

INTRODUCTION TO THE TRAINING

MIGRANTS' STORIES THROUGH THE USE OF IMAGES

27-28.05.2020



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



**SIMPLE PROJECT ACTIVITY/IO2
DEVELOPMENT OF THE FRAMEWORK**
2019-1-SE01-KA204-060418

Table of content

1. Description of the methodology.....	2
Who we are and what we do	2
Who we meet: target groups	2
What we want to achieve: objectives	2
What does it mean to meet extreme stress or trauma.....	2
Which are the expected outcomes	4
2. How we work: materials and tools.....	4
Why non – verbal narration	4
The use of images.....	4
Into the practice	5

1. Description of the methodology

Who we are and what we do

Approdi approach: Extreme (STRESS) trauma and images. Arrivals: migrants' stories through the use of images. Approdi is an association based in Bologna (Italy) and is gathering different professionals active in the social environment: psychologists, anthropologists, linguistics and cultural mediators, educators. Approdi collaborates with Antoniano Onlus inside the Protection System for Beneficiaries of International Protection and for Unaccompanied Foreign Minors (SIPROIMI) providing their methodology to refugees and migrants.

The methodology focuses on the help relationship, where migrants are seen as the real protagonists of their migration process. The aim of this methodology is to avoid that one relies too much on the service and a continuous need for help and support.



Who we meet: target groups

- Migrants and to asylum seekers from Sub-Saharan countries, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Iran etc.
- People who have suffered very difficult journeys: violence, torture (extreme stress or trauma).

What we want to achieve: objectives

- regain the ability to create interpersonal relations;
- being able to feel safe with other people is probably the most important aspect of mental health; safe connections are essentials to meaningful and satisfying lives;
- increase emotional stability (ability to calm yourself);
- develop the ability to associate (put) difficult memories in the past.

What does it mean to meet extreme stress or trauma

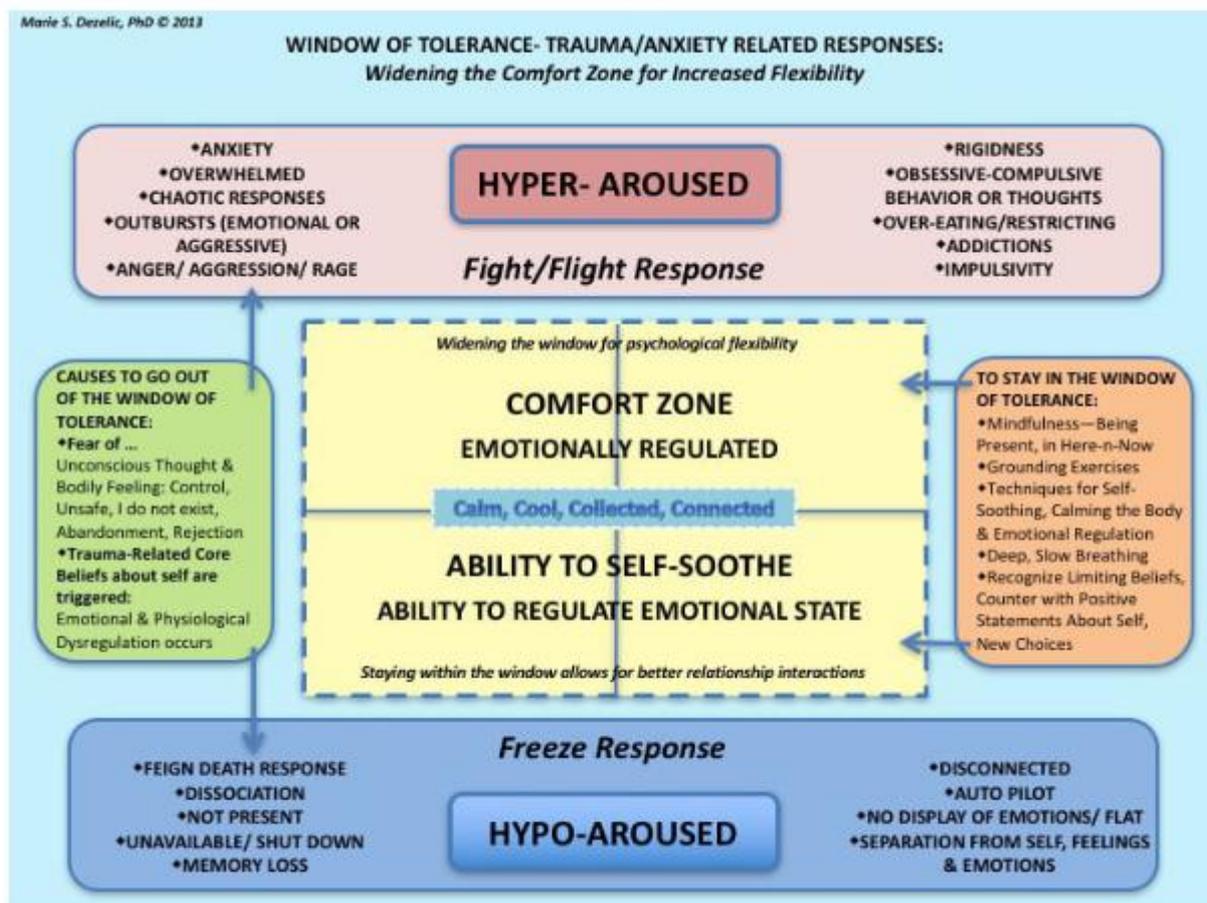
Trauma is a psychological, emotional response to an event or an experience that is deeply distressing or disturbing. For the better and coherent understanding of trauma for SIMPLE project needs, we are going to use a very **broad definition of trauma**.

A traumatic event is an incident that causes physical, emotional, spiritual, or psychological harm. The person experiencing the distressing event may feel threatened, anxious, or frightened as a result. This trauma definition can refer to something upsetting, such as being involved in an accident, having an illness or injury, losing a loved one, going through a divorce or moved to another country. However, it can also encompass the far extreme and include experiences that are severely damaging, such as rape or torture. Because events are viewed subjectively, this broad trauma definition is more of a guideline. Everyone processes a traumatic event differently because we all face them through the lens of prior experiences in our lives.

Trauma occurs when it is impossible to protect yourself or run away. External factors can easily trigger past experiences (even if the person is not able to remember the traumatic events).

The Window of Tolerance is a useful tool to understand how we work

"Window of Tolerance" a term coined by Dr. Dan Siegel is now commonly used to understand and describe normal brain/body reactions, especially following adversity. The concept suggests that we have an optimal arousal level when we are within the window of tolerance that allows for the ebb and flow (ups and downs of emotions) experienced by human beings. We may experience hurt, anxiety, pain, anger that brings us close to the edges of the window of tolerance but generally we are able to utilize strategies to keep us within this window. Similarly we may feel too exhausted, sad, or shut down but we generally shift out of this.



(DEZELIC & ASSOCIATES, 2017)

When we experience adversity through trauma and unmet attachment needs this can drastically disrupt our nervous system. Our senses are heightened and our experiences and reactions are typically intensified and strategies are less readily accessible to us. Learning how to track and shift our affect can be a powerful tool for promoting regulation and integration throughout the brains, body, and mind.¹

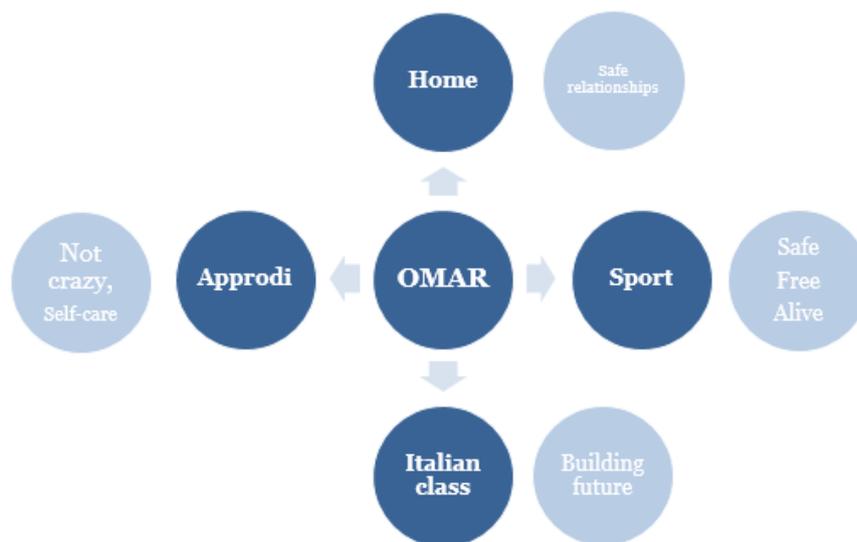
¹ <https://www.attachment-and-trauma-treatment-centre-for-healing.com/blogs/understanding-and-working-with-the-window-of-tolerance>

Which are the pillars of the methodology:

- I reduction of symptoms and stabilization;
- **II narration/elaboration (enable) through the image**, the access to the memories and give narration to what before could not be narrated but only experienced in its terrible emotional, cognitive and somatic representation);
- III integration and rehabilitation of the individual personality return to life (restoring continuity to one's history).

We act through an intervention by phases:

1. Increase the sense of security (I am safe)
- 2. Tell own story through images (I am here)**
3. Relate with the external world - group activities or with volunteers, community and friends, Italian classes, (I am building my future)



Which are the expected outcomes

The approach brings great results: symptom reduction, reduction of fear, increased ability to actively participate in other activities, improved ability to set personal and professional goals and improvement of interpersonal skills.

2. How we work: materials and tools

Why non – verbal narration

The use of images

- The image is like a box that host memories, pains;
- The images, help to narrate, accept and understand stories;
- The Approdi created a **narrative-tool**, using Shuan Tan's graphic novel "The Arrival".



Into the practice

Description of the activity:

The goal of this stage is to create a safe and stable “life in the here-and-now”, allowing you to safely remember the trauma, rather than continue to re-live it. Participants can choose from a folder all the images to tell us their story, before, during and after the journey. Starting from the first image to the last we work to narrate, giving new meaning to the stories.

Objectives:

The focus is to overcome the fear of traumatic memories and put them in the past. During the session, images are viewed, chosen and narrated by migrants.

What do we need for this activity:





Approdi presentazione ENGsub

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=gncxRN2e_A4

Contact person:

- Alessandro Albergamo alessandro.albergamo@antoniano.it,
- Diego Manduri diego.manduri@gmail.com