

GROUP TREATMENT FOR SURVIVORS OF TORTURE
CLINICAL SERIES

STAGE TWO REMEMBRANCE AND MOURNING:
REFLECTIONS ON A WOMEN'S PSYCHOTHERAPY GROUP AT THE
CENTER FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE

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OBJECTIVES:

After attending this webinar participants will be able to:

1. Identify the benefits to survivors of torture in participating in a psychotherapy group.
2. Describe the differences between a psychotherapy group and an education and support group.
3. Describe the role of the clinician in the group.
4. Discuss successes and challenges experienced in one particular group iteration.

OVERVIEW

- A few words about trauma
- Why group work?
- Therapy vs. education
- Formation of the group
- Role of the Facilitator
- "The Thursday Women"

A FEW BRIEF WORDS ABOUT TRAUMA

- Defining Trauma
- Implications for any program working with refugees and trauma survivors



TORTURE, WAR TRAUMA AND TERRORISM AFFECT FIVE BASIC HUMAN NEEDS

- The need to feel **safe**
- The need to **trust**
- The need to feel of **value** (self worth)
- The need to feel **close to others**
- The need to feel **some control** over our lives

PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS ON THE COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

- Culture of Fear, Distrust, Discordance
- Culture of Apathy
- Culture of Isolation and Silence

PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS ON INDIVIDUALS

- No "unique" effects of torture/war trauma
- Wide range of responses
- PTSD, other anxiety sx's
- Depression
- Somatization
- Substance Use
- Organic Impairment (TBI, nutritional)
- Learning Difficulties

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PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS ON INDIVIDUALS

- Damaged Trust
- Helplessness
- Shame and Humiliation
- Shock, Denial, Disbelief
- Disorientation and Confusion
- Rage
- Fear

REMEMBRANCE AND MOURNING

Judith Herman's 3 stage Model

1. Safety and Stabilization
2. Remembrance and Mourning
3. Reconnection

MODEL OF CARE AT CVT

- Multi-disciplinary
- Individualized
- Modeled on Judith Herman's Stages
- Group and Individual Treatment
- Level I, II and III groups

LEVEL II GROUPS

- How did we form our groups
 - Gender
 - Country of Origin
 - Age
 - Language
 - Immigration Status
 - Open vs. Closed groups
- Who can participate
- Use of Interpreters
- Individual vs. Group Goals
- Role of the Facilitator

PURPOSES

- Creating Healing Communities
- Healing that "Makes Sense"
- Community Responses to Trauma
- Survivors as "healers" and "leaders"
- Identity Formation
- Spirituality
- Mourning Losses
- Reconnection

ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

- Creating Safety
- Managing Exposure (trauma)
- Confronting Avoidance
- Regulating Affect
- Modeling
- "Victim, Perpetrator, Bystander, Witness"
- Benefits of Co-Facilitation

COMMON CHALLENGES

- External Constraints
- Group Cohesiveness
- Shame/Blame
- Fear of Judgement
- Conflict Avoidance

"THE THURSDAY WOMEN"

This is one example of an ongoing group.

- 1) 8-10 women
- 2) West African and East African
- 3) Mothers and Young Women
- 4) Immigration Status
- 5) Healing Journeys

WHAT HAPPENED WEEK TO WEEK

- Creation of safety
- Creation of community
- Sharing of Resources
- Building Skills
- Mourning
- Celebration

THEMES

THEMES

- Forgiveness

THEMES

- Forgiveness
- Parenting

THEMES

- Forgiveness
- Parenting
- Grief and Loss

THEMES

- Forgiveness
- Parenting
- Grief and Loss
- Acculturation

THEMES

- Forgiveness
- Parenting
- Grief and Loss
- Acculturation
- Stress Reduction

THEMES

- Forgiveness
- Parenting
- Grief and Loss
- Acculturation
- Stress Reduction
- Immigration Stressors

CHALLENGES

CHALLENGES

- Avoidance

CHALLENGES

- Avoidance
- Group Cohesion

CHALLENGES

- Avoidance
- Group Cohesion
- External factors

CHALLENGES

- Avoidance
- Group Cohesion
- External factors
- Language

CHALLENGES

- Avoidance
- Group Cohesion
- External factors
- Language
- Culture

ENDINGS

- How the group came to a close
- Next steps for the participants
- Lessons learned by the providers

Questions

THANK YOU!



The
CENTER for
VICTIMS of
TORTURE
Restoring the Dignity of
the Human Spirit

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