

Resilience Festival

19th June – 14th July 2022



migrants
organise

WHY A FESTIVAL OF RESILIENCE?

A year ago we held our first Resilience Festival as a response to needs emerging from Covid-19. We knew there was an urgent need for all our members, volunteers and staff to recharge from the challenges of the pandemic, and long periods of lockdown and isolation. We wanted everyone to have a chance to participate in positive activities that supported our wellbeing and connection – strengthening our resilience as individuals and as a community.

Last year the majority of activities were online, running from April 18th until Refugee Week in June with a varied programme including mindfulness, music, art, dance, story-telling, creative writing, gardening, walking and even bingo!

This year we want to build on what went well and what we can do better. It is wonderful that we will have more outdoor and face to face activities and for that reason we decided to run the festival a little later to hopefully take advantage of better weather! The programme this year includes activities that were most popular last time as well as some new ones.

You can read all about the festival in this booklet. We have also included some ideas and resources that we hope you find useful.

We look forward to you joining us in our Festival of Resilience!

Francesca, Erica and Anvita

WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

Simply put Resilience is the capacity to recover from difficult life events.

Resilience is not a trampoline, where you're down one moment and up the next. It's more like climbing a mountain without a trail map. It takes time, strength, and help from people around you, and you'll likely experience setbacks along the way. But eventually you reach the top and look back at how far you've come. (Everyday Health)

Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress American Psychological Association.



ACTIVITY!

It sometimes helps to put your thoughts and feelings into writing.

My Resilience Page

Dump my worries here:

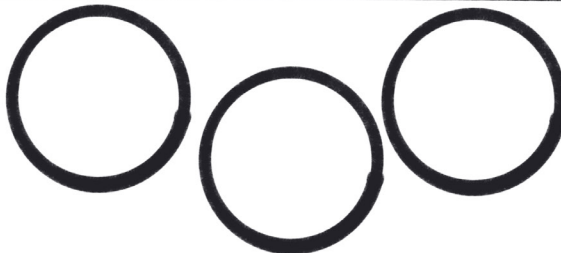


Can I control my
worry?

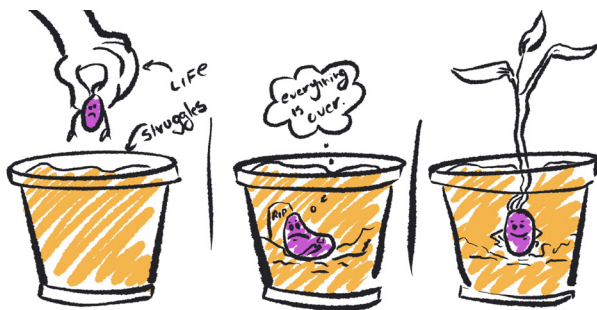
No!

Yes!

What can I do to make it better?



What 3
things made
me feel good
today?



RESILIENCE HELPS US GROW

Gardening is a good comparison to resilience. In this video from our festival last year our volunteer English teacher Jeff shared some gardening tips for wellbeing and many members took up planting small pots:

<https://clipchamp.com/watch/NWY41kX7EcR>

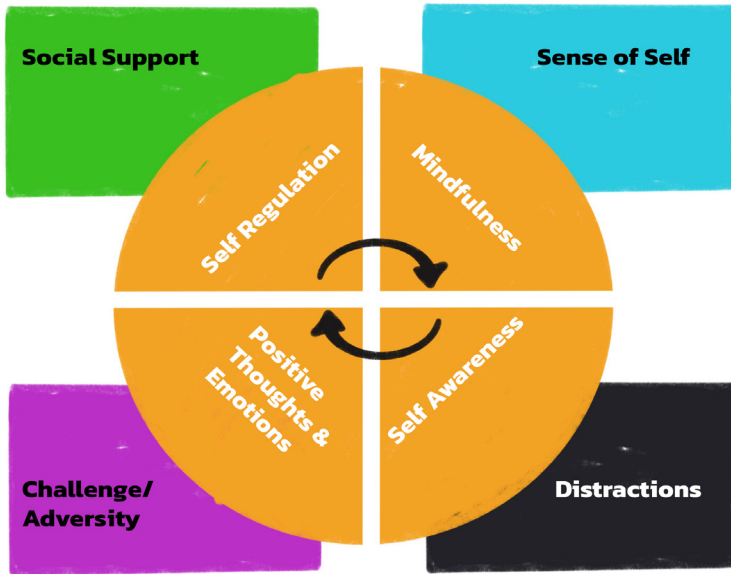
"I enjoy going out every day and seeing a different seed start germinating"



Painting by Ruth Beecher from New Dreams Festival in collaboration with The Gate Theatre.

More artwork can be found here: <https://www.gatetheatre.co.uk/new-dreams/>

PILLARS OF RESILIENCE



SOCIAL SUPPORT:

Talk to somebody - Family, Friend, Case Worker, Hotline
Go for a class
Join a group
Attend a meeting, service, prayer, music concert

SENSE OF SELF:

Believe in yourself
Think of times when you have come out of difficult situations
Self Awareness
Self Regulation - Breathing, Mindfulness

DISTRACTIONS:

When things are difficult, find distractions that will help you reduce anxiety and stop you from worrying

Go for a walk

Connect with Nature

Watch a movie or TV

Listen to music

Dance

Meet a friend for coffee or a meal

CHALLENGE/ADVERSITY:

Seeking strength from past experiences in which you faced adversity (challenge)
Encouraging yourself to fight and persevere again
Be your own cheerleader (You CAN DO THIS !!!)

It is not necessary to always talk about your problem - you can take a break from them by engaging in relaxing or fun activities.

Source: Anvita Madan-Bahel, Ph.D. (Counselling Psychology, Cross-Cultural Counsellor and Consultant, Psychosexual and Relational therapist)



JOIN US ON THE 2022 LONDON LEGAL WALK ON 28th JUNE

The London Legal Walk is the largest fundraising event in the legal calendar, bringing together over 10,000 walkers in support of frontline free legal advice services. This year at Migrants organise we have decided to integrate the walk into our Resilience Festival programme of events to support wellbeing, connection and community for our members, volunteers and staff particularly after the challenges of the pandemic, lockdown and isolation.

After so much zoom we are excited to walk together outdoors along a fantastic route of London landmarks hopefully with better weather!

Contact erica@migrantsorganise.org for more information and to sign up and join us!

Please share our fundraising page! <https://londonlegal-supporttrust.enthuse.com/pf/migrants-organise>



Festival Programme

Note: If you would like to receive live updates about the events please send your number to Francesca on 07913631257 to be added to the festival's WhatsApp group.

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| 19th June Sun | Carnival of Resistance Picnic 12-4pm |
| 20th June Mon | Journaling for wellbeing on WhatsApp |
| 21st June Tue | Walk in Brockwell Park 11.30 am-1pm |
| 22nd June Wed | Women's meet up in Holland Park 11.30am-1pm |
| 22nd June Wed | Lunch time reading group 1-2pm online |
| 23rd June Thurs | Wellbeing and bingo on WhatsApp |
| 25th June Sat | Picnic in South London 12noon-4pm |
| 26th June Sun | Music for Resilience on WhatsApp |
| 27th June Mon | Lunch time piano concert 1-1.45pm online |
| 28th June Tues | Walk in Brockwell Park 11.30 am-1pm |
| 28th June Tues | London Legal Walk - see page 7 |
| 29th June Weds | Women's meet up in Holland Park 11.30am-1pm |
| 29th June Weds | Lunch time reading group 1-2pm online |
| 30th June Thurs | Wellbeing and bingo on WhatsApp |
| 30th June Thurs | Keeping Well and healthy online training session 6-7pm |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| 2nd July Sat | Picnic for women in North London Golders Hill Park 12noon- 4pm |
| 3rd July Sun | Music for Resilience on WhatsApp |
| 5th July Tues | Walk in Brockwell Park 11.30 am-1pm |
| 6th July Wed | Women's meet up in Holland Park 11.30am-1pm |
| 6th July Wed | Lunch time reading group 1-2pm online |
| 7th July Thurs | Wellbeing and bingo on WhatsApp |
| 7th July Thurs | Keeping Well and healthy online training session 6-7pm |
| 9th July Sat | Picnic in West London 12noon- 4pm |
| 10th July Sun | Music for Resilience on WhatsApp |
| 11th July Mon | Lunch time piano concert 1-1.45pm online |
| 12th July Tues | Walk in Brockwell Park 11.30 am-1pm |
| 13th July Wed | Women's meet up in Holland Park 11.30am-1pm |
| 13th July Wed | Lunch time reading group 1-2pm online |
| 14th July Thurs | Summer Thank you Party 6-8pm with live music 6-8pm |



This year we're inviting you to explore the theme of 'Healing'. Through creativity and conversations, Refugee Week 2022 will be a celebration of community, mutual care, and the human ability to start again. Healing means recovering from a painful experience or situation, so that we can continue to live. No-one understands this better than those who have lost their homes and had to build new lives from scratch. We have much to learn from refugees about holding onto hope when going on seems impossible – as well as about how art, creativity and community can help us to heal.

You can find the full list of events taking place from 20th-26th June here <https://refugeeweek.org.uk/events/>



This illustration is by Nima Javan, a painter specialising in traditional Persian art and contemporary abstract art.

Originally from Quchan
in North East Iran, Nima
sought refuge in the UK in
2019.

LONELINESS AND MENTAL HEALTH

1. Small Steps, Small Goals.

“Take small steps and set yourself very, very small goals in terms of trying things or dipping your toe in to connect with other people.”

2. Developing a positive relationship with yourself.

“Don’t beat yourself up. It’s not because there’s anything wrong with you, and spending time on your own can be good because you can do things that you can then share with people, tell people about when you do have contact with them. You can have fun on your own.”

3. Relating to other people.

“I’m trying to focus on the things that I can control. With loneliness, what I can control is who I’m around and who I feel most comfortable with, so not hanging on to these friendships that make me feel even more lonely, even more isolated.”

4. Finding the connections you need.

“I made a point of trying to go out each day. Just for a walk around the village, and I’d go to the park and it got me talking to other mums and dads by the swings. I made a really good friend from that. And she ran the mums and toddler group, so from that I was able to meet other parents.”

5. Trying to do stuff that interests and inspires you.

“I just have this thing that, when you walk around a town, in most towns, there’s always posters and notices up of things happening. At least I find that anyway, even in your local ...supermarkets, you’ll have what’s happening in your local community, so it’s worth always looking there. Libraries have loads of things happening now.”

6. Getting outside and connection to nature.

“Being connected to nature [helps] because it’s the most grand thing you could find in the world and it’s always there for you if you give it love.”

7. Using technology helpfully.

“Talk to people. Watch people streaming things online, live streaming, because then it feels like you’ve got somebody talking nearby. That can help a little bit in softening the initial barriers to reaching out to people and talking to them specifically.”

“Find someone to talk to. And if the first person doesn’t work then keep trying. And just keep trying until you’re actually heard.”



Source: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/psychiatry/sites/psychiatry/files/conversations_around_lonelines_mental_health_08.03.2022.pdf

4 Ms of Mental Health

1: Mindfulness

practice 10-15 minutes of deep breathing, express gratitude, and appreciate nature



2: Movement

take a couple of fitness breaks for 10-15 minutes, go for a walk, bike ride, yoga, or stretch



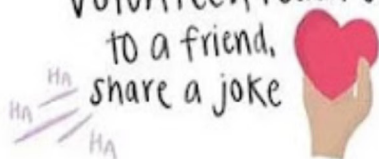
3: Mastery

try + master a new hobby or skill: cooking, gardening, learn a new language



4: Meaningful Engagement

volunteer, reach out to a friend, share a joke



POSITIVE THOUGHTS

| Negative Thought | Positive Thought |
|--|---|
| I've never done it before! | It's an opportunity to learn something new. |
| It's too hard. | I will approach it differently. |
| I don't have the resources I need. | I am a creative problem-solver. |
| I'm too lazy to get this done. | Let's re-examine some priorities. |
| There's no way it will work. | I can do this! I will think outside the box to figure out a solution. |
| It's too big a change. | It's an opportunity. |
| I'm not going to get any better at this. | I've learned other things that were hard at first. How did you do that? |

“Everyone has a poet sleeping inside and my participation has awakened a poet, needing to grow up. Interacting with others also was beneficial for my mental health, improving my mood, feeling less isolated, active, and supported, not alone even on my own.”

GROUNDING WITH YOUR FIVE SENSES

What are

5

THINGS YOU
CAN SEE



SUN
PICTURE ON THE WALL
**PEOPLE
WALKING**

4

THINGS YOU
CAN FEEL



**WIND
BLOWING**
FEET ON THE FLOOR
PENCIL IN HAND

3

THINGS YOU
CAN HEAR



**BIRDS
CHIRPING**
CLOCK TICKING
CAR HORNS

2

THINGS YOU
CAN SMELL



**FOOD FROM THE
CAFETERIA**
LAUNDRY DETERGENT ON CLOTHES
**FRESH CUT
GRASS**

1

THING YOU
CAN TASTE



MINT
Breakfast
TOOTHPASTE

Source:

<http://www.carena.org.uk/grounding-technique-for-anxiety/>

USEFUL RESOURCES AND FURTHER READING

Resilience

What Is Resilience? Your Guide to Facing Life's Challenges, Adversities, and Crises. Everyday Health. <https://www.everydayhealth.com/wellness/resilience/> Hurley, K (2020).

Mindfulness/Breathing Exercises

<https://childhood101.com/fun-breathing-exercises-for-kids/>

Loneliness

https://www.ucl.ac.uk/psychiatry/sites/psychiatry/files/conversations_around_loneliness_mental_health_08.03.2022.pdf

Help Yourself and Others

<https://thrivedn.co.uk/help-yourself-and-others/>

New Dreams Online Exhibition (Gate Theatre and Migrants Organise)

<https://new-dreams.co.uk/>

Audio version for the poem in the final page:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OebhFAOqRA4>

"Where is Home?" By Faosat

Home is where your heart is and it's your temple. But where you are struggling to make ends meet in your country of origin, you move to where you can find comfort. Even though with uncertainty, you will take the big risk. I was born in Nigeria, an adverse country, but left Nigeria for London when I couldn't find love amongst my people and couldn't make ends meet. London is a country of opportunity and I came with the hope things will get better. I did not foresee the challenges I would face, trying to get my stay regularised.

On getting to London, and as a stranger in a manger, no one to show or direct me of what to do, I was in limbo. It was getting tougher and harder—days turned into months and to years. It has been twenty-five solid years of sojourning. Life seems dark, without light, no help in sight and I have been alone, like an animal in the wild, with no one to care and show love. I felt dejected, dumped, and abandoned.

Everyone has eyes, hands, feet and skin. When you take that away from them, you take away a big part of their humanity. They become a victim of cruelty.

Immigration is the key to all doors in this country. While trying to sort out your papers, you will need to make many turns to overcome many obstacles. You will be scammed, go through abuses of all sorts, bullying and exploitation of all kinds.

Being an undocumented migrant, refugee or asylum seeker is not easy. Some people will share your pains and be empathetic, while some people will maltreat you and you will feel that the whole world is against you. This is when you tend to miss home. And being away for so long, you miss people, foods that you enjoyed, places of interest. And you will be home sick.

But as a realist, a strong, focused and resilient person, I know that no condition is permanent. And freedom will come in the end and you will be as free as air. Then you will be opportuned to visit as often as you like and enjoy all that you have missed while you were caged up with all the obstacles and challenges.

I refused to be criminalised by my situation in this country. And the same upbringing, I gave to my two generations of children that I raised in this country, for all of us to remember where we were coming from and be of good behaviours that will portray good about our home country, upbringing and family background.

All the above goals cannot be achieved without having support. I am glad that I found a good network of support through Migrants Organise. Through attending various groups, organised by Migrants Organise, I have learnt extensive new skills. Group sessions like creative reading and writing, the sewing group and women's group have contributed immensely to my wellbeing. Because I am able voice out my feelings and share my experience with everyone in the group, it makes me like Oliver Twist, wanting more, and I am always looking forward to joining the group every week! May I take this medium to show my appreciation to all Migrants Organise Staff Team, volunteers and all my group members. Thank you all and God bless.

We are grateful to the following funders whose support has contributed to supporting particular activities in the festival.

SWIRE
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TRUST



THE BROMLEY TRUST
HUMAN RIGHTS | PRISON REFORM

*Kensington
+ Chelsea
Foundation*

ORANGE TREE
TRUST 

KEEP IN TOUCH

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Printed by www.printbiguk.com