone has noted down the pros and cons of the migration process, it is time to share their ideas with the whole group. The moderator tries to emphasize the points in common, the positive aspects, and the adaptation strategies to the new context. So as not to neglect the negative aspects, a list of the most relevant difficulties encountered (family, friends, language, culture...) is created

collectively. The moderator can refer to this list in future sessions and place a special emphasis on the difficulties mentioned here. One guiding question for the group discussion could be how participants feel now, compared to when they first arrived in the host country.

Then, information about possible psychological consequences of migration is presented visually.

The moderator should emphasize the normality of these reactions. The moderator then presents some tips to overcome these reactions. The group is asked about personal strategies and tips that they want to share with other group members.

The session closes with an open evaluation of the usefulness of the content of the session and expectations about the program in general.

Normal Reactions to the Migration Process

- Worry
- Negative thoughts
- Uncertainty
- Difficulty concentrating and paying attention
- Impaired memory
- Anxiety, fear or insecurity
- Headache or stomach ache
- Lack of appetite
- Sleep problems
- Passive-aggressive or passive behaviors
- Problems making decisions
- Feelings of guilt
- Feeling of loneliness
- Fatigue
- Use of drugs or alcohol

Some Suggestions to overcome these Reactions

- Thinking that what is happening to me is normal
- Have a similar routine every day
- Focusing on the positive aspects and my strengths
- Finding activities that I enjoy (taking a walk, physical exercise, reading, cooking, etc.)
- Community involvement
- Trying to connect with other people
- Finding people with whom to express my emotions
- In case of need, not being ashamed to ask for help
- Group suggestions

Guided Relaxation

The Waterfall

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrAhyTz2Mts>

We place ourselves in a comfortable position, with our arms and legs stretched out, and close our eyes.

Imagine you are taking a walk in the forest...there are big trees...tall...with lots of leaves...You move forward quietly and you hear the sound of running water...it is a very pleasant sound....

You hear the sound more and more clearly... the sound... it's more and more present... You get closer to the water... to the river you are listening to and, little by little, you go up the course of the river until you reach a waterfall. It is a waterfall of warm water... a beautiful waterfall... surrounded by water vapour... with a lot of foam.

There are flowers all around... birds in the branches of the trees. Contemplate the whole thing, the landscape... Contemplate the water that falls in abundance... very pure and warm water, which, as it falls, draws folds in the sand and around the rocks.

The sight of this warm waterfall fills your eyes, the sound of the water relaxes your mind... fills your ears. You feel a sweet emotion. It is an important moment for you. You stand under this wonderful waterfall of pure and warm water.... invigorating.... and full of energy.

Feel the water falling on you. Warm, warm water. It is a very pleasant and purifying sensation. The water is light.... very light. As you let it fall over your body...feel the light caresses down your face...down your neck...along your back...all over your body, following all the inner and outer paths.

This water is so pure and so light that it can penetrate you through the top of your head. Let it take the path you desire.... Let it circulate inside you. It is a wonderful and very pleasant sensation.

Let that wonderful and pleasant sensation run through your body from head to toe. Feel the water circulating as it enters your head and runs through your whole body....

You feel it circulating inside you and coming out through your feet. From this sensation, visualize yourself calm and relaxed as you sit here in the present moment.... Enjoy this sensation for a few moments, feel how relaxed you are...

You prepare yourself to leave the exercise.... conserving all the conscious or unconscious benefits it brings you.....we count slowly 1.... 2.... 3..... you open and close your hands slowly, becoming aware of the small joints of your fingers.....you take a deeper breath.... and another deep breath..... and you open your eyes.... preserving the state of relaxation and calm that you have achieved with the present relaxation exercise.

THE BALANCE OF MIGRATION

[illegible]

SESSION II – Reasons for Migration

Objectives:	Getting to know the macro factors (political, economic, and social) that have motivated migration Learning about the personal reasons for migration Unlearning the blaming of participants for their migratory situation Highlighting the strengths and courage for undertaking the migration project Valuing positively the current situation Promoting empathy and group cohesion among group members Providing community resources for legal advice
Materials:	PowerPoint presentation (Session 2) Relaxation sheet “Visualization on the way to the beach” “Reasons to emigrate” sheets Pens Evaluation sheet Recorder Speaker
Duration:	Three hours

The second session is dedicated to the reasons for starting the migration process. Like every session from this point on, it begins with a round of open questions, in which participants can clarify doubts and questions they have regarding the last session. Then, before getting into the actual session subject, the guided relaxation (see document below) is conducted.

For the Individual exercise, each person writes on a sheet of paper the reasons for emigrating. The exercise is then shared with the group, and points in common are observed and highlighted. If participants show feelings of self-blame, special emphasis should be placed on clarifying that the situation they are in right now is often caused by economic and political factors. Instead, the group moderator should encourage the group to value everything they have achieved so far, by successfully reaching their destination. The following guiding questions can be used during the discussion:

- Do you think you are responsible for the situation you are in?
- Do you think you can change the course of your life?

Before the session ends, local refugee and migrant organizations that give legal advice are presented. Participants can complement the list with personal suggestions. Given the emotional content of the session, it should be ended with a positive group activity. An example is given here. However, it may be replaced by another team-building activity if considered more appropriate. Lastly, as in the first session, the group performs a spoken evaluation of the session content.

It is likely that the second session is characterized by participants' negative feelings, due to the nature of their personal migration stories. Therefore, the group has to respect any member who may not want to share their experience, if they are not yet prepared for it. However, this can also be a great chance to increase group cohesion and trust among members because participants

notice that they are not alone with their stories and that they receive support from other group members. Also, if the group moderator considers that some members of the group are not in the mood for the open evaluation that ends the session normally, it can be postponed to the beginning of the next session.

The Fortune Cookie

This activity aims to imitate the message of fortune cookies. The participants should be told what fortune cookies are about.

Then, each participant is given a few minutes to write a brief fortune message or wish. This should be a message addressed to the whole group, for example, "I wish that what we have learned can be put into practice successfully". The moderator collects all the messages and mixes them in a bag.

Each member randomly takes a piece of paper from the bag and reads the message aloud as if it were an affirmation. As they read it, they personalize it, for example, "I will be able to put what I have learned into practice successfully."

Guided Relaxation

The Beach Walk

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zNJr2M1aCs>

I'm sitting with my back straight and my eyes closed..... I am moving away from the daily noises and demands, I begin to visualize myself, with all kinds of details, walking down a sandy path that leads to a beach..... I see myself walking along the path.....it is a warm day, the sun warms me and the sensation is pleasant..... A cool breeze on my forehead refreshes me.....

I feel my feet sinking slightly into the warm sand and I like it, it's a nice feeling, very pleasant.... From here, I can look at the horizon, I see the blue of the sea..... I see the blue of the sky..... I have the feeling of being surrounded by blue, the blue of the sea, a blue that relaxes me and fills me, invades me, and calms me..... I perceive the smells of the sea, of the sand, I hear the sound of the wind filtering through the leaves of some nearby trees.....

I feel calm and quiet, I feel relaxed and at peace...

I lie down on the warm sand, and it relaxes me, the sand feels warm and pleasant..... while I feel this pleasant sensation, I look at the blue sky and the blue sea that, little by little relax me..... The sound of the wind through the leaves relaxes me..... The sound of the waves relaxes me.....more and more...

I feel the relaxation and calmness..... I allow myself to remain in this state for a few moments, feeling relaxed and calm...

I get ready to leave the exercise..... becoming aware of the state of relaxation in which I find myself.... I open and close my hands slowly....I take a deeper breath..... taking a deep breath.....when I count to 3, I open my eyes.... 1....2....3, keeping the state of relaxation and calmness I have achieved, 1...2....3, and I open my eyes.

SESSION III – Social Network after Migration

Objectives:	Getting to know the social network that each participant currently has Valuing new social relationships Providing practical resources to increase their social network Increasing perceived social support. Increasing a sense of belonging to a group
Materials:	PowerPoint presentation (Session 3) Relaxation sheet “The Cloud” Blank sheets Document “Exercise social network” Pens Evaluation sheet Voice recorder Speaker
Duration:	Three hours

The third session is designed to recognize and foster the participants' social networks. As always, the first minutes of this session are dedicated to doubts and questions regarding the previous session. It's OK if this part of the session is more extensive this time, given the highly emotional content of the previous session. Time should be dedicated to talking openly about how participants felt during the last session, whether they had difficulties dealing with the content, and what their thoughts were after they left the last time. This is important, so participants will not be left with negative thoughts and feelings. This section is followed by a guided relaxation (see document below).

During the individual exercise (see document below), participants explore their social network, how they got to know them, and to what extent they feel supported by them. This is further deepened during the group exercise in which they share their experiences. The sharing of strategies and resources for extending one's social support system by finding new connections or even

professional support can be very beneficial. It can also be emphasized that the space created here during the program can serve as a means to extend one's social support network. The following guiding questions can be used during the group discussion:

- Do you feel that you can rely on the people around you?
- Do you feel that you belong to a group?
- How do you value new social relationships?

The community resources shared by the group moderator can be associations that offer activities or online resources (facebook groups, websites, etc.) or applications that promote meetups or connect individuals. Language exchanges, religious institutions, free city tours, volunteering opportunities, sports associations, or libraries can be useful resources as well. The session closes with a spoken evaluation about the usefulness of the session content.

Guided Relaxation

The Cloud

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ex2SGbidcGE>

Take your relaxation posture and close your eyes... for a few moments simply observe your breathing in a calm and relaxed way. Feel your breathing calm and relaxed.

From this moment on, you will visualize a warm cloud descending on you... it is a beautiful cloud that welcomes you, a warm and protective cloud that first contacts your feet... as it gets closer to them you feel how they become lighter It is a bluish-white cloud that touches your feet and gives them a pleasant sensation, making them lighter.

The cloud has positive effects on every place it comes in contact with your body, your feet become lighter..... and restful, the circulation of your feet improves as they feel lighter and protected by the blue-white cloud.

Your breathing is calm, with each breath your body relaxes more and more..... calmer....more relaxed..... The cloud contacts your legs and the muscles relax, the calves relax, more and more.....with each breath more and more relaxed.....more rested. The knees relax.... you feel them relaxed.....You feel the contact of the cloud warmly on the legs, first the right leg and then the left leg. Both legs are relaxed..... rested..... warm..... the right and left foot....relax and you feel them relaxed..... rested..... warm..... warm.....The cloud continues slowly contacting your body, it touches your hips and makes them light, it touches the abdomen..... and the chest..... the whole body... light...and relaxed.... rested.... very light.... very rested....

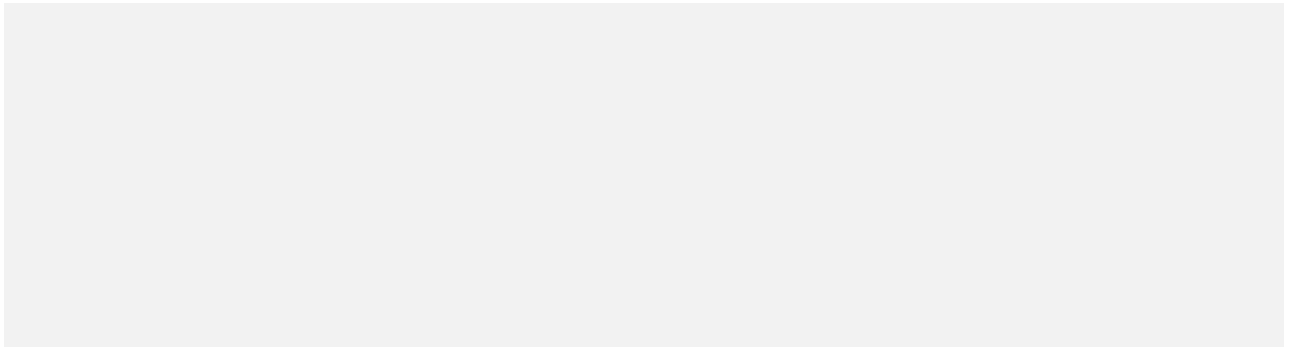
Your breathing is calm, with each breath, your body relaxes more and more..... calmer....more relaxed.....The cloud contacts your arms, you feel the fingers of both hands lighter...the hands light..... the wrists light..... relaxed..... rested.... the arms light.... relaxed... rested.... the light hands.....relaxed..... rested...The cloud embraces you and welcomes you with its warmth, communicates its lightness to you. You feel your whole body light.... Your head.... your arms.... your trunk.... your legs..... your head....Your whole body is very relaxed...very rested.....You become aware of this state of relaxation..... of peace.... of tranquility.....

You feel your breathing..... calm, all your attention is on it..... You watch the air as it enters..... simply observe..... with each breath how the oxygen fills your body and you become lighter, calmer, your body relaxes..... as you breathe, your body relaxes..... more and more and more.....You remain a few seconds enjoying this pleasant feeling of relaxation and peace.

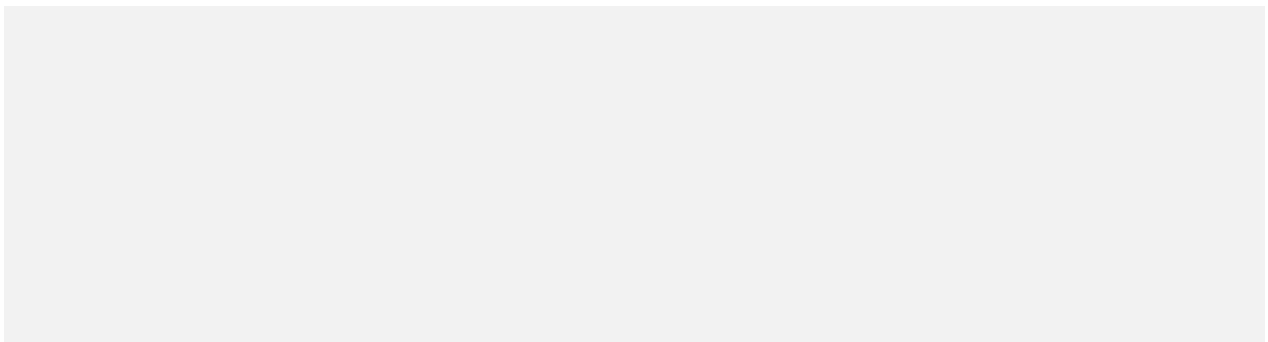
Now, you get ready to leave the exercise..... You count slowly 1 2 3..... You open and close your hands slowly...You take a deeper breath.....and another deep breath..... and open your eyes....preserving the state of relaxation and calm that you have achieved with the present relaxation exercise.

THE SOCIAL NETWORK

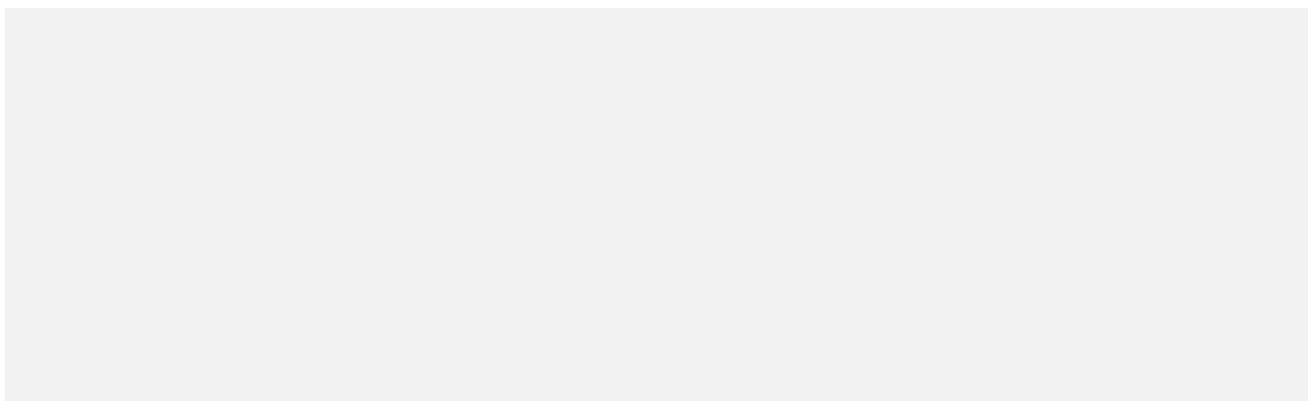
Did you know anyone in this country before you arrived?



Have you met people here and do you feel supported by them?



How did you meet them (e.g. roommates, in language classes, in an association, mobile application, etc.)?



SESSION IV – Language

Objectives:	Learning about difficult situations due to the language barrier Valuing the importance of language learning Valuing the new strengths after learning the language Valuing the increase in social support due to language proficiency Providing resources to attend language, translation, and interpretation courses
Materials:	PowerPoint presentation (Session 4) Relaxation sheet “The Forest and the Sea” Blank sheets Document “Exercise Languages” Pens Evaluation sheet Voice recorder Speaker
Duration:	Three hours

The fourth session is all about the new language, the challenges, but also the advantages that come with learning a new language. It begins with questions and doubts about the last session’s content before the group moderator guides the group into the relaxation and exercise (see document below).

During the individual exercise, participants are supposed to write down a difficult story that happened as a consequence of their language barrier and how they overcame these situations. The stories that come up during the individual exercise are consequently shared in the group. Participants are encouraged to emphasize skills that helped them to overcome those difficult situations and to find experiences that they have in common. They should also value the progress they have made and express how they are feeling now. The moderator can use the following questions to guide the discussion:

- How important do you think learning the host country’s language is for a newcomer?

- Do you feel more empowered/stronger now that you know the language?
- Do you feel more social support after learning the language?
- Do you have the opportunity to practice your own language?

By now, participants will likely have already named a number of resources for learning the language. The group moderator can present community resources such as associations that offer free language classes, information on volunteer translator positions, language exchanges, websites, and mobile applications to learn languages. At the end, participants should receive the instruction to bring magazines, pictures, or materials that remind them of their home culture or the host country’s culture to the next session, as they will be doing a cultural collage. Then, the session is evaluated according to the goals and session content.

It should be noted that this is a context-specific session, as not all refugees in every region of the world will have to learn a new language. For example, seeking asylum within Latin American countries does not require learning a new

language. If this is the case, the content related to language in this session can be replaced with content that matches the demands of that specific population, following the main idea of individual exercises before sharing stories. The focus can also be shifted towards differences in accents, ways of expression, and misinterpretations. In a mixed group with a variety of ethnic backgrounds,

it is likely that some of the participants will be natives or bilingual in the language. However, they can provide a complementary point of view and encourage participants who do not speak the host country's language natively.

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The sessions have changed me to gain more knowledge, to better understand the context that I want to tackle as a foreigner in Spain, and to feel less uncertainty, to improve openness toward other cultures, and to know whom to trust. I have a greater understanding of other institutions and of the process we should go through as asylum seekers and meeting people from similar situations. It has helped me to understand my rights as an immigrant.

35-year-old Salvadorian woman

Guided Relaxation

The Forrest and the Sea

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrAhyTz2Mts>

Place yourself in a comfortable position with your arms comfortably extended to the sides, legs stretched out, feet slightly open outward, with a willingness to relax and close your eyes.....slowly feel your breathing, quiet, calm. From this moment, you will become aware of your breathing.....simply observe how you breathe. Observe your breathing.... become aware of your breathing... you breathe and you are filled with calm, you breathe and you are filled with peace.

Now you begin by visualizing a green meadow..... visualize an expanse of green grass extending into a nearby forest..... you observe the green grass..... the green reflections of the sun on the meadow..... you look out into the forest and see leaves of all possible shades of green..... it is relaxing very relaxing, the sun is reflected in the green leaves of the trees and shines brightly..... The scenery you see is beautiful and you enjoy it...You breathe calmly and quietly inhaling the pure air, full of oxygen produced by the trees of the forest... You find yourself breathing pure and relaxing air..... with each breath you relax more and more.....

You listen to the whisper that the air produces when passing through the leaves of the trees, it is relaxing, very relaxing, you listen to the sound of the wind in the leaves and you relax...more and more..... You remain for some moments, observing the green meadow, the trees, their beautiful leaves, the flowers that are around you..... and feeling your breath.....

You continue walking and in the distance, you see a golden sandy beach under a radiant sun... You approach it little by little and look towards the horizon... You observe a calm and blue sea that slides smoothly to the shore, where the waves break slowly, and you hear the sweet sound of the foam. You visualize the whole beach, the blue sea.... the golden sand..... you lie down on the sand.... The warmth it gives off is very pleasant.... the energy of the sun touches your back and relaxes it, you feel that relaxing...and pleasant warmth..... it is a very nice sensation..... the blue sea..... the blue sky without clouds..... the sound of the wind in the leaves of the trees behind you.....

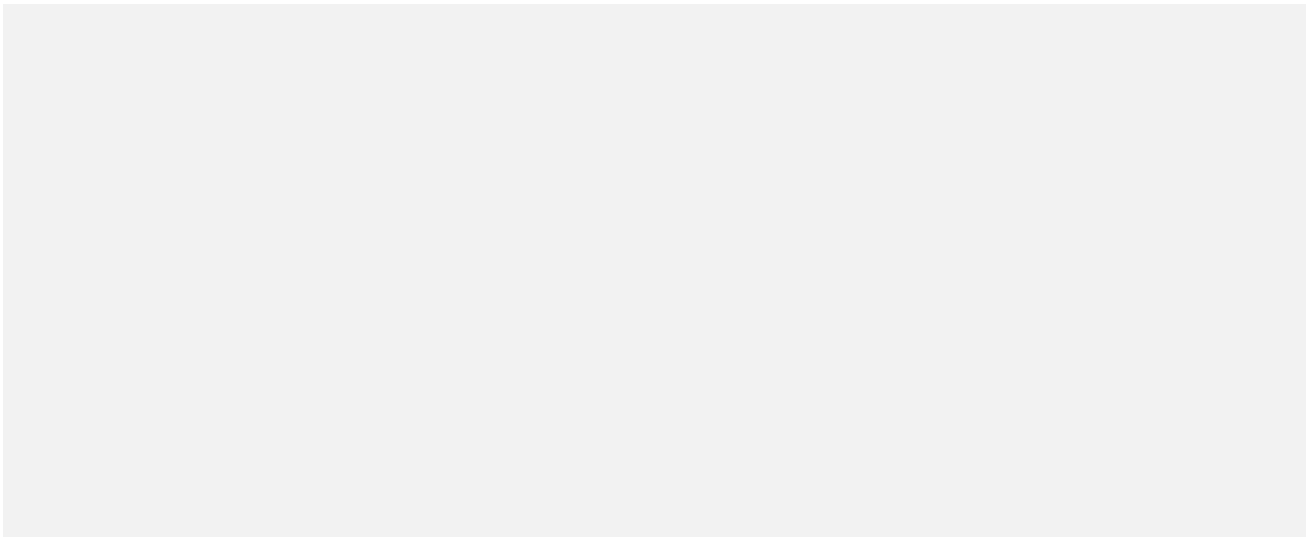
The sun warms your arms as they sink heavily into the sandyou relax more and more.....the sun warms your chest and legs...your legsthat sink heavily into the sand that warms them, and you are becoming more and more relaxed....You listen to the rhythmic and swaying sound of the waves that seem to rock this calm blue sea.... under this beautiful blue sky...You listen to the sound of the wind in the leaves of the trees.... You perceive the smell of the blue sea.....You become aware of your body resting relaxed...more relaxed. You become aware of this state of peacefulness, relaxing, and it fills you with peace and tranquility.....and.....you allow yourself to enjoy a few seconds of this pleasant feeling.

Little by little, you prepare yourself to leave the exercise.... you open and close your hands slowly....you take a deep breath..... and count to three to open your eyes, 1...2...3.

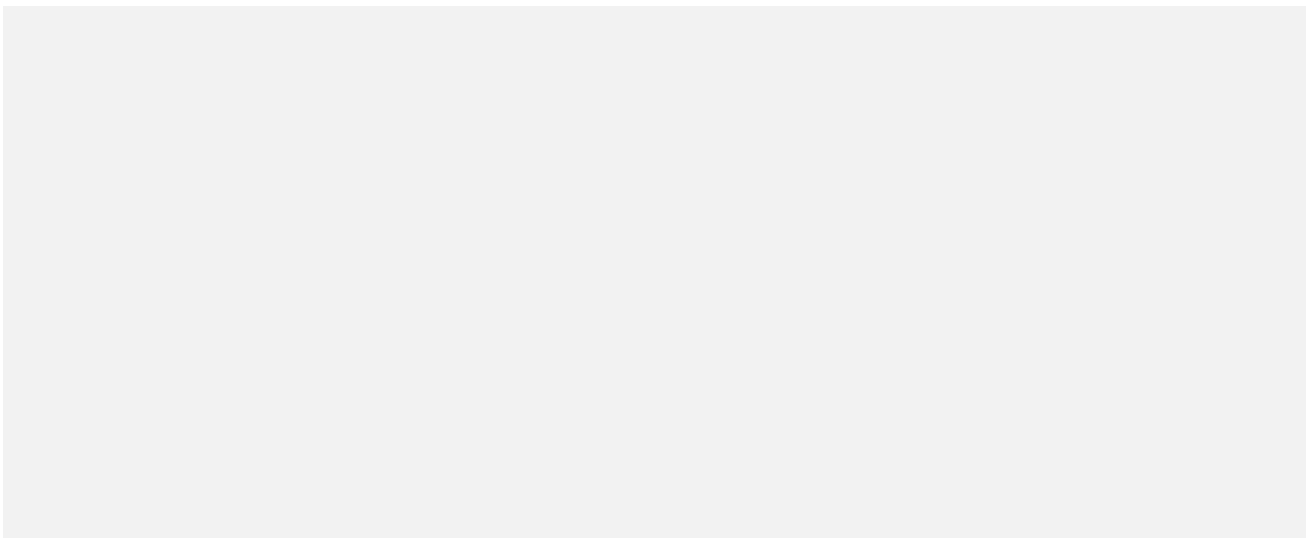
THE LANGUAGE

Write down a difficult situation that happened to you due to the language (or a misunderstanding):

Briefly describe the situation and how you felt



What has helped you to overcome such situations?



SESSION V – Culture

Objectives:	Valuing the customs that participants preserve from their own culture Promoting the acquisition of new customs of the new culture Exploring whether participants preserve an ethnic identity based on cultural practices Valuing customs of the new culture Providing resources on intercultural mediation and cultural activities
Materials:	PowerPoint presentation (Session 5) Relaxation sheet "Aroma" DIN-A2 sheets for the collage Glue sticks Colored pencils Magazines (geography, cultural diversity, dances, travel, food, etc.) Evaluation sheet Voice recorder and Speaker
Duration:	Three hours

The fifth session is about manifesting the participants' cultural identity in a creative project. Although differences in culture will be highlighted, the emphasis should be placed on the positive aspects of maintaining the customs of one's own culture while simultaneously being able to learn from the cultural practices of the host country. Participants are likely to benefit from the intercultural exchange and the relaxed atmosphere of the session program.

First of all, doubts about the previous session should be addressed. Then, the relaxation exercise is performed (see document below). The individual exercise consists of a creation of a cultural collage using old magazines and photographs provided by the group moderator or the participants themselves. Participants can use images that remind them of their own culture and combine these with images that remind them of the new culture they find themselves in. Afterward, they present their work to the group and share their

thoughts on it. The conversation will be guided by the following questions:

- Do you preserve customs from your own culture?
- Have you adopted any new customs from the host country?
- How important do you think it is to preserve the customs of your culture?
- Do you feel better if you practice these customs?
- Do you think it is important to adopt customs from the new culture?

This session's community resources can be intercultural mediation services as well as cultural associations in which participants can connect with their home culture or explore different cultures with a description of the activities that these associations offer. Finally, the session's usefulness should be evaluated.

Guided Relaxation

The Aroma

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iqmO1RlqorU>

I close my eyes and I place myself in a comfortable position, I start paying attention to my breathing, I observe how it is produced..... I observe it without modifying it at all, I contact with my interior and I perceive it calm..... my breathing is calm..... and it becomes natural slow..... peaceful..... calm. My body remains motionless..... quiet..... ready to rest..... relaxing.

From this moment, I begin to visualize a garden....., in it, there are roses..... jasmine..... carnations and all kinds of flowers that spread their fragrance in the environment. Everything has a beautiful green color..... and I can see all kinds of green in this spring garden....., the various fragrances fill me and I feel how the perfume intoxicates me into a state of calm and peace I perceive the calmness of the moment in the middle of this amazing garden..... I listen to the birds singing..... I feel the infinite aromas of this garden...

For a moment, I am motionless..... breathing the essence of the most beautiful flowers, the scent that is a balm for my breathing.... calm..... and quiet..... my breathing is calm..... and becomes natural... slow..... peaceful..... and quiet. I feel my breath....., I listen to the sound of the wind swaying in the leaves of the bushes..... I perceive the singing of the birds..... I contemplate this wonderful oasis of peace and I enjoy the most diverse colors of the roses..... white..... reds.....yellows, and with their warm..... sweet..... and pleasant..... perfumes.

The music of the essences composes a pleasant melody... it seems that my body breathes through my skin, and all the fragrances bring me their energy, their freshness, their vitality..... I breathe and I feel revitalized, full of energy my breathing is calm..... and becomes natural..... slow..... peaceful.....and calm.

I feel my breath..... and contemplate this wonderful oasis of peace and enjoy the scent of jasmine..... that unmistakable essence reaches me..... I see its white flowers..... small..... so small, yet its perfume is intense and provokes feelings of peace.... of joy..... and satisfaction when I breathe it.....observe and feel..... the jasmine..... its scent..... fills me..... calm..... calmness.....I feel my breath....., and I hear the birds singing..... I contemplate this wonderful garden, it is a place of rest..... of peace, and I enjoy contemplating it.

I become aware of my calm state, and I keep it inside me..... little by little, I get ready to leave the exercise; little by little, I take a path that goes out of the garden, its colors and its aromas, and its beauty and tranquility. I get ready to leave the exercise...and we count slowly 1 2 3..... I open and close my hands slowly....I take in air with more intensity.....taking a deep breath and I open my eyes.... preserving the state of relaxation and calmness that I have achieved with this relaxation exercise.

SESSION VI – Land

Objectives:	Learning about the changes in the environment that the participants have experienced Finding out if the participants carry out activities that remind them of their homeland, promoting their ethnic identity Highlighting strategies to adapt to the new environment Evaluating positively aspects of the new environment Providing community resources for field trips
Materials:	PowerPoint presentation (Session 6) Relaxation sheet “Landscape” DIN-A2 sheets to paint Pencils Erasers Pencil sharpeners Colored crayons / Colored pencils / Colored markers / Acrylic paint Paint brush Evaluation sheet Voice recorder and Speaker
Duration:	Three hours

The sixth session follows up on the cultural experience by promoting participants’ cultural identity, considering the change in environment landscape and climate that participants have experienced. The relaxation that follows right after the short round of open questions is also in line with the session theme (see document below).

For the individual exercise, participants are instructed to paint a landscape that reminds them of their homeland. Then, they share their work with the group, explaining what inspired them. During the *sharing stories* part, emphasis will be placed on the differences in landscape and lifestyle between the home country and the host country and how they adapted to these changes. The change in climate and landscape can be significant, and the adaptation from a warm to a cold climate, for example, plays a crucial role in the

individual’s well-being. Guiding questions for the discussion could be the following:

- How do you think your life has changed because of the new environment?
- Have you adapted well to the new environment? Do you find positive aspects?
- Do you go to places that remind you of your homeland?

Community resources can be organizations that offer activities or field trips to explore the land and culture of the host country. Lastly, the usefulness of the session’s content is evaluated.

Given the similarity of sessions five and six, they may be combined by only creating a collage or the landscape painting. That is, as long as both cultural and environmental perspectives are discussed during the group exercise.

Guided Relaxation

The Landscape

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AMYGQhc3dPo>

I close my eyes, and place myself in a comfortable and relaxed position, with my arms and legs stretched out.

I imagine that I am walking through a very green grassy meadow located between high snowy mountains. I notice the mountains around me, they are very high, and I see how the white of the snow contrasts with the intense blue of the sky. It is midday and above me shines a very bright and radiant sun. I look at the green of the grass, the white of the snow on the mountains, and the blue of the sky. The temperature in that place is very pleasant, it is neither hot nor cold, and there is a nice warm breeze blowing gently on the skin of my face.

I go very slowly, appreciating everything I see and feel around me. I have a great sense of tranquility and peace. I hear the birds singing and see them flying around me. Now I notice the plants, grasses, and flowers around me. There are small brightly colored flowers, white, yellow, orange, blue... that invite me to come closer and smell them... I cut a flower and bring it to my nose. I smell its aroma while I concentrate on the color of its petals.

I keep walking very slowly, without hurrying, enjoying the walk. I look around... observing the streams of water coming down from the mountains, forming small streams, where the waters leap and run, forming small waterfalls and quiet pools. I get a little closer and I can hear the murmur of the waters...

I approach a nearby river to drink some water. I put both hands into the water to drink and I feel its freshness...I drink some water and I feel it fresh, pure, clean, and crystalline entering my body...revitalizing my organism, and I feel full of health and well-being...

I continue walking and look for a place where I can lie down comfortably. I see a meadow of green and shiny grass and decide to lie down there...with my eyes closed, I perceive the sounds of nature, the smells, the temperature...feeling calm and relaxed...I enjoy a few seconds of this sensation...

Slowly I prepare myself to leave the exercise...I open and close my hands slowly....I take a deeper breath.....I take a deeper breath.... and open my eyes....

SESSION VII – Status

Objectives:	<i>Learning about the changes experienced over time and future expectations: past, present, and future</i> <i>Highlighting future opportunities</i> <i>Highlighting the positive changes, strengths, and capabilities developed during the migration project</i> <i>Valuing the coping strategies developed and capabilities to change their future</i> <i>Providing resources for job training and job search</i>
Materials:	<i>PowerPoint presentation (Session 7)</i> <i>Relaxation sheet “Magic carpet”</i> <i>DIN-A2 / A4 sheets to paint</i> <i>Pencils</i> <i>Erasers / Pencil sharpeners</i> <i>Acrylic Paint</i> <i>Paint brushes</i> <i>Crayons or Colored markers</i> <i>Colored pencils</i> <i>Evaluation sheet</i> <i>Voice recorder and speaker</i>
Duration:	<i>Three hours</i>

The seventh session explores the participants' self-concept by highlighting changes in their professional and social status that they have experienced after migration. After clarifying doubts and questions about the previous session and the relaxation exercise, the individual exercise follows, in which participants are instructed to paint a river that represents their life. This should symbolize their past, present, and future according to the difficulties encountered along the way. They can play around with objects, the curve of the river, the surroundings, the sun, clouds, animals, etc. to represent different stages in their lives.

Then, before they present their work to the group, participants write a short essay in which they explain briefly their interpretation of it. This has a self-reflecting function, as it encourages participants to engage with their painting and their personal path. It also helps them to structure and mentally prepare the presentation that they will

give shortly after. Then, participants present their rivers to the other group members and explore together the changes experienced on their migratory path as well as their aspirations for the future. Concerning each participant's drawing, the group moderator can use the following questions to guide the discussion:

- Do you think it has been an easy road to get here?
- Do you think you have opportunities to change your future as you wish?
- Do you feel empowered to do so?

Community resources for this session can be related to job training and job search. These include different online tools and associations that provide job training and that help with the recognition of certificates and job experience. The session closes with an open evaluation of the usefulness of the session for the participants.

Guided Relaxation

The Magic Carpet

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0yDOPtm7dc>

I let my body rest in a comfortable position and close my eyes with my arms and legs stretched out. Now, I imagine that I am on a soft and comfortable magic carpet that will take me on a pleasant journey that will provide me with relaxation and calmness.

My carpet takes me to a place in the middle of nature, a space as enchanting as I can imagine...I feel the sun with its majestic brightness, the air full of aromas coming from the nearby flowers..... and suddenly, I realize that I am surrounded by positive energies that fill me with peace and tranquility, placidity, calmness...

I continue my journey on the carpet and I observe a nearby forest composed of trees that provide me with the oxygen I breathe and with each breath, I feel better and better, calmer.... more relaxed... fuller of energy. I breathe and I am full of energy, I feel calm, full of energy, tranquility, and peace, with each breath, I relax more and more...A nearby river allows me to listen to the sounds of water and its various rhythms... I decide to stop and watch how the water flows quietly...

A little further, I see a small, serene, and shallow lake bathed by a radiant sun...I decide to go towards it and I bathe in the water..... my body under the sun is filled with energy..... and submerged in the water, I am cleansed.

The sun charges me with energy..... the water frees me from tensions and gives me a pleasant feeling of calm and tranquility..... I savor the pleasant sensations produced by the water, the sunlight, the nature that surrounds me, the wind passing through the leaves of the trees, the singing of the birds, and the general music that accompanies this journey in nature.....

I feel with all my senses.....I see the colors and shapes, I hear the birds singing, I feel the breeze on my skin, the warmth of the sun, the humid water, the infinite aromas, the taste of sweet air, I feel an enormous harmony...and everything together gives me an intense feeling of joy and happiness.

I feel the energy of nature, the peace, and harmony... I stay for a few seconds in this state of calm... I rest and fill myself with energy, Little by little, I prepare myself to leave the exercise, slowly opening and closing my hands, taking in air with more intensity and on the count of three, we open our eyes... 1..... 2..... 3.....

SESSION VIII – Ethnic Group

Objectives:	<i>Learning about experiences of racism and discrimination</i> <i>Getting to know coping strategies for these conflictive situations</i> <i>Valuing the capacities to respond to conflictive situations of discrimination</i> <i>Valuing one's cultural roots despite difficulties</i> <i>Providing assistance resources to victims of discrimination</i>
Materials:	<i>PowerPoint presentation (Session 8)</i> <i>Relaxation sheet "The Volcano"</i> <i>Blank sheets</i> <i>Document "Ethnic Identity"</i> <i>Pens</i> <i>Evaluation sheet</i> <i>Voice recorder</i> <i>Speaker</i>
Duration:	<i>Three hours</i>

The eighth session focuses on experiences of racial discrimination in the host country and the importance of valuing one's cultural origins. Participants have the opportunity to share experiences of subtle or open discrimination and the strategies they have implemented to cope with these situations.

After doubts and questions about the previous intervention are clarified, the group moderator guides group into the relaxation exercise (see document below). During the individual exercise, participants write a story of an experience in which they have been a victim of racism or discrimination. They should write about their feelings after being discriminated against and how they reacted. As usual, this story is subsequently shared with the group, emphasizing the coping strategies they implemented to get out of that situation, but also ways that helped them to overcome these situations in general. The group moderator can discuss strategies to resolve conflicts of this kind or in general. Guiding

questions for the group discussions could be the following:

- Do you think you have strategies/feel empowered to overcome conflictive situations?
- Do you have social support for such situations?
- Despite the difficulties you have faced, can you value your origins positively?

Community resources can include associations that assist victims of discrimination. Laws that deal with hate crimes can be presented in a simplified way, so participants can get to know their rights. Also, more specific resources that respond to the needs of participants, such as discrimination at the housing market (for example, real estate agencies) can be presented. Participants are, as always, encouraged to come up with their own ideas. As always, the session closes with a final evaluation of the session content.

Guided Relaxation

The Volcano

Music: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hp_LiPnWFQo

We place ourselves in a comfortable position with our back straight, arms and legs stretched out, and close our eyes. We are going to imagine a mountain... a big mountain, and we go little by little towards the top. At the top, we stop and observe the landscape. We look around us and see that there is a volcano with no activity, extinct. We look down and see a radiant light that catches our attention. We see a small spiral staircase attached to the wall of the volcano that invites us to descend.

We head slowly towards the staircase and we realize that on the first step there is a lantern that gives us a warm and pleasant light. We go down the stairs, slowly touching the wall of the volcano. We begin to walk down, step by step, slowly. As we descend, we see more and more light and try to define the sound we hear; it seems to be the sound of water. We continue descending, counting the steps, seeing the light grow, and hearing the sound of water more and more clearly. We keep going down and hear the singing of some birds and the sound of the water becoming clearer and clearer, and finally, we reach the last step.

We stop. We see in front of us a turquoise blue lake. To the right, there is a waterfall among the lush green vegetation in which are the birds we heard on the way down. To the left of the lake is a flat rock where the sunbeam hits the mouth of the volcano. We leave the flashlight on the ground and slowly approach the lake. We look at the water and see a lot of colorful fish swimming ... We touch the warm water, and the feeling is pleasant, it invites us to bathe.

We start walking into the lake and the water touches our feet. We submerge ourselves in the water, serenely and pleasantly, and swim for a while feeling great pleasure and inner peace. We get out of the water, lie down on a flat rock, face-up, feeling the warmth of the sun, and we can see through the volcano a clear blue sky and a dazzling sunbeam.

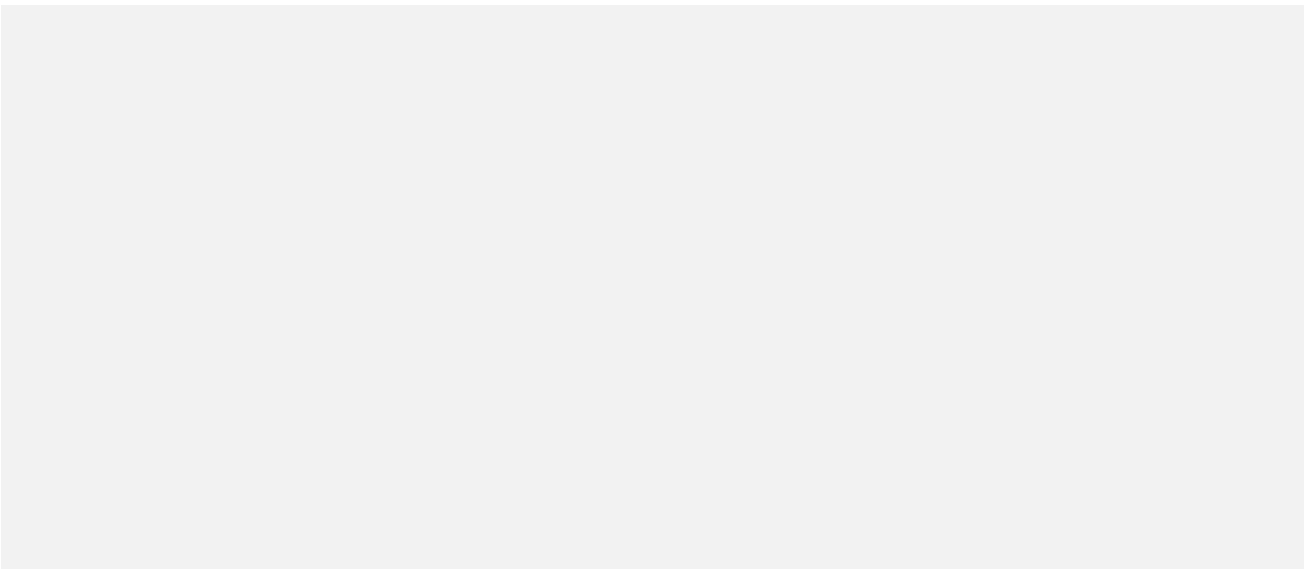
After resting for a while, we feel fully relaxed and slowly, we get up, to walk towards the spiral staircase that takes us back to the top of the mountain. We climb the stairs slowly and go outside. We see the landscape from above, with our arms outstretched, and a gentle breeze envelops us with a wonderful sense of freedom. We stay for a few seconds in this state of tranquility, relaxing, full of peace and calm.

Let's count slowly up to three and open our eyes keeping the state of relaxation that we have achieved...we count slowly 1 2 3.....

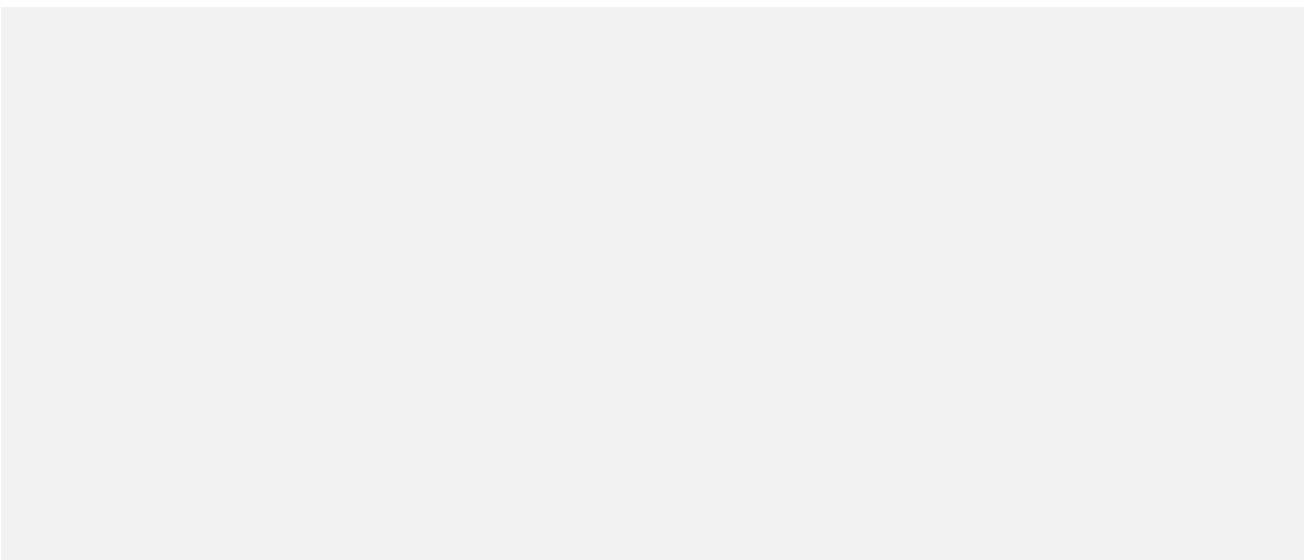
EXPERIENCES OF DISCRIMINATION

Write a situation in which you have been a victim of racism or discrimination:

Briefly describe the situation and how you felt.



How did you get out of the situation? What has helped you to overcome such situations?



SESSION IX – Health

Objectives:	Getting to know the participants' concept of health Learning about the evolution of their health after the migration experience Facilitating strategies to promote health Assessing the existence of social support and community resources in case of illness Providing resources for medical care
Materials:	PowerPoint presentation (Session 9) Relaxation sheet "The Eagle" Blank sheets (DIN A2) Pens Coloured Post-its Evaluation sheet Voice recorder Speaker
Duration:	Three hours

The ninth session deals with the concept of health among the participants and how it has evolved throughout their migration experience. As before, doubts about the previous and present session are assessed first. Then follows the relaxation exercise (see document below).

During the individual exercise, participants investigate what the concept of health means to them. They can write down on post-its words or phrases that they connect to the concept of health or that define the word health for them. Then, everyone presents their most important ideas. The post-its can be placed on the whiteboard or wall, creating a network of concepts.

Together they try to find a common definition, while simultaneously exploring the evolution of health of each participant before and after their migration experience. The group moderator

should try to get to know participants' strategies to promote their health so they will share them with each other. The following questions can be used to guide the discussion:

- Do you think you are doing anything for your health?
- What strategies are you using?
- Do you have social support if you get sick?

The community resources presented in this session can be about associations that provide medical assistance, hospitals, or guidelines on how to access the healthcare system. At the end, the group moderator should evaluate whether the session was considered helpful by the participants.

Guided Relaxation

The Eagle

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tq106PTaEWE>

Get into a comfortable position with your arms and legs stretched out and close your eyes. Let's go on a journey together, an imaginary journey to visit beautiful and pleasant places. Imagine you are in the countryside, you feel good, calm, you feel safe and relaxed... you see the fresh and comfortable green grass, you feel the sun as it touches your skin and warms your body.

You breathe deeply and feel the smell of the field all over your body. You look around you and see the trees, you hear the birds singing, you see butterflies fluttering, you feel very comfortable, you are surrounded by all the colors you can imagine. You are going to sit on the grass, and you feel how the sun caresses your head sweetly and pleasantly, you feel the warmth, you feel it on your shoulders, your arms, your hands, you feel it on your back, your hips, your legs, and your feet. Enjoy this moment. You feel all your muscles relax. Extend your hands upwards, feeling how the sun's rays are charging your hands with powerful energy, feel how it enters your hands and goes through your whole body, you feel calm and peaceful ... strong and confident full of tranquility ...

Now you get up and start to take a walk, enjoying the feeling of having more strength and peace inside you. You are calm, relaxed. You go for a walk in the countryside surrounded by flowers, you look at the trees and you feel happy. You see a river in the distance and you approach it to take a bath in crystal clear water with a warm and pleasant temperature. You feel lighter, and you begin to notice how your body weighs less and less, your body floats more and more, and you begin to notice how you go down the river, letting the current take you little by little. You go down and you feel the field, the flowers, the butterflies, observe everything around you. And you continue floating down, calm and relaxed.

You hear the birds singing, and you see a bird, a beautiful eagle perched on the branch of a tree. And you imagine that you are this bird, this eagle, flying through the blue sky, watching below you the river, the mountains, the valleys, the rivers, the cities. Your body is weightless, and every time you breathe, you feel better, every time you breathe, you feel happier and happier.

You remain a few seconds enjoying this state of relaxation, peace, and harmony...little by little, you move your hands and take in air with more intensity...you count slowly to three to open your eyes....1....2....3

SESSION X – Strengths and Self-Esteem

Objectives:	Exploring the participants' strengths Valuing the positive changes they have experienced throughout their migration trajectory Improving group cohesion among the participants Improving participants' self-esteem Improving participants' self-knowledge Providing resources for psychological assistance
Materials:	PowerPoint presentation (Session 10) Relaxation sheet "The Sea" Blank sheets Pens pocket mirrors List of positive adjectives Colored pencils Evaluation sheet Voice recorder Speaker
Duration:	Three hours

The tenth session is specifically dedicated to recognizing and fostering participants' strengths and self-esteem. After doubts about the previous sessions are discussed, the guided relaxation takes place (see document below). Given that some participants may not have heard about the concept and importance of self-esteem, it should be explained shortly, ideally, using an audiovisual presentation.

Then, every participant is handed a pocket mirror. This exercise is aimed at improving participants' self-knowledge, and they should recognize their strengths and positive aspects. It consists in looking at one's image and silently answering the following questions about oneself:

- What do you see in the mirror?
- What does the person looking back at you in the mirror look like?
- Do you know him or her?

- What positive aspects does that person have?
- What bad characteristics does the person looking at you in the mirror have?
- What do you like most about that person?
- Would you change anything about the person in the mirror?

The questions can be spoken out loud by the group moderator or included in the PowerPoint presentation. Participants should make an effort to see all the positive characteristics of the person they see in the mirror. A short group discussion should follow, to summarize the main impressions that participants have received from the exercise.

Next, follows a collective exercise that is aimed at increasing participants' self-esteem. Every participant writes their name on a sheet of paper and passes it on to the right. Then every person writes a positive aspect or strength that they think the person on the paper has until all the papers

come back to their senders. They can make use of the list of positive adjectives below. All participants read the paper for themselves before they have the opportunity to add strengths or positive aspects that they believe themselves to have and that are not on their sheet.

This exercise is consequently shared with the entire group. Participants can discuss how they felt during and after the exercise, whether they agree with the ascribed attributes, and which ones they added to the list. Lastly, they should explore which of these attributes they developed since their arrival at the host country. The following questions can be used by the moderator to guide the group discussion:

- Do you think that, since arriving in the host country, you have experienced positive changes?
- Do you think you have developed skills or abilities in the host country that you did not have before?

Community resources can include organizations that provide psychological care. The session closes with an open evaluation about the session content and its usefulness.

Guided Relaxation

The Sea

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWc3au2OMyU>

We get into a comfortable position with our arms and legs stretched out and close our eyes.

Now, imagine that you are near the sea. Right now, you are looking at it... it is beautiful.... blue.... calm...and transparent.... inviting you to get closer little by little...you decide to take off your shoes to feel the sand and walk slowly towards the sea, while you listen to its pleasant sound....

You get closer and closer...you observe its small and soft waves as they come and go...producing a pleasant feeling of relaxation. You feel your feet on the shiny golden sand....you feel how the small waves reach your feet and massage them.....now, look up and watch the seagulls flying slowly over the water...enjoy their flight and movements...

Breathe deeply and fill your lungs with the pure and clean air of the sea... Take in pure and clean air several times...feel the energy of the air entering your lungs...enjoy the moment...Open your arms, and breathe deeply. With each breath, you feel a pleasant sensation of peace and tranquility.

You continue walking on the beach, on a huge golden sandy beach...you feel a soft and warm breeze on your face and body...you feel wellness and calm...Your feet brush the wet sand and play with the small waves coming towards you...

You keep walking along this huge golden sandy beach...with your head held high and with a big smile...The sun is shining brightly, allowing you to see the turquoise blue and transparent water...You breathe deeply and with each breath, you feel calmer and more relaxed....

You look towards the sea and contemplate its immensity and beauty filling you with peace and tranquility...Little by little...you say goodbye to this beautiful beach and the sea...keeping the feeling of relaxation and calmness...You breathe deeply...You move your body little by little: back, arms, legs, head...and on the count of three you open your eyes....1....2....3.....you open your eyes slowly.

STRENGTHS

Examples for positive aspects and strengths

Open	Courageous	Independent
Active	Creative	Optimistic
Affectionate	Detail-oriented	Persistent
Attentive	Dynamic	Practical
Autonomous	Empathetic	Problem solver (resolves conflicts)
Able	Energetic	Reflective
Cheerful	Extrovert/sociable	Resistant/strong
Competent	Flexible	Sincere
Confident	Generous	Tolerant
Cooperative	Honest	

SESSION XI – Taking Action

Objectives:	<i>Improving the ability to help others who have experienced similar situations</i> <i>Increasing empathy towards other refugees and migrants</i> <i>Improving self-esteem</i> <i>Promoting problem-solving strategies</i> <i>Providing first-aid resources</i>
Materials:	<i>PowerPoint presentation (Session 11)</i> <i>Relaxation sheet “Flying”</i> <i>Blank sheets</i> <i>Pens</i> <i>Evaluation sheet</i> <i>Voice recorder</i> <i>Speaker</i>
Duration:	<i>Three hours</i>

The eleventh session is meant to empower the group to take action to change the situation they are in whenever they see it necessary. This session is empowering, as they come up with their own solutions for the problems that newly arrived refugees may have. Mentors may benefit especially, as they will put themselves in the shoes of their newly arrived peers for the first time during the program.

After the round of questions about the previous session and the guided relaxation, participants are instructed to write an imaginary letter to a refugee who has just arrived. They should include recommendations for overcoming the main barriers and other suggestions that they would have liked to know about when they arrived at the host country. Some may also include support messages to the new arrivals.

Participants are then instructed to share this exercise with everyone, emphasizing their own experience and the community resources they know. The final result should be a list of

recommendations. The group moderator can encourage group members to participate in the discussion, using the following questions:

- How could you help a newly arrived refugee?
- Do you feel able to do so?

Community resources for this session will most likely be named by the group members. However, the group moderator can point out organizations that perform the first response after refugees' arrival. Then, to close the session, an evaluation of the content and its usefulness should be conducted. Also, the group is given a homework exercise. As a preparation for the next session, participants are asked to take between three and five photos that they relate to how they imagine a day in their lives five years from now. These should be sent to the group moderator so that he or she can put them into the PowerPoint presentation. The photos are then discussed during the next session.

Guided Relaxation

Flying

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zNjr2M1aCs>

Sit with your back straight, do not cross your arms or legs. Close your eyes. Breathe deeply. Feel the wave of relaxation that goes through your whole body from head to toe.

Breathe in, take a breath...as you take a breathe, you are filled with peace and serenity. Continue doing this for a few moments. Now, you are very calm and relaxed. You take a very deep breath, holding the air in your lungs for a few seconds and then slowly releasing it...now continue to breathe as you normally do.

With each breath, you feel your body begin to get lighter and lighter, so light that it begins to rise slowly and slowly...suddenly you find yourself floating in the air gently and slowly, feeling the ability to fly. You begin to fly and, in the distance, you see a beautiful beach and the blue sea.

Below, you can see a small boat gliding gently through the blue waters of the sea and you fly over the golden sands of the beach. You realize how wonderful the world looks from above. From here, you can see a very green island and you head over to get a closer look. You can smell the freshness of the vegetation on this island.

From above, you can enjoy the clarity of the seawater, the blue sky, the freshness of the air, which caresses your skin, and all the nature that surrounds you...

You keep flying and you cross some beautiful cotton clouds that refresh you with their humidity, the air smells clean, there is a beautiful sunset, and the orange sunlight paints everything with its warm colors. Keep flying and enjoy that wonderful feeling of freedom, feeling relaxed and being at peace...

You enjoy a few seconds of the pleasant sensation of well-being, tranquility, and calm, you feel in harmony, relaxed and at peace.... little by little, we will be leaving the exercise while maintaining the state of relaxation. You move your hands slowly and count to three to open your eyes...1....2....3

SESSION XII – Expectations for the Future

Objectives:	Helping participants to learn about their goals and expectations for the future Giving participants the feeling that they can actively shape their own future Increasing perceptions of opportunities in the future Increasing self-esteem Evaluating the impact of the program.
Materials:	PowerPoint presentation (Session 12) Relaxation sheet “The forest” Post test for evaluation Blank sheets Pens Coloured Post-its Evaluation sheet Voice recorder Speaker
Duration:	Three hours

The twelfth session is the last session in terms of new content before the mentor training sessions. Overall, participants should leave the session and, in the case of the peers, also the program, strengthened and empowered and with a positive perspective about their future.

After doubts and questions regarding this and the previous session have been clarified, the group is guided through the relaxation exercise (see document below). Subsequently, participants are instructed to imagine themselves five years from now and describe a day in their lives from the time they wake up until they go to bed. They will then share this exercise with the group, using the pictures taken after the last session as visual guidance. They should put special emphasis on their goals and self-perceptions. The group moderator should encourage a discussion about whether or not they like their imaginary future and

what steps they believe are necessary to achieve their future goals. This time, no community resources are presented.

Instead of the usual session evaluation the post-evaluation can be administered. This should consist of a list of open questions (project evaluation, see appendix) and the post-questionnaire. The list of open questions can be handed out to the participants, so they can write down their answers. But it may also be included in a group discussion, following the list of questions. The evaluation questionnaire is the same as the pre-questionnaire administered before the first session. During the second phase, this session can also be used for planning the closing ceremony in week 15. The group can come up with ideas about what they would like to do to celebrate the successful completion of the program.

Guided Relaxation

The Forest

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrAhyTz2Mts>

Start by finding a comfortable sitting position with your back straight and your arms and legs uncrossed.... close your eyes. Little by little, we will imagine a forest in the mountains, full of trees and vegetation...Imagine yourself walking along a path through that imaginary forest. As you walk, your body and mind relax more and more with each step you take.

Breathe deeply and feel the fresh mountain air, filling your lungs completely. Now breathe out and enjoy the pleasant feeling of relaxation....

Continue to breathe slowly and deeply as you walk through the forest. The air is fresh and pleasant. As you walk, you concentrate on the different sounds of the forest that produce a pleasant feeling of well-being... Birds singing... A gentle breeze blowing. The leaves of the trees changing and swaying in the gentle wind.... Your body relaxes more and more as you walk along the trail....

Breathe deeply and feel yourself becoming more and more relaxed...as you breathe and walk, you begin to feel all your muscles relax. Feel your back relax, your spine relax, your neck relax, all your muscles relax...your mind relaxes..... As you continue walking through the forest, you start to climb up a gentle slope and notice the variety of trees around you. Smell the forest around you, the flowers and the trees...appreciating the vivid colors of nature.

You continue to walk through the forest.... Now, you begin to hear the sound of water faintly in the distance, coming from a nearby river...and continue to enjoy the nature walk....The sun is shining and its rays are caressing your skin... Looking around you, you see the mountains in the distance. The sky is clear and blue... You see a green and comfortable meadow and you decide to lie down to enjoy the sun and the sound of nature. You listen to the water of the river and the sound of the birds as the sun warms you little by little.

You continue to breathe in the clean, fresh air.... You feel very relaxed... Calm... Serene... At peace... With a pleasant feeling of tranquility. You allow yourself to enjoy this sensation for a few seconds...

Little by little, you open and close your hands and slowly you count to three to open your eyes and remain in a relaxed and peaceful state...1...2....3

The Mentor Sessions

Objectives:	Preparing mentors for the peer-group sessions
	Highlighting the main objectives of the intervention
	Making it clear how mentors should work with their peer-group
	Ensuring that all materials are translated in time
Materials:	PowerPoint presentation (The Mentor Session)
	Blank sheets
	Pens
	Evaluation sheet
	Voice recorder
Duration:	Two sessions of three hours each

The mentor sessions are only for participants of the first phase who will take part in the second phase of the intervention. In two sessions, the future mentors will be guided through the process of mentoring the group, they will learn about the essential aspects of being a mentor and repeat the session content and structure that they are going to work with. Although the content is designed for two sessions, depending on the needs of the group, it may take more or less time. This means also that, depending on the characteristics and skills of the future mentors, some additional sessions could be introduced, incorporating aspects on leadership, emotional control, group dynamics, communication skills, or the gender approach.

Apart from the preparation, the mentors have two weeks from this point on to prepare all the materials they need for the second phase of the intervention. They can use this time to translate materials that were not yet translated. The sessions have a rather loose structure, as they are of a more informative nature. However, they should still be interactive, as questions and doubts need to be addressed.

The main idea of the second phase of the program is that mentors orient newly arrived refugees with their own experience in overcoming the main

difficulties they encounter upon arrival in the host country to promote their well-being. As the mentors have already experienced what it's like to participate in the intervention, they might already know its important aspects. However, certain features that characterize the program should be made clear to them. The mentor should always:

- Highlight personal strengths and positive aspects of the participants
- Create a mutual support group
- Work on coping strategies by theme
- Emphasize the active role of the group of participants in their personal growth
- Provide community resources

Mentors should be encouraged to take a proactive role and let their personal experience and cultural background shape their leadership style during the second phase. They should also understand their role as a group moderator during the sessions. The following characteristics are important:

- Empathy
- Active listening
- Assertiveness
- Patience
- Flexibility
- Tolerance
- Responsibility

- Emotional sensitivity
- Taking on the role of a moderator (considering turns of speech, equal participation, etc.)

Mentors are supposed to have a first interview or meeting with the members of their peer group before the official start of the intervention program. For this purpose, a guiding structure should be established. First, when meeting their peer group for the first time, they should explain the project and its main objectives. Second, they should give participants a document with their name, contact details, and other personal data. Third, the mentors need to assess each participant's availability to determine the schedule for the sessions.

After discussing the structure of the first meeting and the general session structure (questions, relaxation, individual exercise, sharing stories, community resources), the future mentors are introduced to the evaluation sheet, which they have to fill out during every session and return to the professional on a weekly basis. It should also be emphasized that they are supposed to record the last part of every session and inform their cultural peer group about it.

The mentors should be reminded of the content of all twelve sessions. Questions and doubts regarding any particular session can be addressed. Finally, they should also be informed about the evaluation methods used and at which point of the program they should be administered and sent to the program coordinator.

”

This must go on, it can't stop here. For me especially, it has been an unforgettable experience and it has helped me a lot to be better, stronger. It's the first step for social change, you convey it to one person and this one to another... I feel empowered.

29-year-old Salvadorian Man

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APPENDIX

EVALUATION SHEET

TO BE USED BY THE GROUP MODERATOR ONLY

Date:

Session:

Group moderator:

Number of participants:

Missing participants (names):

How did you feel
leading the group
today?

Did you notice
progress in the
group? What
progress did you
notice?

Observations and
session summary

PROJECT EVALUATION



PROJECT EVALUATION

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the project, we kindly ask you to answer the following questions as honestly as possible, bearing in mind that the answers will be treated anonymously. Thank you very much for your collaboration.

1. Have the sessions been useful to you? In what way?

12345678910



☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐



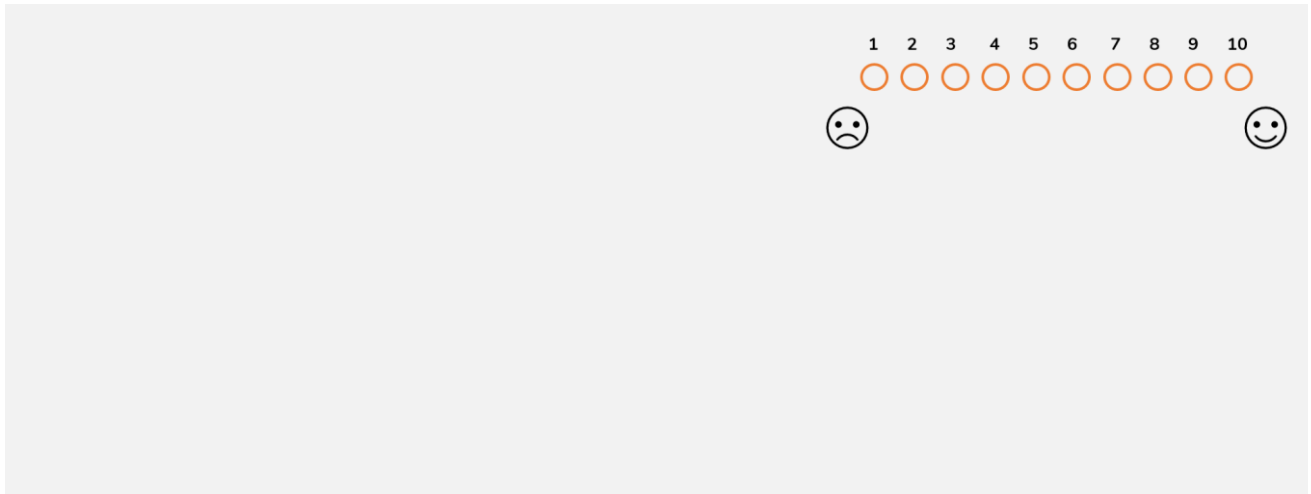
2. To what extent do you think the sessions have changed you?

12345678910

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐



3. Do you think you have developed coping skills that can help you in difficult situations? In what way?

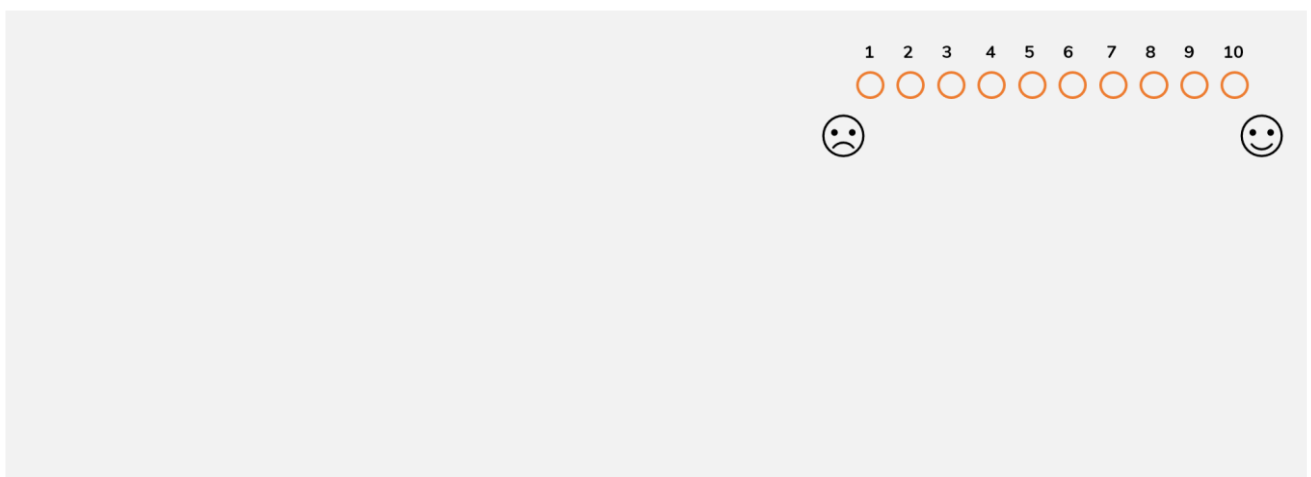


1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

☹️ ☺️

4. Do you think the sessions have helped you to acquire skills to help other people?



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

☹️ ☺️

5. Do you feel that the sessions have helped you to establish bonds with other people?



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

☹️ ☺️

6. Do you think your motivation to help others has improved?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

7. Do you think your expectations for the future have changed? In what way?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

8. What have been the main contributions of the program? What would you improve?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

