

Working with Refugees and Asylum Seekers

“Live with terrible memories”



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Introduction

This session will help you to understand briefly:

- Why people flee their own country.
- Issues faced by Asylum seekers and refugees.
- Identification of trauma or torture survivors.
- How to help Refugee/Asylum seekers Trauma Survivors in the Primary Care Setting.

Who is an asylum seeker?

Asylum

Protection that a government gives to people who have left their own country; usually because they were in danger for political reasons.

Right to claim asylum

- **International Law**
- Three pieces of international Law can be used to support an asylum application

(1.a) 1951 Geneva convention relating to the status of Refugees

**Asylum seekers must show that they have
a well founded fear of persecution due to
their:**

1. *Race*
2. *Religion*
3. *Nationality*
4. *Political opinion or membership of a particular
social group.*

(1.b) 1951 Geneva convention relating to the status of Refugees

Sur

Place

claim

(2) 1950 European Convention Human Right

- A person can apply to remain in UK if removing him/her would be in breach of his /her rights.

Articles 3&8 (ECHR)

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(3) The European Union Asylum Qualification Directive

Adopted by the council of the EU Member States as part of establishing a common European Asylum system. (April /2004)

The European Union Asylum Qualification Directive

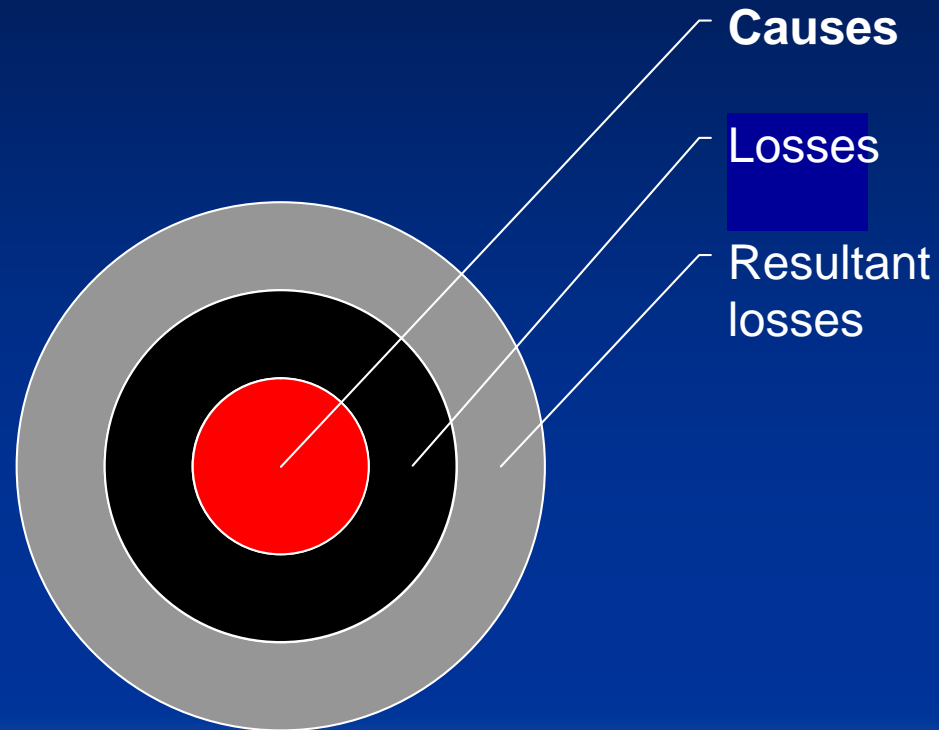
The Qualification and the Procedures Directives are based on article 63 (1) © and (d) of the “Treaty establishing the European Community”.

The Directives are binding for current and new member States except for Denmark (according to a protocol attached to the treaty Denmark is not bound by the measures taken under title IV of the Treaty).

A Refugee

Someone who has been granted refugee status it means that he/she has been recognized as a refugee within the meaning of the 1951 Refugee Convention.

Issues faced by refugees and Asylum seekers



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Issues faced by refugees and Asylum seekers

Causes	Resultant Losses	Issues in the country of asylum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •War •Human right abuses •Persecution on grounds of politics, Religion, gender or ethnicity •Detention •Torture •Physical and sexual violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Family •Friends •Country •Culture •Profession •Language •Plans for future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Multiple changes •Psychological and Practical adjustment (cultural shock) •Uncertain future •Traumatic life events •Racism •Stereotyping by host community •Unknown cultural traditions •Language •Processing asylum claim (fear of negative decision)

Experience of torture



A prisoner, waiting for interrogation. From a publication by [BT'selem](#), the Israeli human rights centre.

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Identification of trauma or torture survivors.

- History of being imprisoned
- Any physical scaring that maybe present
- Somatic symptoms with no known physical cause.
- Psychiatric symptoms of trauma depression, nightmares, emotional numbing.
- Avoidance or anxiety to being touched or examined.....

The triple trauma of Refugees??

- T in the country of origin.
- T endured during migration.
- T of resettlement in the host country.

The triple trauma of Refugees??

Tears

are

words

the heart

can't express!

Talking can be painful to some people!

GRIEVING PROCESS

- **Survivors** often ask;
Is healing possible? The answer is **YES!**

But remember that recovery from abuse/torture is not something that happens overnight;

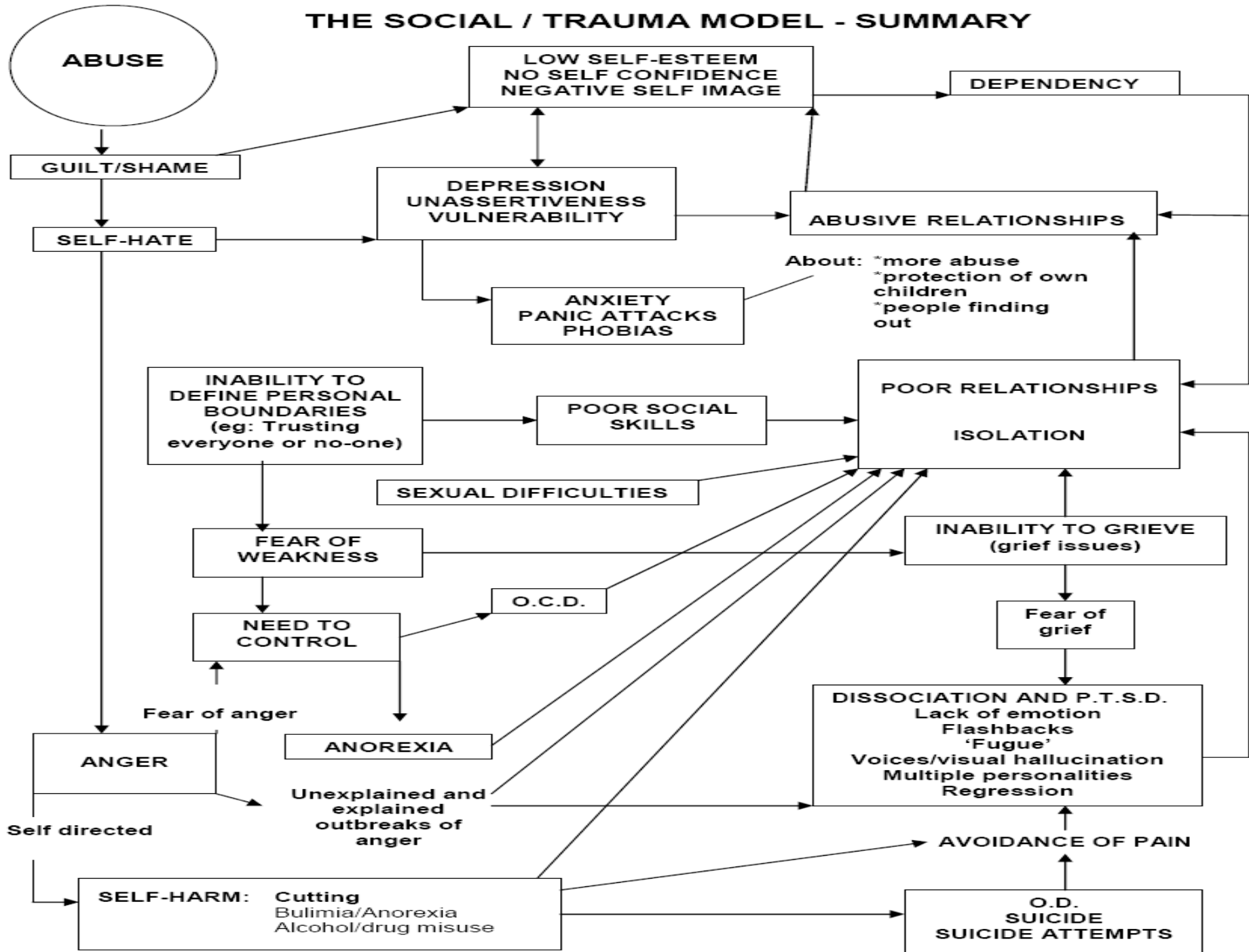
It's an ongoing process which requires courage, support, and commitment. It also involves feeling a lot of pain along the way.

Live with terrible memories



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THE SOCIAL / TRAUMA MODEL - SUMMARY



Helping Refugee Trauma Survivors in the Primary Care Setting

Self – coping strategies for trauma survivors

- Rediscovering innate resiliency
- Physical exercise
- Relaxation techniques
- Spirituality and Religion

- Recreating meaning in life
- Employment and hobbies
- Strengthening social connections
- Minimizing ineffective coping
- Limiting exposure to trauma reminders

How to improve Mental Health

- Know thyself
- Use of social supports
- Build self confidence
- Recognise symptoms
- Develop an attitude of optimism

Thank you for your attention

Questions???

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