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**Type of Presentation:** Workshop

**Effects of War Violence and Forced Migration on Psycho-Social Developmental Systems Regression, Psychosis, and Reconnection**

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**Learning Goal:**

To explore a proposed link between 3 different psychosocial development models to explain the emergence of psychosis after a potential developmental regression connected to torture and war trauma, forced migration, and acculturation challenges.

**Key Words:** Psycho-social Development, War violence, Forced Migration, Bronfenbrenner Ecological Systems, Maslow Hierarchy, Erikson Developmental Stages; Regression

**Abstract Text:**

This presentation proposes an interdependency among three different Psycho-Social Developmental Models, which, activated by the losses and trauma experienced by war survivors and forced migrants, may invite a regression in psychosocial development and elevate the chances of developing psychosis.

Torture and war are extreme traumatic events. Day to day life becomes unpredictable, aggressive, intimidating, hostile, a frightening spectacle of massive destruction, death, blood, and body parts. Severe mental illness may arise as a response to the dantesque scenery of war, as a coping mechanism, while psychosis and schizophrenia may lurk and arise once the war survivor is confronted by the vicissitudes of forced migration and acculturation.

Torture and war make use of extreme economic, physical, psychological, emotional, sexual, racial, and social forms of abuse, which will always produce in the victim: anxiety, fear, anger, confusion, shame, distrust, severe losses, sadness, isolation, guilt, grief, despair, doubt, feelings of inferiority, and worst of all the loss of self.

For someone escaping war violence and forced to migrate trauma and the above feelings might be the only personal belongings and constant company in their journey to the "safety" of a new country.

A new country where the individual might find him/herself void of meaningful relationships, personal identity, and purpose in life, in a new and unknown city, in an alien and sometimes hostile culture; where he/she is unable to communicate or understand, because even when highly educated, he has automatically become illiterate due the lack of oral and written language.

In this new world where the person cannot even trust his/her own skills and abilities, how can he/she trust the world? Here, immersed in a pool of anxiety, isolation and uncertainty, is the refugee client, with life and identity shattered, vulnerable, fragile as an infant, in dire circumstances where psychosis can just happen.

**ON THE HEALING POWER  
OF HUMAN RECONNECTION**