

A Trauma-Informed Creative Arts Therapy Intervention Model to Support Health and Humanitarian Workers in the Context of Receiving War-Traumatized Youth and Families

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Abstract:

This work presents the development and implementation of a Trauma-Informed Creative Arts Therapy Intervention Model (T-ICATIM) designed to support health and humanitarian workers engaged in the care of war-traumatized children, adolescents, and families, particularly in refugee camps in Jordan. Drawing on two field missions (2018, 2021) and over a decade of experience, the model integrates art therapy, embodied practices, and trauma-informed principles to address the psychological impact of displacement on both beneficiaries and professionals.

The intervention responds to the growing need for non-verbal, culturally sensitive approaches to trauma, especially in contexts where trauma is chronic, collective, and often pre-verbal. Emphasizing the role of Awareness, Creativity, and Transformation (ACT), T-ICATIM provides a six-step structure to support emotional regulation, expression, and resilience-building. It also directly targets secondary traumatic stress and burnout among aid workers, offering grounding and containment through integrated creative practices.

Implemented in partnership with local and international NGOs, universities, and medical professionals, this model aligns with community-based, inclusive, and participatory frameworks. It demonstrates how arts-based interventions can enhance psychosocial support systems, reinforce local ownership, and contribute to sustainable trauma recovery efforts in crisis-affected regions.

Keywords:

Trauma-informed care, creative arts therapy, refugee youth, humanitarian workers, secondary trauma, embodied healing, Jordan, war trauma.