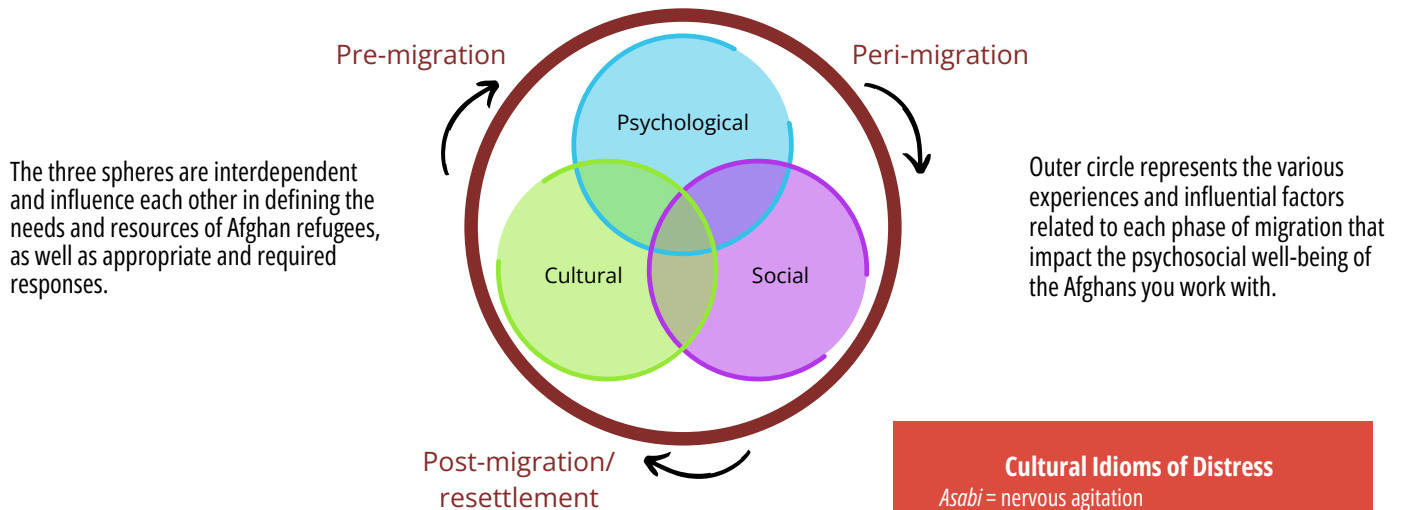


MENTAL HEALTH & PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT GROUPS WITH AFGHANS



Attendance, Participation, & Engagement

- Assess needs, wants, concerns, and interests.
- Build and establish trust.
- Community outreach & engagement with key community gatekeepers.
- Pre-screen potential group participants for suitability, motivation, and readiness.
- Effective messaging about the group.
- Group logistics: timing, location, transportation, size of group, and space.
- Impact of post-migration/resettlement stressors and/or social determinants of health on mental health and functioning.

Elements of Effective Groups with Afghans

- Gender-specific, regardless of age
- Group structure with flexibility.
- Regular preparation and collaboration with interpreters
- Build trust, group cohesion, and emotional support & normalize experiences.
- Relevance, engagement and maintaining attention is key.
 - Holistic view of health/mind-body connection
 - Use culturally appropriate examples, metaphors, or proverbs.
 - Cultural idioms of distress, causes, and healing practices
- Culturally adapted interventions
 - Practical information/support and meet concrete needs.
 - Psychoeducation to increase mental health literacy, decrease stigma, and promote self-awareness, & overcome challenges.
 - Somatic sensation and somatic-focused techniques (i.e., stretching, yoga, etc.)
 - Emotion regulation techniques
 - Use non-traditional approaches: serve to modulate intensity of talking about painful materials & promote different levels of self-expression.

Cultural Idioms of Distress

Asabi = nervous agitation
Gham = unexplained sadness
Afsurdagi = depression
Jigar khun = expression used to describe grief after the loss of family members or friends
Fishar-e-bala or *fishar-e-payin* = state of emotional pressure/agitation or low energy
Goshagary = self-isolation
 Depression often described as 'thinking too much' (ruminative sadness), 'inability to perform daily tasks', 'abdominal pain', 'going crazy', and 'dementia'

Afghan Proverbs

- There is a path to the top of even the highest mountain (*Koh har qadar beland baashad, sar-e khod raah daard*).
- One flower doesn't bring spring (*Ba yak gul, bahaar na-meysha*).
- The world is alive with hope (*Doonya baa omeed zenda ast*).
- Seek knowledge from cradle to grave (*Ze gahwaara taa guhr, daanesh bejoye*).
- Respect to others is respect to oneself (*Ehteraam ba digaraan, ehteraam ba khod ast*)
- When you take a fish from the water, it is always fresh (*Maahee-raa har waqt az aab begiri, taaza ast*; Meaning: it is never too late to begin something new. When you begin something, it always is a fresh start.)
- The sun can't be hidden by two fingers (*Aftao ba du angusht put na-mesha*).
- Patience is bitter, but it has a sweet fruit (*Sabr talkh as, laken bar-e shireen dara*).
- A real friend is one who takes the hand of his friend in times of distress and helplessness (*Dost amus ke dest-e dosta da pereshan (h)all o dar mandagish bigira*).
- No pain no gain (*Be zahmat rahat nest*).
- Laughter is the salt of life (*Khanda namak e zindagi ast*).
- God help those who help themselves (*Himat e mandha madad e khuda*)