

TPSS+[®]

(Trauma Psychosocial Support+)

Registered [®] by WIPO 2019: 1 475 537

Curriculum Shortest Version

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Final editing version 1.0 (English):

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Introduction

The importance of addressing the global problem of psychological trauma can hardly be overestimated. Psychological traumas are emotionally painful and distressing experiences that may overwhelm an individual's ability to cope (van der Kolk, 2005). Furthermore, psychological trauma darkens and scars the lives of millions of people worldwide. It is a silent epidemic, frequently hidden, under recognised, and insufficiently addressed. It is further compounded by a scarcity of appropriately trained, and experienced health workers. Psychological trauma extorts human and socio-economic costs that are vast in magnitude, diverse in cause, and immense in its consequences.

EMDR Therapy is an empirically supported psychological treatment for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Complex PTSD – endorsed by both the World Health Organisation (2013) and the International Society of Traumatic Stress Studies (ISTSS, 2018). The theoretical framework of EMDR Therapy is that of Adaptive Information Processing (AIP) – a transdiagnostic model, that considers that memories of adverse childhood experiences are insufficiently processed by the brain, and that trauma memories (dysfunctional memories) can lay at the heart of a range of mental health disorders beside that of PTSD (Farrell et al, 2017; Felitti et al, 1998; Hase et al, 2017).

Trauma Psychosocial Support Plus (TPSS+) originated from various trauma capacity building projects carried out in South East Asia, Eastern Africa and the Middle East. It consists of an educational programme focussed upon providing training to psychosocial and mental health service providers in the following areas:

- Psychological trauma
- Psychoeducation
- Trauma stabilisation interventions
- Trauma focussed self-care techniques

The underpinnings of the TPSS+ programme include sensitivity towards:

- Culture
- Gender
- Recognising the needs of children, adolescents, adults, families and the wider community
- Faith, religion, belief systems
- Developmental needs
- Community needs
- Conflict
- Reconciliation

Methodical procedure for all learning contents of the curriculum

Each bespoke training programme is organised in the form of seminars, which include didactic teaching, group exercises, role play, discussion groups and problem-based learning – each adapted to participants' teaching and learning needs.

Lectures on the theoretical background are presented in an attractive form and adapted to the participants' learning experiences. There should always be a strong connection to the practical work on site, so that the participants can directly apply what they have learned. The content to be taught and the transfer considerations to the real work situation take place in small groups, followed by an exchange throughout the group.

This concept is implemented, for example, by the following elements:

- Collection of existing knowledge through brainstorming on the topic currently being taught
- Case presentations (from trainers as well as participants)
- Processing of current cases according to a structure to be taught in small groups
- Enable participants to give shorter presentations based on their own competencies

Contents of the curriculum

- 1. Trauma detection (diagnostic approach)**
- 2. Psychoeducation**
- 3. Trauma-focussed perspectives**
- 4. Trauma stabilisation**
- 5. Self-perception and self-care for helpers**
- 6. Recognition of systemic relationships**
- 7. Crisis intervention**
- 8. Dealing with special populations**
- 9. Working with groups**
- 10. Partial / moderate trauma confrontation**
- 11. Models and structures of supervision and support systems**

Key points for the structure of the overall course

- 1. Training of trauma counsellors / therapists to become future trauma supervisors**
In process

- 2. Course divided into three blocks of 5 days each**
 - Three months interval between seminars / supervision if applicable or at least peer supervision during this period

- 3. Interweaving of training and supervision**
 - After the first seminar trainers takes part in the practical work as directly as possible, in order to get to know the conditions
 - After the participants had enough opportunity to train exercises and interventions themselves: Peer Supervision and Supervision
 - Live supervision