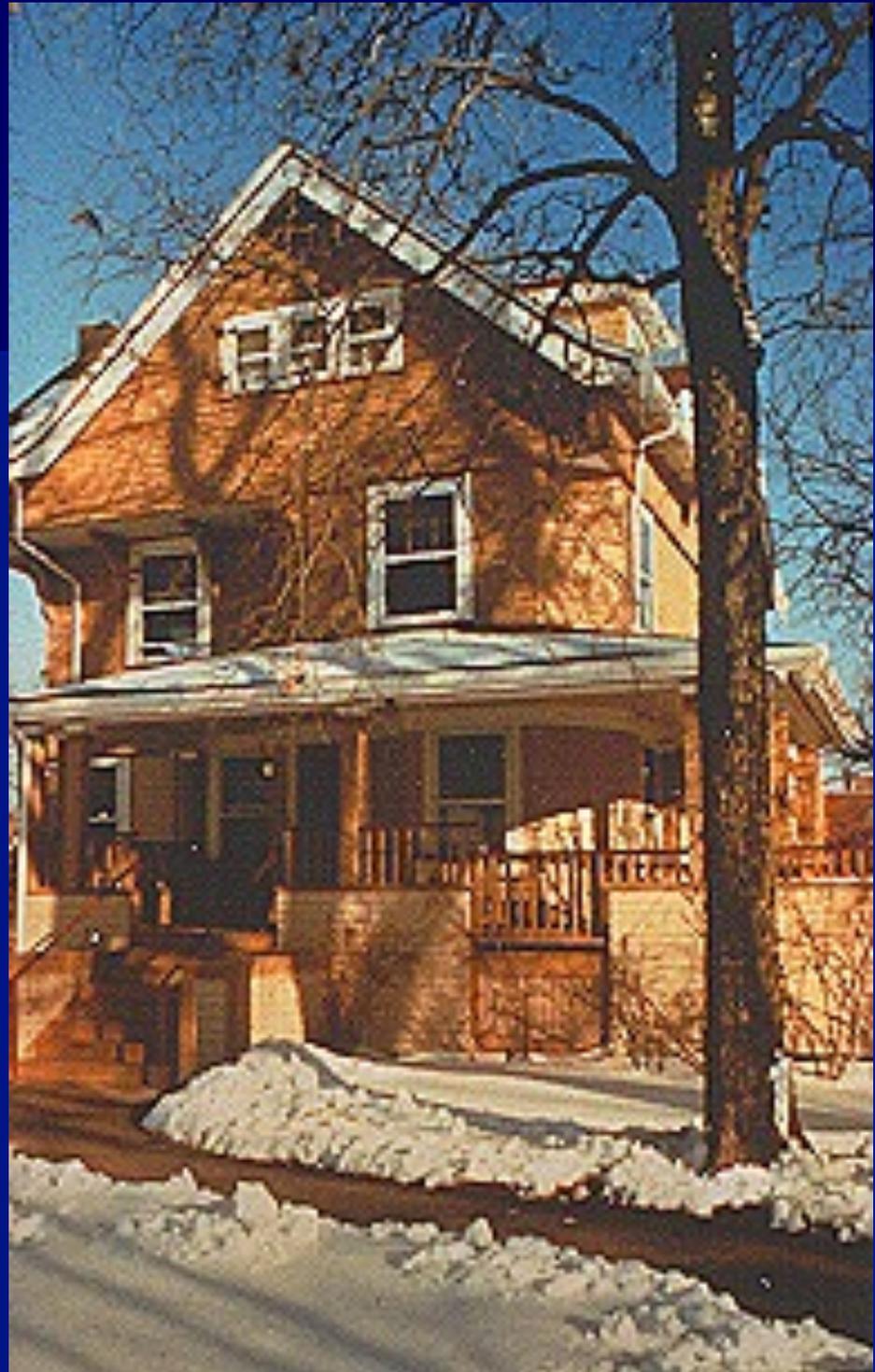


Neutralizing the Effects of War:

Psychosocial Support for TRC Public
Hearing Participants



Torture treatment centers help survivors heal. The Center for Victims of Torture was started in 1985.





THE CENTER FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE

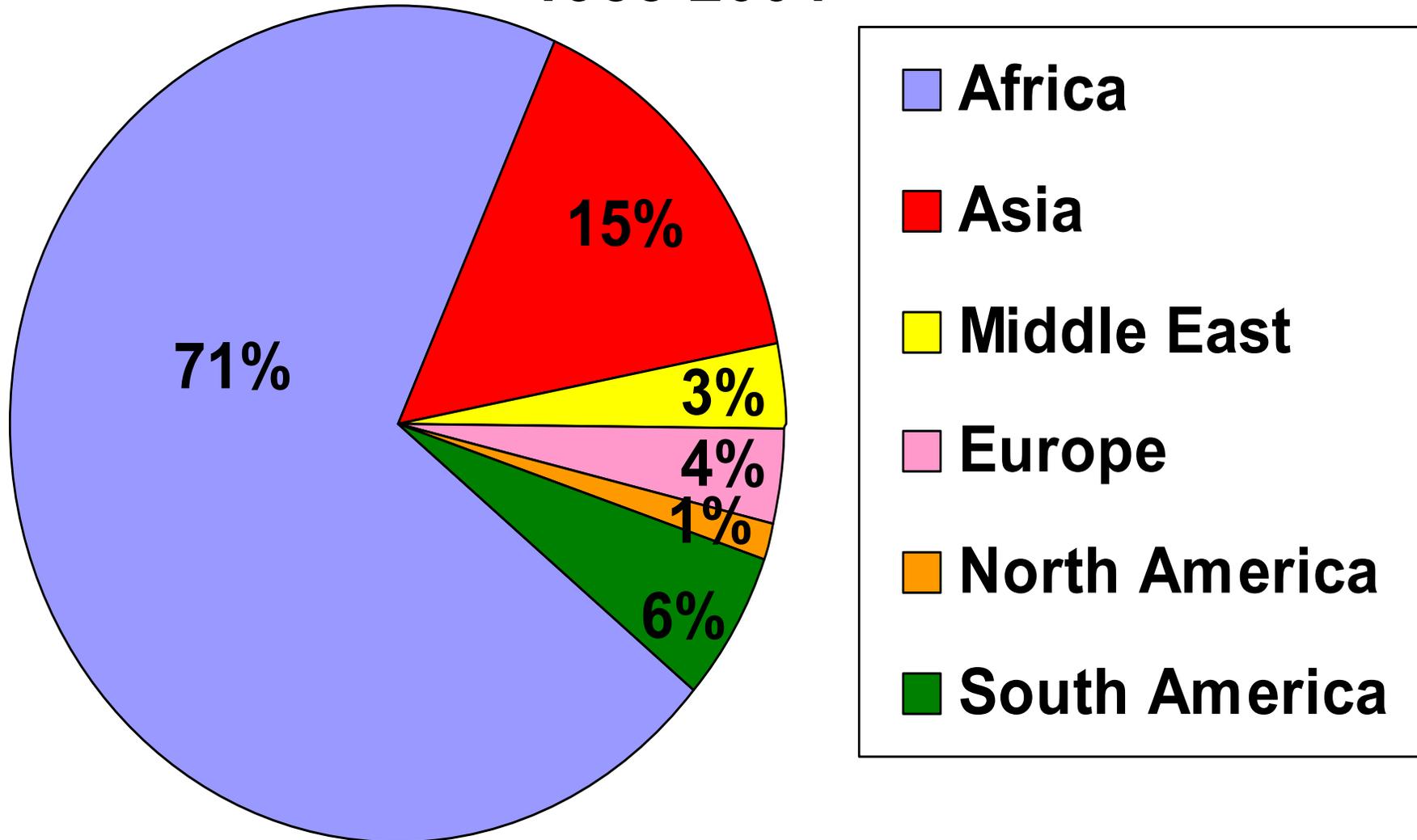
Provides a multidisciplinary approach to treatment and services:

- ✓ Rehabilitative treatment
- ✓ Training
- ✓ Research
- ✓ Public policy

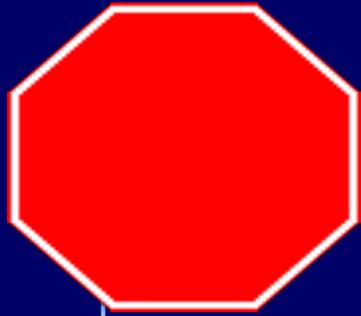
According to Amnesty International, **more than 100** countries worldwide systematically practice torture against their own civilian populations.



Region of Origin, CVT clients 1985-2004



What is happening to your
parishioners who have
survived civil war?



Check on yourself throughout
this training:

Emotional or physical reactions
are NORMAL.

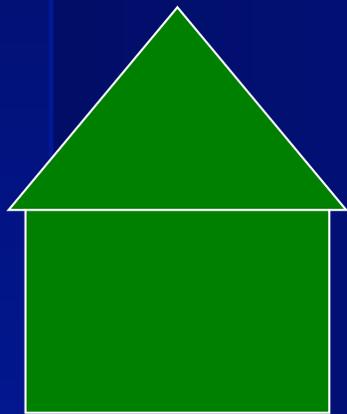


war Trauma

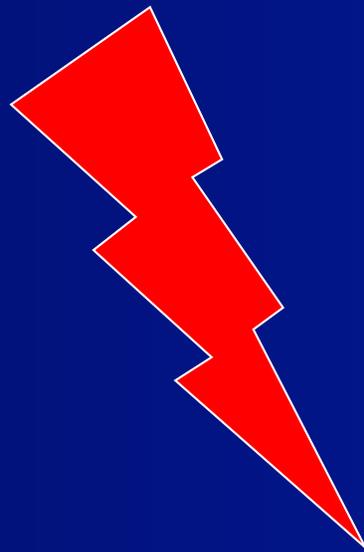


Severe, repeated,
and/or prolonged exposure
to violent events of war

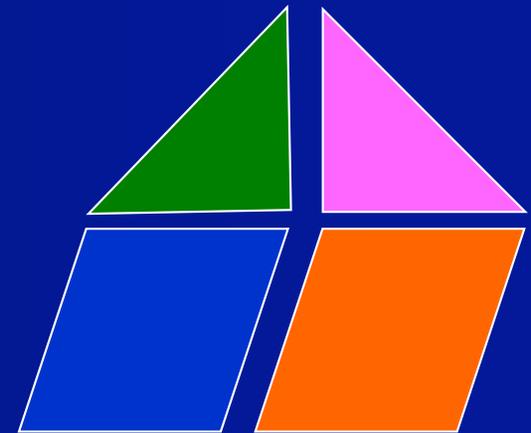
Refugee stages: The Triple Trauma Paradigm



Pre-flight



Flight



Resettlement

Elements of Trauma

- | Life threatening
- | Unpredictable
- | Out of the person's control
- | Stress is extreme

Normal Reactions to Stress



- Fight
- Flight
- Freeze



Signs and Symptoms

- Scars
- Musculoskeletal and foot pain
- Loss of limb
- Hearing loss
- Dental pain
- Visual problems
- Headaches
- Organic impairment (TBI, nutritional)



Signs and Symptoms

- Chest pain
- Heart beats very fast
- Stomach aches or nausea
- Shaking or trembling
- Hands or feet cold
- Hot or burning feeling
- Sweating at night
- Feeling dizzy, faint or weak



Signs and Symptoms

- Substance use
- Learning difficulties
- Sexual dysfunction
- Depression
- PTSD, other anxiety disorders

Depression

- Feeling sad or angry a lot
- Trouble thinking
- Feeling worthless
- No hope
- Feeling guilty a lot
- Appetite problems
- Sleeping problems
- Wishing for death

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

Symptoms fall in three main categories:

- Re-experiencing
- Avoidance/Numbing
- Hyper-arousal

Triggers for PTSD

- Certain words, sights, sounds, or smells may trigger response.
- Person may not seem “present”.

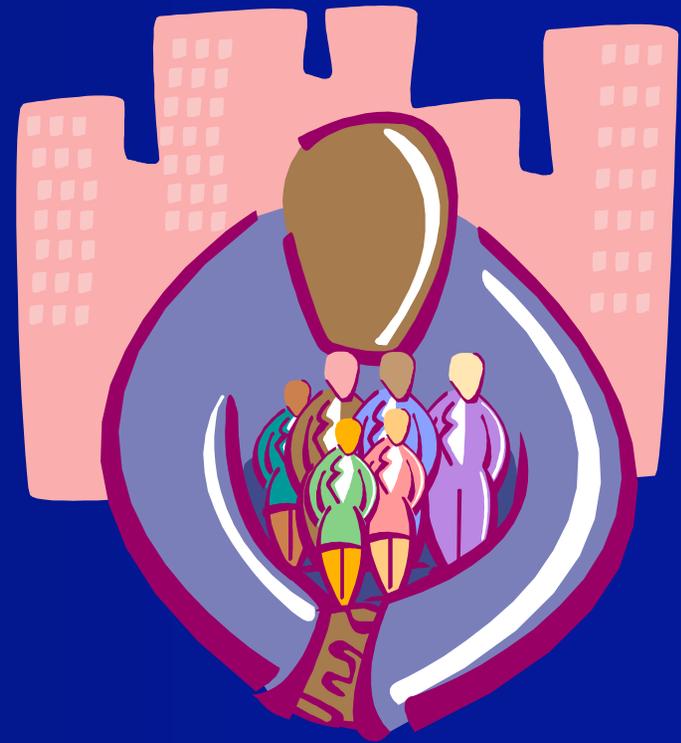
Effects on Families

- Loss of cultural and social supports
- Parent-child role reversal
- Conflict: marital, intergenerational, ethnic/tribal/clan (broken bonds)



Effects on the Community and Culture

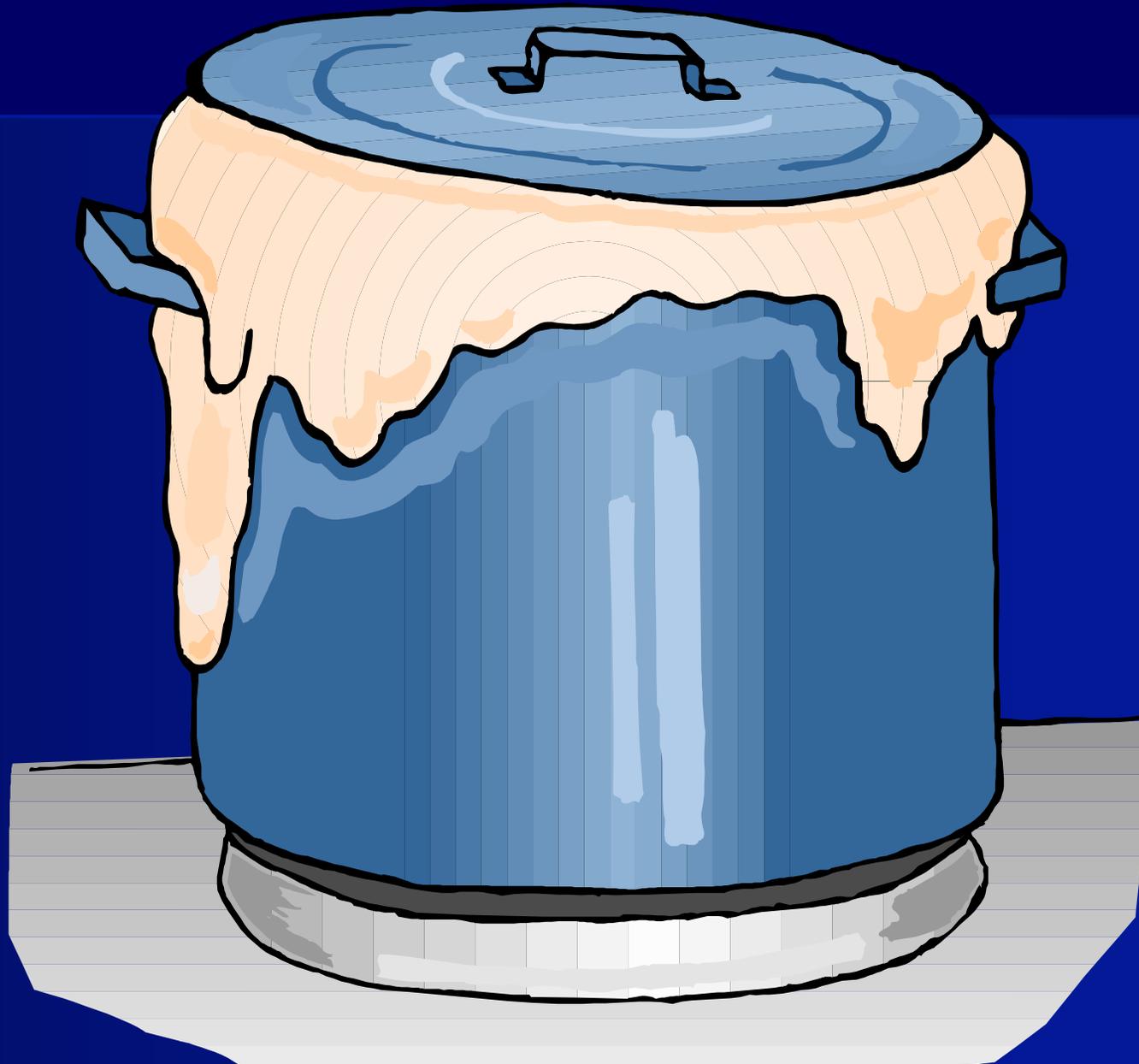
- Fear
- Distrust
- Blame
- Apathy
- Isolation
- Strife
- Helplessness



Effects of War on Faith

- Strengthening one's faith
- Questioning a supreme being
- Loss of faith

Why can't we just forget about it and go on with our lives?







How can faith leaders help?

Torture, War Trauma and Terrorism affect **FIVE** basic human needs.

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

Clergy with parishioners from countries in conflict can:

- +Work to develop trust with members of congregation.
- +Recognize symptoms “out of control”.
- +Assure confidentiality.



+ Find opportunities that give responsibility.

+ Give choices.

+ Use community resources.

+ Offer opportunities to have fun.

+ Be aware of secondary traumatization.



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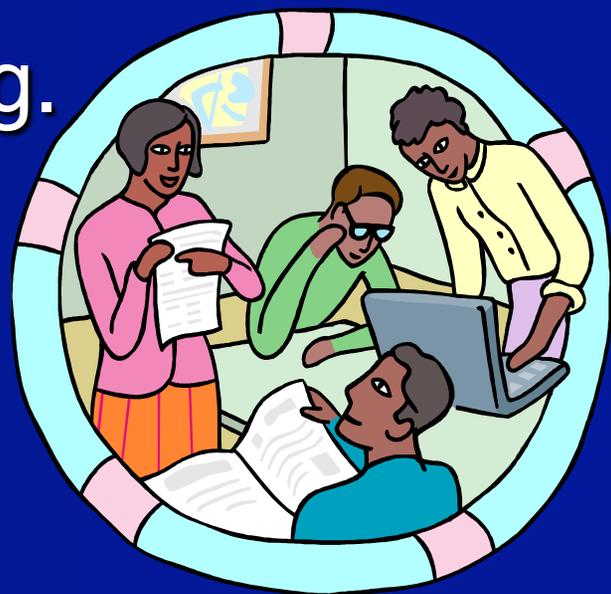
Wiiiiii uuuuu

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Dealing with Disclosure

- As traumatized refugees form trusting relationships, they may share pain, losses and suffering. The disclosure represents an opportunity for them to be heard and believed.



Dealing with Disclosure of Trauma

Adopted from the "Guide to Working with Youth people who are Refugees"
Victorian foundation for Survivors of Torture, Australia

- When intense emotions are expressed, you act as a buffer against a parishioner being overwhelmed.
- Disclosure can alternate between numbing and denial.
- Stay close to his way of coping and not challenge it.
- You can not assume what is the most traumatic event for a person.

Dealing with Disclosure of Trauma

Adopted from the "Guide to Working with Youth people who are Refugees"
Victorian foundation for Survivors of Torture, Australia

- Acknowledgement of the traumatic experience and feelings is foremost.
- Closing the discussion when traumatic material has been expressed requires sensitivity.
 - Emphasize that the response is understandable (i.e., normalize).
 - Acknowledge her bravery in talking about difficult experiences and feelings.
 - Suggest that he will again feel sad, angry or worried .
 - Suggest that when this happens she shares those feelings and thoughts with someone.

Dealing with Anger

- Understand the cause of anger.
- Allow her space and time to express herself further.
- Suggest expressing the violation appropriately (making a complaint, writing an editor).
- Use an intermediary, if conflict is with you.



Messages for survivors:

- Welcome; I'm glad you are safe and here in our community.
- You will have much to contribute.
- I know you have gone through many bad experiences.
- Most war survivors are still feeling the effects of these experiences. This is normal.
- I know you were not always a refugee. You have lost much.

Spiritual Leaders

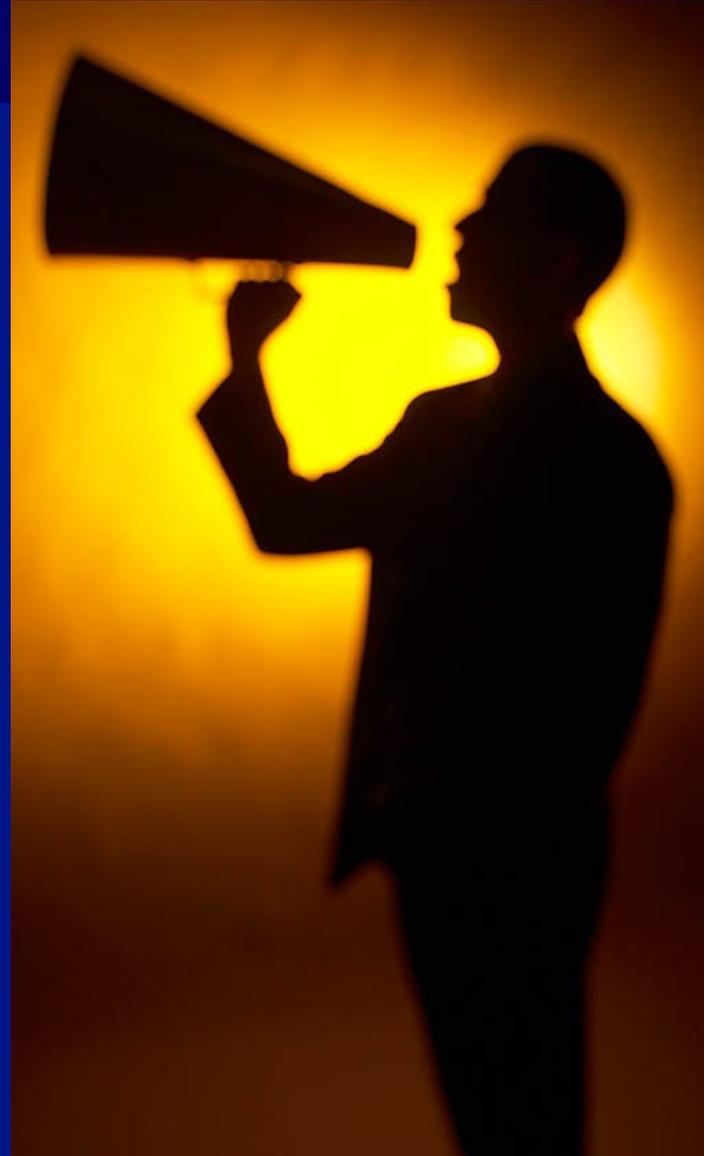
Be informed. Who has the resources? How can you access these?



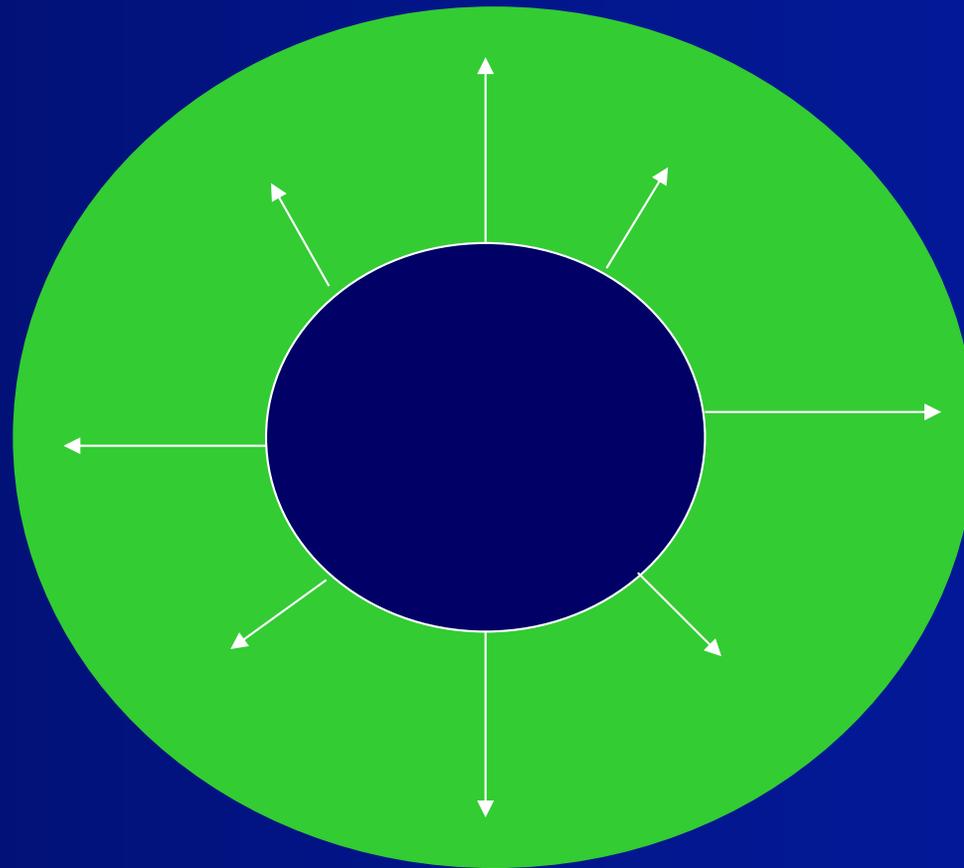
Communicate and make connections.
Take a strengths-based and problem-solving
approach to challenges.

Community Leaders

- Raise awareness.
- Be an advocate for individuals.
- Be an advocate for change in systems.



Community building and interventions need to focus in all possible ways on enlarging the sense of community.



Refer, as indicated

- Psychotherapy: individual/family/group
- Pharmacotherapy
- Primary medical and dental care
- Corrective medical treatment
- Physiotherapy, bodywork, etc.
- Traditional healing methods
- Social services
- Community projects, programs

REFERRAL RESOURCES

- Make a list!
- Keep it current.
- Use it often.
- Accompaniment - take people to the resources.



The Journey of Healing - what would it look like in your:

- Family?
- Community?
- Place of worship?
- Self?

