

THE REFUGEE STRESS ASSESSMENT

The Refugee Stress Assessment is an instrument that measures multiple aspects of stress related to refugee trauma and acculturation. The four sections each represent a critical construct that measures the refugee's level of emotional distress over the past month.

Refugees who experience significant symptoms and do not have therapeutic support are less likely to make a successful transition to life in the United States. Before using this scale you will want to familiarize yourself with refugee trauma, the somatic expressions of posttraumatic stress and the issues and stages of acculturative stress.

Instructions:

Using the water jug images at the end of the assessment, ask the client to choose the appropriate level of distress for each item. Note that the directionality of the items vary.

I recommend printing the water jugs page and putting it in front of the client so they can indicate the level of distress for each question. For a client that is literate in their language, you may want to have an interpreter translate the meaning of each level and write it under the corresponding jar.

If you are using an interpreter, you will want to have an advance session with the interpreter to discuss how to explain the instrument, as well as how to interpret the concepts and the levels of distress. Even clients who can read English may still need some help completing the scale.

This scale is not a scored scale but rather should be used to help a clinician to determine the clients' immediate needs, develop a treatment plan or compare changes in emotional distress at various stages of treatment.

The Refugee Stress Assessment was created by Susan Rhema, MSW, LCSW. Send feedback and questions to: susan@susanrhema.com

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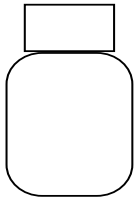
REFUGEE SRESS ASSESSMENT

SENSE OF SAFETY In the past month, to what degree :	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE BIT	MODERATELY	QUITE A BIT	EXTREMELY
1. Do you feel safe in your home?					
2. Do you feel safe in your neighborhood, at school or on the bus?					
3. Do you think about wanting to return to your homeland?					
PHYSICAL SYMPTOM and AROUSAL In the past month, to what degree:	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE BIT	MODERATELY	QUITE A BIT	EXTREMELY
4. Have you had muscle, joint or bone pain?					
5. Did you have an appetite?					
6. Were you suddenly afraid for no reason?					
7. Did you feel weak, dizzy or faint?					
8. Did you feel overwhelmed or confused?					
9. Did you feel anxious or nervous?					
10. Did you feel restless and could not sit still?					
11. Did you sleep well?					
12. Did you have difficulty listening to others or concentrating?					
13. Did you feel helpless or powerless?					
14. Did you cry or feel sad?					
15. Did you feel numb or without any feeling?					
16. Did your heart begin beating quickly or too hard in your chest?					

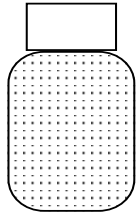
ACTIVE TRAUMA In the past month, to what degree have you been bothered:	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE BIT	MODERATELY	QUITE A BIT	EXTREMELY
16. By thinking about bad things that happened in the past?					
17. By lying awake in bed trying to sleep?					
18. By thinking that bad things will happen to you now?					
19. By waking suddenly or by nightmares while sleeping?					
20. By thinking too much?					
ORIENTATION	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE BIT	MODERATELY	QUITE A BIT	EXTREMELY
21. Generally, over your life have you been able to cope with challenges?					
22. Generally, over your life have you been able to solve problems?					
23. Do you have hope that the future will be better?					
24. Do you believe that you will have a good life in America?					

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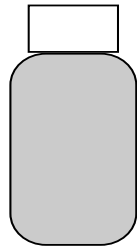
Client scale



Not at All



A Little Bit



Moderately



Quite a Bit



Extremely

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