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# EMMW

## Self-control

# Emotional Management for Migrant Women

## INDEPCIE

## SPAIN



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# 1. Introduction to Topic & Subtopics

## 1.1. Background

The vast majority of experts consulted in all the Focus Groups highlight the importance of developing self-control to improve the mental and psychological situation of people who have emigrated from their country, going through a myriad of traumas and adaptation problems in the country of arrival, with the situation of women, in particular, standing out.

Self-control is a crucial factor for success and well-being in all areas of life, including for migrant women. Self-control can be defined as the ability to regulate one's thoughts, emotions, and behaviours in order to achieve long-term goals and adapt to changing circumstances.

Migrant women face a variety of challenges, including social isolation, discrimination, and cultural adjustment, which can make it difficult to maintain self-control. However, it is essential for them for several reasons.

First, self-control allows migrant women to manage the stress and anxiety that often accompany the challenges of migration. Due to the discomfort associated with cultural stress, social exclusion, and intergenerational conflicts, in addition to PTSD and other psychological disorders, immigration-related stresses can increase the likelihood of suicidal ideation and behaviour.

Second, emotional management, stress management, and the development of self-control can significantly contribute to migrant women's adaptation process. By regulating their emotions and behaviours, they can avoid making impulsive decisions that could have negative consequences for their physical and mental health.

Third, self-control enables migrant women to pursue their long-term goals despite obstacles. This group of people often face significant barriers to education, employment, and social integration, but self-control can help them stay focused and persistent in the face of these challenges.

Fourth, self-control is essential for building positive relationships with others. Migrant women often experience social isolation and discrimination, but by practising self-control, they can maintain positive interactions with others, build trust, and establish supportive networks.

Finally, self-control is essential for making informed decisions about important issues, such as health care, education, and legal matters. By regulating their thoughts and behaviours, migrant women can make thoughtful, informed decisions that reflect their values and priorities.

In summary, self-control is a critical factor for the success and well-being of migrant women. By practising self-control, migrant women can better manage stress, pursue their long-term goals, build positive relationships, and make informed decisions.

Obviously, the same rules cannot help everyone; therefore, each individual requires a unique strategy. For that, the most important step in acquiring these skills is to seek assistance from professionals who can show support by demonstrating the correct steps.

## 1.2. Definition of Self-Control

Self-control can be defined as the conscious ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behavior in the face of temptations and impulses<sup>1</sup>. A person with self-control can manage his or her emotions and regulate his or her behaviour.

On the other hand, self-control is a tool that allows a person, in moments of crisis, to distinguish between what is most important (what will last) and what is not so relevant (what is passing).

When a person is careful about what he/she says or does, it is because he/she is controlling him/herself; this is when self-control makes sense. Self-control could be defined as a quality, virtue or capacity that human beings have to regulate their impulses: this action is their choice, not because someone else has asked or demanded it. When it is given voluntarily, it means that the person is aware of what they are doing and decides on their own to act in this way.

The immediate purpose of a subject moderating his actions is directly linked to having harmonious relations with the rest of society. If a person acts in a wrong way towards another person, the latter will judge and evaluate this behaviour negatively. In addition to pursuing self-benefit, a person with self-control may be able to measure not only his or her behaviour but also his or her feelings.

We have selected the following topics related to self-control or emotional management, which we believe may be the most necessary for our target group at the moment. In this theoretical module we will touch upon:

- **Refugees' and Asylum Seekers' Emotions**

Refugees and asylum seekers often experience a wide range of intense emotions, such as fear, anxiety, stress, and sadness, due to the traumatic events and difficult circumstances that they have experienced. These emotions can have a significant impact on their self-control.

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<sup>1</sup> DeLisi, M. (2014). Low self-control is a brain-based disorder. The Nurture Versus Biosocial Debate in Criminology: On the Origins of Criminal Behavior and Criminality, 172-183

On one hand, intense emotions can impair refugees' and asylum seekers' ability to regulate their thoughts and behaviours, which can lead to impulsive actions that may have negative consequences. For example, refugees and asylum seekers who are experiencing high levels of anxiety or stress may struggle to make informed decisions or may act impulsively in response to perceived threats.

On the other hand, self-control can be a critical tool for managing emotions and coping with the challenges of migration. Refugees and asylum seekers who are able to regulate their emotions and behaviours may be better equipped to cope with the stress and uncertainty of their situation, make informed decisions, and build positive relationships with others.

Furthermore, the experience of seeking asylum or refugee status can involve significant delays, uncertainty, and bureaucracy, which can be emotionally taxing for individuals. Maintaining self-control in these situations can help individuals navigate these challenges and stay focused on their long-term goals.

In summary, there is a complex relationship between refugees' and asylum seekers' emotions and self-control. While intense emotions can make it challenging to regulate one's behaviour and make informed decisions, self-control can also be a critical tool for managing emotions and coping with the challenges of migration. Developing self-control skills can therefore be an important aspect of supporting the well-being and success of refugees and asylum seekers.

Therefore, it is important for social workers working with this group to develop their own self-management, as it helps them to effectively engage with the expertise of individuals, families, and communities themselves, described as expertise from below. This is especially true in the field of mental health where migration, and particularly forced migration, creates unique vulnerabilities for individuals, families, and communities and frequently brings people into contact with formal, often unfamiliar, systems of support<sup>2</sup>.

Hope, optimism, and resilience of refugees and migrants are linked to local language proficiency, family connectedness, opportunities to maintain and make meaning of culture and tradition, experiences of personal control and self-efficacy, and having social support. By developing their self-control, social workers can better facilitate safe and effective intercultural interactions; advance principles of social justice; enhance power and autonomy; restore individual, family, and community well-being; and integrate clinical and critical perspectives in practice.

In addition, social workers are confronted on a daily basis with a multitude of traumatic stories experienced by migrants, which may end up affecting their work and mental health. Developing self-control can help them maintain a healthy distance and avoid

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<sup>2</sup> Higgins, M. (2020). Social work with refugees and migrants. *Mental Health and Social Work*, 353-374.

being overwhelmed by the emotional toll of their work. This can help them to remain effective in their role and continue to provide support to those in need.

- **Self-Control & Frustration**

Self-control and frustration are closely related, as frustration can often lead to a breakdown in self-control. Frustration can be defined as an emotional response to a perceived obstacle or barrier that prevents an individual from achieving their goals or desires. When faced with frustration, individuals may experience a range of negative emotions such as anger, sadness, or disappointment.

In this context, self-control can refer to an individual's ability to manage their emotional responses and regulate their behaviour in the face of frustration. For example, a person who has developed strong self-control skills may be better equipped to resist the urge to lash out in anger or engage in other impulsive behaviours when faced with frustrating situations.

However, when an individual experiences prolonged or intense frustration, their self-control may start to break down. This can result in a loss of impulse control, which can lead to rash decisions or behaviours that are not in line with the individual's long-term goals or values.

Furthermore, research has shown that prolonged frustration can lead to a depletion of self-control resources<sup>3</sup>. This means that an individual who experiences a series of frustrating events may be less able to regulate their emotions and behaviours over time, which can lead to further breakdowns in self-control.

In summary, frustration and self-control are closely linked, with frustration often posing a challenge to an individual's ability to regulate their emotions and behaviours. Developing effective self-control strategies can be an important tool for managing frustration and maintaining healthy coping strategies.

- **Limiting Excessive Behaviours**

Self-control is closely related to limiting excessive behaviours such as alcohol use, gambling, or violent conduct. Excessive behaviours are often driven by impulses and cravings, which can override an individual's ability to control their behaviour and make informed decisions.

In contrast, self-control involves the ability to regulate one's thoughts and behaviours in order to achieve long-term goals and adapt to changing circumstances. By developing self-control skills, individuals can better manage their impulses and cravings and make informed decisions about their behaviour.

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<sup>3</sup> Muraven, M., & Baumeister, R. F. (2000). Self-regulation and depletion of limited resources: Does self-control resemble a muscle? *Psychological Bulletin*, 126(2), 247-259.

For example, an individual who struggles with alcohol use may be better able to limit their drinking by developing self-control strategies, such as setting limits on their alcohol consumption, avoiding triggers that lead to excessive drinking, or seeking support from others. Similarly, an individual who struggles with violent behaviour may benefit from developing self-control strategies, such as practising mindfulness or anger management techniques or seeking therapy to address underlying emotional issues.

Likewise, excessive gambling can be controlled by self-control strategies such as setting limits on gambling time and money spent, avoiding triggers that lead to excessive gambling, and seeking support from others. By developing self-control skills, individuals can better manage their impulses and cravings and make informed decisions about their behaviour.

In summary, self-control is essential for limiting excess behaviours such as alcohol use, gambling, or violent conduct. By developing self-control skills, individuals can better regulate their impulses and cravings, make informed decisions about their behaviour, and achieve their long-term goals.

- **Emotional Regulation with Migratory Grief**

The process of migration often involves significant loss and grief for individuals and their families. These losses can include the loss of loved ones, familiar surroundings, and cultural norms. The experience of migration can also be accompanied by a range of challenging emotions, such as sadness, loneliness, and homesickness.

Self-control can play an important role in regulating the experience of migratory grief. By developing self-control skills, individuals can better manage their emotional responses to the losses associated with migration and maintain a sense of agency and control over their lives. For example, an individual who has developed strong self-control skills may be better able to resist the urge to withdraw from social interactions or engage in unhealthy coping behaviours, such as substance use.

Furthermore, self-control can help individuals set and achieve goals related to adapting to their new environment. For example, an individual who has developed strong self-control skills may be better able to set realistic goals for building social connections, learning a new language, or pursuing employment opportunities.

Developing self-control skills can also help individuals to maintain a sense of perspective and focus on the long-term benefits of migration, despite the immediate challenges and losses they may be experiencing. By practising self-control, individuals can better manage the emotional impact of migratory grief and maintain a sense of hope for the future.

In summary, self-control can play a critical role in regulating the experience of migratory grief. By developing self-control skills, individuals can better manage their emotions, set

and achieve goals related to adapting to their new environment, and maintain a sense of perspective and hope for the future.

### 1.3. Different Cultural Perspectives on the Topic

Some studies<sup>4</sup> suggest that collectivist cultures, with high conservation values, seek not to alter the harmony of the group, so they use coping mechanisms that favour self-control and restrict emotional expressions. It has thus been verified that individualistic cultures have greater subjective well-being and collectivist cultures have greater psychological well-being. According to Lu and Gilmour<sup>5</sup>, the tendency towards collectivism poses risks for the development and maintenance of subjective well-being, as it confronts the individual with collective norms and demands that restrict the options for enjoyment, the satisfaction of psychological needs and the development of personal goals. Meanwhile, the coping styles of a collectivist culture protect interpersonal relationships and promote adaptation to contextual roles, which means that these societies have better levels of eudaimonic well-being than hedonic well-being.

There are many cultural values that can affect people's self-control or emotional control. Some of the most common include:

1. **Individualism vs. collectivism**: Cultures that value independence and autonomy, such as Western cultures, may emphasise individual emotional expression and self-control. Whereas, cultures that value harmony and interdependence, such as Asian cultures, may emphasise suppression of emotions and collective self-control.
2. **Hierarchy and authority**: Cultures that value hierarchy and authority may emphasise the importance of emotional self-control in maintaining social stability and the relationship with authority.
3. **Gender**: Cultures that have traditional gender roles may emphasise the importance of emotional self-control for men, while emotional expressions are allowed or even expected from women.
4. **Religion**: Religious beliefs may emphasise the importance of emotional self-control as part of the spiritual path and discipline.
5. **Education**: Cultures that value education and discipline may emphasise the importance of emotional self-control as part of personal development and success.

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<sup>4</sup> Nicely, S. (2019). Variations in Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultural Orientation and the Protective Factors that Contribute to Resilience: Comparisons from Jamaica, Rwanda, and the United States.

<sup>5</sup> Lu, L. & Gilmour, R. (2006), Individual-oriented and socially oriented cultural conceptions of subjective well-being: Conceptual analysis and scale development. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 9(1), 36-49.

In short, cultural values can have a great impact on emotional self-control and the expression of emotions in different social contexts. It is important to recognise and understand these cultural values in order to develop effective emotional self-management skills in different cultural situations.

The concept of self-control may be understood differently in different cultures. Here are some examples of how some cultures may understand the concept of self-control:

**Eastern cultures:** In many Eastern cultures, such as Japanese, Chinese and Korean cultures, self-control and moderation in the expression of emotions is valued. The idea of "controlling" emotions is considered a virtue and a way to maintain social harmony. Meditation and mindfulness are often used to develop emotional self-control.

**Western cultures:** In Western cultures, such as American and European cultures, self-control can be understood as a way of resisting temptation and impulsivity. The ability to control impulses and postpone gratification in order to achieve long-term goals is valued.

**African cultures:** In some African cultures, self-control is valued as a way of respecting others and maintaining social harmony. Patience and moderation in expressing emotions are considered important virtues.

**Arab cultures:** In Arab cultures, self-control is valued as a way of maintaining dignity and honour. Excessive expression of emotions is considered a sign of weakness and can be seen as a challenge to authority.

It is important to remember that these are just a few examples of how some cultures may understand the concept of self-control. In each culture, self-control may be understood differently according to cultural beliefs, values and practices.

To improve self-control by considering cultural values, the following tips can be followed:

**Recognise cultural values:** it is important to understand one's own and others' cultural values in order to develop effective emotional self-control skills. This involves learning about the culture and how they relate to emotional expression and self-control.

**Practising empathy:** Emotional self-management also involves empathising with others and understanding how they feel. Empathy can help avoid emotional reactions and allow people to take a more objective and calm perspective.

**Seek help in the community:** In some cultures, people are expected to seek help in the community to manage their emotions. This may include guidance from a religious leader, mentor or family member.

**Develop meditation skills:** Meditation and mindfulness are techniques that can help improve emotional self-management. These practices can be particularly effective in cultures that value contemplation and introspection.

**Focus on problem-solving:** In some cultures, problem-solving is emphasised as a means of controlling emotions. This involves identifying and addressing the underlying causes of the emotion in order to find an effective solution.

In general, to improve emotional self-management in consideration of cultural values, it is important to understand and respect cultural norms and to adapt self-management techniques to cultural expectations and practices.

## 1.4. Gender Perspective

The gender perspective on self-control refers to how a person's gender can influence their ability to regulate their emotions and behaviours. There are some gender differences in the way people experience and express emotions, as well as in their ability to control them.

Some studies<sup>6</sup> suggest that women may have a greater ability to regulate their emotions and express them appropriately in social situations, while men may be more likely to express emotions impulsively or aggressively. However, these findings are not universal and may vary according to cultural and social context.

In addition, gender expectations and social norms may influence how men and women are expected to control their emotions. For example, in some cultures, men are expected to be more reserved and less emotional than women, which can make it difficult for men to express their feelings and regulate their emotions effectively.

Overall, the gender perspective on self-management suggests that it is important to consider how gender can influence the way people experience, express and control their emotions. Work must be done to overcome gender stereotypes and cultural expectations that may limit people's ability to express and regulate their emotions effectively.

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<sup>6</sup> Brody, L. (1999). Gender, Emotion, and the Family

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## 2. Refugees and Asylum Seekers' Emotions

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### 2.1. Background

Refugees and asylum seekers often experience a wide range of emotions related to their situation of forced displacement. These can include anxiety, fear, sadness, anger, shame, guilt and loneliness, among other emotions.

Traumatic experiences, such as war, violence and persecution can have a significant impact on the mental health of refugees and asylum seekers. In addition, the asylum-seeking process itself can be an emotionally draining and stressful process, which can lead to anxiety and depression.

It is important to bear in mind that emotions and the way they are expressed can be influenced by cultural and social factors. Refugees and asylum seekers may have different ways of expressing and regulating their emotions depending on their culture of origin.

It is therefore important for mental health providers and social workers working with refugees and asylum seekers to have an understanding of the cultural background and migration experience of their patients. This will enable them to provide culturally sensitive and culturally appropriate care that takes into account the emotional and mental health needs of refugees and asylum seekers.

According to the data collected by the consortium in the self-assessment of PR1, the workers surveyed achieved only 63.8% of the questions on self-monitoring, which makes it clear that there is room for improvement, especially in cases such as Greece and Belgium, where they only achieved 35% and 40% respectively.

### 2.2. Target Group and the Goal of the Activity

The target group of the activity is any professionals working with migrant women such as:

- Translators
- Humanitarian aid workers
- Public health specialists
- NGO workers and volunteers
- Teachers
- Child protection workers
- Mental health workers (psychologists, psychiatrists)
- Workers in camps and shelters
- Coaches

The activity aims to:

- **Identify different emotions:** Participants will be able to identify and label different emotions they experience, allowing them to become more emotionally aware.
- **Differentiate levels of emotional intensity:** The activity allows them to differentiate between intense and less intense emotions, which helps participants understand how emotions affect their ability to regulate their behaviour and thinking.
- **Develop self-management strategies:** Participants can work together to develop strategies to help them move their emotions from red or yellow to green, allowing them to practise and develop self-management skills.
- **Promote communication and collaboration:** The activity encourages communication and collaboration among participants, which can help build relationships and support networks in the group.
- **Foster resilience:** The activity can help participants develop resilience and the ability to cope with stressful and emotionally challenging situations.

## 2.3 Learning Outcomes of the Activity

The objective of this activity is that participants can develop empathy and a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by displaced individuals, fostering a more inclusive environment. They can also enhance cultural sensitivity by learning about different cultural contexts and values. These activities promote emotional intelligence, as participants gain skills in identifying and managing emotions and responding to the emotional needs of others.

Communication and listening skills improve, enabling effective support and trust building. Participants become aware of trauma and learn trauma-informed care approaches. They may also become advocates, supporting social justice and inclusive policies. Lastly, activities prompt self-reflection and personal growth, fostering empathy and personal development. Overall, these activities cultivate empathy, cultural sensitivity, emotional intelligence, advocacy, and personal growth, creating a more compassionate environment for refugees and asylum seekers.

## 2.4. Description of the Activity

### Name of the Activity/Practice/Tool

*"The traffic light of emotions".*

**Description:** This activity involves creating a traffic light with three colours: red, yellow and green. The facilitator should explain that the traffic light represents different emotions and levels of emotional control. Participants should identify different situations and emotions they experience and place them at the traffic light accordingly.

**Red:** Represents intense and uncontrolled emotions, such as anger, fear or

overwhelming sadness.

Yellow: Represents less intense emotions, such as anxiety, worry or frustration.

Green: Represents positive and calm emotions, such as happiness, calmness and contentment.

Once participants have identified different situations and emotions, they can work together to develop strategies to move their emotions from red or yellow to green, such as breathing techniques or mindfulness.

It is important to note that this dynamic should be done with care and sensitivity, as some emotions may be closely related to traumatic experiences and it may be necessary to work with a trained mental health professional to address these emotions effectively.

### Operational Needs/Logistics

- Both online and onsite
- One trainer with or without co-trainer
- Groups of three/four (one interviewer, one interviewee, one/two observers)
- Notepads and pens
- Presentation (Powerpoint or Flipchart)

### The Procedure of the Activity

N.	Activity	Details	Duration
1	Welcome	Introduction of the Project EMMW	15 min.
		The Outline of the Activity (Subtopic 1)	
		Session Agreement & Consent	
		Introduction of the participants	
		Expectations	
2	Icebreaker/ Warm-up Activity	<b>"Two facts game"</b> : Each person shares two facts about themselves, one of which is true and one of which is false. The others have to guess which is the true fact.	10 min.
3	Introduction	Explanation of the activity	5 min.

4	Step 1	Identification of different situations and emotions	10 min.
5	Coffee Break		
6	Step 2	To develop strategies to move their emotions from red or yellow to green. Some techniques for this may include the following, but there are also others: - Awareness of emotions - Conscious breathing - Mindfulness - Identifying triggers - Changing perspective - Seeking social support	15 min.
7	Step 3	Participants make their strategies public	10 min.
8	Open Discussion	Open debate about results	5 min.
9	Evaluation of the activity		5 min.

## 2.5. Bibliography

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## 3. Self-Control & Frustration

### 3.1. Background

Self-control and frustration are closely related, as the ability to control our emotions and thoughts can help us to better handle frustration and other negative emotions.

When we experience frustration, we often feel overwhelmed and out of control. If we do not have strong self-control skills, we may act impulsively, say hurtful things, or make rash decisions that can worsen the situation.

On the other hand, if we have self-control skills, we can recognise and accept frustration, and take steps to manage it effectively. We can take time to calm down and reflect, or use problem-solving strategies to address the situation that is causing the frustration.

In addition, the ability to regulate our emotions and thoughts can also help us prevent frustration in the first place. If we can recognise and control the negative thoughts contributing to frustration, we can prevent their occurrence or reduce their intensity.

In short, self-control and frustration are closely related, and developing strong self-control skills can help us to better manage frustration and other negative emotions.

Frustration can have a significant impact on a social worker who works with immigrants due to the complex and challenging nature of this work. Here is some key information on how frustration can influence a social worker and how self-control can help in managing it.

In the case of social workers working with immigrant populations, they are often exposed to difficult stories and situations. They may encounter individuals who have experienced trauma, abuse, or extreme hardships in their home countries or during the migration process. Constant exposure to distressing situations can lead to accumulated stress and emotional exhaustion, which in turn can generate frustration.

Additionally, social workers dealing with immigrants often face bureaucratic and structural obstacles that hinder their ability to provide effective help. These obstacles may include restrictive immigration policies, language barriers, lack of resources, and inadequate support. The inability to overcome these barriers can generate frustration and feelings of helplessness.

Despite the efforts and dedication of social workers, they may encounter limitations in their ability to achieve significant changes in the lives of immigrants. Legal restrictions, economic constraints, and other factors can restrict available options and hinder the attainment of tangible outcomes. The lack of progress can lead to frustration and a sense that their work is not making the desired impact.

Self-control plays a crucial role in managing frustration. It enables social workers to recognize and regulate their own emotions in frustrating situations. This involves maintaining composure, avoiding impulsive reactions, and responding in a professional and empathetic manner. Self-control helps maintain a balanced and focused attitude, facilitating rational decision-making and the management of difficult situations.

Moreover, self-control helps social workers maintain empathy and understanding toward immigrants despite their challenges and frustrations. It reminds them that each individual has a unique and complex story and that difficulties may be beyond their control. Self-control prevents frustration from translating into negative judgments or insensitivity towards the individuals being served.

Self-control is also related to self-care and resilience. Social workers working with immigrants can experience high levels of stress and burnout. Self-control allows them to establish healthy boundaries, seek support, and practice self-care to prevent the accumulation of frustration and emotional exhaustion.

In conclusion, frustration can be a common experience for social workers dedicated to assisting immigrants. However, self-control plays a fundamental role in their ability to manage and overcome these challenging situations. By maintaining composure, regulating emotions, and preserving empathy, social workers can confront challenges with greater resilience and effectiveness. Furthermore, self-control enables them to take care of themselves and avoid emotional exhaustion.

### **3.2. Target Group and the Goal of the Activity**

The target group of the activity is any professionals working with migrant women such as:

- Translators
- Humanitarian aid workers
- Public health specialists
- NGO workers and volunteers
- Teachers
- Child protection workers
- Mental health workers (psychologists, psychiatrists)
- Workers in camps and shelters
- Coaches

The activity aims to:

- Encourage and improve one's self-management
- Identify and challenge one's negative thoughts
- Learn to control one's emotional response to frustration

### 3.3 Learning Outcomes of the Activity

The objectives of this activity are to encourage and improve self-management of frustration. Participants can learn to identify and challenge their negative thoughts, develop relaxation and problem-solving skills, and learn to control their emotional response to frustration. These outcomes can help participants improve their emotional well-being, their ability to manage stressful situations and their ability to maintain healthy relationships with others.

In addition, these skills can be especially important for migrants and refugees, who often face stressful and frustrating situations related to their migration status, and may have difficulty accessing mental health services, as well as for social workers, who also face daily frustration at the difficulty or inability to improve the situation of the migrant group, either due to emotional exhaustion or structural obstacles, thus obtaining limited results that lead to the feeling that their work is not having the desired impact.. By improving their self-management of frustration, they may be better able to adapt to their new life and cope with the challenges they face.

### 3.4. Description of the Activity

#### Name of the Activity/Practice/Tool

*“The Adviser”*

**Description:** The activity is a role play where participants are asked to split up into pairs in which one of them acts as a person experiencing frustration, while the other person acts as a friend or counsellor. The person experiencing frustration should describe the situation causing it and how they feel about it.

The friend or counsellor should practise active listening, paying attention to the feelings and thoughts of the person experiencing frustration, without judging or interrupting them.

Once the person experiencing frustration has expressed their feelings, the pair should work together to identify solutions and strategies to address the situation that is causing the frustration.

During the process, self-management skills, such as deep breathing, meditation or visualising a calm and relaxing situation, can be taught and practised.

At the end of the activity, participants can be asked to reflect on what they learned and how they can apply these skills in future situations that may cause frustration.

## Operational Needs/Logistics

- Both online and onsite
- One trainer with or without co-trainer
- Groups of three/four (one interviewer, one interviewee, one/two observers)
- Notepads and pens
- Presentation (Powerpoint or Flipchart)

## The Procedure of the Activity

N.	Activity	Details	Duration
1	Welcome	Introduction of the Project EMMW	15 min.
		The Outline of the Activity (Subtopic 2)	
		Session Agreement & Consent	
		Introduction of the participants	
		Expectations	
2	Icebreaker/ Warm-up Activity	<b>"Quick questions"</b> : Each person has 30 seconds to answer a specific question about themselves. Then, they move on to the next participant and ask a new question.	10 min.
3	Introduction	Explanation of the activity	5 min.
4	Step 1	The person experiencing frustration has to express his/her feelings, the pair should work together to identify solutions and strategies to address the situation that is causing the frustration.	20 min.
5	Coffee Break		

6	Step 2	Participants make their strategies public	10 min.
7	Open Discussion	Open debate about results	5 min.
		Debriefing and the learning outcomes of the activity	5 min.
8	Evaluation of the activity		5 min.

### 3.5. Bibliography

- Baumeister, R. F., Vohs, K. D., & Tice, D. M. (2007). The strength model of self-control. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 16(6), 351-355. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8721.2007.00534.x>
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## 4. Limiting Excessive Behaviours

### 4.1. Background

Research<sup>7</sup> has shown that people who have good self-control tend to be more successful in many aspects of life, such as having healthy interpersonal relationships, achieving personal and professional goals, and having better mental and physical health.

However, to maintain a good level of self-control, it is essential to limit excesses that can distract us or weaken our ability to make conscious and responsible decisions. It should be made clear that most of these behaviours are addictions, which most people need professional and ongoing support to change. Self-control alone is not enough to change these behaviours when addiction is involved, but it is a useful and necessary tool to combat impulses and therefore to overcome these addictive behaviours.

Limiting these excesses can not only improve our capacity for self-control but can also help us avoid negative consequences for our physical and mental health. Therefore, it is important to set limits and practice self-control in order to maintain a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

### 4.2. Target Group and the Goal of the Activity

The target group of the activity is any professionals working with migrant women such as:

- Translators
- Humanitarian aid workers
- Public health specialists
- NGO workers and volunteers
- Teachers
- Child protection workers
- Mental health workers (psychologists, psychiatrists)
- Workers in camps and shelters
- Coaches

The activity aims to:

- Improve self-control and personal well-being
- Develop problem-solving skills
- Increase one's sense of control and self-confidence

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<sup>7</sup> Bermúdez, J. P. (2020). The skill of self-control.

## 4.3 Learning Outcomes of the Activity

Engaging in the activity of creating a personal action plan holds several valuable benefits for social workers. Firstly, it fosters a deeper sense of self-awareness by encouraging social workers to identify their own excesses and limitations. Through this process, they gain a clearer understanding of their stress triggers and areas where self-control is crucial. This heightened self-awareness equips social workers with the knowledge needed to recognize and address potential challenges more effectively, enhancing their ability to navigate demanding situations with composure and resilience.

Furthermore, the personal action plan facilitates the development of self-control, a vital skill for social workers to maintain their well-being and optimize their performance. By setting specific and realistic goals, they can learn strategies and techniques to regulate their behavior, manage impulses, and maintain healthy boundaries. These actions contribute to their ability to handle workloads more effectively, avoid burnout, and sustain a healthy work-life balance. By incorporating concrete actions into their daily routines, such as engaging in regular exercise, practicing self-care, and seeking support when needed, social workers experience improved overall well-being, reduced stress levels, and greater satisfaction both personally and professionally.

In addition to enhancing self-awareness and self-control, the activity of creating a personal action plan cultivates adaptability and resilience within social workers. By setting goals, tracking progress, and adjusting their strategies, they develop a capacity for adaptability in the face of changing circumstances. This adaptability, coupled with a strengthened sense of self-control, empowers social workers to overcome challenges and maintain their well-being in demanding professional environments. Ultimately, this process enables social workers to regain a sense of control over their own lives and professional development, fostering increased self-confidence, motivation, and a belief in their ability to make a positive impact in the lives of the individuals and communities they serve.

## 4.4. Description of the Activity

### Name of the Activity/Practice/Tool

*"Creating a Personal Action Plan"*

**Description:** The activity "Creating a Personal Action Plan" is designed to support social workers in improving their self-control and overall well-being. By following a structured approach to setting goals, identifying concrete actions, and tracking progress, social workers can develop essential skills to limit excesses and maintain a healthy work-life balance. This report outlines the learning outcomes that social workers can achieve through this activity, highlighting the benefits it brings to their personal and professional lives. To create the personal action plan, target group members can follow these steps:

- Identify the excesses they would like to limit: Social workers can reflect on areas where they feel they may be overextending themselves, experiencing burnout, or neglecting their own well-being. These excesses could include working long hours without breaks, neglecting personal self-care, taking on too many responsibilities, or struggling with work-life balance.
- Set specific and realistic goals related to limiting these excesses: This target should establish clear and measurable objectives that address the identified excesses. For example, they might set goals to leave the office at a designated time each day, take regular breaks during work hours, prioritize self-care activities, or delegate tasks when appropriate.
- Identify concrete actions they can take on a daily basis to achieve these goals: Participants can brainstorm actionable steps that they can incorporate into their daily routines to work towards their goals. These actions could include taking short walks during lunch breaks, scheduling regular self-care activities such as exercise or meditation, setting boundaries with clients or colleagues, or seeking support and supervision from colleagues or mentors.
- Establish a specific time and place to do these actions: Social workers should identify a specific time and place where they can consistently carry out their planned actions. This could involve scheduling activities in their calendar, creating reminders, or designating specific spaces for self-care or relaxation.
- Track progress and adjust the action plan as necessary: They should regularly evaluate their progress towards their goals and make adjustments as needed. This may involve keeping a journal, using tracking apps, or seeking feedback from supervisors or colleagues. By monitoring their progress, they can identify areas for improvement and refine their action plan accordingly.

This activity can help social workers develop stronger self-control, reduce stress, and maintain a healthy work-life balance. By actively working on limiting excesses and prioritizing their own well-being, workers may experience improved job satisfaction, increased resilience, and enhanced overall effectiveness in their role. This structured approach empowers them to regain a sense of control over their professional lives, ultimately benefiting both themselves and the individuals and communities they serve.

### **Operational Needs/Logistics**

- Both online and onsite
- One trainer with or without co-trainer
- Groups of three/four (one interviewer, one interviewee, one/two observers)
- Notepads and pens
- Presentation (Powerpoint or Flipchart)

### **The Procedure of the Activity**

N.	Activity	Details	Duration
1	Welcome	Introduction of the Project EMMW	15 min.
		The Outline of the Activity (Subtopic 3)	
		Session Agreement & Consent	
		Introduction of the participants	
		Expectations	
2	Icebreaker/ Warm-up Activity	<b>"The similarities game"</b> : Divide the group into pairs and give them a few minutes to talk and find out three things they have in common. Then, each pair shares their similarities with the rest of the group.	10 min.
3	Introduction	Explanation of the activity	5 min.
4	Step 1	Participants must Identify the excesses they would like to limit and set specific and realistic goals related to limiting these excesses.	20 min.
5	Coffee Break		
6	Step 2	Participants must identify concrete actions they can take on a daily basis to achieve these goals and establish a specific time and place to do these actions.	10 min.
7	Step 3	Participants make their strategies public. (Optional)	10 min.
8	Open Discussion	Open debate about results (Optional)	5 min.
9	Evaluation of activity		

## 4.5. Bibliography

- Hofmann, W., Friese, M., & Strack, F. (2009). Impulse and self-control from a dual-systems perspective. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 4(2), 162-176. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-6924.2009.01116.x>
- Losing control: How and why people fail at self-regulation. (1995). *Choice Reviews Online*, 32(11), 32-6508-32-6508. <https://doi.org/10.5860/choice.32-6508>
- Bermúdez, J. P. (2020). The skill of self-control. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/7wz5v>

## 5. Emotional Regulation with Migratory Grief

### 5.1. Background

Migrant bereavement is a complex emotional process that migrants and asylum seekers experience after leaving their country of origin. Emotional regulation is a key aspect of the process of adaptation and resilience during this process. Emotional regulation refers to a person's ability to manage their emotions effectively, which may include the ability to recognise, express, control and regulate emotions.

Self-management is an essential component of emotional regulation in migrant bereavement. It involves a person's ability to control his or her own actions, thoughts and emotions. During migration bereavement, migrants and asylum seekers may face a range of emotional challenges, including the loss of their home, culture and loved ones. Self-monitoring can help them remain calm and maintain perspective in these situations, which in turn can help them make informed decisions and better adapt to their new environment.

In addition, emotional regulation can also influence self-control. When a person is able to regulate their emotions effectively, they are more likely to have a greater capacity for self-control. For example, if a migrant or asylum seeker feels overwhelmed by sadness or anxiety, it may be more difficult for them to maintain self-control and make informed decisions.

One approach that social workers can use to help migrants work on emotional regulation in the context of migratory grief is through the use of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). DBT is a type of cognitive-behavioral therapy that focuses on teaching individuals skills to help them manage their emotions, improve their relationships, and increase their ability to tolerate distress<sup>8</sup>.

DBT includes four skills modules: interpersonal effectiveness, distress tolerance/reality acceptance skills, emotion regulation, and mindfulness skills. Social workers can use these modules to help migrants develop their emotional regulation skills and better cope with the challenges of migratory grief.

For example, social workers can use mindfulness exercises to help migrants become more aware of their emotions and learn to observe them without judgment. They can also teach distress tolerance skills to help migrants develop healthy coping strategies for managing difficult emotions. Interpersonal effectiveness skills can help migrants improve their relationships and communication with others, while emotion regulation skills can help them learn to manage their emotions in a healthy way.

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<sup>8</sup> Higgins, M. (2020). Social work with refugees and migrants. *Mental Health and Social Work*, 353-374.

## 5.2. Target Group and the Goal of the Activity

The target group of the activity is any professionals working with migrant women such as:

- Translators
- Humanitarian aid workers
- Public health specialists
- NGO workers and volunteers
- Teachers
- Child protection workers
- Mental health workers (psychologists, psychiatrists)
- Workers in camps and shelters
- Coaches

The activity aims to:

- Identify emotional triggers
- Develop self-management skills in bereavement situations

## 5.3 Learning Outcomes of the Activity

This exercise can have several important learning outcomes for social workers who work with migrants. By participating in this exercise, social workers can gain a deeper understanding of the different states of mind and how they affect thoughts, feelings, and actions. They can learn to recognize when they or their clients are in Emotional Mind, Rational Mind, or Wise Mind, and develop skills to help clients balance their Emotional and Rational Minds in order to achieve Wise Mind.

This exercise can also help social workers become more aware of the importance of considering both emotions and rational thinking when making decisions and managing emotions. By using the “Three States of Mind” exercise as a tool, social workers can help clients develop their emotional regulation skills and better cope with the challenges of migratory grief.

Overall, the “Three States of Mind” exercise can provide social workers with valuable insights and skills that can help them better support migrants as they work on emotional regulation. By developing their understanding of the different states of mind and learning to balance them, social workers can help their clients make effective decisions and manage their emotions in a healthy way.

## 5.4. Description of the Activity

### Name of the Activity/Practice/Tool

*"Three States of Mind"*

**Description:** This exercise helps individuals understand the different states of mind they may experience and learn to balance them in order to make effective decisions and manage their emotions.

First of all you should begin by explaining to the participants the three states of mind: **Emotional Mind, Rational Mind and Wise Mind:**

- *Emotional Mind* is when emotions control our thoughts and actions.
- *Rational Mind* is when we rely solely on logic and reason, regardless of our emotions.
- *Wise Mind* is the balance between Emotional Mind and Rational Mind, where we take into account both our emotions and rational thinking when making decisions.

Once participants have understood these concepts, ask them to think of a situation in which they have been in Emotional Mind. They can then share their experiences and discuss how being in the Emotional Mind affected their thoughts, feelings and actions.

Next, they will think of a situation where they were in Rational Mind. Again, they will share their experiences and discuss how being in the Rational Mind affected their thoughts, feelings and actions.

Finally, they will do the same with a situation where they were in the Wise Mind, discussing how being in the Wise Mind helped them to make effective decisions and manage their emotions.

To conclude the exercise, the importance of balancing the Emotional Mind and Rational Mind to achieve the Wise Mind will be discussed, and the group will be encouraged to practice using the Wise Mind in their daily lives.

### Operational Needs/Logistics

- Both online and onsite
- One trainer with or without co-trainer
- Groups of three/four (one interviewer, one interviewee, one/two observers)
- Notepads and pens
- Presentation (Powerpoint or Flipchart)

## The Procedure of the Activity

N.	Activity	Details	Duration
1	Welcome	Introduction of the Project EMMW	15 min.
		The Outline of the Activity (Subtopic 3)	
		Session Agreement & Consent	
		Introduction of participants	
		Expectations	
2	Icebreaker/ Warm-up Activity	<b>"The Shared Story"</b> : Start a story and ask each person to add a sentence or paragraph as it is passed around the group. In this way, you create a collaborative story and learn more about each participant's ideas and imagination.	10 min.
3	Introduction	Explanation of activity	5 min.
4	Step 1	Explanation of the three states of mind	10 min.
5	Coffee Break		
6	Step 2	Sharing experiences based on Emotional Mind and debate about its influence in the situation.	15 min.
7	Step 3	Sharing experiences based on Rational Mind and debate about its influence in the situation.	15 min.
8	Step 4	Sharing experiences based on Wise Mind and debate about its influence in the situation.	15 min.
9	Open Discussion	Discuss about the importance of balancing Emotional and Rational Mind in order to achieve Wise Mind.	5 min.

## 5.5. Bibliography

- Bonanno, G.A., Westphal, M., & Mancini, A.D. (2011). Resilience to loss and potential trauma. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 7(1), 511-535. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-032210-104526>
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