



Webinar: Micro-Learning Series on Digital Inclusion

Transcript

Part 1 of 6

June 10, 2024, 12:30 – 12:45 PM ET

Introduction

Julie Heller: Hello again, welcome everyone to today's micro-learning session which focuses on mental health concerns—where digital inclusion overlaps with support and resources for mental health.

Today's Speakers

I'm the facilitator Julie Heller, Program Manager for Digital Inclusion. Freschta Naseri from Afghanistan is our subject matter expert with lived experience. Megan Rafferty is the Training Officer for Mental Health and Wellness. And Christine Elamo is with Emergent Tech and she is a Training Officer for Switchboard and she'll join possibly the Q&A. The dates and times—I'd love to encourage you to join all six sessions, but feel free to join on any day as your schedule allows. They begin today, June 10, and continue June 17 and 24. We pause for a holiday week on July 4 and we resume on July 8, July 15, and conclude on July 22. I'll begin at 12:30 ET and wrap approximately 12:45. Each day we'll follow an animated character that is based on real-life cases, recognizing different mental health concerns throughout their resettlement journey. This will be followed by recommended resources.

Learning Objectives

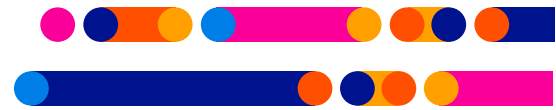
JH: This presentation will introduce technology as a complementary tool in mental health services. It will focus on tech that has a realistic accessibility rate in the realm of resettlement. Today's micro-learning series focuses on culture shock and the learning objectives around this. You should be able to, by the end of this session, first recognize common mental health concerns Afghan families encounter at different stages of their resettlement journey. Secondly: identify ways to integrate technological tools and resources supporting Afghan newcomers seeking mental, social and emotional health services.

So please meet Masoud. We will watch a five-minute animation of Masoud at the start of his resettlement journey. Again, his concerns will center around culture shock and he will look for ways to cope using technology. Any questions submitted in the Q&A box will be discussed after the animation and recommended resources will be shared.

Animated Video: Masoud

Narrator: This animation depicts how new technologies can support Afghan newcomers in addressing the mental health concerns they may experience during their resettlement journey. Meet Masoud, a 38-year-old male Tajik from Herat.

Masoud: I feel so frustrated, helpless and unfair. I'm just overwhelmed. In Afghanistan, I had a prestigious job and here I'll be lucky to work at all. My change in status is a big concern.



N: Culture shock is when one becomes disoriented during or after experiencing an unfamiliar way of life. The National Institute of Health estimates that 50% of Afghan refugees experience depression and 43% experience anxiety. This is linked to cultural adjustment difficulties and loss of social support.

M: I am feeling the stress that I must find a job as soon as possible to pay rent and the bills, put food on the table and clothes for the kids. And I have been to a number of job interviews but no one has gotten back to me yet.

N: Every time his kids have a medical appointment, Masoud feels an overwhelming sense of anxiety. He doesn't know where to go in the building, who to ask for help if he is lost, or how to communicate with the doctor. This is true every time he goes to medical, immigration or other appointments.

M: This is so shameful. I cannot even navigate the different public transportation systems and I'm at the mercy of friends and cash workers for help.

N: On a sunny Wednesday afternoon, Masoud packs his paperwork and heads to the bus station near his apartment complex. He knows how to take the bus to go to the local resettlement agency, but not to other places in the city. Once he arrives, he meets with Christina, his mental health caseworker, for the first time. After arriving and checking in, Christina comes to meet him with an interpreter, Ahmad.

Christina: Hi Masoud, nice to meet you. My name is Christina and I am your mental health caseworker and this is Ahmad. He will be our interpreter today.

[foreign language]

N: Masoud is guided to follow Christina to her office for initial intake and paperwork. The door is closed for privacy reasons.

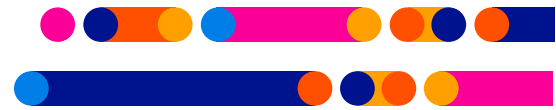
C: So Masoud, your caseworker mentioned that you have been stressed lately. Can you tell me a bit more about what is bothering you and how I might be able to help you?

M: I have a family of eight people. I don't have a job yet. I don't know English. I don't have a car. Every time we need to go shopping, we have to wait for a friend to become available to take us. Everything is new and unfamiliar here. I struggle whenever my kids have appointments.

N: Masoud tells Christina about the many problems he has encountered in his short time in the U.S. Through their conversation, Christina realizes that Masoud doesn't know many other Afghans, even though there is a well-established Afghan community in his neighborhood.

As a first step to help Masoud, Christina has planned to connect him with other Afghans through an online community group. These groups are an easy way to connect with other people. They are available in the client's native language. Masoud joins a group chat of Afghans in his area, some newly arrived and others longtime U.S. residents. They use the group chat to keep up with one another, build new friendships, plan gatherings for the weekends, and celebrate holidays like Eid. Masoud's digital resources from Christina include the Settle In mobile and desktop app, an easily accessible companion for newcomers during their resettlement journey to the U.S. The Settle In app provides short videos, interactive lessons, and badges to reward and track learning progress. Masoud follows an Afghan content creator from the community who teaches English on YouTube. In his free time, Masoud watches videos of this instructor translating his lessons into Dari, which makes them easier for Masoud to understand.

M: Using the Settle In app in Dari helped me find services and connect with new friends who have been here a long time and know their way around. Connecting with others online and using these resources have eased my concerns.



Reflection

Poll Question

JH: Okay, we do have a Slido question for you. So, using your camera phone, capture the QR code, or you can join us at [slido.com](https://www.slido.com) and use the number below to answer the question.

How does Masoud's use of technology effectively support his experience coping with culture shock?

JH: So, again, I'll read that one more time and then I'll pause for just a moment to give you an opportunity to answer. So, how does Masoud's use of technology effectively support his experience with culture shock?

He feels less alone, reduces social isolation, great answers; connects him with other Afghans, definitely a community of support, a lot of great answers here; receiving info in his own language, all of these are great, yeah, connecting with people, feels supported, gets connected with others, aids in employment.

You guys are great, yep, perfect. Helps give him friends, yeah, connects with the community for help, navigates technology, there's support for him, same language, yeah, got a lot of that, connects to a community, practices English, right. I think there's a few more people typing here: language support, gives them options for sure, community events, awesome, increases confidence, I love that. It's a lot of what digital inclusion is: is giving refugees and newcomers the opportunity to improve their confidence.

Wonderful, all great answers, curated a list of online communities and local resources is great, promoting connections among clients through those online communities, and if none exist in your area, you can begin that, Switchboard in conjunction with CORE is curating a list of online Facebook communities and will be sent out next, this week after this micro-learning series concludes.

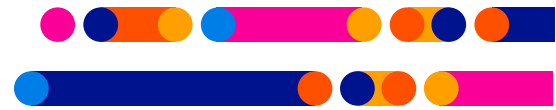
Recommended Resources

JH: So yeah, some touch points for resources. So the IRC Digital Community Afghan Facebook from CORE, the Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange. The app Settle In, and again, Settle In Facebook was an initiative launched by CORE to directly engage newly arrived Afghans resettling in the U.S.; this platform serves as another touch point to disseminate vital correct information in an interactive format tied to resettlement services, employment, housing, and education. In addition to these posts—the ability to directly message with trained, experienced, Dari- and Pashto-speaking digital community liaisons. Settle In Facebook will also host Q&As, live stream events, and you can always visit like the page in order to get the most accurate updated information. You can incorporate Settle In Facebook to your existing cultural orientation sessions.

And again, share the Settle In Facebook with all your U.S. ties, and inform these resources that newcomers can help better understand early resettlement services and life in the U.S. using these. And again, if you have questions, settle.in@rescue.org is the contact for that, so—and secondly, a Switchboard link, Ethnic Community-Based Organizations play a vital role in supporting other communities, such as the Karen Organization of San Diego, so this is a blog post that does just that, so some really great resources there that we'd like to pass along.

Learning Objectives

JH: Okay, so today's learning objectives: now you are able to, first of all, recognize common mental health concerns Afghan families encounter at different stages of their journey. And you're also able to identify ways to integrate technological tools and resources in supporting Afghan newcomers seeking mental, social, and emotional health services.



Q&A Panel

JH: Okay, let's pause for just a moment, we're going to have a quick Q&A, you can type your questions into the Q&A box, you can give a thumbs up for questions that you agree with, and we'll pause for 60 seconds to allow that to happen if you'd like to reflect. I can also ask—a few of you had submitted—we have a lot of people on today's call, which is wonderful, and a lot of you have submitted some questions previously with the registration, and so some of the ones I really did like, and I can start with that, and as they come in, we do have Megan is monitoring the Q&A for us. One of the ones I really liked was:

What digital technologies are currently being used?

JH: That was a really great question for a lot of reasons, and the online communities that we've shared, those are great, the settlement apps are always great. So I want to of course bring it back to what we just covered in the animation, and the recommended resources are always a great way to go. So the digital technologies, there's a lot of caseworkers and mental health workers that are using those online communities. But this, the impetus for this conversation is again, a conversation starter, so they're just beginning to—we're just beginning to see an overlap with digital inclusion and mental health, and it being employed. So let's pass it to Megan, and see if we're getting any questions in the Q&A.

Megan Rafferty: Okay, thanks Julie. I'm seeing a couple of questions here.

For those who are supporting clients who don't have a high digital literacy level, how do you go about utilizing technology with those individuals?

JH: Yeah, that is a really great question. And one of the things that we are going to share throughout this micro-learning series is a different technological resource with each session, so that's a great way to go about it. We have virtual reality coming up that is free of language, it's all about immersion, so we're going to go through a lot of those. So I'm hoping the person that asked that question, I think it's April—I'm hoping she joins us later for, as we grow that, again, our technological resources. We'll share different ones each session with you, so kind of stay tuned as the question for that.

Okay, yeah, I see one in there about Settle In app being used for other nationalities besides Afghan newcomers, and the answer is yes, although this micro-learning series focuses around the Dari- and Pashto-speaking population, that is 100% something that you can check out. Again, we're building some resources that are Afghan-based, but that are accessible in multiple other languages.

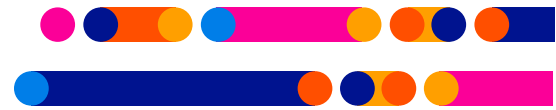
Conclusion

Feedback Survey

JH: Okay, thank you for those great questions, really, thank you, yeah, thank you. So, one final thing, help us help you, if you could scan the QR code and give us some feedback in improving training, we would love that. Again, there are five questions and 60 seconds, it should take you no more than just a minute, so if you would, I'll pause for just a brief moment and give you the opportunity to do that.

Stay Connected

JH: Okay, and I think this link will also be sent out in the follow-up email with the recommended resources as well, so if you didn't get an opportunity to do that, it will be shared with you again. I'd like to thank you for joining us for this wonderful animation series, I hope to you again next week. We'll continue with Masoud's resettlement journey that focuses on his concerns around sleep disturbances. Thank you so much, and I hope you have a really great week.



Part 2 of 6

June 17, 2024, 12:30 – 12:45 PM ET

Introduction

Julie Heller: Welcome to today's micro-learning session which focuses on mental health concerns and where Digital inclusion overlaps for support and resources.

Today's Speakers

JH: I'm the facilitator Julie Heller, Program Manager for Digital Inclusion. Freschta Naseri from Afghanistan is our subject matter expert with lived experience. Megan Rafferty is the Training Officer for Mental Health and Wellness.

The dates and times for these for each week—again, thank you to everyone who joined us for the first session and is joining us again today. Welcome to all new participants joining us today. I'd like to encourage you to join the remaining four sessions, but feel free to join any day as your schedule allows. We began last week, June 10, and continue today, June 17, June 24, and pause for a holiday week July 4. We resume on July 8, July 15, and conclude on July 22, all beginning at 12:30 ET and wrapping approximately 12:45.

Each day we'll follow an animated character that is based on real-life experiences, recognizing a different mental health concern throughout their resettlement journey. This will be followed by recommended digital inclusion resources. This presentation will introduce technology as a complimentary tool in mental health services and will focus on technologies that have a realistic accessibility rate in the realm of resettlement. Today's conversation is around sleeping issues.

Learning Objectives

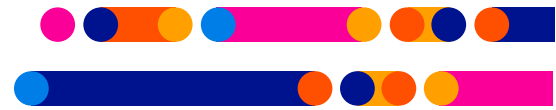
JH: The learning objectives are two: by the end of this session, you should be able to first recognize common mental health concerns Afghan families encounter at different stages of their resettlement journey. Secondly, identify ways to integrate technological tools and resources in supporting Afghan newcomers in seeking mental, social, and emotional health services.

Last week we met Masoud. Today we will watch a five-minute animation as Masoud continues his resettlement journey. His concerns will center around sleeping issues, and he will look for ways to cope using technology. Any questions should be submitted in the Q&A box and will be discussed after the animation and recommended resources will be shared.

Animated Video: Masoud

Narrator: This animation depicts how new technologies can support Afghan newcomers in addressing the mental health concerns they may experience during their resettlement journey. We last met Masoud, a 38-year-old male Tajik from Harran, who is experiencing stress from culture shock. It has been six years since Masoud's arrival in the US and now he faces new challenges. He constantly worries about not being able to provide for his growing family, given that he cannot find a high-paying job, even though his English proficiency has improved.

Masoud has trouble falling asleep at night because he finds himself worrying about his financial situation and his family's future. Masoud has started working as a truck driver. One day while making a long-haul delivery on the road. Masoud gets lost in his thoughts and crashes his truck. There is damage to his employer's vehicle and he is called in for a meeting with his supervisors at the trucking company.



Masoud: I tried to stand up for myself. Everyone has accidents. It has only been a few days since this accident, and I have not had time to get better. I don't deserve to be fired from my job.

N: Accidents are a common side effect from lack of sleep. Masoud's worries continue and he develops severe insomnia. He tosses and turns all night unable to sleep. When Masoud does get to sleep, he's awoken by nightmares. Christina, Masoud's former mental health service provider, had suggested some beneficial resources and practices. Masoud is no longer in contact with Christina since his eligibility for therapy time has expired. But, while working together, Christina equipped him with some digital resources that have been helpful.

Although the National Institute of Health estimates that 20% of refugees stop therapy prematurely, the figure can be as high as 65%.

M: I should try to remember the steps Christina and I practiced and focus on locating the music resources she provided.

N: Relaxing music can alter heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing in a positive way, lowering the body's physiological stress. The benefits of listening to curated music online can be tremendous.

[music]

Slow or meditative music can induce a relaxing effect while faster rhythms can concentrate the listener's attention. Instrumental music and guided meditation to assist in falling asleep are widely available for free online or via apps.

[music]

Service providers can equip newcomers with resources that help after initial mental health services end.

M: My days have become lighter and less worrisome as I have practiced falling asleep through apps at night and also listening to calming music.

Reflection

Poll Question

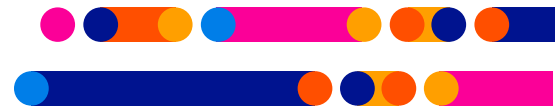
JH: Okay. We do have a Slido question for you. You can use your camera phone to capture the QR code, or you can go to slido.com and you can look at the number below to engage and answer the question.

[How does Masoud's use of technology effectively support him with his sleeping troubles?](#)

JH: We'll pause about 30 seconds to give you a little time to reflect and answer that question in considering the video. Again, the question is, how does Masoud's use of technology effectively support him with his sleeping troubles?

We have some participants coming in. Sleep apps help him relax. Yes. Excellent. Calmness helps him relax so he can fall asleep easier. Helps him relax. All good. Distracts him from his worries. Calming music is relaxing. All perfect. Helps him relax. Guided meditation can calm his anxiety. Can help him access calm music for guided meditation.

All good. Through tech, he can access music. Calmness with music. Access online support is good practice. Absolutely. We have a few more people that look to be still typing, but I think that's the gist of it. All great answers. Takes the focus off what's troubling him. Calmness with the music. Again, perfect. Thank you for



engaging, perfect responses. That's exactly right on. We do have some action steps and possible action steps if you would like to encourage therapy, even when the mental health has improved. Always a good idea. Secondly, provide support locating music online different resources and offer help downloading those apps that assist in falling asleep and many are often free, so potential or possible action steps there for you.

Recommended Resources

JH: Some recommended resources, some touch points. Again, we have a systematic review, a meta-analysis here. This literature review evaluates the efficacy of music therapy for acute and chronic sleep disorders in adults. Again, that will be sent out in the email to you 24 hours after this micro-learning session concludes, so be on the lookout for that. That's a great one.

Also, we'd like to share our subjective list of relaxing music which was compiled online using different rating polls and music critic blog sites, including Afghan contributors. As you are assisting clients and downloading music and making playlists and getting online to listen, it's good to remember that not all genres are equally as effective. This list that we'll be sending you has been subjectively rated and was compiled short list tracks spanning classical, pop, and ambient genres. This was shown to have the capacity to lower heart rates, slow breathing, and decrease levels of stress hormones.

Lastly, there's music. There's a link of a variety of different mixes, all of which are available online and will be sent to you as well.

Learning Objectives

JH: The learning objectives for today are twofold. You should be able to now recognize common mental health concerns Afghan families encounter at different stages of their resettlement journey. Secondly, identify ways to integrate those technological tools and resources in supporting Afghan newcomers seeking mental, social and emotional health services.

Okay, so we do have just a couple of moments for a Q&A. If you'd like to type a question in the box, we'll reflect for just a few minutes. If you have something that you would like to type in, I can answer that or if you want to give a thumbs up for someone else. The conversation is really around a lot of the questions that we get, always go back to, this is the beginning conversation starter, so I want to put that out there. Hey, it's a conversation starter around recognizing different mental health concerns and what tools are available, digital inclusion tools for sleeping.

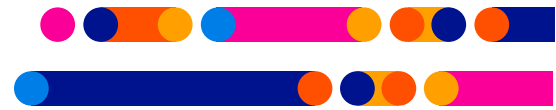
Continuing therapy and promising signs for creating playlists have been evaluated. Getting online to listen really helps. I'm not seeing a lot of questions come in, so I think that the animation probably answered a lot of those.

Conclusion

Feedback Survey

JH: We will go ahead and scan the QR code on the next screen here and help us help you. If you'd like to see something maybe be done a little bit differently or we can assist in training and technical assistance in any other way, there are six questions that are available. Take about 60 seconds. If you wouldn't mind hopping on there and help us improve for future technical assistance training.

There's some questions that are coming in after the fact here. I'm going to maybe go back to those. Yes, so we get a lot of apps about different languages and those are included in the recommended resources that are going to be sent out in the email, so stay tuned for that one. That's a great question that came in a little bit late.



Stay Connected

JH: Okay. All right, I think we've paused long enough on scanning the QR code and answering the questions. Again, that will be available in the email as well. Thank you for joining us. Next week, we'll meet Marion, who is just beginning her resettlement journey and she is experiencing concerns around anxiety and issues focusing. Thank you again for joining us. It was great to see all of you, and I hope you have a really nice week.

Part 3 of 6

June 24, 2024, 12:30 – 12:45 PM ET

Introduction

Julie Heller: Well, welcome back. Good to see everyone again. Thanks for joining today's micro-learning session that focuses on mental health concerns and where digital inclusion overlaps for support and for resources.

Today's Speakers

JH: I'm the facilitator, Julie Heller, program manager for digital inclusion. Freschta Nasri from Afghanistan is the subject-matter expert with lived experience and Megan Rafferty is the training officer for mental health and wellness.

The dates and times for this micro-learning series, again, I'd like to encourage you to join all of them, but any as your schedule allows. Feel free to join us on the remaining sessions. We've had conversations around culture shock on June 10. We had sleeping trouble concerns that continued on June 17, and today, June 24, we will look at concerns around anxiety.

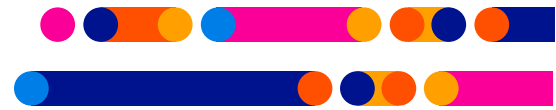
We'll pause for a holiday week, that's next week, and then we'll resume on the July 15 and conclude on July 22. All of these micro-learning sessions begin at 12:30 ET and wrap 12:45. Each day will follow a different animated character that is based off of real-life experiences, recognizing a different mental health concern each day throughout their resettlement journey.

This will be followed by a recommended digital inclusion resource. This presentation will introduce technology as a complementary tool in mental health services and will focus on technologies that have a realistic accessibility rate in the realm of resettlement.

Learning Objectives

JH: Today, again, we will take a look at concerns that are around anxiety issues and our learning objectives. As always, by the end of this session, you should be able to recognize common mental health concerns that Afghan families encounter at different stages of their resettlement journey, and secondly, identify or integrate technology tools and resources in supporting Afghan newcomers that are seeking mental, social and emotional health services. Last week we met, or today, I guess, we'll meet Maryam.

We'll continue with Maryam next week, and we will watch a five-minute animation around Maryam as she begins her resettlement journey. Again, her concerns are around a lack of focus and anxiety, and she will look for ways to cope using technology. Any questions can be submitted in the Q&A, and we will be briefly discussed after the animation, and the recommended digital inclusion resources will be shared.



Animated Video: Maryam

Narrator: This animation depicts how new technologies can support Afghan newcomers in addressing the mental health concerns they may experience during their resettlement journey.

Maryam: I often dream of myself when I was young. I'm with my classmates at school. I'm learning and having fun. I'm from Bamyan in Afghanistan, and I'm the first-born child of Hazara parents. I'm 17 years old and feel differently about the school now. Here, I feel so much older than the others, and my clothes are so different that it is difficult to focus on learning. I'm also a few years behind now because of difficulties learning English.

N: Maryam arrived in the U.S. five months ago. Maryam was always top of her class in Afghanistan, but because of her limited English and differences in the education system, she is starting two grade levels behind where she was at home. She feels odd at her new school as she looks and dresses differently. It has been hard to make friends.

Whenever Maryam presents in class or meets with large groups of new people, her heart feels like it's beating 10 times faster. Back in Afghanistan, she never experienced this kind of anxiety. Christina, Maryam's mental health worker, is meeting her after school at their typical spot on campus. Maryam prefers to talk outside of the resettlement office, where other families she knows could see her. Maryam has communicated that she does not want an interpreter to be present for these check-ins. Anxiety is characterized by excessive worry and nervousness about perceived threats and uncertainty. This typically leads to avoidant behaviors, increased heart rate, and muscle tension.

Christina: How was your day today?

M: Today was a difficult day.

C: Would you like to talk about it?

M: I had a presentation in my history class, and I had to do it in English. I practiced and prepared so much, but right before the presentation, my heart started beating fast, and it feel like I'm almost passed out. I just wanted to be out of the class at that moment. I'm still not comfortable speaking English with my peers.

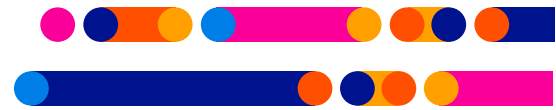
C: I'm sorry to hear that. It is normal to feel nervous when using a new language in front of others. Do you feel this way often? When do you usually feel this way?

M: Whenever I must speak in public or when I'm in a large group of people, finding my words is difficult in English. I make up reasons to not participate in these activities or meet new people.

N: After half an hour of discussion, Christina introduces Maryam to specific apps and digital technologies known to ease anxiety, often for free. Most of these apps are user-friendly. Their mini-sessions are short enough that you don't need too much experience with technology to try them. Where these initial barriers in using technology persist, digital skills instruction in resettlement service delivery can help alleviate them.

M: Sometimes I find it hard to focus when I'm doing homework. I keep thinking about other things. As a result, finishing my homework takes much longer than it should. Is there an app that can help me with this too?

C: I find music helpful when I work on tasks. I have a collection of instrumental music that I'll send you right now. You can listen to these for free online. There are also study communities online where people listen to live music while studying. I encourage you to check them out and see if you can find a style of music that best helps you stay focused.



N: Listening to instrumental music through headphones helps cancel out the outside noise and provides a constant rhythm, allowing users to stay focused on the task at hand.

M: Thank you. I'm excited to try it out. I can't believe there are so many free resources on the internet that can help me with my mental health.

N: Maryam starts breathing using the 4-7-8 technique. Inhale for 4 seconds, hold your breath for 7 seconds, then exhale for 8 seconds.

M: Christina was right. This app helps me feel calm when I start feeling overwhelmed, and listening to music does help me concentrate sometimes.

N: You can find additional resources to address anxiety all across the internet, including several YouTube channels.

M: My anxiety has lowered a lot, and I'm learning new skills to manage these feelings. Things are not perfect, but better.

Reflection

Poll Question

How did Maryam's use of technology effectively support her with her concerns of anxiety and lack of focus?

JH: If you could just take a few moments, grab your phone, pull out your camera, and capture the QR code, or go to slido.com and use the number below. Again, the question will pause for just a moment, about 30 seconds, and you can answer the question. How does Maryam's use of technology effectively support her with concerns of anxiety and lack of focus?

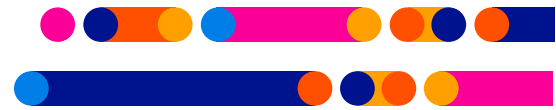
It looks like we have a few people typing. There are always really good answers. I look forward to these. "It helped her use breathing techniques to calm down." Yes. "Gave her accessible coping tools." For sure. Both good answers. "Helps block out noise and concentrate." "Helps focus." "Provided effective coping strategies." "Confidence." Yes, I love that. Again, I think last week we talked a little bit about the confidence. "Used music to relax, music again to help stay focused and calm." Good answer.

"She was able to use technology to drown out the noise to focus better and apps are able to help her find self-regulation techniques to relax." Very good. "Breathing apps helps let go, helps to express calm." "Music, ideas to use music as a resource redirected her attention, helped her to focus, have some control." Again, a lot of great answers. "Helped to block out noise, concentrate on her work, utilize apps in real time." "Breathing and music." "Using apps and hearing instrumental music."

"The 4-7-8 technique." "Helped to build self-esteem and provide a sense of belonging to her new community." "Watching music videos for sure." A lot of different genres are very helpful. "Music, again, helps her to stay focused and control her anxiety." I think we have a couple people typing. We'll give them just a second to finish up, but all those are amazing answers right on target. Thank you for that. "Provided confidence and reduced her anxiety symptoms."

Yes, "Eating spaghetti." [laughs] Okay, that's good. Okay, thank you for your answers on that. Wonderful, great, possible answers there.

Action Steps and Recommended Resources



JH: For your consideration, we do have three potential action steps. Introduce tools like relaxation apps to ease anxiety, for sure. Focus on specific techniques like breathing that can be replicated and follow along online. Discover a niche because not all apps work for everyone. Three great action steps that you can take. Some recommended resources for you to consider, some touch points as well, we have four of those.

The first one is a really great one: the National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants, and Migrants offers a collection of fact sheets, posters, videos, audio recordings, and other resources, not just in English, but in Dari and Pashto as well. These materials come from the organizations across the country. They are working to assist Afghan communities throughout every step of their resettlement journey.

There are options you can search and filter by topic differences or language differences, so it really is a great resource. Please check that out. Mindful activities that follow creation and editing of images, like image creator, are also really great. Painting online. Often for these you have to have the latest version of Windows, however, so it's just a FYI. Again, mentioned in the video, the animation, was the 4-7-8 breathing technique, which is based on the pranayama breathing and exercises.

It's that ancient yoga practice of controlling your breath. These types of mindful breathing exercise have been shown to have many benefits for stress reduction and relaxation. The 4-7-8 breathing technique was developed by Dr. Andrew Weil, and he refers to it as a natural tranquilizer for the nervous system, so a really great way to control your breathing. Lastly, there is a really great—Quest channel is a great channel that focuses mainly on relaxing music, and we're going to share that with you as always.

This is great for just basic music, study music, instrumental music, focus music, and concentration music, so something else that's really great to check out. Again, that will all come to you in an email within 24 hours, so be on the lookout for that.

Learning Objectives

JH: Today's learning objectives. Now you're able to recognize common mental health concerns that Afghan families face at different stages of the resettlement journey.

Secondly, identify ways to integrate technological tools and resources supporting Afghan newcomers seeking mental, social, and emotional health services. Okay.

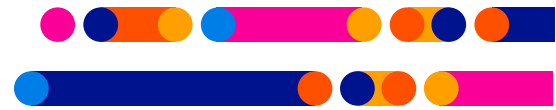
We do have a quick time. I'm going to do better about pausing for about 30 seconds. If you have just a moment and you'd like to reflect either on a mental health concern around anxiety or issues focusing, we do have a subject matter expert. Megan is on the call with us. Feel free to type that in.

She was also really great about getting back to people who thought of questions later, and then email them at a later time. I can do the same. Digital inclusion. If you have any questions about the resources that we've offered or additional resources, again, you're always invited and encouraged to submit a technical assistance training on Switchboard's website as well.

Conclusion

Feedback Survey

JH: At this point, I'd love for you to scan the QR code if you have just a moment, as we wrap this up and give us a little bit of feedback. There are a few questions. Should only take you about a minute. I'm going to pause, let you have time to do that, and help us improve all of these trainings that we offer at Switchboard.



Stay Connected

JH: I want to thank you for joining us. I hope you had enough time, and again, if you did not, that email should be coming out and you can submit more feedback at that point. Next week, we will continue to follow Maryam on her journey, and she'll then be experiencing concerns that have developed more of a concern around depression. We'll offer digital inclusion tools and support and resources in that vein. Thank you so much. I hope you have a really great week. Next week we're off for July 4 holiday, but it will be the following week after that. Have a really great week. See you then.

Part 4 of 6

July 8, 2024, 12:30 – 12:45 PM ET

Introduction

Julie Heller: Hello, everyone. Welcome back to today's micro-learning session. We will focus on mental health concerns today where digital inclusion overlaps for support and resources.

Today's Speakers

JH: I'm the facilitator Julie Heller, Program Manager for Digital Inclusion. Freschta Naseri is the subject matter expert with lived experience from Afghanistan. We have Megan Rafferty, the Training Officer for Mental Health and Wellness.

The dates and times for this micro-learning session, they started a few weeks ago. We started June 10. We continued June 17 and 24. We paused for a holiday week, and we have two remaining sessions left. Please join us on both or either of those days as your schedule allows. I'll begin at 12:30 ET and will wrap at approximately 12:45 ET. Each day we will follow an animated character that is based on real-life experiences, recognizing different mental health concerns through their resettlement journey. This will be followed by recommended digital inclusion resources.

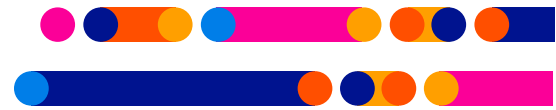
Learning Objectives

JH: This presentation will introduce technology as a complementary tool and mental health services. We'll focus on technologies that have realistic accessibility rates in the realm of resettlement. Today, we will look at concerns that focus around depression. By the end of this session, there are two objectives. You should be able to, first, recognize common mental health concerns Afghan families encounter at different stages of their resettlement journey, and second, identify ways to integrate technological tools and resources supporting Afghan newcomers seeking mental, social, and emotional health services.

Two weeks ago we met Mariam, and today we will watch a five-minute animation of her as she continues on her resettlement journey. Her concerns will center around depression and she will look for ways to cope using technology. Any questions can of course be submitted in the Q&A box and will be discussed after the animation. Of course, recommended resources will be shared.

Animated Video: Maryam

Narrator: This animation depicts how new technologies can support Afghan newcomers in addressing the mental health concerns they may experience during their resettlement journey. We catch back up with Mariam, the firstborn child of Hazara parents from Bamyan, Afghanistan. She has graduated from community college and joined the workforce.



Mariam: I really miss my hometown, extended family, and old friends. It's, of course, nearly impossible for me to visit Afghanistan. I feel a sense of emptiness. I feel pessimistic about the future and find nothing exciting to look forward to in life.

N: Depression, which describes a feeling of pervasive sadness and loss of interest in normal activities, often brings about a generally pessimistic outlook. From her meetings with Christina, Mariam has learned to use different tech tools to cope with depressive feelings. Mariam listens to motivational audiobooks in her native language, Dari. Listening to audiobooks can help people understand themselves and get along better with others.

M: I will use positive affirmations. Saying things like, I'm glad that rather than I wish that.

N: Mariam often catches herself reverting back to negative thinking, which leaves her feeling empty. These are new skills for Mariam and regressing is common, so she must continue to practice skill-building while using the telehealth app. Through the use of Dari audio apps and Christina's guidance, Mariam is catching her pessimistic thoughts much quicker and redirecting to a more positive tone. In addition to daily affirmations in audiobooks, Mariam has started watching videos of Dari speaking mental health coaches online.

M: Telehealth was much more convenient than I realized, and the online coach speaking Dari reinforced what I was learning. My feelings of depression have lessened.

Reflection

Poll Question

JH: We do have a Slido question for you. Please get out your phone and use your camera to scan the QR code, or you can engage online at slido.com and use the number below to answer the question.

How does Mariam's use of technology effectively support her with concerns related to emptiness and pessimism and depression?

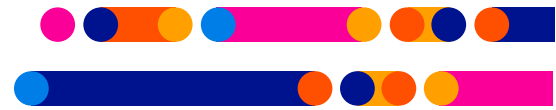
JH: A lot of answers coming in already. Native language support absolutely gives her hope. They offer tools in her home language for sure. In Dari, obviously very helpful, give her confidence, help her realize she isn't alone. Finding motivational speakers YouTube in her language. Again, a lot of their comments on native language support empowerment. All great answers.

We have about six people, seven people still typing. She can make positive affirmations. Gives her hope. She can use it at various times of the day, depending on circumstances. Available 24/7 for her to utilize. Great answers. Language support, optimism, positive thinking. It gives her a chance to be able to listen to things in her native language, which enables her to work on positive affirmations.

Also allows her to practice different tools regularly so that when she works, she feels—I think I got most of that. They're going so quickly. Anyway, great answers. Provide some familiarity through resources in her native language. Fast, convenient, offers hope, native language support, positive thinking. All great answers. I think we have a couple of people still typing there. Thank you again for everyone participating.

A lot of the answers. Giving hope, easily available. Excellent. We've got a couple of people left. We'll just give them just a second to chime in with their answers. Thank you for participating again. Gives her hope and easily available. Excellent. Give it one more second. Native language support. For sure, for sure. We do have some possible—oh, reduce the feelings of isolation.

Got you. Thank you all very much.



Action Steps and Recommended Resources

JH: Some possible action steps that we recommend are provide information on specific telehealth apps based off of location and specific providers, provide links, language specific to mental health coaches online, and encourage listening to audiobooks. Those three things are great action steps that you can take after this micro-learning session ends. We also have some touch points for some recommended resources. There are three of these. Telehealth apps can help overcome barriers like distance, provider shortages, connecting patients with remote healthcare professionals is great in so many ways.

Also, the language-specific therapists may have limited access in person, but the telehealth online is convenient. It's timely. It's efficient. It often increases the probability of continuation of care, and there is an associated cost savings element as well. The time away from work and parking, et cetera. Telehealth apps overcome a lot of barriers. Secondly, many mental health coaches are often engaging. They offer personal support. They offer motivation, goal setting, and planning, and they can boost self-confidence and obviously help improve family relationships as well.

Audiobooks are amazing and they have the power to boost our moods and disrupt negative thinking patterns. Psychology today notes that for those of us prone to anxiety and depression, listening to someone else read can help by replacing negative thoughts with something more positive. Those are three great resources that will be emailed to you within 24 hours after this micro-learning session ends.

Learning Objectives

JH: The two learning objectives: now you're able to recognize common mental health concerns Afghan families face at different stages of their resettlement journey. Secondly, identify ways to integrate those technological tools and resources in supporting Afghan newcomers seeking mental, social, and emotional health services. We did have a couple of things. There's one in the Q&A. If you would like to pop something in there, you absolutely can. Yes, there are audiobooks in Pashto, in Dari, and those will be sent to you. That's a part of the links that will be emailed out.

We had a couple of questions earlier about whether sessions one through three available, and they are. Those will be emailed out to you, and they're also available on our website. All of the specific information will be sent to you. Again, those of you who are just joining us and missed one through three, it's very easy to join in. This is a beginning conversation around the overlap of mental health and digital inclusion. Some of these are reminders, some of these maybe new suggestions or specific links. Again, all of that we will share those links and resources with you.

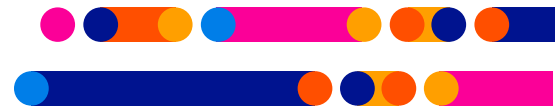
Conclusion

Feedback Survey

JH: Thank you so much for that. One other thing, if you could scan the QR code as we finish up here and give us a little bit of feedback as we look towards our technical and training assistance. There are five questions about 60 seconds, and I'd love for you to pause, take just a moment to do that. If you could, pull out your phone again just one more time and help us out with that. Again, if you typed in a question and we didn't get to that, we will make sure that we email you after. Megan is on the call as well. Regardless if it's a mental health question or a digital inclusion question, we will get back with you personally, either Megan or myself. Thank you, great presentation. Thank you so much.

Stay Connected

JH: One final thing, I guess, next week we want to make sure that you're joining us as well. We will start with a new character. We'll meet a new one, Zohra, and she is just beginning her resettlement journey, and she is



experiencing concerns around self-harm ideation. We will take a look at a new animation, and I hope to see all of you back for both of those final two presentations in the next. They're always on a Monday at 12:30 ET. I hope you have a really great week. Thanks for joining us today. We'll see you soon. Take care.

Part 5 of 6

July 15, 2024, 12:30 – 12:45 PM ET

Introduction

Julie Heller: Hello, everyone. Welcome back. Thanks for joining today's micro-learning session. It focuses on mental health concerns and where digital inclusion overlaps more support and resources.

Today's Speakers

JH: I'm the facilitator, Julie Heller, Program Manager for Digital Inclusion. Freschta Naseri is our subject matter expert with lived experience from Afghanistan. Megan Rafferty is the Training Officer for Mental Health and Wellness. Thank you.

If you have participated in previous micro-learning sessions, we began on June 10 and continue through July 22. Each Monday, we start at 12:30 ET and conclude at approximately 12:45. Each day, we follow a different animated character that is based on real-life experiences throughout their resettlement journey. This will all be followed by recommended resources. This presentation will introduce technology as a complementary tool in mental health services and will focus on technologies that have a realistic accessibility rate in the realm of resettlement.

Learning Objectives

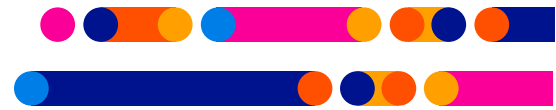
JH: Today's concerns and focus will center around self-harm ideation. The learning objectives are twofold. By the end of this session, you'll be able to recognize common mental health concerns Afghan families encounter at different stages of their resettlement journey and identify ways to integrate technological tools and resources in supporting those Afghan families—those newcomers seeking mental, social, and emotional services.

Today we will watch a five-minute animation of Zohra as she begins her resettlement journey. Her concerns will focus around self-harm, and she will look for ways to cope using technology. Any questions as always can be submitted in the Q&A box and be discussed after the animation, and recommended resources will be shared.

Animated Video: Zohra

Narrator: This animation depicts how new technologies can support Afghan newcomers in addressing the mental health concerns they may experience during their resettlement journey. Meet Zohra, a young Pashtun mother from Nangarhar who has been dreaming of the days when she was with her family back in Afghanistan. Zohra had a well-paying job in Afghanistan working with the US Army. She knew sufficient English to work as an interpreter and translator.

Zohra: There are over 11,000 kilometers or 7,000 miles between me and where I want to be. [sobbing] How could I leave my child behind? I have no say in where I live. I am buried in responsibility and cannot control this horrible feelings about abandoning my child and not having control. I'm constantly thinking about my family members back in Afghanistan. [sobbing] I worry about their safety and security. I feel angry, helpless, hopeless, stressed, and sad. I can only release my anger and hopelessness by hurting myself.



N: Self-harm is when an individual attempts to displace emotional pain into physical pain to reduce overwhelming feelings and escape traumatic memories.

Z: I also feel immense guilt for endangering my family's life in Afghanistan by interpreting for the U.S. government. The Taliban made me aware my life was in danger. My concerns are now especially high because I am safe, and my family might not be safe. I will reach out to my mental health case worker provider.

Christina: How are you doing today, Zohra?

Z: [sobbing] I have been here for four months and still don't know what to do. My family is in Afghanistan. I also feel so selfish for coming to the U.S. when my son is not here. I don't want anything for myself at the moment. I don't want the safety when my family is in danger. Even if I could have the whole world, I don't want it. I only want my son and my family with me.

C: I'm so sorry to hear you're going through this. I understand these are very difficult times.

N: The conversation continues for another 30 minutes. Christina suggests that Zohra use a telehealth app to access support more regularly. Meeting in person with a mental health professional is difficult with Zohra's work schedule.

Z: I don't know how it works. How am I supposed to join the checking online?

C: I can help you with that. First, you need to download the telehealth app to your phone. Then create a login and password. I will send you a link by text and email before our appointment. Once you have the app downloaded, all you need to do is click on the link and we will be connected. You may also use your laptop to join our meetings if you prefer.

Z: That's great. It will be super helpful to talk to you more often. Thank you.

C: Zohra, I would like to reshare this list of emergency contacts in case you call me when I don't have my phone or I'm not available. Please save these numbers to your phone for safety reasons. You can call, text, or visit the Lifeline website anytime free of charge. Call this hotline if you are experiencing thoughts of self-harm anytime, day or night.

N: Christina offers a list of resources including the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline 988.

Z: I took a picture and saved the numbers to my contact list. Thank you. I didn't know these resources exist on demand. I thought the only way to talk to someone is if I can make an appointment. These are free? Do I need to have insurance to call them?

C: These resources are completely free of charge. You can access these resources without insurance.

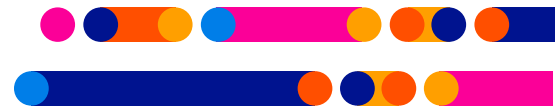
Z: That's amazing. I'll share it with my roommates and other Afghan ladies in my neighborhoods too.

Reflection

Poll Question

How does Zohra's use of technology effectively support her with her concerns around self-harm?

JH: Okay. As always, we do have a Slido question for you. If you could pull out your phone and use your camera to scan the QR code or you may join us at slido.com and use the number below—the 247-4949 number. We'll



pause for just a moment to give you some time to participate in the poll, and you can engage by using the QR code or slido.com. Again, the question is how does Zohra's use of technology effectively support her with her concerns around self-harm?

We have some responses coming in. Coordination with resources. Is the access 24/7? Better timing for her schedule. Provides accessible, free, professional mental health. Provides on-demand support for crisis moments. Gives her someone to speak to so she doesn't feel isolated. Connects with professionals. Easy access. Support. Accessibility. Access. All correct. Telehealth consultation. Free of charge. Access to resources. Yes. She can call anytime from anywhere to seek help. Make an appointment online. Makes it easy for the client to connect with a therapist. Less isolation. Accessibility. Immediate access to help in a crisis. Easier access to a mental health counselor. Excellent. All amazing answers.

A great conversation starter with this overlap with mental health and digital inclusion. These are all good responses. Free mental health can be advised with online services. Improves her access to telehealth and health care services and resources. Awesome. All, again, amazing. A couple more, and then we'll move on. Useful for her and other refugee clients who are in touch with Zohra. Correct. Providing resources. Free services. Doctors willing to help her online and services is a good option for which she is very happy as she noticed. Yes, for sure.

Action Steps and Recommended Resources

JH: Let's go on to some possible action steps. Assisting and registering with and creating logins and passwords for downloaded telehealth apps is very important. Emphasizing the benefits and the ease of telehealth, providing emergency contacts, hotlines, and chat forums to reach out when ideating about self-harm. Some good steps at the conclusion of this session that you can potentially take.

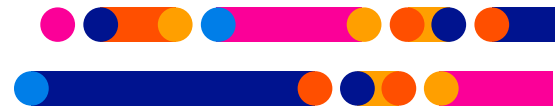
Some recommended resources—some touch points for this. As we've emphasized in the past, it's worth talking, as we remind ourselves of these resources and beginning conversations again, about this overlap with mental health and digital inclusion. Telehealth apps: they can overcome barriers like distance to the provider, shortages, connecting patients with remote health care professionals, and also language-specific Dari- and Pashto-speaking therapists often have very limited access. That's something to keep in mind. Also, they're more convenient, timely, efficient, and increase the probability of continuing care. There's the cost-saving variable that's associated with that time away from work that you wouldn't need if you participate in a telehealth app or those types of things.

The second recommended resource here is the 988 Lifeline Chat and Text. It can connect one with caring crisis counselors for emotional support 24/7. Those two touch points are our recommended resources and will be sent out to you within 24 hours, hopefully, of this session.

Learning Objectives

JH: Learning objectives today were two-fold. Now you're able to recognize common mental health concerns that Afghan families encounter at different stages of their resettlement journey. Secondly, you can identify ways to integrate technological tools and resources in supporting Afghan newcomers seeking mental, social, and emotional health services.

If you have a question or you'd like to take a moment and pause about a potential question, now is a great time to do that. As always, we will respond to some of these. If you think of them later and you'd like to email me— I have gotten a few emails— at julie.heller@rescue.org, that's 100% fine as well, if it's more specific. If you'd like to drop a question into the Q&A app, you absolutely can, and we will address those. You're more than welcome to drop them in, and I will obviously get back. Megan and I are both pretty good about addressing those emails after the sessions.



We did have a question. April, who's great, thank you so much for all of your questions. She continues to throw some in here. "How do we overcome their belief in talking to family only?" One of the great resources that we had prior is those online resources—those Facebook communities. That's a really great assistance that I think once they see their family and community members that are encouraging them and supporting them in online groups, that's one of the great ways. We'll follow up with some other suggestions as well in a personal email, April.

Conclusion

Feedback Survey

JH: Okay, let's go on to giving a little bit of feedback if you wouldn't mind. We do have one more here for you. If you can help us help you, we do have five questions. It takes about 60 seconds. If you wouldn't mind scanning the QR code and giving us some feedback and letting us know how we're doing. I'm going to pause just a moment and let you do that before we wrap up.

Stay Connected

JH: I am going to let you finish that on your own. Hopefully, you had enough time to do that. Thank you again for joining us today. Next week is the conclusion of Zohra as she continues her resettlement journey. She has concerns around trauma. We will look at those concerns and how digital inclusion overlaps. It will be the conclusion of this entire series.

I appreciate seeing you for each and every one of these, or only one or two as your schedule's allowed. I hope you have a really great week and hope to see you back next Monday at 12:30 ET. Take care.

Part 6 of 6

July 22, 2024, 12:30 – 12:45 PM ET

Introduction

Julie Heller: Hello, everyone. Thanks for joining us. Welcome to today's final micro-learning session that focuses on mental health concerns, and where digital inclusion overlaps for support and resources.

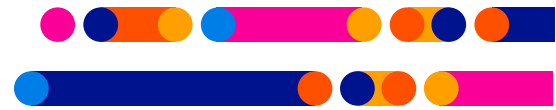
Today's Speakers

JH: I'm the facilitator, Julie Heller, Program Manager for Digital Inclusion. Freschta Naseri from Afghanistan is the subject matter expert with lived experience, and Megan Rafferty is the Training Officer for Mental Health and Wellness. Welcome.

Today, we are going to conclude a six-session microlearning series. Again, thank you for joining us for the last few months, and if today is your very first day, welcome. Each day we have followed an animated character that is based on real-life cases and recognizing a different mental health concern through their resettlement journey. This is always followed by recommended resources.

Learning Objectives

JH: This presentation introduces technology as a complimentary mental health service and focuses on tech that has realistic accessibility rates in the realm of resettlement. Today's area of concern is the focus of



trauma, and we have a twofold learning objective. By the end of this session, you will be able to, first of all, recognize common mental health concerns Afghan families face at different stages of their resettlement journey, and secondly, identify ways to integrate technological tools and resources in supporting Afghan newcomers seeking mental, social, and emotional health services.

Last week we met Zohra, and today we will continue on her resettlement journey. We will watch a five-minute animation of her as she continues. Her concerns this week will center around post-traumatic stress, and she will look for ways to cope using technology. Any questions as always can be submitted in the Q&A box, and will be discussed afterwards, and recommended resources will follow. We will email any responses if a question did not get the time today.

Animated Video: Zohra

Narrator: This animation depicts how new technologies can support Afghan newcomers in addressing the mental health concerns they may experience during their resettlement journey. Zohra, a 29-year-old Pashtun mother, continues her resettlement journey one year later, still without her son. Zohra now works a full-time job, takes ESL classes at her local community college, and is looking for a second part-time job to be able to support her family in Afghanistan.

She needs to pay for their immigration case fees and save up for when they arrive in the US. Zohra is looking through her bills. She is specifically concerned about the way she wants to support her family financially. Zohra's thinking begins to spiral out of her control. One minor inconvenience can trigger feelings of catastrophic dread. Just the sight of children on a playground reminds Zohra of when she fled Afghanistan. She often experiences flashbacks, reliving traumatic moments in her life as though they were happening now.

Zohra's Mother: [foreign language]

N: The drive to the airport was filled with fear. The Taliban could have appeared from anywhere at any moment to stop Zohra. Zohra remembers leaving her home that day very vividly. Sometimes, the memory shows up in nightmares. Zohra meets with Christina once a week now. In one of her office visits, Christina introduces Zohra to virtual reality VR therapy with a VR headset, which uses motion-sensitive technology to reflect a user's movements in the onscreen images. Clients can practice navigating unfamiliar situations in a low-stress environment.

Christina: How have you been this week, Zohra?

Zohra: I try to relax, but as you know, my mind is wrestling between past and present. My family is not here. I need to find a second job, but I am so busy with appointments, work, and English class.

C: Are you ready to try the VR headset? Where do you want to visit today?

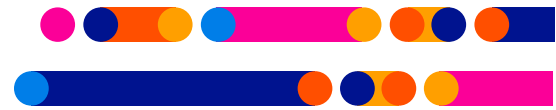
Z: Somewhere peaceful in nature, maybe a forest.

C: Got it. Let me prepare the video for you. Please take a seat.

N: We join Zohra's immersive experience by listening in to the natural calming sounds of the forest.

C: Let's finish with a deep breath in through your nose. Hold for a few seconds, then breathe out through your mouth. Let's repeat this multiple times.

Z: Thank you so much, Christina. This is so helpful. When I am in the headset, I don't get distracted by my thoughts. I feel present. It helps me to clear my mind.



C: I'm so glad that you find this helpful. Even though you don't have a VR headset at home, you can use these visualizations and breathing practices anytime to help you relax when you're feeling stressed.

N: At their weekly check-ins, Christina provides Zohra VR simulations of new environments combined with breathing exercises. These help Zohra relax her mind and reduce overthinking and stress. Be sure to check out switchboardta.org and visit the many resource links like the Virtual Reality and Resettlement toolkit.

Reflection

Poll Question

How does Zohra's use of technology effectively support her with concerns around post-traumatic stress?

JH: Okay. We do have a Slido question for you. If you would pull out your phone and use your camera, capture the QR code or you can join us @slido.com and use the number 247-4949 and engage by answering the question.

Again, we'll pause for just a few moments to give you time to engage with that question. It is, "How does Zohra's use of technology effectively support her with concerns around post-traumatic stress?"

We've got some really good answers coming in, a couple of people, "Definitely helped calm her mind to breathe, to feel safe." "A calming effect." "Help her feel safe." "Feel safe and calm." All right. All correct. "Helped her to imagine a calm place." "The VR program allowed her to find moments of peace and calm." Again, a lot of these answers centering around feeling safe and calm, which are all right on the mark. "Calming and centered." "Helped to clear her mind." "She disconnected from bad feelings and thoughts."

All wonderful answers. "She uses technology well and effectively." "Helps her to relax." "Sometimes can be a bit superficial, but temporary relief." For sure, it's a temporarily good thing to do. If she can practice those and keep at them maybe it can have some longer-term effects. "Calming." "Feeling safe." All good answers. "Feel safe and calm." "Calming." A couple more people are still typing. We'll give them just a moment. "Helps clear her mind." "To calm her nerves and overthinking." Wonderful. What great answers.

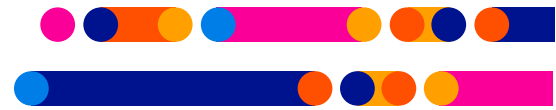
Again, this is a beginning conversation around some of these new steps or remembering some of these steps or providing resources that are out there that maybe aren't being utilized to their capacity. VR is a really great way to begin that conversation. "Technology showed how visualization can out bring a calming effect." Yes. "Her case manager has a way of talking to her that was effective." "Just for a few minutes, she can forget some bad memories." For sure. "When she uses the VR, she forgets her past." Really great answers.

Thank you if you participated in our Slido.

Action Steps and Recommended Resources

JH: There are some really great action steps that you can take. Potential steps, you can encourage the use of virtual reality VR headsets, which can simulate those immersive environments. Again, public libraries are always a great way to discover some free technological resources. We've just mentioned this in the last part, you can submit a technical assistance to request Switchboard for VR support specifically. Those are all really great steps.

There are also some good touch points for some recommended resources. Again, Switchboard provides free personalized technical assistance for eligible newcomers. Our services go beyond just VR, but there are things like consultation calls, webinars, workshops, in person training, data and research. There's a lot there, so



please make sure you visit switchboard.org for a little bit more information, and you can always, of course, submit a TA request.

The toolkit developed by Switchboard offers refugee service providers an introduction to VR. If you are new to this, this is a great opportunity, and it's in the context of resettlement and integration programming. Through this guide, users can learn promising practices for integrating VR as a training tool and programs that support refugees and other newcomers. Future Switchboard resources will provide more detail about technical training processes of using VR. There are many apps, Innerworld is also an app that comes to mind where clients are fully immersed in virtual worlds, and you can learn evidence-based mental health tools and receive support where clients can feel safe.

Again, just a quick reminder about telehealth teletherapy, during VR therapy, the therapist has the ability to monitor and control what the client is seeing, and people can use VR for self-help, or therapists may suggest VR for more along the lines for homework between sessions. That's a great way too. This is also wonderful, helping make VR therapy more accessible is the Society for Virtual Reality Therapy, svrt.org. Some great recommended resources there for you if you'd like.

Learning Objectives

JH: There are some learning objectives we'd like to cover. Now you should be able to do the following two things. First, recognize common mental health concerns Afghan families encounter at different stages of their resettlement journey, and identify ways to integrate technological tools and resources supporting Afghan newcomers seeking mental, social, and emotional health services.

Conclusion

Feedback Survey

JH: If you want to pause for just a few seconds and scan the QR code, there are 5 questions, 60 seconds you can help us improve. There's also a Q&A if you'd like to drop that. We usually do a Q&A, so if you'd like to drop that in the chat, we can do that, or you can also email me at julie.heller@rescue.org. Again, julie.heller@rescue.org, if you'd like to ask a question and receive more personalized feedback. Again, we'll pause to allow you to scan the QR code, address the five questions, and help us improve these types of microlearning trainings.

Stay Connected

JH: Thank you for joining us. This concludes our micro-learning session. We appreciate you participating. Again, there's the Q&A. If you want to put something into that, we will address that at some point, either through a personalized email or if you have a quick typing, you can get it in now. Thank you for joining us. This concludes our micro-learning series around the overlap of mental health and digital inclusion. Please reach out if you'd like personal support or technical assistance through the Switchboard website. Again, thank you for joining us. It's been a pleasure. I hope you have a really super week.

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