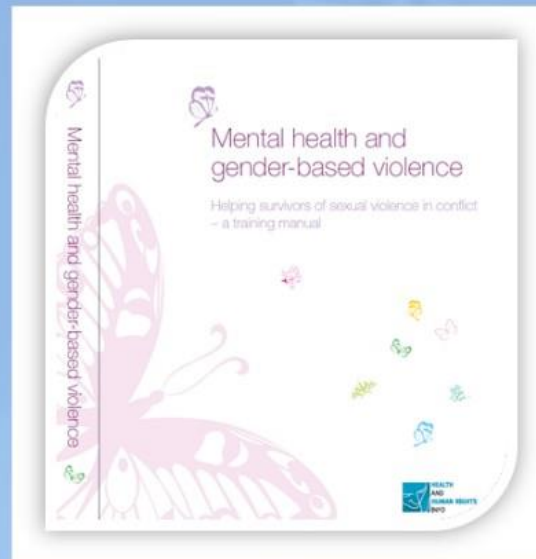




**Health and Human Rights Info
presents the training manual**

**Mental health and gender-based violence
Helping survivors of sexual violence in conflict**



Why this manual?

Strong international efforts to combat gender based violence in conflict and war.

A large number of valuable initiatives including guidelines and reports exist

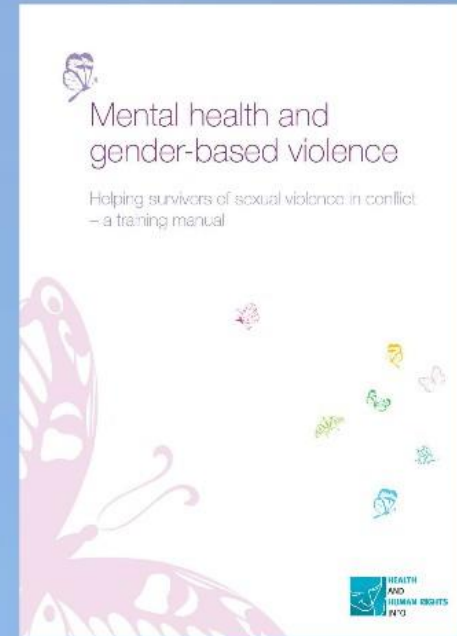
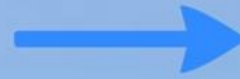
But how do we support the survivors?

How can we ensure that the survivor and her family are helped?

And how to support the helper?

To ensure that the manual would be cultural applicable, we piloted the manual in 5 different countries

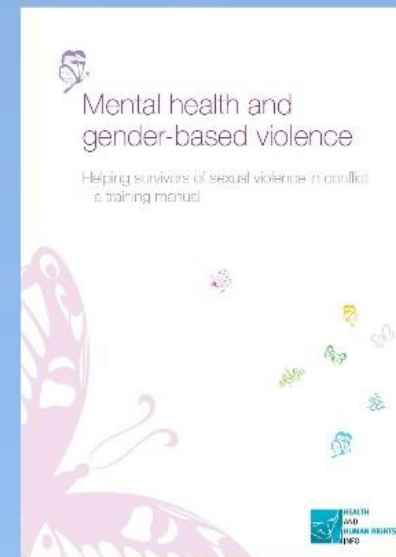
Jordan, Cambodia, Turkey, Colombia, Norway.



15.09.2014
The manual was publish

The manual:

- Focus on mental health, and psychological reactions to traumatic events.
- Practical interventions, exercises and skills training.
- Resource oriented – survivor as well as helpers.
- Builds on experience and local knowledge.
- Tool for training, supervision, group-work and self-study.
- Lots of room for adaptation and adjustment for each context.
- Developed by clinicians but can be used without formal training.
- Aims at being self-explanatory.
- Based on a single metaphor The Butterfly Woman, clinically accurate



How to read the manual

Keys to symbols

TO THE TRAINER

Left hand page

Instructions to the Trainer.



Exercises in plenary or small groups.



Role Play exercises, for pairs.



Key points to remember (for example, "The story shows that...".)

Once upon a time...

The story of the Butterfly Woman.

SAID ALOUD

Right hand page

Everything that is to be said aloud.



Grounding exercises: to help survivors who are panicked or lose their energy.



Discussions in plenary or small groups.

TEACHING INSTRUCTION.

Teaching instruction: pedagogical advice to the Trainer.

There is a left side and a right side

What the trainer needs to know

What is said aloud

TO THE TRAINER

The good helper

Aims. To help the Trainer and group to understand their conceptions of helpers and help. What methods and skills do helpers bring, what elements of their work make them feel proud and positive, what new skills and resources do they need?

EXERCISE

Exercise 3. Describe the qualities of a good helper.

Draw the helper on the flip chart (Figure 1: The qualities of a good helper in your society and context). Leave space to write comments.

- What are the differences between male and female helpers?
- Use the list of questions on the facing page to explore the issues.
- Write participants' comments and conclusions on the flipchart.

ROLE PLAY EXERCISE

Role Play 1. How to approach a survivor who is overwhelmed by what has happened to her.

Show the participants how to role play by demonstrating how you might approach a survivor who is overwhelmed by her emotions. Ask another trainer or a participant to put on a scarf to play the role of Survivor. Then invite the participants to practise together in pairs with scarves, using the questions. Show them how to physically brush off their roles and return to being themselves when the role play ends. Make sure they all do this at the end of the exercise. An example of role play can be found in Section 9 of Part III.

Summing up the experiences so far

To end the session, summarise the major issues that have been touched on. Validate good things participants are already doing. Pay special attention to helping strategies that take account of culture.

Make sure the participants take away some positive feedback about their experience and their strengths. It is vital to begin the training by affirming their own knowledge. The training exists to complement and enrich the gifts and experience that helpers already have (not supplant these with a new approach from abroad).

This exercise and the role play together should

- Help the group to understand more fully what makes a good helper.
- Throw light on: her personal and professional skills; her character; her ethics; how she relates to others; how she manages problems that she confronts in her daily work.
- Show practically how helpers assist in real life, how they calibrate distance and closeness, how they listen...

The introductory session should have given the group an opportunity to reflect on what goes on at the beginning of a helping relationship.

TEACHING INSTRUCTION.

After the exercise, take a short break. Let the participants stretch their bodies and walk around a little. Before you start the next session, spend some time doing a grounding and breathing exercise, to get the group back on track.

SAID ALOUD

The good helper

Aims. To help the Trainer and group to understand their conceptions of helpers and help. What methods and skills do helpers bring, what elements of your work make you feel proud and positive, what new skills and resources do you need?

Trainer. Now we know a little bit more about your community and about the problems you have been facing and some of the challenges you have met.

Next I would like to know more about how you have tried to tackle these challenges. What have been your experiences, where have you been successful, and where do you need more skills or support? Please share your thoughts about being a helper. Tell us what you think are the qualities of a good helper.

Then tell us what you do in your own work. Show us how you do it.

Exercise 3. Describe the qualities of a good helper. (15 minutes in plenary.)

The Trainer will draw a helper on the wall chart and ask you to name the qualities she needs to have. She will write your thoughts on the drawing.

Consider the following questions:

- What are the qualities of a good helper here in ...?
- Do men and women help in different ways?
- What can you say about yourself as a helper?
- What do you do when you meet a survivor who is overwhelmed by emotions – by sadness, shame, anger, anxiety or numbness?
- Is it sometimes difficult to help a survivor? What makes it difficult to help?

Role Play 1. How to approach a survivor who is overwhelmed by what has happened to her. (10-15 minutes.)

The Trainer will work with one of you in a role play. You can then break into pairs to practise. One of you is the Helper, the other the Survivor. Use the questions to show how you approach a survivor who is overwhelmed by her emotions and by what has happened to her.

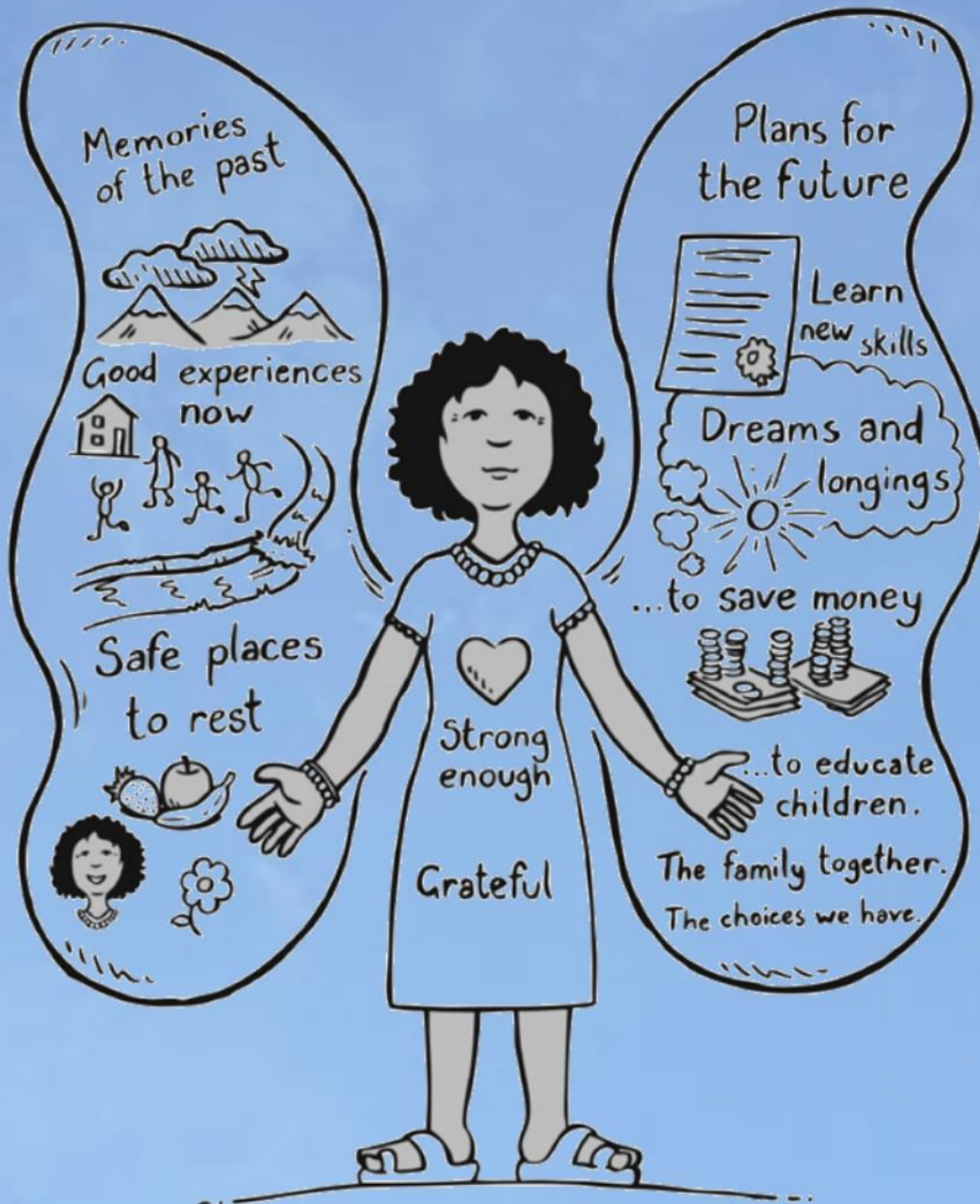
At the end, take off the scarf if you are the Survivor, brush off your role as Helper or Survivor. Brush yourself down physically and say aloud "Now I am [me]".

Summing up (5-10 minutes.)

The Trainer will summarise the discussion so far and ask you to comment and react to the plenary discussion and role play.

BREAK 15 – 20 MINUTES.





Safety. Solid ground.

What does it mean to have a human rights perspective?

A human rights based approach is about empowering people to know and claim their rights and increasing the ability and accountability of individuals and institutions who are responsible for respecting, protecting and fulfilling rights.

This means giving people greater opportunities to participate in shaping the decisions that impact on their human rights. It also means increasing the ability of those with responsibility for fulfilling rights to recognize and know how to respect those rights, and make sure they can be held to account.

There are some underlying principles which are of fundamental importance in applying a human rights based approach in practice.

These are:

- participation
- accountability
- non-discrimination and equality
- empowerment and
- legality

Give some examples in your work with survivors that does not have a HR approach?

How could it be done differently to give the situation a HR approach?

A brief introduction to 'trauma'

A trauma is “a personal encounter with death and violence”.

Judith Herman

- A 'traumatizing event' is one that has the capacity to cause mental or physical damage.
- Faced with such an event, the immediate response of the body and the mind is to struggle for survival ('fight, flight or freeze' responses, submission or 'playing dead')



What characterizes a traumatic event?

- The situation is overwhelming, inescapable and very frightening
- Loss of control and beyond what we are prepared to deal with
- Threaten life and integrity
- Most people will struggle with serious reactions such as intrusive memories, re-experiences, flashbacks and sleeping problems afterwards



These physical responses, also called survival strategies, are:

- **Fight** - You experience a strong physiological reaction without mental planning.
- **Flight** - You feel less contact with the ground; your body mobilizes to run as fast as it can, without thinking or planning.
- **Freeze** - Flight and fight are impossible, energy levels are intense but the body is immobilized (tonic/muscular immobility).
- **'Playing dead'** - When no other options are available, submission or 'playing dead' may be the final survival strategy.

Sexual-Gender-Based Violence and trauma.

SGBV is a distinctive form of trauma because the violation involved is extremely invasive and gives rise to feelings of shame, self-blame and guilt. When combined with fear of being injured or killed, it is traumatizing in almost all cases.



Important aspects of trauma

- Survivors of traumatic event that experience a similar situation, can behave differently after the event.
- Events associated with trauma reactions are often intense, grave and disruptive.
- The reactions that survivors show initially are survival responses.
- Traumatic events affect people in different ways also in the longer term.



Triggers, trauma reminders and flashbacks

They can be extremely stressing and create such anxiety that the survivor can be afraid

- to go out,
- of meeting people,
- of hear certain sounds or
- of doing ordinary things



The most common trauma reactions

- **Triggers or trauma reminders** are events, objects or situations that revive memories of trauma.

Flashbacks, which are sudden, strong re-experiences of a past traumatic event. They are triggered by sensations – smells, images, sounds, touch. Senses are gateways that trigger memories.

- The triggers, trauma reminders and flashbacks can be recognized in **thoughts, feelings, breathing, heart and body**.
- The responses are natural ones to an extremely serious and painful experience.

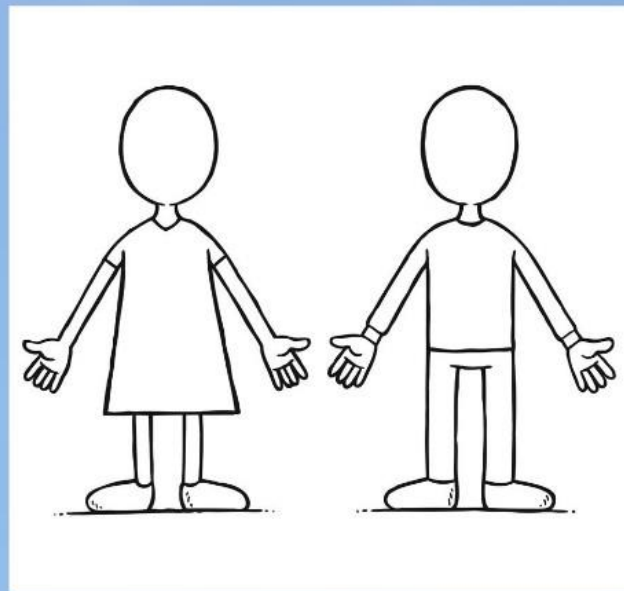
Triggers and trauma reminders

- Trauma-reminders are events or situations that remind survivors of their painful experiences, and awaken memories
- Such reminders may elicit trauma reactions over and over again

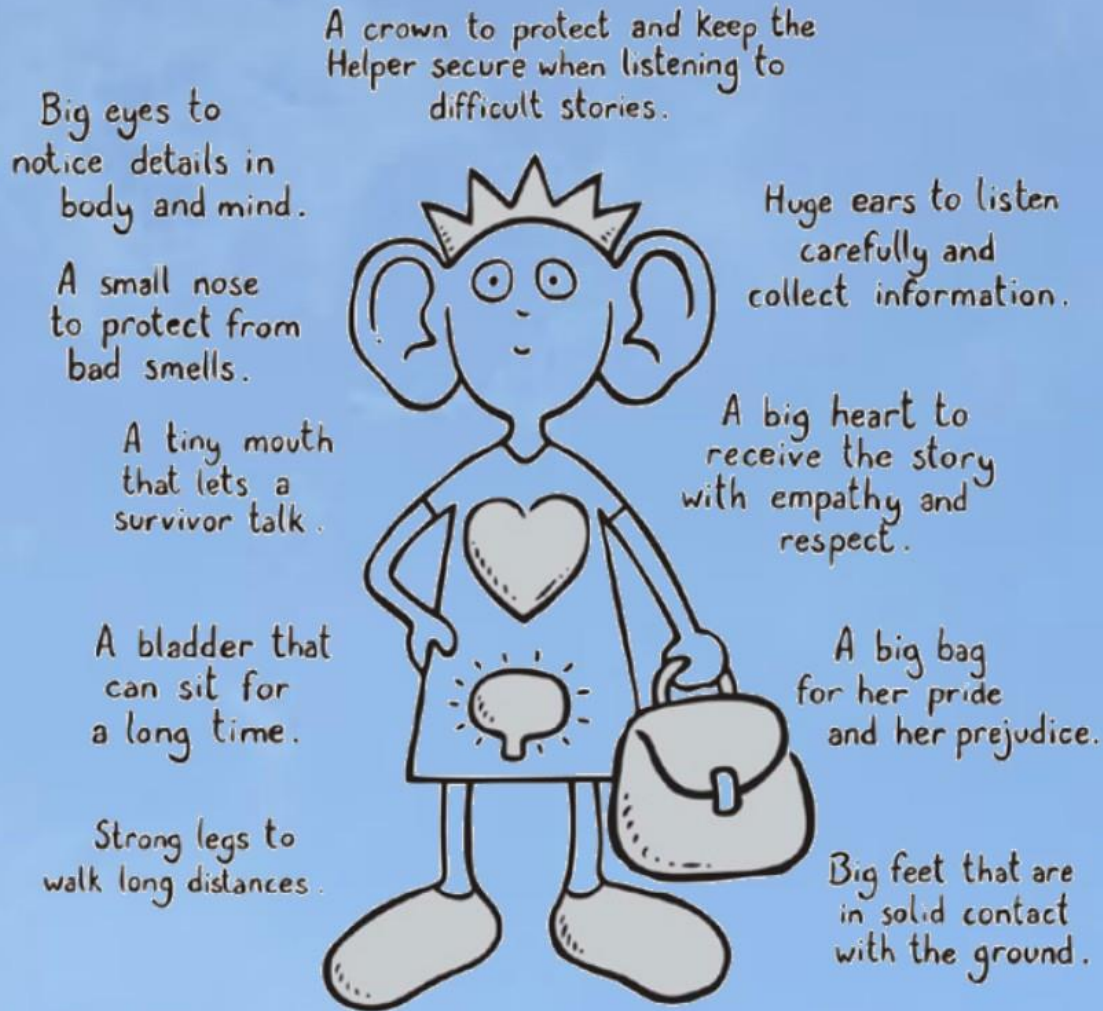




What are the qualities for a good helper in your community?



The good helper



The qualities of a good helper.

This image was shared by **counselors** working in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**.



The toolbox

We all use a **tool-box** when we work.
With your knowledge and experience you already have many tools that you use through your work.
And **you**, as a helper, are the most important tool. In these sessions, we will practice different tools and skills so that they can be available to you when you need them.

Practicing tools and exercises

Tools for helping survivors

- The helpers' qualifications:
 - "I see you".
 - "Your reactions are natural".
 - "You are a survivor".
- BASIC-Ph.
- Safe place exercises.
- Grounding exercises.
- Relaxation exercises.
- Energising exercises.
- Exercises that connect with the senses.
- Grounding exercises that connect to the past and future:
 - Present moment.
 - 'Squeeze-Hug'.
 - Weight of the body.
 - Straightening the back.
- The 'window of tolerance'.
- Psycho-educational approaches.
- The Butterfly Woman metaphor and other metaphors.
- Human rights-based approach.

59

Tools for Trainers

- Role play exercises.
- Group discussions.
- Plenary discussions.
- Examples for trainers to practice.
- The Butterfly Woman story (or other ways to convey acute and long term reactions to traumatic events).
- How the brain works when in danger.
- Familiarity with triggers.
- The 'window of tolerance'.
- Human rights-based approach.



The aim of this manual is to let the helpers discover their own tools and maybe give them some new ones.

Tools in work with survivors

- Listening, respecting and acknowledging painful reactions
- Communicate that you «see» her
- Create safe place
- Stabilizing by being here and now oriented
- Grounding exercises
- Relaxation and energising exercises
- Psycho-educational approaches

What is stabilization?

We will now talk about stabilization and stabilization techniques. This is an approach that helps to handle trauma-related reactions, to improve the ability to be present in the here and now. Techniques or therapeutic actions to make a survivor react in a normal manner to stress factors.

Education about the effects of trauma helps survivors better understand their own stress responses, and knowledge of coping strategies provides a sense of control over these responses.

To be able to concentrate, to learn and to understand it is important that the survivor is present in the here and now – that means that the survivor has to be stable.

Some traumatized survivors can go from being stable to unstable during your meeting, and need to be stabilized before we can start or continue talking. This will be one of the tools you have working with survivors.

Empowering

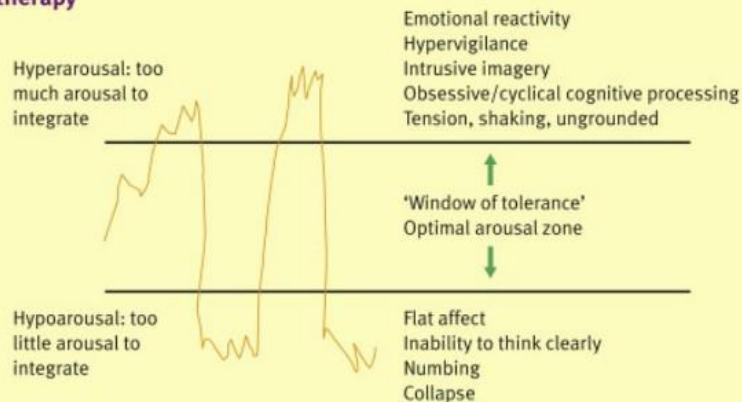
- To empower survivors is a skill. To let the survivor learn about her reactions and how to handle them is one way of empowerment.
- We will explore other skills that can help to stabilize survivors and assist them to feel more in control and less frightened.
- To stabilize a survivor we need to help her to connect with her senses, this will help the survivor to manage danger and fear.



Window of tolerance as a tool

The window of tolerance is a therapeutic metaphor that we can use to explain trauma reactions.

The 'window of tolerance': maintaining optimal arousal for trauma-focused therapy



(Adapted from Ogden and Minton 2000)¹⁰

Window of tolerance

This is a model used to understand reactions to stress and trauma.

- Each individual has a window of tolerance in which events are successfully experienced, processed, given meaning, and integrated.
- Traumatized survivors have narrow windows of tolerance, are quick to leave their window, and may swing between hyper- and hypo arousal.
- The aim is to keep the survivor within the window which indicates that she is in the ideal state of emotional response. In this state she can absorb and respond to information effectively.
- **Above** the window she experience hyper arousal (often associated with the body's **'fight and flight'** response).
- **Below** the window, she experience hypo arousal (associated with **freeze**, **'playing dead'**, submission and dissociation responses).

Use your senses

We can use our senses to regulate responses, such as trigger reactions, in the 5 focus areas:

- body
- thoughts
- breathing
- feelings
- heart

Scan the five focus areas before and after using a stabilizing tool to notice the difference.



As in all cultures, we must adapt what we do in our culture. And, since every person is unique, we need to make the tools and exercises as helpful as possible by adapting them to the needs of each survivor.



Grounding exercises

Grounding is a stabilization method for handling strong emotions of fear or flashbacks, when a memory 'takes over' and is experienced as if it happens in the present.

Grounding exercises can help a survivor to reconnect:

- With the present moment in time
- With the here and now
- With her body, and reassert personal control
- To the safe context of the room in which she is

Grounding is one way to reduce reactions or symptoms of anxiety or panic that threaten to overwhelm a survivor.



To monitor the effects of these techniques, we can ask these guiding questions before and after doing the exercise:

- What happens in your body?
- What happens to your feelings?
- What happens to your breathing?
- What happens to your thoughts?
- What happens in your heart?





Always remember to invite the survivor to participate in a grounding exercise. Let it be an open invitation. If she does not feel ready to participate in an exercise, respect her wish.



1. Grounding the body. (10-15 minutes.)

This exercise can help a survivor to come down from hyper arousal and find a more balanced emotional state. It can also be used to focus survivors who are in 'freeze-mode'.

Sit on your chair. Feel your feet touching the ground. Stamp your left foot into the ground, then your right. Do it slowly: left, right, left. Do this several times. Feel your thighs and buttocks in contact with the seat of your chair (5 seconds). Notice if your legs and buttocks now feel more present or less present than when you started focusing on your legs.

Now move your focus to your spine. Feel your spine as your mid line. Slowly lengthen your spine and notice if it affects your breath (10 seconds). Move your focus toward your hands and arms. Put your hands together. Do it in a way that feels comfortable for you. Push your hands together and feel your strength and temperature. Release and pause, then push your hands together again. Release and rest your arms.

Now move your focus to your eyes. Look around the room. Find something that tells you that you are here. Remind yourself that you are here, now, and that you are safe. Notice how this exercise affects your breathing, your presence, your mood, and your strength.

Source: Jacobson, Edmund. 1974. Progressive Relaxation. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, Midway Reprint.

5. Re-orienting to the present. (10 minutes.)

This exercise is of help to survivors in 'freeze-mode', who feel numbed and frozen. Form pairs and sit together. One of the pair should play a helper and the other a survivor. The

Helper should assist the Survivor to use her senses to put herself fully in the present and feel safe.

Take turns.

Look round you and name 3 things you see.

- Look at something (an object, a colour, etc.)
- Tell yourself what you are seeing.

Name 3 things you hear.

- Listen to a sound (music, voices, other sounds).
- Tell yourself what you are hearing.

Name 3 things you touch.

- Touch something (different textures, different objects).
- Tell yourself what you are touching.

Now, notice your state of mind.

- Do you feel that you are more present in the room or less present after doing the exercise?
- Do you feel calmer or more energised?

Role Play: First meeting



Here we give you an example of the first meeting between a helper and a survivor.



Notice what the helper say and the posture and body language. Also notice how the human rights principles are included in this first meeting.

Afterward we would like for you to do a role-play of that same situation.



Role Play: First meeting



- You can work in pairs to practice.
- One of you is the Helper, the other the Survivor.
- Use a scarf to indicate the one who is the survivor.
- Think about the different good qualities of a helper when you approach a survivor who is overwhelmed by her emotions and by what has happened to her.
- At the end, take off the scarf if you are the Survivor, brush off your role as Helper or Survivor. Brush yourself down physically and say aloud “Now I am [me]”





- Discuss between the two of you how it felt to be a survivor and how it was to be a helper.
- Was there anything you would have liked to be different?
- Would it be different without the human rights principle?

Taking care of yourself as a helper



The techniques used to help victims (such as stabilisation exercises, sleeping advice, etc.) can often be helpful to the helpers themselves.

Helpers need to understand that it is important to recognise their own needs and reactions, and understand what triggers and modifies them.

Warning signals that can occur after prolonged period of time on a job



- Wounded ideals
- Cynicism
- Feeling unappreciated or betrayed by the organization
- Loss of spirit
- Grandiose beliefs about own importance
- Heroic but reckless behaviors
- Neglecting one's own safety and physical needs (not needing breaks, sleep, etc.)
- Mistrusting colleagues and supervisors
- Antisocial behavior
- Excessive tiredness
- Inability to concentrate
- Symptoms of illness or disease
- Sleep difficulties
- Inefficiency
- Excessive use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs.

Can you think more signals?

So what do you do?

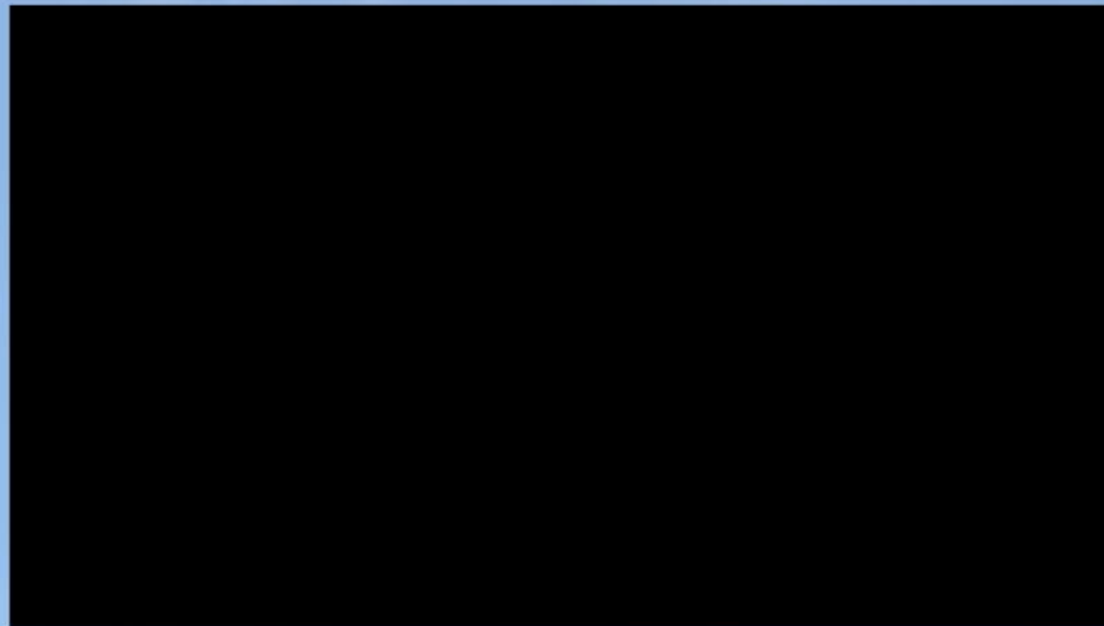
- Acknowledge that your reactions are normal and unavoidable
- Consciously try to relax
- Talk to someone with whom you feel at ease
- Express your feelings in ways other than talking: draw, paint, play music
- Listen to what people close to you say and think about the event
- Take care of yourself
- Do grounding exercises



Mama Congo



To set the note for the training we would like you to spend a 5 minutes to watch this little film. It is about the Good helpers in Congo who first inspired us to write this manual.

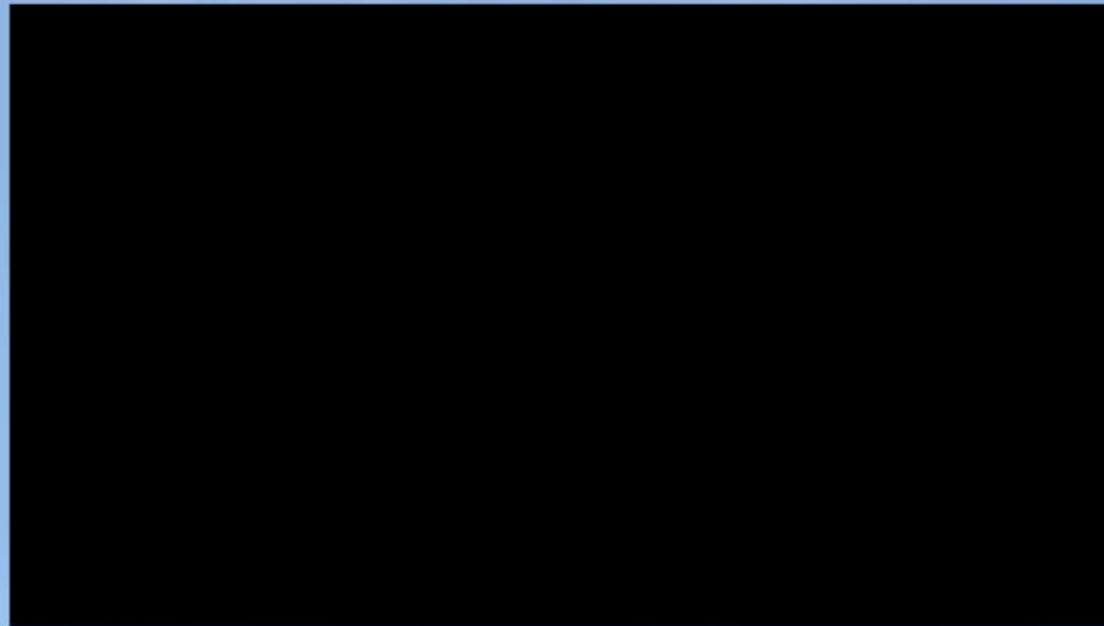


by Arild Kumar - Join Good Forces

Mama Congo



To set the note for the training we would like you to spend a 5 minutes to watch this little film. It is about the Good helpers in Congo who first inspired us to write this manual.



by Arild Kumar - Join Good Forces