

DANCE+THERAPY

CURRICULUM



THRIVEGULU

from SURVIVOR to THRIVER



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About THRIVEGulu

THRIVEGulu is a trauma recovery organization.

THRIVEGulu supports survivors of the Lord's Resistance Army insurgency and refugees from South Sudan with a mandate to prioritize the unique needs of women and girls' survivors of violence.

THRIVEGulu believes that meaningful existence is more than mere survival. We believe the invisible wounds of psychological trauma deserve healing. And, we believe that functionality and productivity can only flourish when an individual and her community are more-than-surviving.

THRIVEGulu was established in 2010 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in the US and a registered Non-Governmental Organization in Uganda. THRIVEGulu has been internationally recognized for providing holistic, integrated counseling and empowerment services to survivors of war.

Vision

Our vision for northern Uganda is one in which all people are treated with dignity, live in safety, and have the chance to contribute to the good of the community.

Mission

THRIVEGulu assists communities in post-conflict northern Uganda to heal from the traumatic effects of war, sexual exploitation, extreme poverty and the resulting loss of opportunities.

Our History

For over two decades, Joseph Kony and the Lord’s Resistance Army abducted over 60,000 children in northern Uganda to serve as child soldiers and brides. More than 2 million civilians were forced to flee their homes, living in the squalor and instability of Internally Displaced Persons camps, some for over a decade. More than 100,000 people were killed. The LRA left behind a society psychologically traumatized by war, poverty, lack of education, sexual violence, and hopelessness.

In 2010, THRIVEGulu gave birth to the region’s only trauma recovery center. Our founder, Professor Emerita Judy Dushku of Suffolk University in Boston, Massachusetts, USA identified a need for women survivors of the LRA war to have a safe space to gather, support one another, and begin to recover individually and collectively from trauma.

From an original vision to build a community of strength, hope and healing has grown an organization internationally recognized as a leader in innovative, holistic psychosocial interventions and individual and community empowerment. Our commitment is twofold: Go to the most marginalized places and war affected peoples; and work with individuals and communities as partners. From survivors to THRIVERS, we triumphantly proclaim: “Together We THRIVE!”

Nondiscrimination Statement

THRIVEGulu champions gender equality and does not discriminate on the basis of religion, age, disability, ethnicity, color, marital status, sexual orientation or sex (including gender identity and gender stereotyping) in regards to beneficiaries or staff.

Acknowledgments

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Dance movement and the principles of Social-Emotional Learning are integral to this project. THRIVEGulu wishes to acknowledge the following individuals from Dance4Life without whom we would not be able to present this manual for mental health trauma recovery in its fullness: Nina Pavlovska; Valeria Pecchioni; Anna Dahlman; Yvonne Ochieng; and Ntende Baker.

DANCE+THERAPY MANUAL

This Dance+Therapy Manual provides a step-by-step curriculum which aims to enhance trauma recovery, especially for those suffering from anxiety, depression, and self-harm behaviours through an innovative combination of therapeutic psychosocial counselling and dance movement. Peer-led groups of not more than 15 group members each will meet for 12 sessions, building group solidarity while allowing for individual healing and development. Group members will process experience and negative memories together, offering positive affirmation and support. Moreover, individuals will build a toolbox of self-soothing techniques which they can practice as needed to mitigate negative thoughts and feelings. Members will learn dance techniques and other physical movements which are fun, life-giving, and positively reinforce the psychoeducation and therapeutic support they receive.

Background of Dance+Therapy Program

More than twelve years after the war, psychological trauma is compounded by poverty, lack of education and missed opportunities. The invisible wounds of trauma lie deep beneath the surface, difficult to identify and diagnose. The mind naturally dissociates disturbing memories, sometimes causing trauma to manifest years after the adverse event originally occurred. Furthermore, the phenomena of 2nd and 3rd generational trauma suggests that mental distress can be passed from parents to their children. Stigma against individuals with mental distress or illness is widespread. There is a need to sensitise community members to demystify stereotypes on causes of mental dis-ease and to inform people that there are conventional treatments available to improve mental wellbeing.

Why Dance+Therapy?

With the Dance+Therapy (D+T) Program, THRIVEGulu aims to achieve three key changes/outcomes: 1) improved individual mental health and self-seeking behaviour; 2) group cohesion & harmony; 3) individual and group empowerment.

D+T is a group approach to counselling that integrates dance with THRIVEGulu's signature Mental Health & Psychosocial Support services to effect measurable reduction in depression, anxiety, stress, and suicidal thoughts among youth and adults with gender inclusiveness. The program educates group members about mental health, encourages them to safely process and reframe their traumatic memories, and harnesses their innate resilience to reconnect with self and society.

Dance researcher, Sara Cook, affirms, “Dance is a way of dealing with feelings and releasing them, instead of locking them in.” Expressing oneself through dance, body movement, and embodiment may be easier for some than vocalizing difficult feelings. Similarly, moving in a social space as a group can support a safe environment for authentic sharing and collective healing. Dance is envisioned to have a therapeutic effect when combined with learning techniques to mitigate mental distress, reduce stigma, promote healthy and positive behaviors and relationships, and strengthen group cohesion. D+T has the potential to heal trauma in 1st, 2nd and 3rd generation survivors of trauma, leading to increased productivity (economic, educational) and functionality (social, family).

Dance+Therapy Curriculum

The D+T Curriculum is a 12-week/18-hour programme, consisting of 12 sessions designed for group members to work through their psychological problems in the context of a safe, nurturing community of their peers. There are two (02) additional sessions in the form of community outreach to create awareness on mental health issues, during which time members will have the opportunity to share their experiences as participants in the THRIVEGulu programme.

Each group will be led by two (02) Peer D+T Leaders, selected from among their communities based on maturity, responsibility, demonstrated leadership skills, and communication skills. Groups will consist of no more than 15 members. All Peer D+T Leaders will be trained both in the D+T Curriculum, as well as in basic psychological first aid.

The D+T Curriculum is built on a tri-phasic model based on Judith Herman’s three stages of trauma recovery that aims at Safety and Stabilization, Remembrance and Mourning, and Reconnecting to Self and Others.

This curriculum also draws from the five (05) core competencies of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL): Self-Awareness, Responsible Decision-Making, Relationship Skills, Social Awareness, and Self-Management. (See annex 1 for SEL)

Dance paired with experiential learning, SEL, psychoeducation and counselling, will mitigate psychological distress, and empower individuals and communities to be resilient. Beneficiaries will learn about common mental health conditions, coping skills, resilience, and health-seeking practices, as well as healthy relationships and gender equality. They will find their voice, grow confident in their identity, process traumatic memories, reconnect socially, and participate in a fun, life-giving physical activity. Collectively, groups will feel a sense of connectedness, solidarity, safety, and cohesion that they can bring back to their communities.

Outcomes

The D+T Curriculum is intended for use with both youth (16-30 years old) and adults (> 30 years old) separated accordingly to maintain a community of peers with shared experiences, concerns, and dreams. Group members are selected according to criteria, which includes experiencing psychological distress and reduced daily functioning which could be due to depression, anxiety, stress, and suicidal thoughts.

Outcomes will be assessed according to:

- i. Symptom reduction, which is measured in pre- & post-assessments and weekly check -ins;
- ii. Improvement in functionality measured using the functionality tests included in the pre- & post-assessments and weekly check-ins;
- iii. Improved psychological wellbeing measured using the client's coping questionnaire at the beginning of therapy and end of the 12-week therapeutic programme.

General effects of the programme will be measured using baseline & end-line assessments, client's satisfaction survey, and qualitative feedback during stakeholders' review meetings.

In addition to the therapeutic quality of the D+T Curriculum and the group itself, members will have the opportunity to receive individual and/or family counselling from one of THRIVEGulu's professional staff counsellors. This will be on an as-needed basis with individuals either seeking support themselves or being identified and referred by staff or Peer D+T Leaders.

STRATEGY

The Curriculum utilizes a peer-led approach to create a safe space, facilitate active participation, and give beneficiaries a sense of ownership of the program.

Shared Experiences

A successful D+T group involves sharing common experiences between the Peer D+T Leaders and the group members. Common experiences include psychological distress (depression, anxiety, etc.), but may also include a history of gender-based violence, early marriage, school drop-out, poverty, etc. The Peer D+T Leader shall have a higher level of understanding of her/his emotions, feelings, and motivations, and with support from THRIVEGulu counsellors will have already processed her/his experiences to such a degree as will contribute to a safe, compassionate, and responsible leadership role. The Peer D+T Leader will use these skills to help group members explore and process their own experiences, feelings, behaviors, and personal issues.

Engaging and Creative Facilitation

D+T groups provide safe, comfortable and supportive opportunities and environments for all members to share their stories and feelings regarding their psychological distress. All group members are invited to participate. Members are encouraged to share their experiences to draw empathy, inspiration, and communion (“I am not alone”). Peer D+T Leaders will encourage non-judgmental interactions. Dance movement encourages individuality, as well as group cohesion.

Safety

Confidentiality is emphasized. Each group is a “closed group” to ensure sustained trust and open sharing. All members are given an equal opportunity to speak without interruption. The Peer D+T Leaders will enforce a culture of respect. Peer D+T Leaders are closely supervised by THRIVEGulu professional counsellors. A feedback mechanism is available for all group members to report an incident or concern to THRIVEGulu staff. All THRIVEGulu staff and affiliates, including Dance4Life staff, will sign a Safeguarding Commitment, indicating their understanding of their responsibility to uphold the THRIVEGulu Safeguarding Policy. All Peer D&T Leaders will undergo Safeguarding training, and all group members will be informed about safe practices and reporting structures.

Use of Peer Dance+Therapy Leaders

The Peer D+T Leaders are community members, selected based on the following criterion:

- i. Ability to read and write both the local language and English with good communication skills, and able to translate clearly and accurately the content of the manual into local language during session facilitation.
- ii. Person of good character in their community (e.g., no record of or reputation for substance abuse, violence against women or children, crime, etc.). Referenced by community leaders. Preferably a member of an existing THRIVEGulu Empowerment Group. Holds no political position.
- iii. Good time manager, with limited responsibilities in the community to be available for all the training (05 days for Basic Psychosocial Support Counseling and 03 Days for D+T Facilitation), and able to facilitate the 12 weeks’ D+T sessions with two (02) extra Community Outreaches in every circle of the 12 weeks D+T session.
- iv. Easily approachable, accessible, extroverted, energetic, confident, loves music, dance and arts, and enjoys getting creative. A critical thinker with the ability to inspire others.

- v. Maintains strict confidentiality and enforces confidentiality amongst all group members. Capable of being empathic, non-judgmental, and supportive when interacting with group members who are seeking support or are in crisis. Practice active listening.
- vi. Committed to THRIVEGulu's vision, mission, and Safeguarding Policy, and understands the goals and outcomes of the Comic Relief Ahead of the Game grant programme and Sport for Change model.
- vii. A team player who works well in collaboration with others, mindful and aware of group dynamics with the ability to bring out the strengths of all personality types.
- viii. Able to communicate clearly, timely, and effectively with THRIVEGulu staff, with strong understanding of the importance of referrals, especially in critical situations.

Each Peer D+T Leader will be paired with a THRIVEGulu staff counsellor, who will serve as supervisor. Prior to the launch of a new group, all Peer D+T Leaders must be trained by THRIVEGulu counsellors to provide basic, psychological first aid, including crisis intervention, low intensity emotional support, intake, and referrals. The Peer D+T Leaders will serve their group members as frontline point persons within the communities for discussing problems, issues, fears, crises, etc. This very important responsibility will be closely monitored by THRIVEGulu professional counsellors. These same counsellors will be available for referrals when moderate to severe cases are triaged accordingly.

The Peer D+T Leaders will conduct the weekly sessions, receiving direct support and supervision from THRIVEGulu counsellors. The Peer D+T Leaders can open, lead, and close discussions. They will remind the group that all members will have an equal opportunity to share and explore feelings in a welcoming and respectful environment. Peer D+T Leaders will take a neutral, non-judgmental stance when addressing information shared by group members whether in or outside of group meetings.

At least 01 of the 02 Peer D+T Leaders in each Group shall be a woman/girl.

Group Selection

An assessment will be conducted among existing THRIVEGulu Empowerment Group members in both Layibi and Odek to identify individuals with depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, or who are in vulnerable categories at-risk for mental distress, such as teenage mothers, child marriage, and survivors of violence against women and girls or any other major trauma. These individuals will qualify to be members of a D+T Group. A minimum 70% of each D+T Group shall be women/girls.

Group Approach

The D+T Model includes 12 weekly group sessions, 18 hours, that guide the clients through Safety & Stabilization, Mourning & Remembrance, and Reconnecting with Self & Others (based on Judith Herman's framework for trauma recovery) while integrating the 05 core competencies of Social Emotional Learning (SEL); Self-Awareness, Responsible Decision Making, Relationship Skills, Social Awareness, and Self-Management.

Group Size

Groups shall comprise not more than 15 individuals. After formation, groups will be closed, meaning no additional members will be permitted. Given the sensitive nature of topics discussed and the goal of strengthening group cohesion, we will limit group participation to the 15 members initially selected. Should one or more members drop out of the group for any reason, those spaces shall not be filled.

Tardiness and Absenteeism

Latecomers will be admitted only up to 15 minutes from the start of the session. Attendance at all sessions is strongly encouraged and shall be reinforced at each session. If a group member cannot attend a session, she/he should notify the group's Peer D+T Leaders as soon as possible, preferably before the session begins. Absenteeism is strongly discouraged. After 02 absences the Peer D+T Leaders will discuss the matter with the individual. It is left to the discretion of Peer D+T Leaders if an individual should be asked to leave the group.

USING THIS MANUAL

This manual guides Peer D+T Leaders through preparation for each session, the goals of the session, and the materials that will be needed for each session. The structure of every session is more or less uniform. Each session is expected to take 90 minutes. Each session includes an opening, then moves on to the activity of the week, and concludes with a vigorous dance.

Preparation

The Peer D+T Leaders will procure and prepare beforehand all the necessary materials for the session. Each Session Outline in this manual includes a list of materials needed.

The Peer D+T Leaders will have thoroughly reviewed the session outline contained in this manual. They should consult with their THRIVEGulu supervisor if they have any questions, require clarification, or need support prior to the session. It is essential that each Peer D+T Leader understands the session goals and expected outcomes.

Welcome/Opening the Session

The way the session starts is designed to promote a sense of safety and camaraderie and allows the group members time to gather and get settled. In the first session, the group members should choose an opening practice that can be used in each subsequent session. Group members will join together for a dance warm-up, including instruction on new dance routines. The Peer D+T Leaders will be responsible for time management.

Check-in & Recap

At the beginning of each session, the Peer D+T Leaders will check-in with group members to determine how each person is feeling presently and how their week has been. Additionally, the Peer D+T Leaders will provide a recap of the previous week's learnings and goals. This also serves as a helpful warm-up for the activity of the week. The recap can include group members describing what they remember as the key points from the previous week, and any homework/takeaways that they were able to practice since the last session.

Activity of the Week - Session in Detail

The session in detail is where group members learn and practice new skills for coping, healing and growing. This is where group members are taken through the phases of safety, stabilization & grounding, healing invisible wounds, and building a meaningful future. The manual provides the Peer D+T Leaders with a script for how to conduct the week’s educational component and activities.

Home Practice Assignment

An assignment or takeaway is given to the group members at the end of every session which encourages group members to reflect on new knowledge and practice skills learned on their own throughout the week. The takeaway is designed to expand their coping mechanism “toolbox,” build resilience, and maintain continuity from one session to the next.

Closing

The session ends by helping the group members to integrate everything they have learned in the session and prepare to go home. Every session should end on a joyful, positive note through a vigorous movement dance. The dance allows group members to “shake off” any weight of the session that may have come with sharing past pains. Before group members depart, they can enjoy a snack, remain for informal conversation, and leave on a high note.

STRUCTURE

STAGE 1: SAFETY, STABILIZATION & GROUNDING

People affected by “life threatening situations” tend to feel unsafe in their bodies and in their relationships with others. They may also feel unsafe in their own thoughts and feelings. Group members can present with any number of safety concerns, including but not limited to poor self-care, high-risk behaviours, revictimization, dissociation, detachment, isolation, and aggression. These issues can impede treatment if individuals fail to understand the root causes and the multiple possible manifestations of trauma. Regaining a sense of safety may take days to weeks with acutely traumatized individuals or months to years with individuals who have experienced ongoing/chronic abuse or a major traumatic event. It is not the responsibility of the Peer D+T Leaders to provide therapeutic support to group members with high levels of trauma and/or mental distress. Rather, the Peer D+T Leaders will be trained in how to refer such individuals to THRIVEGulu professional counsellors. The Peer D+T Leaders should frequently revisit issues of safety and stabilization throughout all stages of the D+T Programme – this includes ensuring that a safe space is established from the very opening of each session. In Stage 1, the Peer D+T Leaders will strive to help group members begin the process of moving toward trauma recovery by guiding them in figuring out what areas of their lives need to be stabilized and how that can be accomplished. Participants will develop a toolbox of coping mechanisms to alleviate mental distress, such as deep breathing exercises, mindfulness, grounding, and dance.

Stage 1 is crucial, as it includes fundamental knowledge and skills (psychoeducation) to begin the trauma recovery process:

- A) Gaining awareness of and increased control over symptoms of mental distress;
- B) Building a “toolbox” of mindfulness and other self-modulating techniques/strategies that will help to improve affect, impulse regulation, and resilience;
- C) Receiving and reflecting upon psychoeducation while benefiting from group process;
- D) Developing a positive relationship with other group members, the Peer D+T Leaders, and THRIVEGulu staff;
- E) Increasing understanding of the role that trauma plays in self-destructive behaviours and the limiting effect it has on one’s happiness, interpersonal relationships, quality of life, and potential to thrive.

Stage 1 includes five sessions:

- 1) Welcome & Group Orientation
- 2) Creating a Safe Space
- 3) Connecting Mind & Body
- 4) Awakening Coping Skills
- 5) Building a Toolbox

STAGE 2: HEALING INVISIBLE WOUNDS

Stage 2 of trauma recovery is often referred to as ‘Remembrance and Mourning’ in accordance with Judith Herman’s seminal model. The objective is to create a space in which one can safely work through traumatic events and begin to make sense of the devastating experiences that have shaped their life. The main work of Stage 2 involves:

A) In a safe and supportive environment, group members give voice to negative memories. Members share portions of their life story with their peers, which can lessen the emotional intensity of the invisible wounds of trauma. Group members revise the meanings of these memories as they pertain to one’s life and identity to reframe them as less painful.

B) Group members allow themselves to grieve unwanted or abusive experiences and the negative effects these have had on their lives.

C) Group members will likewise mourn and work through grief about good experiences that they did not have but that all deserve.

Hence, Stage 2 is where group members critically engage in the healing process to overcome past trauma and current mental distress. The participant will grow comfortable sharing and expressing difficult feelings in the group, and learn to process and reframe traumatic memories.

Stage 2 includes five sessions:

- 6) Telling Our Stories
- 7-8) Working Through a Painful Memory
- 9-10) Loss & Resilience

STAGE 3: BUILDING A MEANINGFUL FUTURE

Stage 3, the final stage of recovery, concludes the curriculum with a focus on ‘Building a Meaningful Future.’ This stage is about empowerment and aims at the creation of a new, positive sense of self and a bright, new future for all group members. This final task involves redefining oneself in the context of meaningful relationships. Through this process, trauma is no longer a defining and organizing principle in someone’s life. Rather, trauma becomes integrated into their life story in such a way that it is no longer the only story that defines them and so that it does not have the final word.

The goal is for group members to emerge feeling confident, secure, empowered, and (re)connected. Throughout this stage, however, safety may remain an issue – reconnecting with others in an open, honest, and trustful way may find some group members still feeling vulnerable. The Peer D+T Leaders, therefore, may need to support group members to re-establish a sense of safety as they approach reconnecting meaningfully with others. Group members will identify their unique self-motivating “why?” and set long-term goals.

Stage 3 includes two sessions:

- 11) Build Goals & Identify a Motivating “Why”
- 12) Closing & Celebration

OUTREACH SESSIONS

Following completion of the 12-week D+T Programme, each Group will offer two (02) sensitization outreaches to their communities on mental health. They will showcase how the combination of dance plus therapeutic mental health support provides individuals with a feeling of improved emotional security, the resilience necessary to overcome future threats, and the skills needed to *more-than-survive!* Assuming the role of community advocates, group members will build confidence and feel empowered to embrace a leadership role within the community as someone who can support others through difficult times.

Annex 1: SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING



SELF-AWARENESS is understanding one’s emotions and thoughts and how they influence behavior. Skills include: identifying emotions, self-perception, recognizing strengths, self-confidence, and self-efficacy. (Self-efficacy is the belief in your ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplishment of a task).

SELF-MANAGEMENT is the ability to regulate one’s emotions and behaviors in different situations. Individuals set and work towards their goals. Skills include: executive function, self-regulation, stress-

management, and self-discipline. (Executive function and self-regulation are the mental processes that enable us to plan, focus attention, remember instructions, and juggle multiple tasks successfully. Our brains need this skillset to filter distractions, prioritize tasks, set and achieve goals, and control impulses.)

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING is the ability to make positive choices and take responsibility for both positive and negative outcomes. Skills include: identifying problems, analyzing situations, solving problems, and reflection.

SOCIAL AWARENESS is the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others. Skills include: empathy, appreciating differences, and respect

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS means having the ability to establish and maintain healthy and meaningful relationships with others. Skills include: communicating clearly, active listening, cooperation, resisting negative pressure, resolving conflicts, and supporting one another.

Annex 2: MANAGING EXTREME AFFECT

Throughout the Dance+Therapy (D+T) Programme, there will be opportunities for group members to share parts of their life story. Individuals share intimate parts about themselves with others, thereby releasing the traumatic burdens they carry while building safe, social relations.

After a person shares, it is important for the Peer D+T Leaders to provide emotional support (i.e., validate, normalize, express empathy) and invite the group members to respond to their peer's disclosure. Encourage group members to express their support by saying a word or two about how they felt as they listened to their peer's story. It is not the time for anyone to offer advice or opinions or to pass judgment. Nor is it the time to compare one's own story over another's. Rather, it is important for group members to affirm the significance of these stories in the life of their peers. After the group members have responded, the Peer D+T Leader should bring closure to the narrative event with a supportive or empathic comment.

Recalling and giving voice to a traumatic memory can evoke many different strong emotions in group members, ranging from sadness to anger, fear to shame, or to a complex combination of feelings. It is important to remember that even listening to others share their stories can trigger such feelings in a group member who has experienced something similar or who feels particularly sensitive to the story being told. Peer D+T Leaders should monitor the entire group during an individual's sharing.

The most common expression is crying. If a group member cries, allow them to cry and give them enough time to let it out. Demonstrate empathy through your calming presence, relaxed body language, and caring demeanor. Show the group member that you understand her/his grief and that you can tolerate the intensity of her/his emotional pain. When the group member calms somewhat, tell them in an empathic tone that you understand how hard it can be to find words for what they experienced and are now feeling. Crying, even very heavy, deep crying, is not a reason to ask if the group member needs to leave.

Please avoid any language or actions that indicate your discomfort or impatience. Remember, as a Peer D+T Leader, you represent the group – by staying calm and empathetic, you will remain in control of the group and help group members moderate their feelings. You may wish to utilize grounding techniques and other supports from the toolboxes they have assembled. Should you require assistance, a THRIVEGulu counsellor should be available to provide support.

If a group member's emotional expression takes the form of aggression, fainting, self-harm, or any other behaviour which threatens the safety of self or others, contact a THRIVEGulu counsellor immediately for assistance. The Peer D+T Leader should not attempt to handle such a situation on their own.



STAGE 1: SAFETY & STABILIZATION

SESSION 1: Welcome and Group Orientation

Objectives of the session:

- To get to know group members.
- To create awareness of the group's purpose.
- To identify and clarify on group members' expectations.
- To introduce the concepts and routine practices of group sessions.

Preparations and materials needed for the session:

- ✓ Time for the session is 90 Minutes
- ✓ Make sure you have the list of the expected group members
- ✓ Organize the room/space and the mats/chairs/benches/tables so all sit in a circle facing each other
- ✓ Nametags for each group member or materials to make nametags
- ✓ Promo materials about THRIVEGulu (presentation/brochures)
- ✓ Flipchart paper, easel, markers
- ✓ Group record book
- ✓ Visual diagram of the 12-session journey
- ✓ Musical instruments and/or loudspeaker with popular songs for dancing
- ✓ Practice reading the script for the grounding exercise
- ✓ Snacks/refreshments for group members

TIPS:

The Session Narrative is a guide. Please note: the text in **BLUE** is a suggested script on what you could use when facilitating. The Peer Dance+Therapy (D+T) Leaders need not be rigid about the script. It is good to be flexible, adapting context-appropriate activities while maintaining the set structure and allocated time. Feel free to express the content in your own words but please keep the intended meaning.

SESSION FLOW:

Time	Activity	Process/script	Materials needed
20 min	Welcome and Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome group members with a smile as they arrive • Provide name tags and encourage them to walk around for some informal talks as the group gathers. Ask individuals to try to learn one “fun fact” about everyone they talk to as a means to “break the ice” • Invite them to find a seat • Introduce yourself by sharing a story about yourself and your position and role as a Peer Dance+Therapy Leader in the group • Let the others on your facilitating team also briefly introduce themselves • Invite each group member to share their name and one thing they really enjoy doing or a “fun fact.” Others who also enjoy the same thing can stand up/raise their hand/say “me too” 	Nametags, mats/chairs/benches

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite group members to come up with a session opening ritual (prayer/practice) and open this session as they set on their journey together 	
5 min	About THRIVEGulu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the members what they know about THRIVEGulu, listen to the responses, and make sure you share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>THRIVE is an indigenous, grassroots organization with headquarters in Layibi</i> • <i>Works with people in the community to empower them economically and psychologically</i> • <i>Goal is for individuals and communities to achieve their signature slogan “from Survivors to Thrivers”</i> • Ask 1 or 2 group members: <i>“Do you know what it means “to thrive”</i> • <i>In this Dance+Therapy Programme, we are working to help people heal from their “troubling hearts”¹. People with physical illnesses go to hospitals or see medical professionals; people with troubled hearts may also go to hospitals, but there may be helpful alternatives. It is often important to see a counsellor or find a community of support. That is why we are here. Over the past 11+ years, THRIVEGulu has learned that it can be very important for us to express ourselves openly and talk about the things that have hurt us emotionally. This can help us to feel less alone and to lighten the burdens we carry.</i> • Acknowledge the courage of the group members for showing up today 	Any promotional materials from THRIVEGulu
10 min	Purpose of the Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start with asking the group members: <i>Why do you think we are doing this as a group and not individually?</i> • After collecting some responses you can explain: 	D+T Sessions Summary Chat/Diagram

¹ Troubling hearts or Psychological distress (Cwercwiny, par, kumu, tam mapol).

		<p><i>The group gives us an opportunity to learn from each other and offer each other support. Just as we share things we love in this group, we can also share similar life experiences and past histories of distress. In this group process you will better understand the situations that have affected you and strengthen your ability to move forward in life. By sharing with others in the group, you will realize that you are not alone, and that you can share strengths and resources with each other. We will do this through activities, discussions and individual/group reflection, but we will also use dance, music and body movement. Dance and movement help us to express ourselves in ways beyond words and to regulate our emotions. We hope that this process will help you learn to better control your thoughts, feelings and actions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the visual/diagram of the journey and explain that you will meet 12 times, lasting 90 minutes. Each session builds on previous ones. Use the metaphor that this experience is a healing journey: just like taking medications according to the doctor’s prescription to recover from a common illness, it is important that group members come to the weekly sessions consistently in order to heal their emotional scars. • Inform the group that at the end of the whole journey they will have a chance to share what they’ve learned and reach out to their communities to create awareness on mental health causes, signs and symptoms, and where to go to find help. Motivate them with how much they will contribute to the community, making it a better place for everyone and reducing the stigma of persons suffering from mental health problems. 	
10 min	Building Hope – Clarification of Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask group members why they have joined this group and how they hope to benefit from it? • Invite a few group members to share; others may raise their hands if they feel similarly 	Flipchart, easel, markers

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While people are sharing, take some notes on the flip chart of what has been shared • Ensure that what is shared is aligned with the goal of the program and that the expectations are realistic and maintaining therapeutic gains only • Make sure they know that they will not receive financial assistance or any material support for participating in the group <p>NOTE: Sometimes group members will come up with real life needs and expectations at this time. Throughout the sessions, it is important to always validate these realities without letting a discouraging conversation take over the group. After you have validated their difficulties, emphasize how the group sessions and skills they will learn will strengthen them to face these challenges.</p>	
25 min	Grounding Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the musical instruments/technology you have available for the group: to whatever extent possible, the group members will choose the dance of their choice (i.e., style, rhythm) • Share why we use dancing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Dancing can help one heal emotionally. All throughout history, all over the world, since people have lived in groups, dance has been used in rituals, celebrations and festivals of all sorts. In Acholi (Luo), dance represents a fundamental part of the cultural heritage to pass on knowledge, during planting and harvesting seasons, courtships, relationships, bonding and marriages, child births, sickness and death/mourning, plagues and pestilence, the weather (sunshine, rain), and even during battles. Dance improves physical and mental health by strengthening the body, improving posture and flexibility, and lifting mood and easing anxiety. It is also a fun activity that can be enjoyed alone or with others. When practiced in a group, dance can improve social bonds.</i> • Inquire with the group members if they like Acholi (Luo) dance and music 	Instruments/ loudspeaker/music

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share which is your favorite Acholi song; sing it or play it and start dancing on it • Invite others to join the dance and make a circle dancing • Invite group members to share their favorite music/song and dance moves (perhaps, something modern) as they take their place in the middle of the circle to “shine” while others try to copy their dance <p>NOTE: Please remember that this group is not about making a dance competition of who dances best – allow for dance and body movement as an expression of oneself.</p> <p>NOTE: You may need to adapt parts of this section depending on whether youth or adult group.</p>	
15 min	Home Practice Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the home practice assignments by sharing that the purpose is to help them integrate what they have learned in group into their daily lives. • For today’s assignment, invite all to reflect upon how dance makes them feel. Ask them to explore how they could bring more dance into their daily lives. They can choose their favorite song and try dancing alone or with others and notice how dance makes them feel. 	
5mins	Closing with Vigorous Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the group does not already have a name, help group members choose a name that is strong, positive and uplifting • Bring in the name of the group and invite group members to come up with an energetic chant and body movement they can use as they pronounce the name • Divide them in 3-4 groups and give them 2 minutes to come up with a unique group movement that reflects the group name they chose 	Snacks and musical instruments/ loudspeaker

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Then, let them showcase their chants and movement and repeat it a few times possibly coming up with one they like the most• Serve snacks for closing as group members hang out informally and depart	
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STAGE 1: SAFETY & STABILIZATION

SESSION 2: Creating a Safe Space

Objectives of the session:

- To create a group environment of trust that is warm, inviting and safe for all members.
- To build group conditions for safety, trust, and a sense of belonging among group members, and between the group members and their Peer Dance+Therapy Leaders.
- To begin learning coping strategies, namely Grounding.

Preparations and materials needed for the session:

- ✓ Time for the session is 90 minutes
- ✓ Make sure you have the list of the expected group members
- ✓ Organize the room/space and the mats/chairs/benches/tables so all sit in a circle facing each other
- ✓ Nametags for each group member or materials to make nametags
- ✓ Remember what happened last session
- ✓ Practice reading the script for the grounding exercise
- ✓ Flipchart paper, easel, markers
- ✓ Group record book
- ✓ Choose an object, e.g., a rock/ a table/ a chair, or anything else heavy and large to illustrate the power of a group
- ✓ Musical instruments and/or loudspeaker with popular songs to dance to
- ✓ Snacks/refreshments for group members

TIPS:

The Session Narrative is a guide. Please note: the text in **BLUE** is a suggested script on what you could use when facilitating. The Peer Dance+Therapy (D+T) Leaders need not be rigid about the script. It is good to be flexible, adapting context-appropriate activities while maintaining the set structure and allocated time. Feel free to express the content in your own words but please keep the intended meaning.

SESSION FLOW:

Time	Activity	Process/script	Materials needed
5 min	Welcome and Opening Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warmly welcome everyone to the group while acknowledging their commitment, motivation, and courage in continuing to come to the group. Remind them of the group's opening ritual (prayer/practice) agreed upon in the previous session and invite the group members to perform it to formally begin the session. If no practice was agreed to yet, it is ok to create it now. Provide nametags in case group members have not learned each other's names yet, or introduce a short name activity - e.g. each group member can come up with an adjective/word starting with the letter of their own name and share it with the rest of the group (for example Powerful Paul, Daring Doreen, Awesome Agnes, etc.). Invite group members to use words from the local language and make sure all are strong and positive words. 	Name tags; mats/chairs/benches
10 min	Check-in and Recap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check-in with the group members about how they are doing. Have them focus on thoughts, feelings, and sensations they may be having now or may have had since the last session. 	Flipchart, easel, markers

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask the group members to share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HEAD: What's on your mind? - to explore current <i>thoughts</i> - you can invite them to touch their head as they ask themselves and answer ○ HEART: What's in your heart? - to explore current <i>feelings</i> - you can invite them to put their hand on their chest and share how they feel ○ HAND: What do you feel in your body now? - to explore current <i>sensations</i> - you can invite them to put their hand on their lower belly as they ask themselves and answer ● Then invite all to remember what they did in the last session. Summarize their answers by outlining the main points of last week's session on the flipchart. ● Recap the given home practice assignment. Inquire if anyone who had tried it at home would be willing to share how it was for them: what did they observe about themselves as they tried to deliberately include dance in their daily lives? <p>TIP: if you notice group members have not done their home practice assignment you could stress again the importance of it, as what we all learn here will only yield results when it becomes part of their daily lives.</p>	
15 min	Making a Group Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emphasize that it is normal to have some fears and anxieties about the group as well. You can mention that these may include feeling shy about talking in a group or feeling nervous about what other members will think of us. <p><i>We want this group to be a safe space for all of us to share honestly what we think and how we feel without being shy or afraid. Therefore, I would like to invite us to make our own Group</i></p>	Flipchart, easel, markers

		<p><i>Agreement. What do you think we can do that will support you to feel safe? How do we want to be with each other to make sure everyone feels encouraged and respected? For the smooth running of our group, what are some things that you think we should always do?</i></p> <p>As group members voice their ideas, feel free to note them down on a flipchart. This will help form their group agreement. Be sure to keep these pages for future reference.</p> <p>It is important that you reframe the agreements in a language that is enabling, rather than restricting: for example you could reframe <i>“Don’t interrupt each other”</i> into <i>“Let each other finish before we speak”</i> or <i>“Agree to signal if one wishes to speak.”</i></p> <p>Once you gather all ideas you could include any of the following that are not already on the list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respect one another and accept each other’s differences ● What happens in this group stays in this group and is not discussed with anyone outside the group (<u>Confidentiality Agreement</u>) ● Arrive before the start of the session. If we start on time together we will finish on time together. ● Active participation means active listening from all; i.e., listen attentively to others without interrupting. ● Everyone deserves a chance to speak. ● Let others finish speaking before you begin to speak. Raise a hand if you wish to be called on. 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be honest. Share your truth as it is - there are no right and wrong feelings. <p>Remind the group that this is not a class, and that their participation and support of one another will benefit everyone. If everyone agrees to the list, you can ask the group members if they would like everyone to sign the agreement; if so, have everyone sign their name using the flipchart paper.</p> <p>Note: For each agreement, make sure everyone agrees before adopting it as an agreement. Make the agreements visually available for every session, so that group members can remember them easily or add new agreements on the go. Avoid imposing punishments for not respecting the agreement, rather help to redirect towards positivity.</p>	
15 min	Purpose of the Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bring in the heavy object you chose to illustrate the power of the group and place it in the center of the group. ● Ask if someone would try to lift it with one single finger. It's likely they will not be able to do that, yet still invite a few group members to take a turn trying solo. ● Ask the original person to try again, but this time, ask members to add their fingers, one by one, to the first person's finger. This time, the group will be able to lift the heavy load together. Celebrate their success. ● Invite all to sit down and reflect together on the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What happened in the first try versus what happened in the second? ○ What is it you learned from this experience/activity? ○ Can you think of any "heavy objects" you've tried to lift all by yourself, but which would have been easier to move had you worked with others/as a team? 	Previously identified heavy object

		<p>TIP: See if anyone is able to use the physical heavy object as a metaphor for something more personal, like a family conflict or making a difficult decision.</p> <p>Process this in terms of connection and support, i.e., it is easier to do this with many people who work together (connection), and when we face a challenging task or have a heavy load, others can help to ease the load (support).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Affirm that this is exactly how the support of the group will work to help each member. 	
20 min	Grounding Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grounding techniques often use the five senses — sound, touch, smell, taste, and sight to immediately connect us with the here and now (present moment). For example, when one puts all attention to singing a song, rubbing lotion on our hands, or even eating something sweet, etc. These all could be grounding techniques that produce sensations that are difficult to ignore or distract you from what is going on in your mind. ● Explain that we are going to teach a simple exercise that the group members can use any time they feel upset, confused, or scared. When we feel as though we are being thrown all over the place and the world is spinning out of control, grounding helps us feel safe and secure by reminding us that we are standing on solid ground. Grounding exercises are easy to learn and help to make us feel calmer, stronger, and more supported. ● Give the following instructions in a soft and low tone. Go slowly and pause between each “feeling” moment. If you believe it’s helpful you can put some soft drumming or calm music in the background. <p><i>I invite you to sit comfortably in your chair (or on the mat). Close your eyes, or if you find it more comfortable, you can choose a spot on the ground to look at. Slowly pay attention to sensations throughout your body that are almost always there but that we seldom notice. Feel your feet grounded on the floor... feel the support of your seat below and behind you... feel the texture</i></p>	

		<p><i>of your clothing on your skin...the temperature of the air around your face... the weight of your tongue in your mouth...the very tip of your head.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Spend a few minutes reflecting how the group experienced this exercise, asking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>How did you feel doing this exercise?</i> ○ <i>Did you notice an increased sense of support from the ground/earth? From the chair?</i> ○ <i>What kind of changes did you notice in your body? Were you aware of a sense of stability and calmness in your body?</i> ○ <i>Did you notice any changes in your thoughts? ... If yes, share more.</i> <p>Note: Some people will have a challenging experience doing this exercise for the first time and may experience anxiety, distress or even flashbacks. Normalize these reactions as common when first slowing down enough to connect with one's emotions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lead group members through the exercise one more time to reinforce the skill and make sure they understand the instructions. If some had a difficult experience the first time, it is likely they will have a better experience the second time. ● Check in briefly with the group members to see how they are doing after the second time around. 	
15 min	Grounding Walking Dance - Connecting with Senses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Invite all group members to stand in a circle. Tell them that today we will be doing a “walking-in-silence” dance. Play the music and invite them to walk while it plays. Once the music stops, they need to stop where they are and listen to instructions on what to do, but there's no need to share or speak anything. 	Musical instruments / loudspeaker

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Start playing a song on the drum or loudspeaker with a neutral rhythm and invite them to walk around the room feeling the music. Invite them to walk in the rhythm of the song and move other parts of their body as they walk. ● Then stop the music a few times and invite them to connect with their 5 senses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1st stop: <i>I invite you to listen closely to all the sounds surrounding you.</i> ○ 2nd stop: <i>I invite you to notice any taste in your mouth.</i> ○ 3rd stop: <i>I invite you to notice any smells surrounding you.</i> ○ 4th stop: <i>I invite you to look around and observe something you haven't noticed before.</i> ○ Last stop: <i>This time I invite you to stand still. Bring your attention to your feet on the floor/ground... feel the shape of your feet and the texture of the floor/ground... notice the sensations and movement of each toe. Try moving your weight back and forth and notice how that feels. Then breathe in, and as you exhale, push your weight firmly into your feet.</i> ○ Get people to reflect on the dance by asking the following questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>How did you feel walking and stopping, walking and stopping?</i> ● <i>What were you thinking?</i> ● <i>How do you feel now?</i> ● <i>What are you learning from this experience?</i> 	
5 min	Home Practice Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have group members reflect on the importance of Grounding as a particular type of coping strategy that is designed to "ground" you in the present moment. It is helpful for times when a person may be ruminating about the past or worrying about the future. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They can use any one of the five senses, a combination, or simply bring their attention to their feet on the ground. • <i>When we are faced with life challenging situations it is important to reconnect ourselves to the present moment – this will help calm us, make us feel better, and improve our ability to make rightful decisions. Grounding can be a self-soothing exercise any time, any place.</i> • Through the new week, encourage members to practice grounding exercises whenever they feel agitated or whenever they feel a need to relax, breathe and center oneself. 	
5 min	Closing with Vigorous Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite group members to join in a vigorous dance. As they dance, invite each to shout out loud what they learned today that they hope will help them feel better going forward. • Serve snacks for closing as group members hang out informally and depart. 	Snacks and musical instruments/ loudspeaker



STAGE 1: SAFETY & STABILIZATION

SESSION 3: Connecting Body & Mind

Objectives of the session:

- To help group members understand the importance of thought processes, feelings, and behaviors and how they affect each other.
- To support group members to develop a more positive self-image, specifically, as persons who have courage, strength and who can take charge of situations to survive.

Preparations and materials needed for the session:

- ✓ Time for the session is 90 Minutes
- ✓ Make sure you have the list of the expected group members
- ✓ Organize the room/space and the mats/chairs/benches/tables so all sit in a circle facing each other – at least 3 chairs are required
- ✓ Make sure you have nametag for each group member or materials to make name tags
- ✓ Remember what happened last session
- ✓ Practice reading the script for the Cognitive Triangle and roleplay
- ✓ Prepare a (personal) story that clearly presents thoughts, feelings and behaviors which will be identifiable for the group members
- ✓ Make a pre-drawn Cognitive Triangle diagram
- ✓ Explore what's the best way to facilitate the roleplay
- ✓ Group record book
- ✓ Musical instruments and/or loudspeaker with popular songs to dance to
- ✓ Snacks/refreshments for group members

TIPS:

The Session Narrative is a guide. Please note: the text in **BLUE** is a suggested script on what you could use when facilitating. The Peer Dance+Therapy (D+T) Leaders need not be rigid about the script. It is good to be flexible, adapting context-appropriate activities while maintaining the set structure and allocated time. Feel free to express the content in your own words but please keep the intended meaning.

SESSION FLOW

Time	Activity	Process/script	Materials needed
5 min	Welcome and Opening Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Warmly welcome everyone to the group while acknowledging their commitment, motivation, and courage in continuing to come to the group and pursue their journey of recovery. ● Invite the group members to do their opening practice. Make sure that this practice is performed or led by different people each session so that the whole group owns the ritual. ● If it is still necessary for group members to remember each other's name introduce a short and fun activity for each to share their name as they check-in 	Name tags; mats/chairs/benches
10 min	Check-in and Recap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check-in with the group members about how they are doing. Have them focus on thoughts, feelings, and sensations they may be having now or may have had since the last session. ● Ask the group members to share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HEAD: What's on your mind? - to explore current <i>thoughts</i> - you can invite them to touch their head as they ask themselves and answer ○ HEART: What's in your heart? - to explore current <i>feelings</i> - you can invite them to put their hand on their chest and share how they feel 	Flipchart, easel, markers

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HAND: What do you feel in your body now? - to explore current <i>sensations</i> - you can invite them to put their hand on their lower belly as they ask themselves and answer ● Then invite all to remember what you all did in the last session. Summarize their answers by outlining the main points of last week's sessions on the flipchart. ● Recap the given home practice assignment about grounding. Inquire if anyone who had tried it at home would be willing to share how it was for them: what did they observe about themselves as they tried to deliberately include dance in their daily lives? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Were you able to practice the grounding skill during the week? If yes, did anyone try to make it a regular part of their day/week?</i> ○ <i>How was the experience? What did you notice when you practiced the grounding exercise?</i> <p>TIP: if you notice group members have not done their home practice assignment you could stress again the importance of it, as what we all learn here will only yield results when it becomes part of their daily lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete the check-in with a short grounding exercise by inviting all to connect to their body, touching the floor or chair and feeling supported by the ground. Practicing this skill at the beginning of a session helps remind them of the group's purpose and puts them in a calm state of mind to start the activity of the day. 	
20 min	Two Minds and Two Hearts - It's Your Choice! Roleplay Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Put three chairs in the center of the room. Invite two volunteers to sit on the chairs to help the Peer D+T Leaders illustrate the Two Minds/Two Hearts roleplay. You can take the volunteers out of the room and brief them that one will be discouraging self-talk and the 	Chairs; Situation/ story to share for roleplay

		<p>other one encouraging self-talk. Share with them that the other Peer D+T Leader will share a difficult situation she/he is in. The volunteers will pay attention to the thoughts that arise in their head from listening to this story. Then, the volunteers will roleplay these thoughts based on whether they are discouraging or encouraging. The roleplay means that they will speak their thoughts out loud, as though they are talking to themselves. You can give them the following examples to use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discouraging self-talk (“Discouragement” => negative): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Life will never get better. ○ There is no reason for hope. ○ You will never make it. ○ All is lost. ○ Your life has been ruined. ○ or any examples mentioned earlier in the session. ● Encouraging self-talk (“Encouragement” => positive): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One day it will be better. ○ Where there is life, there is hope. ○ Do not ever give up. ○ All is not lost. ○ You still have so much to live for. ○ or any examples mentioned earlier in the session. ● Please be honest and realistic in the encouragement. It is not useful to make exaggerated, unrealistic statements such as “you will be the happiest person in the world,” “you will forget all about these problems,” “you won’t have bad feelings about the war (the bad things) anymore,” or “things will return to how they were before the war (before the bad things happened).” 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BEGIN: One of the Peer D+T Leaders sits in the middle and shares a situation/story which is difficult or painful. The self-talk volunteers can then start roleplaying. Both voices (encouraging and discouraging) will try to persuade the storyteller to follow their way of thinking. The storyteller will struggle to figure out which voice to listen to. ● Finally, the storyteller tells the discouraging self-talk to go away, motioning for Discouragement to go away, leave them alone. Discouragement shrinks and goes out of the room/circle, whimpering. The storyteller turns to Encouragement and says, <i>“You are the one I am going to listen to today. I am not going to listen to the other, discouraging voice.”</i> ● After the roleplay, invite everyone to reflect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>What happened in this scenario?</i> ○ <i>Do either of these roles sound like someone you know – an encouraging or discouraging person? Do they sound like thoughts or feelings you have experienced in your own life? Do they bring you back to a specific experience from your past?</i> ○ <i>How can you successfully listen to the encouraging self-talk and not believe the discouraging self-talk?</i> ○ <i>When we are feeling low, when we are losing hope, what are some things we can say to ourselves to make ourselves feel better?</i> <p>NOTE:</p> <p>1) It may be helpful to explain that the two self-talk voices (Encouragement and Discouragement) do not come from out of nowhere. An individual’s development, social upbringing (family, school, community), and environment (during the war, IDP camp, poverty, violence) play a big role. For example, individuals who grow up under difficult circumstances, such as war, abuse, poverty, etc. will often be exposed to situations and people who reinforce discouraging self-talk.</p>	
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		<p>2) It is not always easy to identify a discouraging thought – for some, such thoughts are so normal to our experience that we don't even recognize how harmful they are. There are, however, some ways we can learn to recognize a discouraging thought. One way is to try to ground ourselves when we begin feeling stressed, scared or sad – then, we can ask ourselves, <i>“Is this thought helping me or making me feel worse? Is this thought helping me find a solution or pushing me deeper into a hole?”</i> If we discover that the thought we are having is Discouragement, then we can try to push it aside, move it to a sort of mental garbage bin of no-good thoughts, and not believe it. If we can recognize Discouragement, then instead, we can invite Encouragement to tell us something positive and hopeful.</p> <p>3) While there are important, positive, and encouraging things we can say to ourselves that can make us feel better, it is important to know that sometimes we need to seek additional help if we are feeling too low or losing hope. We are here as a group, so that we can support one another and lift one another up. It is also why our Peer D+T Leaders are accessible for us to talk to, as well as the THRIVEGulu counsellors who are available if you need a little extra support.</p>	
20 min	Cognitive Triangle: Interplay Between Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Divide group members into three groups. Tell them that you will share a story and that their task is for each group to identify one of three key elements from the story: <p><i>One day as I was going to the market in the morning, I saw my neighbour walking towards me. She appeared to be in a hurry. As I got closer to her, I greeted her, but she did not respond. Immediately I thought, “she does not like me.” I felt annoyed with myself and angry. I said to myself, “I will never greet her again.” When I came back from the market, I found her children at my house playing with my children and I sent them away. Her chickens, as always, were on my compound, so I chased them away and shot one dead with a stone. I did not want anything to do with her.</i></p>	Story that illustrates thoughts, feelings and behaviours (describing positive and/or negative experience); flipchart, easel, markers; Cognitive Triangle Diagram

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Group 1 identifies the thoughts of the protagonist/main character: <i>what was the main character thinking <u>during</u> the situation? How did the main character think about the situation <u>afterwards</u>?</i> ○ Group 2 identifies the feelings: <i>what was the main character feeling <u>in or during</u> the situation? How about <u>afterwards</u>?</i> ○ Group 3 identifies the behaviours: <i>what did the main character do? How did she act or respond to the situation?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guide them to not make assumptions about what or how they would think/feel/act, but rather ask them to describe the thoughts, feelings and behaviours that are mentioned or depicted in the story. ● Invite each of the three small groups to share their observations as you note down on the flipchart what they noticed from the story – you can use a circle or separate sheets of paper for each category (thoughts, feelings, behaviours). ● Then, introduce The Cognitive Triangle (NOTE: This is a concept taken from psychology called CBT = Cognitive Behavioural Therapy): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The Cognitive Triangle is a way of understanding how our thoughts, feelings and behaviours all impact one another¹. The Cognitive Triangle represents a cycle for how we respond to different situations and how we live our lives.</i> 	
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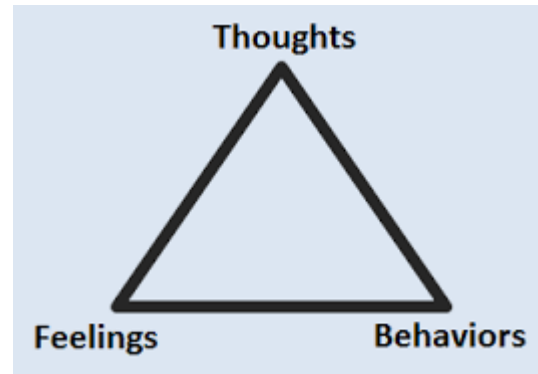
¹ Cognitive Triangle - obedo kit ma tam, winyo ki icwiny wa ki kit ma watime kede kube kwede.

Thoughts - Tam , ma romo bedo **Tam Mabeco onyo Tam Maraco**

Feelings - Kit Ma waiinyo kwede i Cwinyi ma romo bedo **winyo maber onyo marac, Yom cwinyo onto Cwercwiny (feeling happy or feeling sad**

Behaviour - kit ma wa time kwede ma romo **Tim Mabeco onyo Tim Maraco**

- *When a situation arises, we naturally have **thoughts** about the facts of that situation; those thoughts trigger **feelings**; and, based on those feelings, we engage in **behaviours** which in turn impact the situation (either positively or negatively). The cycle continues...*



- *Learning how **thoughts, feelings and behaviours** are connected will help us in our lives. We do not always have control over a situation but we can have control over how we think about things. If we start by reframing our negative or discouraging **thoughts**, we can begin to take control also of our **feelings** and our **behaviours**.*
- *This is what we call the power to “**catch and reframe thoughts.**” “Catch” means you stop the thought before it goes too far, so that you can determine if it is encouraging or discouraging. “Reframe” means you take a discouraging thought and you change it or look at it from a different perspective. For example, take this thought: “**Everything I do is no good.**” When such a thought comes into your head, catch it and ask yourself: ‘**Is this something I would tell any of my loved ones (mother/friend)? Would I tell them, ‘Everything you do is no good?’** If the answer is ‘no,’ then you should ask yourself, ‘**If I wouldn’t tell it to someone I love, why am I telling it to myself? If I love myself just as I love them. I should catch this thought***

		<p>before it takes control over my feelings and behaviours, and instead, I should reframe it into a thought that is positive and encouraging.' <i>This is what it means to catch and reframe thoughts from a place of self-love.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>We are not our thoughts; rather, we are the awareness that sees or recognizes them. This group will help us be more aware of our thoughts, so that we can make positive changes in our lives.</i> ○ Use the triangle to illustrate the interplay between the thoughts, feelings and behaviours using the two examples below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Let's start with the thought: "I feel hopeless"</i> ○ <i>What feelings does a thought like that trigger within you?</i> ○ <i>What kind of behaviours do those feelings lead to?</i> <p><i>We can see that when we start with a belief that a situation is hopeless it affects our feelings and our behaviours. Other kinds of unhelpful thoughts can have the same effect.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Now, let's try a different thought: "I can do this"</i> ○ <i>What feelings arise when you say this to yourself?</i> ○ <i>When you feel that what are you likely to do or how are you likely to act (behaviour)?</i> <p><i>In the same way, encouraging thoughts can have a helpful, healing influence on our feelings and behaviour.</i></p> <p>TIP: Invite the group members to come up with an unhelpful & helpful thought – if they are not able to come up with one, use another example.</p>	
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20 min	POWERPOSE Statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From the previous two activities/discussions, invite group members to choose one personal power statement that they want to use to let go of or push aside their discouraging self-talk and to remind them of some good things about themselves. Share: <p><i>We learned today that we have the power to choose positive thoughts over negative ones. Listening to our encouraging self-talk can make us feel good and help us overcome anything that may be worrying, scaring or saddening us. What are some things that you can say to yourself (in your mind) to remind yourself about how brave, strong, and smart you are? What are some things you can say to remind yourself about some of the good people and good things in your life? How can we encourage ourselves when we are feeling discouraged?</i></p> <p>Then introduce the concept of POWERPOSE and let them pair their statement with their own individual POWERPOSE. Their personal POWERPOSE will further strengthen their encouraging thoughts because it is the embodiment and outward expression of those positive thoughts.</p> <p>Have each group member take a turn sharing some of these encouraging self-statements demonstrating the different POWERPOSES.</p>	
5 min	Home Practice Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have group members reflect on the importance of positive thinking. Ask them to notice several times a day over the week what they are thinking or feeling. When negative or discouraging thoughts arise, have them talk back to these thoughts and feelings using their personal power statement and POWERPOSE. Inform group members that they can practice their personal power statement and POWERPOSE in front of a mirror, when they wake up, or before they go to sleep at night. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask them to continue reinforcing the grounding exercise from the second session by practicing this at home during the week, at a regular time every day. • Encourage them to connect with each other outside of the group. Where appropriate, encourage them to teach their family members what they are learning in the group. 	
10 min	Closing with Vigorous Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite group members to join in a vigorous dance. As they dance, invite each to shout out loud what they learned today that they hope will help them feel better going forward. Consider playing Nas - I Can (Official HD Video) - YouTube • Serve snacks for closing as group members hang out informally and depart. 	Snacks and musical instruments/ loudspeaker



STAGE 1: SAFETY & STABILIZATION

SESSION 4: Awakening Coping Skills

Objectives of the session:

- To help group members recognize their internal and external resources that they can use in times of difficulty.
- To increase group members' knowledge of coping behaviours and skills that can be used in difficult situations.
- To support group members to recognize and validate each other's strengths.

Preparations and materials needed for the session:

- ✓ Time for the session is 90 minutes
- ✓ Make sure you have the list of the expected group members
- ✓ Organize the room/space and the mats/chairs/benches/tables so all sit in a circle facing each other
- ✓ Make sure you have nametag for each group member or materials to make name tags
- ✓ Remember what happened last session
- ✓ Practice reading the script for the Table with Load and "I am, I can, I have" exercises
- ✓ Flipchart paper, easel, markers
- ✓ Group record book
- ✓ Bring a table and several miscellaneous heavy objects (rocks, bricks, wood, etc.)
- ✓ Musical instruments and/or loudspeaker with popular songs to dance to
- ✓ Snacks/refreshments for group members

TIPS:

The Session Narrative is a guide. Please note: the text in **BLUE** is a suggested script on what you could use when facilitating. The Peer Dance+Therapy (D+T) Leaders need not be rigid about the script. It is good to be flexible, adapting context-appropriate activities while maintaining the set structure and allocated time. Feel free to express the content in your own words but please keep the intended meaning.

SESSION FLOW

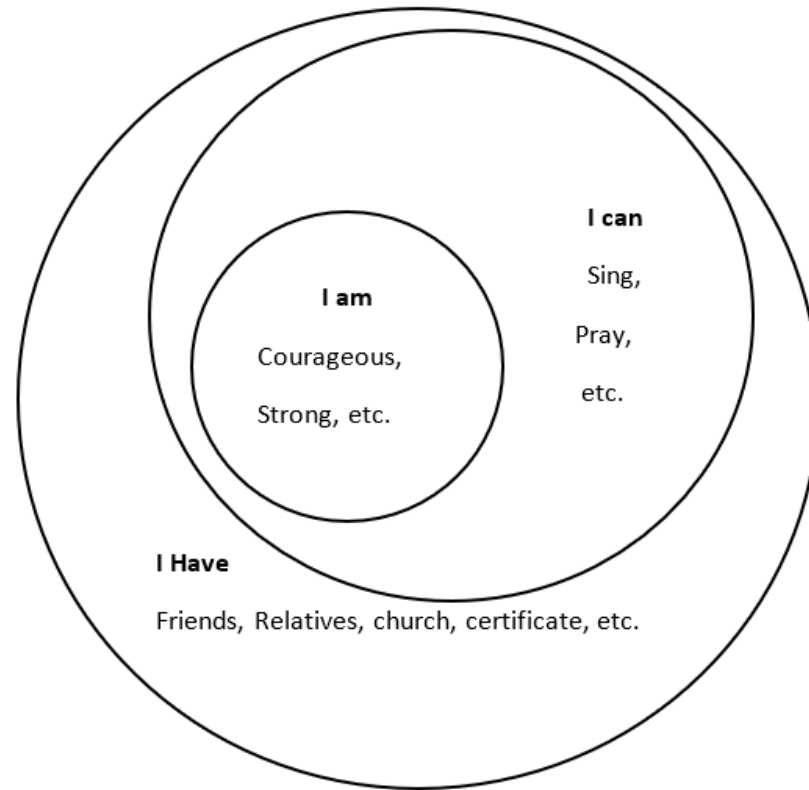
Time	Activity	Process/script	Materials needed
5 min	Welcome and Opening Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Warmly welcome everyone to the group while acknowledging their commitment, motivation, and courage in continuing to come to the group and pursue their journey of recovery. ● Invite the group members to do their opening practice. Make sure that this practice is performed or led by different people each session so that the whole group owns the ritual. 	Mats/chairs/benches
15 min	Check-in and recap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check-in with the group members about how they are doing. Have them focus on thoughts, feelings, and sensations they may be having now or may have had since the last session. ● Share: <i>Coming back together after a week, let each of us reflect on the importance of positive thinking, encouraging self-talk and “catch and reframe thoughts from a place of self-love.”</i> 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask them if over the week they were able to notice what they were thinking or feeling and if they tried talking back to any negative or discouraging thoughts and feelings using their personal positive statement. ● Ask them if they were able to practice their POWERPOSE or any of the grounding exercises they've learned. How did they feel afterwards? ● Keeping time in mind, call on a few group members to share their positive experiences. Build off these examples to encourage the group to continue practicing the skills they are learning, reinforcing that these are tools they will always need to live a positive life. ● Remind them of the importance of practice so that these skills become a regular part of how we take care of ourselves. ● Briefly practice the Grounding Walking Dance again (Session 2). After a few moments of noticing their breath and the support, have them think of an encouraging statement about themselves. Ask them how they feel after doing this exercise. 	
15 min	Noticing Our Problems and What Helps: The Table with Load	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduce the exercise by sharing: ● <i>Today we are going to talk more about some of the ways we can deal with difficult situations that we face in our daily lives. Some of these have to do with our bad experiences in the past and some of them have to do with our present bad situations. Our past and the present are connected – even if something bad happened a long time ago, sometimes we might still feel sad, lonely, afraid, angry, or even hopeless in our lives right now because of our memories and feelings. However, it is important and helpful to realize that this is normal – every person would naturally have such feelings and reactions from such experiences. In our group sessions, we are going to learn about</i> 	A table, loads of any kind

		<p><i>ways to help ourselves and each other to feel better and to manage our lives according to the way we want to.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>There are ways that can help us tolerate, minimize, and exert control over stressful situations in life. Learning to manage stressful situations can help us feel better physically and psychologically and can impact our ability to perform at our best. To feel better, one useful technique is to recognize what is helping us to survive and stay strong in our lives right now, and to identify the people, places and practices from where we get support.</i> ● Get a table and put it in the middle of the circle. Ask group members to think of the different life-challenging situations they are experiencing. Let them name these challenges and ask them to consider their difficulties as weights. Ask them to find something to represent their stressor and ask them to put it on the table. ● Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Could the table stand if it had only one leg? Two? Even three?</i> ● <i>What if there are lots of objects on it, some of them very heavy?</i> ● Recognize their responses; let them just mention a few; avoid long discussions. ● Continue to talk about how heavy the total of all the objects is, and the importance of having as many strong legs as possible for the table. Some of these legs we already have, others we have forgotten about. Still others are ones that we will build during this 12-week group. Examples of “legs”: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Our own strengths: courage, patience, kindness, hard-working, commitment. 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Our practices and skills that help us cope: praying, walking, playing with our children, exercising. ○ People in our lives: family members (father, mother, uncle, aunt, grandparents, siblings), friends, workmates, clan leaders, neighbors, organizations, etc. 	
15 min	Application of the Table with Load in Group Members' Lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Invite the group members to talk about the strengths and resources they have used in coping with life in their past and current situations. Help them to explore their internal resources, such as being smart, strong, hard-working, caring, brave, and so forth, as well as external resources, such as relatives who are still alive, friends, teachers, priests/imams, etc. Also, ask them to consider any practices or skills they have that help them cope whether individually or in a group, such as playing sports, going to church/mosque, exercising, singing, etc. ● Make it clearer by asking them questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>What are the things, people, activities, memories, skills, and organizations that help you to survive/keep going/not give up and/or to feel a little bit stronger either at the present time or in the past?</i> <p>NOTE: This should be a conversation. Draw on a flipchart to record the resources and strengths that group members identify. <i>These become the names of the table legs.</i> You can use different colors to represent the variety of table legs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Depending on what group members say, point out to the group that some supports that people mentioned are outside of themselves (organizations that help, school) and some are inside of themselves (determination, creativity) and some may be both inside and outside (religious faith, loved ones and the love we have for them). 	Flipchart, easel, markers

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reflect with the group on the strength of the table with many strong table legs, which is better able to support their burdens, as opposed to a table with only one or two table legs. Mention that in the next part of the session we will learn how to strengthen and add to their table legs. 	
25 min	I Am, I Have, I Can (Emphasising identification and use of our resources)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When we are faced with challenges in life, we sometimes convince ourselves that we are prisoners of our past; we struggle to think positive thoughts and worry that nothing better will happen to us. We can feel that we have nothing that can help us. Unfortunately, our brain makes us believe these thoughts, whether they are true or not. ● It is important therefore to always be aware of who we are, what positive resources we have, and what we can do to help us in times of difficulties. ● Hand every group member a plain piece of paper, pen/pencil. Ask everyone to draw three circles, a smaller one inside a fairly bigger one and the biggest round the first two. 	



- Ask them to draw/write what they consider themselves to be (“I am”) in the smaller inner circle.
- In the bigger middle circle, ask them to draw/write what they are good at doing (“I can”).
- In the outer biggest circle, ask them to write/draw the positive, helpful/useful resources they have (“I have”).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask a few members of the group to share with the group their drawing. ● Highlight the good resources identified, helping them identify which are internal and external. ● Reflect with the group on the strength of the table with many strong table legs which are our coping resources (“I am, I can, I have”). These strong legs are better able to support their burdens, as opposed to a table with only one or two table legs. 	
5 min	Home Practice Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask group members to reflect on the importance of recognizing and acknowledging what helps them when they are faced with difficult situations. ● Encourage them to continue identifying other things that may also help: they can jot these helpful resources down in a journal, draw a picture of their own unique table, or try to keep a mental list. When a difficult situation arises, or when they begin to feel like they are struggling, encourage them to remember their “I am, I can, I have”. ● Ask them to continue reinforcing the grounding exercise from the second session by practicing this at home during the week, at a regular time every day. ● Encourage them to connect with each other outside of the group. Where appropriate, encourage them to teach their family members what they are learning in the group. 	
10 min	Closing with Vigorous Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Invite group members to join in a vigorous dance shaking dance. As they dance, invite each to shout out loud what they learned today that they hope will help them feel better going forward. ● Serve snacks for closing as group members hang out informally and depart. 	Snacks; musical instruments/ loudspeaker



STAGE 1: SAFETY & STABILIZATION

SESSION 5: Building a Toolbox

Objectives of the session:

- To help group members further understand how the body and mind affect each other, such as how past experiences are stored in the body as memories which can surface as both emotional and physical sensations.
- To help group members recognize and name feelings and relate it to how it affects them.
- To expand group members' toolbox of coping techniques with a Movement Breathing Dance.
- To remind group members that their toolbox contains resources that they can use anytime they feel stressed, discouraged, overwhelmed, or face a difficult situation.

Preparations and materials needed for the session:

- ✓ Time for the session is 90 minutes
- ✓ Make sure you have the list of the expected group members
- ✓ Organize the room/space and the mats/chairs/benches/tables so all sit in a circle facing each other
- ✓ Remember what happened last session
- ✓ Practice reading the script for the Body Map and Movement Breathing Dance
- ✓ Make a pre-drawn Cognitive Triangle Diagram
- ✓ Make a Body Map illustration
- ✓ Paper, pencils, crayons
- ✓ Group record book
- ✓ Musical instruments and/or loudspeaker with popular songs to dance to
- ✓ Snacks/refreshments for group members

TIPS:

The Session Narrative is a guide. Please note: the text in **BLUE** is a suggested script on what you could use when facilitating. The Peer Dance+Therapy (D+T) Leaders need not be rigid about the script. It is good to be flexible, adapting context-appropriate activities while maintaining the set structure and allocated time. Feel free to express the content in your own words but please keep the intended meaning.

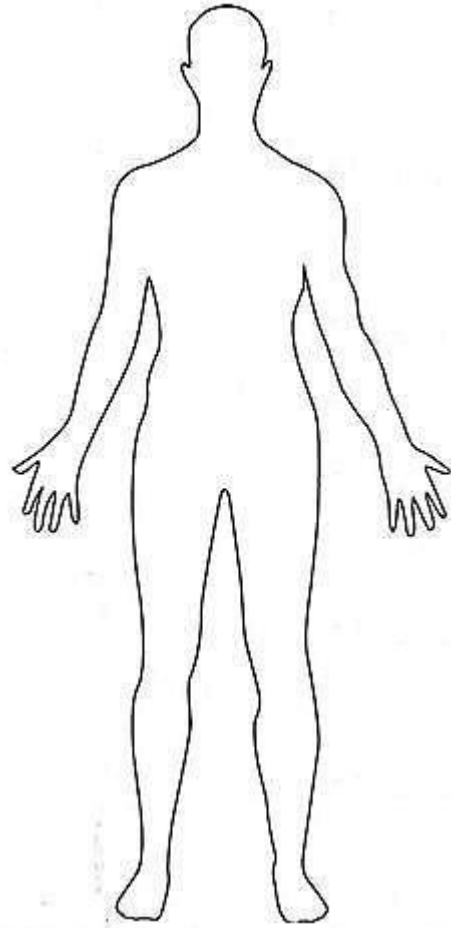
SESSION FLOW

Time	Activity	Process/script	Materials needed
5 min	Welcome and Opening Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warmly welcome everyone to the group while acknowledging their commitment, motivation, and courage in continuing to come to the group and pursue their journey of recovery. Invite the group members to do their opening practice. Make sure that this practice is performed or led by different people each session so that the whole group owns the ritual. 	Mats/chairs/benches
10 min	Check-in and Recap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check-in with the group members about how they are doing. Have them focus on thoughts, feelings, and sensations they may be having now or may have had since the last session. You can say something like: <i>Coming back together after a week, let's each reflect on all that's transpired: let's name a thought, feeling or sensation we are having now or may have had since the last session. What type of a thought or feeling is it (positive/encouraging or negative/discouraging)? What do you think is bringing about (the source of) these thoughts/feelings /sensations? Are these new or have you had them before?</i> 	Flipchart, easel, markers; paper, pencils, crayons

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask group members if they remember what was discussed last week. Summarize their answers by outlining the main points of last week's session using the flipchart. • Ask group members to reflect on their home practice assignment of identifying and acknowledging what helps when they are faced with difficult situations. • <i>Were you able to identify any additional resources that helped when you were faced with difficult situations? What were you able to note down? What resources were you able to use?</i> • <i>If in the past week you made use of any of your resources, how did you feel during the difficult situation versus afterwards once it was resolved? If you did not need to use any of your resources, how does it make you feel knowing that they are there for you whenever you may need them?</i> • Ask them if there were other coping skills they used and what they noticed when they did them. Ask if there are any coping skills they find difficult to practice. • Remind them of the purpose of doing the different activities we are learning, it's like tools that they can put in their toolbox. You could have them draw a toolbox and start to add additional skills. 	
5 min	Body and Mind – The Cognitive Triangle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the diagram of the Cognitive Triangle from Session 3, remind the group of the connections between thoughts, feelings and behaviours, and emphasize that we can work with any point in the triangle to start a process of strengthening. • <i>Today, we're going to continue working with thoughts, feelings and behaviors to continue to build our skills in strengthening ourselves. This helps us in our daily lives and it will also strengthen us to recover from the traumatic experiences that have caused us so much pain. That pain can be both mental and physical.</i> 	The Cognitive Triangle

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have you ever noticed the different ways in which your body feels when you are feeling different emotions? For instance, when you have thoughts or memories about bad things that happened in the past, how does your body feel? What physical sensations do you have?</i> Have them briefly mention a few physical discomforts they may have. 	
25 min	Recognizing Feelings in the Body and Naming Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may notice that for some, naming the above connections is difficult. Inform them that sometimes, people who have been through traumatic experiences have difficulty recognizing their feelings (emotions) and this is normal. • <i>In some ways it protects us, but in other ways it causes trouble because those feelings stay stuck inside of us, making us feel mentally unsettled and unable to control our behaviours. In fact, these thoughts and feelings can actually create the sense of physical pain in our bodies. All of these effects can greatly interfere with our functionality and quality of life.</i> Refer to The Cognitive Triangle again here. • <i>One of the strengthening skills we will learn today is recognizing our feelings. And one of the best ways to recognize our feelings is to find where we feel them in our physical bodies and how they are connected to body sensations (e.g., warmth, tingling, tightness, pain).</i> • Let them know that they will do some exercises to help them identify their feelings (sadness, anger, happiness, fear, love) and how these are connected to body sensations (heaviness, warmth, pain, fluttering, numbness). They will see how the simple exercises they are learning can help relieve their distressing physical sensations. • <i>When we recognize how our feelings and bodily sensations are connected, we can work with our thoughts and actions to help us feel better in our heart and body.</i> • Hand every member a clean piece of paper, pencil/pen and colors/crayons and encourage everyone to draw a Body Map of themselves, remind them that the drawing does not need to be perfect but just a sketch that they can manage to draw. Illustrate with your example. 	The Cognitive Triangle; The Body Map; Papers, pencil, and crayons.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After drawing their Body Map, invite them for a short meditation: • <i>I invite you to close your eyes or pick a spot on the floor to look at. Notice your breathing.</i> • <i>Now, I invite you to travel through time and go back to a distressing situation or event that happened recently to you.</i> • <i>Now that you are thinking back to that negative situation or event, try to notice and name in your head the feelings you have when you think of it, when you remember it. Notice what you feel in your body right now and where those feelings are located (in your head, chest, stomach, etc.).</i> • <i>Now open your eyes and on your piece of paper draw the sensations onto your body map. You can jot down a few words to describe the feelings.</i> • You can give a quick illustration of your own drawing and shading showing where you feel your own different emotional discomforts. 	
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- Ask group members to briefly discuss their Body Maps in pairs (it is also possible to discuss as a group if there is time).

In the big group, put the Body Maps in the middle of the room and reflect on the following questions:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do we notice when we look at these pictures?</i> • <i>What were some examples of difficult feelings and where are they in the body?</i> • <i>We can see that not only do traumatic experiences affect our thoughts and emotions in the form of anxiety, distress, sadness and anger, but we also feel the effects in our bodies. We may feel pain, discomfort, racing heart, nausea and headaches. Sometimes we may even feel pain, numbness or other physical sensations in an arm, leg, hand, or stomach. Memories are not just in our minds; they also “live” in our bodies. So, in the same way we have to take care of our minds, we also have to take care of our bodies to help us work through the physical feelings and sensations that have been caused by our experiences.</i> 	
30 min	Movement Breathing Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Certain behaviours can help us cope and manage our distressing thoughts, feelings and bodily sensations. Today, we’re going to learn a very simple behaviour skill called Movement Breathing Dance, which:</i> • Calms down feelings of anxiety and fear • Grounds and centers us and helps us focus when we feel scared, distracted or disoriented • Quiets our mind when it is “too busy” and overthinking • Helps us relieve pain sensations <p><i>In the following exercise, we’ll learn to combine movement breathing and dancing.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play an upbeat/fast tempo song. Invite the group members to begin dancing while they notice how some people appear tired. Now, slow down the music to enable people to walk around and relax. Lead the group in an inhale-and-exhale breathing exercise. Follow that pattern for the whole of this part of the session. • As members walk around the meeting space, offer the following instructions: • <i>I invite you to concentrate on your steps — you can even count them. Notice the rhythm of your footsteps to the music and how it feels to put your foot on the ground and then lift it</i> 	Musical instruments

		<p><i>again. Also, notice the different colors people wear, the scent around the room, any objects in the room and their patterns. Appreciate things – colors, smells, etc. – in the room in detail.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I will now invite you to walk like a feeling, so if you are really, really happy, let your body show forth as an outward expression of your feeling. What does that “really, really happy” feeling look like? What if you are angry? And what if you are deeply hurting and sad? How would you walk if someone just told you he/she loves you with all their heart?</i> Then invite everyone to come to a stop and be still. <i>Breathe in for 5 seconds, hold for 5 seconds, and breathe out for 5 seconds, making sure that each inhalation, exhalation, and holding is being done for at least five seconds. While breathing in and holding, tighten your muscles and while breathing out, release and loosen them.</i> <i>This will help regulate breathing, allowing your breath to slow down and deepen naturally. Breathing exercises bring fresh oxygen to our brain and body and reduce our distressing symptoms. When our brain gets enough oxygen, it can think better, just like when our body gets enough oxygen it can function better and be healthy.</i> When you are done, check in with the group and ask them what they noticed, how easy or hard this exercise was, and how it made them feel. You can also talk about how and when it might be useful, like when they feel distressed or are experiencing pain or discomfort in their bodies. Connect this with the Cognitive Triangle and have them point out how it might have changed their thoughts, feelings and/or behaviours, together with bodily sensations. 	
5 min	Home Practice Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask group members to reflect on the importance of recognizing and naming feelings when faced with difficult situations. Encourage them to practice noticing feelings/emotions, both uncomfortable and pleasant. They can practice noticing the precise places where they feel these emotions in their body, 	

		<p>and the specific sensations that go with them. In a journal, they can draw Body Maps whenever they experience a new body/mind connection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask them to continue practicing the different skills using the tools in their toolbox. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set aside one time each day to practice grounding, movement breathing and dance. Also, practice these skills when they feel stressed. • Teach their family members some of their tools (<i>only if appropriate</i>) • Practice telling themselves encouraging thoughts, including their personal power statement. Stand tall in their POWERPOSES. • Keep a journal of what helps them, their resources or table legs. Remember to refer to them always • Keep working on connecting with others. 	
10 min	Closing with Vigorous Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite group members to join in a vigorous dance. As they dance, invite each to shout out loud what they learned today that they hope will help them feel better going forward. • Serve snacks for closing as group members hang out informally and depart. 	Snacks; musical instruments/ loudspeaker



STAGE 2: HEALING INVISIBLE WOUNDS

SESSION 6: Telling Our Stories

Objectives of the session:

- To help group members appreciate their lives – past, present and future – acknowledging the occurrence of both painful and joyful moments.
- To initiate and sustain motivation towards the future.
- To remind group members of the importance and power of their toolbox for facing challenges and threats with resilience.

Preparations and materials needed for the session:

- ✓ Time for the session is 90 minutes
- ✓ Make sure you have the list of the expected group members
- ✓ Organize the room/space and the mats/chairs/benches/tables so all sit in a circle facing each other
- ✓ Remember what happened last session
- ✓ Practice reading the script for the River of Life activity and Making-Meaning
- ✓ Make the River of Life illustration
- ✓ Paper, pencils, crayons
- ✓ Group record book
- ✓ Musical instruments and/or loudspeaker with popular songs to dance to
- ✓ Snacks/refreshments for group members

TIPS:

The Session Narrative is a guide. Please note: the text in **BLUE** is a suggested script on what you could use when facilitating. The Peer Dance+Therapy (D+T) Leaders need not be rigid about the script. It is good to be flexible, adapting context-appropriate activities while maintaining the set structure and allocated time. Feel free to express the content in your own words but please keep the intended meaning.

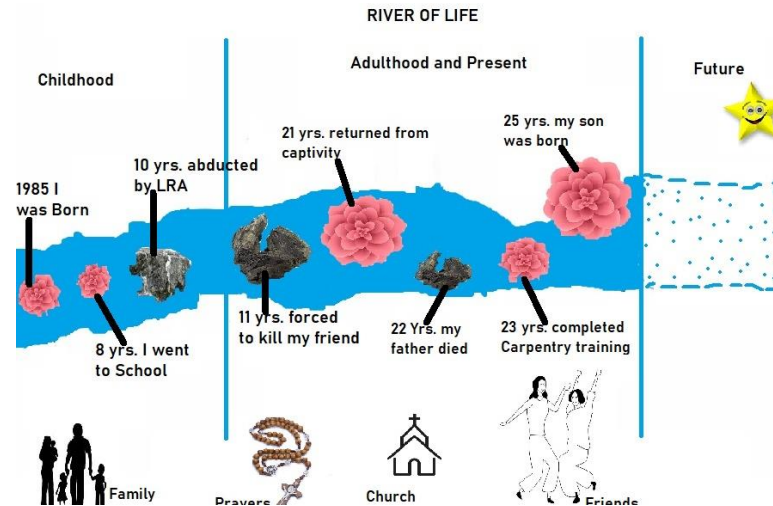
SESSION FLOW

Time	Activity	Process/script	Materials needed
5 min	Welcome and Opening Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Warmly welcome everyone to the group while acknowledging their commitment, motivation, and courage in continuing to come to the group and pursue their journey of recovery.• Invite the group members to do their opening practice. Make sure that this practice is performed or led by different people each session so that the whole group owns the ritual.	Mats/chairs/benches
10 min	Check-in and Recap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check-in with the group members about how they are doing. Have them focus on thoughts, feelings, and sensations they may be having now or may have had since the last session.• Ask them if they were able to notice a connection between what they were thinking and feeling emotionally with how they were feeling physically.• For those who did notice a connection, particularly between a negative thought or emotion and a painful or uncomfortable physical sensation, ask if they were able to use a coping technique from their toolbox to help them get through the situation.	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ask: Did anyone practice the Movement Breathing Dance? After 5 weeks of building your toolbox, what tools or coping techniques have been most useful to you? What does it mean to have these new skills to help you feel better?</i>• <i>Say: Today is the beginning of Stage 2 of our Dance+Therapy programme. We call this Stage “Healing Invisible Wounds.” What do you think we mean by the words “invisible wounds”? *”Bur ma obone”</i>• <i>The objective of Stage 2 is to create a space in which all of us can safely work through traumatic events and begin to make sense of the negative experiences that have shaped our lives. We cannot erase the past, but we can take control over how we think about the past and how we let it affect us. We can learn how to heal our invisible wounds – the mental and emotional wounds on the inside that others can’t see – and take back control of our present and our future.</i>• <i>It is possible that during the session painful memories could surface. Remember that we are all here to support one another. It is okay to express emotion. But, it is also important that we utilize our supports, including the group itself, to practice calming down.</i>	
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30 min	Our Life as a Whole – River of Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the River of Life to the group members. <i>Today we are going to create a picture of a river that represents each one of our lives.</i> Mention that different items will depict different life events that represent their lives: • Rocks = traumatic or negative events • Flowers = happier or positive events • <i>Like a river, your life is unique – it has certain rough areas and smooth areas; at some points it is straight while at others it bends; sometimes it flows fast and roars but it can also be smooth and still.</i> • <i>We will be identifying different moments in our lives using a river as a metaphor or image of life. If your life were a river, what shape would it take?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) <i>Where are the bends and turns when your situation or perspective changed?</i> ii) <i>Where are the rocks — obstacles or life-altering moments? Where are the flowers – achievements or celebratory moments?</i> iii) <i>Where are the points at which it flowed powerfully and purposefully or slowed to a trickle?</i> iv) <i>Where are you now? And is it still flowing ahead?</i> • <i>We will be creating a picture of your life to help give you a more accurate view – a sort of bird’s eye view – of your life where you can see both good and bad moments that you’ve experienced.</i> • <i>One thing trauma can do is create bad memories. Trauma can confuse our sense of past and present – this causes us to feel like events that have happened in the past are happening right now in the present. Using the River of Life, we place our life events in chronological order, which will help us realize that past events are already over.</i> 	Papers, pencils, and crayons, “the River of Life” illustration
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Another thing about trauma: sometimes bad memories block out happy memories. Bad memories may seem strong, but in reality, if we have the awareness and right tools, we can make sure that trauma does not get the last word. There is never one single experience or event that defines us completely – there are always other parts to our story. Your river will help you see the big-picture story of your life and help you weave your most difficult moments together with your positive, life-giving moments and allow your river to flow into a more hopeful and meaningful future.</i>• <i>Today we will not be going into any detail about each major event or even think about them too much, we just want to name or label the different major events in the order in which they happened with your approximate age and/or dates along the flow of your river.</i>• <i>We will go into details of a selected event in the next session. It is normal to experience some emotions while doing this exercise. If you start to feel overwhelmed, practice the grounding and breathing exercises we reviewed at the beginning. If you need support, ask one of the Peer D+T Leaders.</i>• Hand each participant a paper and pencil and crayons. Show them a pre-drawn river of life as an example for them to draw from. | |
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- Start your drawing from birth, which will be the start of the river.
- Identify various key events in your life that shape your story.
- Use dotted lines to divide up your river into three sections: 1) childhood, 2) adulthood (including the present) and 3) future.
- Draw the symbols for life events (rocks for bad and flowers for good) in chronological order; add your approximate age and/or dates at the time of these events and a short label (name) of the event. For example, "Brother killed, July 1999," "Mother died when I was 17," or "Daughter born, September 2020."
- You may use color or size of the symbols to show the level of difficulty or happiness (e.g., marriage might be a big colorful flower; your hut burning down may be a great big rock). Encourage them to use symbols that are meaningful to them (e.g., a star, a heart, an animal).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give the group members some time because traumatic memories tend to “take over the brain” and crowd out the other memories. It may be hard for some group members to think of happy, positive events/memories. Encourage them to take a moment and try to think through even small things that may still be significant to their story. • <i>In your drawing, you can represent the future by leaving a space for the river to flow. You can symbolize this with dotted lines. Draw a symbol of hope or vision for the future.</i> • <i>You can draw symbols along your shore that represent your strengths and resources that helped you handle difficulties that came your way.</i> 	
15 min	Making-Meaning out of Our Lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have members discuss their stories in small groups of 5 people. Remind them that they do not need to go too in depth. For now, we are looking for “headlines.” The goal is to begin to give voice to our stories, find the right language to express ourselves, and start to identify some key elements that we will want to explore later on. Also, remind group members that they are not alone in this. • Return to the big group and put the pictures in the middle of the room, so that the group members are like birds looking over their rivers. • Ask the group the following questions (you do not have to ask all of them, rather these are suggested prompts for the discussion): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v) <i>What do you see when you look at all the pictures together?</i> vi) <i>Do you feel that the River of Life illustration was able to capture some or all of your life story? If not, what was missing?</i> vii) <i>How was it for you to see your life as a whole?</i> viii) <i>What surprised you?</i> ix) <i>What did you learn?</i> 	

		<p>x) <i>Did you use any grounding or other skills while you were drawing? What did you notice when you used these skills?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>By having a bird's eye view of our past, it makes it possible for us to imagine a future full of positive experiences. Of course, there will also be challenges, but we will be equipped to face those challenges with strength and courage and self-love. When you face a difficult situation or a negative memory begins to surface, it may help you to imagine yourself flying over your life as a bird – from up in the sky where the bird flies freely, what do you think the bird would see? How do you think the bird would respond?</i> 	
15 min	Learn a Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite the group members to dance. Explore the possibility of co-creating a choreography, especially if using dance movements that express different parts of the stories that have been shared. Dance to songs that promote resilience, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Romeo Odong - Pililili Yoo Leng Bwola - The Acholi Royal dance <p>TIP: Consider using a happy dance, since it is likely the group members will be feeling tense.</p>	Musical instruments/ loudspeaker
5 min	Home Practice Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind the group members to continue practicing the coping techniques inside their toolbox. As with anything, the more you practice, the better you will be at it and the more natural it will become. <i>Your toolbox will be especially important over the next two sessions because we will be looking into our stories in more detail. This can feel scary at first, however, the process usually helps people feel much better and to lift the burden of the painful stories you are holding inside. Having the tools in your toolbox readily accessible will help make the scariness go away and help the healing begin.</i> 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Continue to practice using the tools in your toolbox, such as:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>xi) Strengthen your practice of grounding and/or movement breathing exercise every day</i> <i>xii) Continue to work on changing thoughts, feelings, and behaviours by pushing negative or discouraging self-talk aside, using your personal power statement and POWERPOSE</i> <i>xiii) Practice noticing things that are going well or that are pleasant to help re-train your brain to see the joyful moments in life</i> <i>xiv) Start your day with an encouraging thought about yourself or your day ahead</i> <i>xv) Keep working on connecting with others such as your family, friends, and group members. Identify the people, places and practices from where you get support.</i> 	
10 min	Closing with Vigorous Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite group members to join in a vigorous dance. As they dance, invite each to shout out loud what they learned today that they hope will help them feel better going forward. • Serve snacks for closing as group members hang out informally and depart. 	Snacks; musical instruments/ loudspeaker



STAGE 2: HEALING INVISIBLE WOUNDS

SESSION 7: Working through a Painful Memory, Pt. 1

Objectives of the sessions:

- To help group members face their fears, avoid avoidance, and share their painful experiences in a safe and supportive environment.
- To allow group members to give and receive emotional support to and from one another.
- To inform group members about how mental health counselling works and encourage them to seek professional counselling if they require additional support to work through their traumatic experiences.
- To help group members practice new coping skills when faced with strong emotions, threats to their emotional well-being, numbing and dissociation.

Preparations and materials needed for the session:

- ✓ Time for the session is 90 minutes
- ✓ Make sure you have the list of the expected group members
- ✓ Organize the room/space and the mats/chairs/benches/tables so all sit in a circle facing each other
- ✓ Remember what happened last session
- ✓ Practice reading the script for Working through a Painful Memory and Wound Metaphor
- ✓ Wipes/tissue
- ✓ Group record book
- ✓ Musical instruments and/or loudspeaker with popular songs to dance to
- ✓ Snacks/refreshments for group members

TIPS:

The Session Narrative is a guide. Please note: the text in **BLUE** is a suggested script on what you could use when facilitating. The Peer Dance+Therapy (D+T) Leaders need not be rigid about the script. It is good to be flexible, adapting context-appropriate activities while maintaining the set structure and allocated time. Feel free to express the content in your own words but please keep the intended meaning.

SESSION FLOW

Time	Activity	Process/script	Materials needed
5 min	Welcome and Opening Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warmly welcome everyone to the group while acknowledging their commitment, motivation, and courage in continuing to come to the group and pursue their journey of recovery. • Invite the group members to do their opening practice. Make sure that this practice is performed or led by different people each session so that the whole group owns the ritual. 	Mats/chairs/benches
5 min	Check-in and recap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-in with the group members about how they are doing. Have them focus on thoughts, feelings, and sensations they may be having now or may have had since the last session. • <i>Last week we created our River of Life – this was a representation of each person’s uniquely special journey through life. You may have felt many emotions throughout the week stemming from this activity. How did you feel? What did you experience?</i> • <i>What tools from your “toolbox” did you use to cope with your feelings/memories/thoughts? What skills seemed to help you the most?</i> 	

<p>10 min</p>	<p>Introduction to Working through a Painful Memory; Wound Metaphor</p>	<p>SESSION 7 ONLY</p> <p>TIP: Remind the group members on the confidentiality agreement before starting the next phase of sharing stories.</p> <p>Working through Painful Memories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Over the next two sessions we are going to be working through our painful memories. We would like to invite you to focus on a period in your River of Life that has had a major impact on your life. This would be a moment that is difficult for you to forget and yet it is something that you try hard to avoid thinking about. This is a moment that emotionally upsets you whenever you do think about it.</i> • <i>We may have been told that it is not appropriate or that we are not allowed to talk about certain memories and their associated feelings. We may feel like it is not okay to share our thoughts and feelings with others. We want to remind you that over the past several weeks, we have been working to create a safe space and a culture of support and encouragement among our group. It is okay to talk about these things – in fact, talking about them is a major part of the healing process.</i> <p>NOTE: Use the Wound Metaphor to help group members pass through any tendency towards avoidance. <i>“Kolo wang ngwee” “Bur ma pe ocang ci obone”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>First ask: Have you ever had a physical wound? If so, what did you do to take care of it?</i> • <i>What happens if you do not take care of the physical wound and just cover it up or ignore it? It gets worse, right? It can become infected and lead to serious long-term problems. So, we are advised to clean the wound even though it can hurt badly while doing so, because in the long run it will heal better.</i> • <i>Emotional/psychological/spiritual wounds are similar – if you ignore them or avoid them, they do not always go away; in fact, they can often start to bother you more and</i> 	
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		<p><i>more through intrusive memories, nightmares, physical pains, insomnia, poor attention, bad choices/reckless behaviours, and other symptoms.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Just like an unhealed physical wound or inflammation, every time you bump into an unhealed emotional or psychological experience – every time a memory/flashback resurfaces – it hurts, oftentimes worse and worse over the years.</i> ● <i>Naturally, we don't like the way this feels, so we try to avoid it. We've conditioned ourselves to believe that it is better not to be in touch with these bad memories because they can hurt so much. However, in order for the wound – either physical or psychological – to heal properly, we need to tend to it.</i> ● <i>So how do we clean and care for an emotional/psychological/ spiritual wound? We identify our thoughts and feelings; we talk about it; we utilize our helpful resources/supports; we receive and give support. This is what we call healing our invisible wounds.</i> ● <i>But, even when a physical wound heals, is it entirely gone? No – there may be scars. Similarly, we will never entirely forget traumatic memories – they will always be a part of us. But, there are things we can do to help the pain subside and have more control over our traumatic memories. We will be able to function to the best of our abilities and we will enjoy a good life.</i> ● <i>We acknowledge that this topic can be difficult while sharing, but we often feel lighter at the end. Also, it can be difficult to listen to others' stories. Let's stay with the person who is speaking and show them support.</i> ● <i>We will not have time for everyone's story today, but we will have time at the next session to make sure everyone gets to share.</i> 	
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45 min	Working through a Painful Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>In the previous session, you named events in your River of Life and we focused more on the whole river rather than the details of these events.</i> ● <i>Today we want to take the opportunity to share one event in more detail, from beginning to middle to end.</i> ● <i>We would like you to choose one memory that still really bothers you and still comes to mind even when you do not want it to, that you feel willing and able to share with the group.</i> ● <i>We know this is difficult, but today is a special day to face your memories of fear when you have the support of others, and we will all help you get through it. We want to look at a very upsetting moment so that we can face it together.</i> ● <i>We appreciate your courage and openness to share your story with us. Telling your story in a supportive environment helps you put the pieces of the memory back together to help you heal. It is okay to show emotion; it is okay to cry. Here, crying is not a sign of weakness; rather, it is a part of the healing process to make yourself stronger. Being part of this group requires a lot of hard work; your tears are a sign of that strength.</i> <p>Divide into 2 subgroups: each group will have 1 Peer Dance+Therapy Leader and 1 THRIVEGulu Counsellor leading the sharing of traumatic memories.</p> <p>In each of the 2 sub-groups, 3 members will share @ 12 minutes/person.</p> <p>NOTE: Below are some of the responses and behaviours that might be helpful during this session. Emphasise to all members to use them during the sharing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respect others' turn to speak ● Listen actively and silently to others when sharing their stories 	Wipes/tissue
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Acknowledge their resilience or courage instead of reminding them of their suffering; remember that you have the power to make a difference by offering someone encouragement and support but do not give advice ● At the end say: <i>Thank you for sharing your story with us</i> <p>NOTE: A THRIVEGulu counsellor will help direct the storytelling by offering professional guidance, asking the group to offer support, and asking sensitive questions.</p> <p>TIP: Make sure you do a movement exercise between group members' sharing to allow everyone to release the stress in the body.</p>	
5 min	Check-in and Validation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After everyone has shared, make sure the two groups come back together and reconnect as a large group. ● Invite group members to practice grounding exercise: <i>We will be taking a short break to stand up and stretch, shake our legs and arms, and do some breathing exercises to let go of the tension.</i> ● <i>You may feel low for several hours or days; this is normal after having talked about and listened to very difficult experiences. With time, you will all feel better. And, there are THRIVEGulu counsellors available if you need additional support. They are here to help.</i> ● <i>Some of you may feel relief that you were able to speak about something difficult, that you were able to do something you had feared; this may have lifted a burden for you. Everyone should feel good about themselves that you were able to support one another.</i> 	
10 min	Learn a Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explore the use of funeral dance and choose songs to play in a way that allows a person to mourn both alone and in a group, and that facilitates a process of grieving that is also healing. 	Musical instruments/ loudspeaker

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This dance should be cathartic, meaning it can help release bad energy and replace it with good. Together, we can bandage our wounds and bring ourselves back to the here-and-now as we prepare to close the session. 	
5 min	Recap of Today's Session and Home Practice Assignment	<p>RECAP: Acknowledge and praise the work the group has done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Once again, we want to take a moment to appreciate all your courage to share and listen in this session. We know it has not been easy to talk and hear about such difficult moments, but you were all very brave and continued together even when it was hard. It takes courage, trust, and strength to do that.</i> <p>Home Practice Assignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>For this week's home assignment, notice your thoughts, feelings, behaviours and body sensations throughout the week. Write them down in a journal if it is helpful.</i> <i>Importantly, think about the joyful moments from your River of Life from Session 6.</i> <i>Continue to practice using the tools in your toolbox, such as:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Strengthen your practice of grounding and/or movement breathing exercise every day</i> <i>Continue to work on changing thoughts, feelings, and behaviours by pushing negative or discouraging self-talk aside, using your personal power statement and POWERPOSE</i> <i>Practice noticing things that are going well or that are pleasant to help re-train your brain to see the joyful moments in life</i> <i>Start your day with an encouraging thought about yourself or your day ahead</i> 	

		<p>v) <i>Keep working on connecting with others such as your family, friends, and group members. Identify the people, places and practices from where you get support.</i></p>	
5 min	Closing with Vigorous Dance	<p>TIP: This being an intense session, it may be helpful to use light humor or talk about something fun that can help lighten the emotions before they leave the session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite group members to join in a vigorous dance. • Serve snacks for closing as group members hang out informally and depart. 	Snacks and musical instruments/loudspeaker



STAGE 2: HEALING INVISIBLE WOUNDS

SESSION 8: Working through a Painful Memory, Pt. 2

Objectives of the sessions:

- To help group members face their fears, avoid avoidance, and share their painful experiences in a safe and supportive environment.
- To allow group members to give and receive emotional support to and from one another.
- To inform group members about how mental health counselling works and encourage them to seek professional counselling if they require additional support to work through their traumatic experiences.
- To help group members practice new coping skills when faced with strong emotions, threats to their emotional well-being, numbing and dissociation.

Preparations and materials needed for the session:

- ✓ Time for the session is 90 minutes
- ✓ Make sure you have the list of the expected group members
- ✓ Organize the room/space and the mats/chairs/benches/tables so all sit in a circle facing each other
- ✓ Remember what happened last session
- ✓ Practice reading the script for Working through a Painful Memory and Wound Metaphor
- ✓ Wipes/tissue
- ✓ Group record book
- ✓ Musical instruments and/or loudspeaker with popular songs to dance to
- ✓ Snacks/refreshments for group members

TIPS:

The Session Narrative is a guide. Please note: the text in **BLUE** is a suggested script on what you could use when facilitating. The Peer Dance+Therapy (D+T) Leaders need not be rigid about the script. It is good to be flexible, adapting context-appropriate activities while maintaining the set structure and allocated time. Feel free to express the content in your own words but please keep the intended meaning.

SESSION FLOW

Time	Activity	Process/script	Materials needed
5 min	Welcome and Opening Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warmly welcome everyone to the group while acknowledging their commitment, motivation, and courage in continuing to come to the group and pursue their journey of recovery. Invite the group members to do their opening practice. Make sure that this practice is performed or led by different people each session so that the whole group owns the ritual. 	Mats/chairs/benches
60 min	Working through a Painful Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check-in with the group members about how they are doing. Have them focus on thoughts, feelings, and sensations they may be having now or may have had since the last session. <i>We're going to pick right up where we left off last week. Our group did an incredible job working through some painful memories. This is hard work, but you all are showing each other and, most importantly, proving to yourselves that you have courage, strength and resilience. Every week, you are growing stronger and stronger.</i> <i>Today we want to make sure that everyone has an opportunity to share one event from their River of Life in more detail, from beginning to middle to end.</i> 	Wipes/tissue

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>We would like you to choose one memory that still really bothers you and still comes to mind even when you do not want it to, that you feel willing and able to share with the group.</i> ● <i>A quick reminder of a few things:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>We know this is difficult, but today is a special day to face your memories of fear when you have the support of others, and we will all help you get through it. We want to look at a very upsetting moment to face it together.</i> 2) <i>We appreciate your courage and openness to share your story with us. Telling your story in a supportive environment helps you put the pieces of the memory back together to help you heal. It is okay to show emotion; it is okay to cry. Here, crying is not a sign of weakness; rather, it is a part of the healing process to make yourself stronger. Being part of this group requires a lot of hard work. Your tears are a sign of that strength.</i> 3) <i>Consider the kinds of responses and behaviours that would be helpful during this session: “Thank you for sharing your story with us”; listen actively and silently to others when sharing their stories; acknowledge their resilience or courage instead of reminding them of their suffering; respect others’ turn to speak; remember that you have the power to make a difference by offering someone encouragement and support.</i> <p>Divide group members into 2 sub-groups: each group will have 1 Peer Dance+Therapy Leader and 1 THRIVEGulu Counsellor leading the sharing of traumatic memories.</p> <p>In each of the 2 sub-groups, 5 members will share @ 11 minutes/person.</p>	
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5 min	Check-in and Validation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After everyone has shared, make sure the two groups come back together and reconnect as a large group. • Invite group members to practice a grounding exercise: <i>We will be taking a short break to stand up and stretch, shake our legs and arms, and do some breathing exercises to let go of the tension.</i> • <i>You may feel low for several hours or days; this is normal after having talked about and listened to very difficult experiences. With time, you will all feel better. And, there are THRIVEGulu counsellors available if you need additional support. They are here to help.</i> • <i>Some of you may feel relief that you were able to speak about something difficult, that you were able to do something you had feared; this may have lifted a burden for you. Everyone should feel good about themselves that you were able to support one another.</i> 	
10 min	Learn a Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the use of funeral dance and choose songs to play in a way that allows a person to mourn both alone and in a group, and that facilitates a process of grieving that is also healing. • This dance should be cathartic, meaning it can help release bad energy and replace it with good. Together, we can bandage our wounds and bring ourselves back to the here and now as we prepare to close the session. 	Musical instruments/ loudspeaker

<p>5 min</p>	<p>Recap of today's session and Home practice assignment</p>	<p>RECAP: Acknowledge and praise the work the group has done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Once again, we want to take a moment to appreciate all your courage to share and listen in this session. We know it has not been easy to talk and hear about such difficult moments, but you were all very brave and continued together even when it was hard. It takes courage, trust, and strength to do that.</i> <p>Home Practice Assignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>For this week's home assignment, notice your thoughts, feelings, behaviours and body sensations throughout the week. Write them down in a journal if it is helpful.</i> • <i>Importantly, think about the joyful moments from your River of Life from Session 6.</i> • <i>Continue to practice using the tools in your toolbox, such as:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) <i>Strengthen your practice of grounding and/or movement breathing exercise every day</i> ii) <i>Continue to work on changing thoughts, feelings, and behaviours by pushing negative or discouraging self-talk aside, using your personal power statement and POWERPOSE</i> iii) <i>Practice noticing things that are going well or that are pleasant to help re-train your brain to see the joyful moments in life</i> iv) <i>Start your day with an encouraging thought about yourself or your day ahead</i> v) <i>Keep working on connecting with others such as your family, friends, and group members. Identify the people, places and practices from where you get support.</i> 	
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5 min	Closing with Vigorous Dance	<p>TIP: This being an intense session, it may be helpful to use light humor or talk about something fun that can help lighten the emotions before they leave the session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Invite group members to join in a vigorous dance. ● Serve snacks for closing as group members hang out informally and depart. 	Snacks and musical instruments/loudspeaker
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STAGE 2: HEALING INVISIBLE WOUNDS

SESSION 9: Loss & Resilience, Pt. 1

- Memories of Loss -

Objectives of the session:

- To provide a supportive environment for group members to express their grief over their losses and accept losses that cannot be recovered.
- To help group members reflect on the multiple internal and external losses in life due to war, torture, and displacement and how these losses have affected their beliefs, self-image, emotions, behaviours and ability to reclaim their own goodness and self-worth.
- To reduce feelings of self-blame, guilt and shame and begin the process of self-forgiveness.
- To help group members identify the positive characteristics in their loved ones that have been passed onto them, and to utilize these memories and character traits as supports that are part of their own identity.

Preparations and materials needed for the session:

- ✓ Time for the session is 90 minutes
- ✓ Make sure you have the list of the expected group members
- ✓ Organize the room/space and the mats/chairs/benches/tables so all sit in a circle facing each other
- ✓ Remember what happened last session
- ✓ Practice reading the script for the Memories of Losses story and the Footprints Exercise
- ✓ Aromo's Story

- ✓ The Group Agreement
- ✓ The Body Map Illustration
- ✓ Paper, pencils, crayons
- ✓ Group record book
- ✓ Musical instruments and/or loudspeaker with popular songs to dance to
- ✓ Dance costumes and props for the dance choreography
- ✓ Snacks/refreshments for group members

TIPS:

1) Ensure you have Aromo’s story or a well-adapted and context-appropriate story that depicts life before a loss, living through the loss, living with the loss and eventual recovery and moving forward.

2) The Session Narrative is a guide. Please note: the text in **BLUE** is a suggested script on what you could use when facilitating. The Peer Dance+Therapy (D+T) Leaders need not be rigid about the script. It is good to be flexible, adapting context-appropriate activities while maintaining the set structure and allocated time. Feel free to express the content in your own words but please keep the intended meaning.

SESSION FLOW

Time	Activity	Process/script	Materials needed
5 min	Welcome and Opening Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warmly welcome everyone to the group while acknowledging their commitment, motivation, and courage in continuing to come to the group and pursue their journey of recovery. • Invite the group members to do their opening practice. Make sure that this practice is performed or led by different people each session so that the whole group owns the ritual. 	Mats/chairs/benches

10 min	Check-in and Recap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-in with the group members about how they are doing. Have them focus on thoughts, feelings, and sensations they may be having now or may have had since the last session. • It is important to note: <i>The last few weeks involved very difficult topics. Today will also be difficult as we continue to think about losses.</i> Give genuine encouragement and acknowledge the strength everyone has shown. • <i>I want to say that our group has done an incredible job working through some painful memories. This is hard work, but you all are showing each other and, most importantly, proving to yourselves, that you have courage, strength and resilience. Every week, you are growing stronger and stronger.</i> • <i>Coming back together after a week, let's each reflect on all that's transpired: let's name a thought, feeling or sensation we are having now or may have had since the last session. What type of a thought or feeling is it (positive/encouraging or negative/discouraging)? What do you think is bringing about these thoughts/feelings/sensations? Are these new or have you had them before?</i> • <i>Have you been able to utilize any tools from your toolbox to help you feel better, to soothe some of the pain you may have felt and to steer you towards self-talk that is positive and encouraging?</i> 	
25 min	Memories of Losses – Aromo's Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In this session, we will be discussing how to support each other and connect with the things you need in order to set positive expectations for the additional difficult work ahead.</i> <p>Revisit the Group Agreement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite the group members to mention the items in the Group Agreements that they still remember. • Review them, placing special emphasis on confidentiality: <i>Please remember: "Things in the group stays in the group."</i> 	The Group Agreement; Aromo's Story

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>As we have continued to build strong relationships with one another, we have learnt that most (or all) of us have experienced significant loss in our lives, such as the death of a dear family member, friend or neighbor; the destruction of or separation from our ancestral villages; and the disappearance of deeply rooted ways of life, traditions and culture. All of this impacts our beliefs about ourselves and others, our sense of meaning, our spirituality, and how we see the world.</i> • <i>We know that although feelings of fear, anxiety and depression are common among survivors of trauma, these feelings are not the only struggles we face. The exposure to extremely challenging situations can make us vulnerable and may lead us to question life and hope for the future. Such situations can include loss of country and community, loss of identity, loss of livelihood and independence, loss of sanitary living conditions, forced migration, physical violence, horrible things we have witnessed, and unresolved grief. These experiences can then cause confusion, self-blame, guilt, shame, humiliation, and a sense of immobilization. In turn, these feelings interfere with coping and meaning-making, and they may freeze the grieving process.</i> • <i>Today, we will explore our experiences of loss and separation. We will consider how some losses are external (loss of home, employment, material items, loved ones), while others are internal losses (loss of dignity, identity, emotional well-being).</i> • <i>To help us understand this better, let's listen to a story. The story is a trauma story, so it may trigger some memories and emotions in you. Let's all take a deep breath and remember to keep our toolbox of coping techniques nearby. (Aromo's story or a well-adapted and context-appropriate story that depicts life before a loss, living through the loss, living with the loss and eventual recovery, and moving forward).</i> <p>Aromo's Story Once upon a time, there lived a very powerful farmer by the name of Aromo. She was married to a teacher, and they had three children. The oldest son was attending a Clinical Officers College in a faraway town. The middle child, a girl, was attending the school where her father was a teacher.</p>	
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		<p>The youngest, a little girl, stayed at home. Hard working as she was, Aromo and her husband lived a good life, owning a beautiful home and a car.</p> <p>One day while she was in her garden, the rebels that had been fighting in the nearby district reached into her village. When she heard the shooting, Aromo immediately ran home to collect her young daughter. They fled and hid in the bush not far away from their home.</p> <p>After three days of hiding, Aromo and her daughter were feeling hungry and weak. Aromo had previously heard terrible stories about how the soldiers tortured people and had even seen it with her own eyes. Even though she had seen the soldiers not far from where she and her child were hiding, Aromo tried to return home with her child. Yet, as soon as she entered the road, the soldiers captured her and began to punish her for running away. They beat her severely on her head and every part of her body with sticks and gun butts until she lost consciousness and was left for dead.</p> <p>Upon regaining consciousness, Aromo found that a neighbor had helped her and her daughter, who thankfully was unharmed, and took them to a nearby hospital. Her neighbor told her that everyone in the school had been killed, including her husband and younger daughter.</p> <p>Aromo stayed in the hospital for 4 months while receiving treatment. Many of her teeth had been knocked out in the attack and she had an ugly scar on her face. Although she was recovering, she found it difficult to stand for long periods or to lift heavy things due to multiple fractures from the beating. The doctors told her that with regular exercise she might become stronger in time.</p> <p>Aromo was not able to contact her oldest son in the other town. The war had reached that town too, and the school closed. News went round that several students from that training school were abducted and some were killed. Her son did not answer his phone. Aromo had no idea where her older son was, or even if he was alive.</p> <p>After many months Aromo managed to track down her eldest son. He was living with some friends and expressed a desire to continue his education when the war was over. He was trying</p>	
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		<p>to make ends meet by working as a day guard. At that time, it was still too dangerous for her son to visit her, but they were able to speak on the telephone regularly.</p> <p>Today, Aromo misses her husband and middle daughter terribly and every night she looks at their photographs before getting into bed. She remembers how her husband always trusted in God. This renews her own faith and gives her strength. She also remembers her daughter’s laugh and how she always used to make her mother laugh with silly jokes. While these memories make Aromo sad as she remembers all that she has lost, they also make her smile.</p> <p>Briefly discuss the following questions or use your own:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What stood out to you in this story?</i> • <i>Recall the difference between external and internal losses. What were some of Aromo’s external losses? How about her internal losses?</i> • <i>What helps her to bear the pain and remember the positive memories?</i> • <i>Can you grieve over someone even if they may be still alive?</i> • <i>What do you think Aromo misses the most?</i> <p><i>Thinking about Aromo’s story can remind us about our own losses, and the things we miss the most. Today you are going to have the opportunity to share with each other about what you still miss the most, and what positive memories you have. This may be painful to talk about but sharing with the group can help us gain strength and heal our invisible wounds.</i></p>	
20 min	Memories of Losses – The Footprint Exercise	<p>Expressing Our Grief - The Footprint Exercise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Can you think of a person who has died but who you continue to hold in your heart? Who is that loved one?</i> • <i>Let us take this opportunity to express what we miss about our lost loved ones. Maybe we can see how they inspired us and had a positive impact on our lives.</i> 	Paper, pencils, crayons

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is it that they did that made you admire them?</i> • <i>What is it today that you miss most about the person you have lost?</i> • Get a few answers from the group members. After the discussion, make this statement: <i>These people have left a big impression on you/the world. It is almost like they left a footprint in the lives of others.</i> • Distribute A4 paper and a colored pen or crayons for each group member. Ask all the group members to take their shoes off, step with your left foot on the paper and draw an outline around it – demonstrate this by doing it yourself. • Then, in the middle of the foot, fill in the name(s) of a person they admire – if they prefer, they can also draw the person’s face. In the toes, write or draw 5 characteristics they like about them. When they are finished, ask a few group members to share their results. • Now, have the group members flip the paper to the other side and do the same with their right foot. But this time, instead of writing/drawing your lost one’s name/face, write or draw your own name/face – demonstrate this by doing it yourself. In the toes, this time have them write the characteristics you want others to know you for: e.g., “I want people to know I’m kind, honest, strong, etc.” Once complete, ask a few (different) group members to share their results. • Then invite all to place their footprint on the floor with whichever side they are willing to share to be facing upward. Allow group members to walk around the drawings, so that everyone can see each other’s footprints. • Ask the group members to find their footprints, fold them and keep them as they take their seats. Acknowledge: <i>It is not easy to think about our lost loved ones, but I can feel that the group has grown stronger and supported each other in honoring the things we miss about them.</i> 	
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		<p>Ask group members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How did it feel to remember and share about your loved one?</i> • <i>What helps you to bear the pain and remember the positive memories?</i> • <i>What might help you to live with your losses so that they don't weigh you down emotionally?</i> 	
20 min	Learn a Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let group members decide upon a well-known Acholi traditional dance that celebrates life or come prepared with an upbeat and encouraging popular song to which the group members can dance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Funeral dance; "Odong moko tye, too oneko layom cwiny" • Inform group members that for this dance, everyone will "get into character." Each person needs to select a particular role to play as they dance: guilt; self-blame; sadness; joy; self-love; hopeful; etc. Together, they will choreograph the dance movements. • If appropriate, let group members select and wear appropriate costumes for the dance. Have props available for use during the dance. • <i>How do you recognize these different emotions? What does it feel like to "play the part of" an emotion? How does it feel knowing that when you play the character of an emotion, you can take control over it?</i> 	Musical instruments/ loudspeaker; dance costumes and props
5 min	Home Practice Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask group members to develop a practice or memorial to honor their loved one(s). Have them write down or draw a picture of some of the gifts and strengths they have received from them. Encourage them to pick a regular time of the day or week to remember their loved ones. • <i>As we remember the losses we have endured, we have also noticed that thinking about the positive memories of our lost loved ones can give us strength. For next week, we ask that you create a memoir: this can be an object that reminds you of the positive memories of your lost</i> 	

		<p><i>loved one. For example, you could bring a specific item, like a photo or a necklace, or it could be something that represents a characteristic of that person, like a shiny stone or a green leaf.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask them to think about ways that they can rebuild their lives, using the strengths that their loved ones taught them. Especially if their loved ones made them feel happy or brought them joy, reminding them how important it is to focus on the joyful moments in life. • <i>Continue to practice using the tools in your toolbox every day, including grounding, movement, breathing, and dancing. Start your day with an affirmation about yourself or your hopes for the day (e.g., I am capable; I am strong; Today I will do well on my test; Today I will make a profit selling in the market). These tools will help you work on changing thoughts, feelings, and behaviours.</i> 	
5 min	Closing with Vigorous Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite group members to join in a vigorous dance. As they dance, invite each to shout out loud what they learned today that they hope will help them feel better going forward. • Serve snacks for closing as group members hang out informally and depart. 	Snacks; musical instruments/ loudspeaker



STAGE 2: HEALING INVISIBLE WOUNDS

SESSION 10: Loss & Resilience, Pt. 2

- Living through Losses -

Objectives of the session:

- To provide a supportive environment for group members to express their grief over their losses and accept losses that cannot be recovered.
- To help group members develop practices for positive grieving and keeping memories alive (pictures, sayings, symbols).
- To help group members recognize how positive memories of loved ones build resiliency and can be internal resources for rebuilding their lives.
- To motivate group members to explore new endeavors, interests and relationships as a way of recovering from some losses.

Preparations and materials needed for the session:

- ✓ Time for the session is 90 minutes
- ✓ Make sure you have the list of the expected group members
- ✓ Organize the room/space and the mats/chairs/benches/tables so all sit in a circle facing each other
- ✓ Remember what happened last session
- ✓ Practice reading the script for the Living through Losses and Rebuilding Life after Loss sections
- ✓ The Cognitive Triangle

- ✓ Drawing of the table from Session 4
- ✓ Aromo's Story
- ✓ Paper, pencils, crayons
- ✓ Group record book
- ✓ Musical instruments and/or loudspeaker with popular songs to dance to
- ✓ Dance costumes
- ✓ Snacks/refreshments for group members

TIPS:

The Session Narrative is a guide. Please note: the text in **BLUE** is a suggested script on what you could use when facilitating. The Peer Dance+Therapy (D+T) Leaders need not be rigid about the script. It is good to be flexible, adapting context-appropriate activities while maintaining the set structure and allocated time. Feel free to express the content in your own words but please keep the intended meaning.

SESSION FLOW

Time	Activity	Process/script	Materials needed
5 min	Welcome and Opening Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warmly welcome everyone to the group while acknowledging their commitment, motivation, and courage in continuing to come to the group and pursue their journey of recovery. • Invite the group members to do their opening practice. Make sure that this practice is performed by different people each session so that the whole group owns the ritual. 	Mats/chairs/benches
15 min	Check-in and Recap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-in with the group members about how they are doing. Have them focus on thoughts, feelings, and sensations they may be having now or may have had since the last session. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to note that the last few weeks involved very difficult topics, and that today will also be difficult as the group continues to think about losses. At the same time, it is important to note that each group member is growing stronger and the group as a whole is also growing stronger. Give genuine encouragement and acknowledge the strength everyone has shown. • Ask group members about the home practice assignment. Ask if through the week they were able to think about the loving words of encouragement, inspiring characteristics and other strengths passed down from their lost loved one. Ask if anyone was able to create a memorial of some kind paying tribute to a lost loved one. • If any group members brought with them a photograph, memento, or other symbolic object that serves as a memoir of a lost loved one, invite them to share it. • <i>How do you feel when you look at or touch your memoir? Does it change how you remember them or the feelings of loss that you suffered?</i> • <i>How does it feel telling others about the person you loved?</i> 	
25 min	Living through Losses – Self-blame, Guilt and Shame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>‘How people keep on living despite losses’ is the theme of this session.</i> Reflect on the experience of loss: • <i>Today we’re continuing to explore how losses and separations from deep connections of family members, community, and our deeply rooted way of life impact us. These losses impact our beliefs, our sense of meaning, spirituality, and how we see the world. This can then cause confusion, self-blame, guilt, shame, humiliation, and a sense of immobilization. These feelings interfere with coping and meaning-making and may freeze the grieving process.</i> • Loss and the feeling of guilt and shame: 	The Cognitive Triangle

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>When we think about our losses, it is natural to wonder sometimes if we are somehow responsible for the loss and if we contributed to it in some way. We might look back and feel that maybe we could have done something different which would have prevented the bad things from happening. These thoughts often start with “if only...” For example, “if only I had done this or that, I might have prevented the harm or death of a loved one,” or “if only I had stayed rather than leave my child wouldn’t have been abducted,” or “if only I had cooperated with the perpetrators I would not have been assaulted.” Also, we may regret not having the opportunity to say “goodbye.” These thoughts can leave us feeling guilty and ashamed.</i> • <i>Having these thoughts can be extremely painful, as it makes us lose the sense of ourselves as a good person and a person in control. This certainly does not mean that we were responsible (those who perpetrated the war/trauma/torture were responsible), but regardless, having these thoughts easily leads to painful and distressing feelings, usually of self-blame, guilt, and shame.</i> • <i>Do you remember the Cognitive Triangle? Point to the Cognitive Triangle to help them see the connections between thoughts and feelings. We want to name and understand these painful thoughts and feelings to provide an opportunity for healing.</i> • <i>Ask the group members to think of a situation in which they think they were responsible for a loss (where they have a sense of self-blame, guilt, or shame). Invite them to pay attention to the language they use when they think about this situation: <i>What do you say to yourself about yourself? What words do you use? How do you feel?</i></i> • <i>These are hard things to think about, but it is important to develop an awareness around how we currently process certain losses, so that we can begin to forgive ourselves.</i> <p>Note: be careful not to reinforce members' negative perception about themselves.</p>	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To begin to address these feelings of self-blame, guilt, and shame, I would like us now to imagine a person in your life, in the past or present, who has been caring, forgiving and supportive of you and who would not want you to suffer. This could be a friend, a teacher, a parent, a sibling, a grandparent, a neighbor, a religious leader, etc. I will be quiet now and give you a few minutes to think about who this person is for you.</i> • Once they have chosen a person, invite them to imagine a situation where they share their pain and guilt with this person. Inquire, <i>How would this person respond to you lovingly and compassionately when they hear about your struggles?</i> • <i>Maybe they would say something like, “You did the best you could;” “Think about all the good things you have done - you were able to save yourself and your children by leaving;” “I love you no matter what;” “Yes, some things may have gone wrong, but even good people make mistakes and can be forgiven.”</i> • Ask the group members to notice what they feel in their body as they think of those words that the caring person is saying to them. The goal is to facilitate real-time therapeutic feedback, meaning they are actively healing in the here-and-now. • Now, go around the circle again and have the group members say out loud the words that they wish their “caring person” would say to them. Have them speak as if they were that person talking directly to themselves. Ask them to describe how it feels to say these words and to hear yourself saying them. Ask if there is any change in their feelings when they think of these words. • Refer once again to the Cognitive Triangle and emphasize that we can choose to focus on these words of caring rather than the negative thoughts that fill us with self-blame, guilt, and shame. 	
20 min	Rebuilding Life after Loss and Reclaiming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>From our River of Life session, we learned that our brains often focus on what is hard or painful, and that this in turn generates unhelpful views about ourselves that keep us from</i> 	Aromo’s Story; Drawing of the table from session 4

	<p>Goodness – Aromo’s Story, continued</p>	<p><i>seeing our goodness. Similarly, we need to try hard to remember that we did a lot to survive our traumatic experiences and to protect others.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Remember how in Session 4, we learned that have a lot of strengths that have helped us to survive. Point out the table drawing, and the internal resources listed. Ask group members if they remember some of the strengths they had listed.</i> • <i>We can choose to focus more on our strengths and replace the cycle of negative thoughts with a cycle of helpful thoughts and feelings just like what we learned from the Cognitive Triangle. For instance, we might say to ourselves “I may not have been able to save everyone, but I managed to escape the village and save my children;” or “I am proud of myself for being able to support my children even without my husband.”</i> • <i>Even after a loss, we must rebuild our lives in order to feel whole again: First, we need time to mourn our losses, as we did together in our last session. And, second, we need to find ways to keep on living in the present despite having lost loved ones in the past, because this is the key to having a hopeful future.</i> • <i>To help us think about this important topic, let us continue with Aromo’s Story.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>What do you remember about Aromo’s eldest son? As you remember from last week, Aromo was able to track down her eldest son. He is living in the town where he was studying and would like to continue his education when the war is over; he is currently working as a day guard. They speak on the telephone regularly.</i> ○ <i>What do you remember about Aromo’s husband and eldest daughter? She misses her husband and middle child terribly and every night she looks at their photographs before getting into bed. She remembers how her husband always trusted in God. This renews her own faith and gives her strength. She also remembers her daughter’s laugh and how she always used to make her mother laugh. While these memories make Aromo sad, they also make her smile, and sometimes give her strength.</i> 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In time, Aromo recovered some of her physical strength and managed to get a part-time job working at the hospital at which she was treated. Because the hospital staff understand that it is difficult for Aromo to stand for long periods, she is given administrative duties at the reception that she can do sitting down. ○ Her son is doing well in a new school in a new town. Sometimes when she goes to the school to collect her boy she will sit and talk with some other mothers under the trees. One of these mothers is starting to become a friend and one day soon Aromo plans to invite her to share a meal with them. ● Further group discussion about Aromo’s story by asking the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What is Aromo doing to return to her life after her losses?</i> <i>What might Aromo do to restore some of the things that she has lost? What else do you think she could do to help her feel better?</i> <i>Are there losses she cannot restore? Why should Aromo think about these things?</i> ● Then invite group members to take a moment and reflect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Think about your own life. Identify one personal loss that you might have experienced. Please tell people in the group how you showed strength during that difficult time.</i> ● Ask group members to share how else they can have compassion for themselves, reminding them that it is important to start to forgive themselves? ● <i>As we have discussed before, every human being has special gifts and talents that they bring to the world, and especially to the people that they love. By sharing those special gifts, they teach us something about how to live well, especially when times are very hard. This is an opportunity for you to honor the people that you have lost, and to tell others about the special gifts that you have received from them.</i> 	
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15 min	Learn a Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get members into a circle and dance to Otole Dance. • Life is like a “fight”-or-lose situation – and people must be prepared to “fight”. In Acholi tradition the Otole dance or warrior dance as it is now known, served several complementary functions. The vigorous and energetic movements helped physically prepare men for the demands of fighting, whilst the sequences performed during the mock fights instructed men on formation patterns, advance and retreat strategies alongside the manner of attacking and defending. Women had the essential role of supporting men before, during and after battle. Otole also serves to emotionally prepare women and men for violent encounters, acting as a mechanism for motivation and encouragement, and for inciting military courage and confidence. Otole dance in this context can help through freeing members of guilt or regret. <p>NOTE: In our group, the roles of women and men can be interchangeable, and all should be encouraged to try on different roles.</p>	Musical instruments/ loudspeaker; dance costumes
5 min	Home Practice Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Think about the gentle words from the person who cares about you and try to say these to yourself as often as possible throughout the week. In addition, identify and focus on yourself as a good person who has dignity and strength.</i> • <i>Think about what is important to you in life, what gives you a sense of meaning or purpose, what makes you feel proud, and what you have learned through your difficulties. Also, think of the specific characteristics that have helped you to be a survivor. Write these down or draw a picture representing these qualities and put this somewhere you can see it, to remember the good things in life, including your own self-worth.</i> • <i>Continue to practice using the tools in your toolbox every day, including grounding, movement, breathing, and dancing. Start your day with an affirmation about yourself or your hopes for the day (e.g., I am capable; I am strong; Today I will do well on my test; Today I will make a profit selling in the market). These tools will help you work on changing thoughts, feelings, and behaviours.</i> 	

5 min	Closing with Vigorous Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite group members to join in a vigorous dance. As they dance, invite each to shout out loud what they learned today that they hope will help them feel better going forward. • Serve snacks for closing as group members hang out informally and depart. 	Snacks; musical instruments/ loudspeaker
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STAGE 3: BUILDING A MEANINGFUL FUTURE

SESSION 11: Build Goals & Identify a Motivating 'Why'

Objectives of the session:

- To help group members to reconnect with themselves by recognizing and appreciating their inherent dignity and value.
- To help group members develop increased hope for their future lives and build connection to their communities.
- To support group members as they prepare to face future challenges.
- To facilitate group members' exploration of their personal goals.

Preparations and materials needed for the session:

- ✓ Time for the session is 90 minutes
- ✓ Make sure you have the list of the expected group members
- ✓ Organize the room/space and the mats/chairs/benches/tables so all sit in a circle facing each other
- ✓ Remember what happened last session
- ✓ Practice reading the script for the Inner Core and Future Goals activities
- ✓ Pictures/drawings of a tree and a ladder
- ✓ Paper, pencils, crayons
- ✓ Group record book
- ✓ Musical instruments and/or loudspeaker with popular songs to dance to
- ✓ Dance costumes
- ✓ Snacks/refreshments for group members

TIPS:

The Session Narrative is a guide. Please note: the text in **BLUE** is a suggested script on what you could use when facilitating. The Peer Dance+Therapy (D+T) Leaders need not be rigid about the script. It is good to be flexible, adapting context-appropriate activities while maintaining the set structure and allocated time. Feel free to express the content in your own words but please keep the intended meaning.

SESSION FLOW

Time	Activity	Process/script	Materials needed
5 min	Welcome and Opening Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warmly welcome everyone to the group while acknowledging their commitment, motivation, and courage in continuing to come to the group and pursue their journey of recovery. • Invite the group members to do their opening practice. Make sure that this practice is performed by different people each session so that the whole group owns the ritual. • Remind them that this is the second to last session. 	Mats/chairs/benches
10 min	Check-in and Recap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-in with the group members about how they are doing. Have them focus on thoughts, feelings, and sensations they may be having now or may have had since the last session. • It is important to note that the last few weeks involved very difficult topics. Give genuine encouragement and acknowledge the strength everyone has shown. • <i>Today, we will begin to use the things we have learned about ourselves, as well as the things we learned about how to cope with difficult situations, to look towards a hopeful and meaningful future.</i> 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the group members about the home practice assignment: • <i>Do you remember what we talked about last week? Were you able to replace negative thoughts with some of the caring and loving words that a lost loved one had said to you? How did that make you feel?</i> • <i>Were you able to think about what is important to you in life, what gives you a sense of meaning or purpose, what makes you feel proud, and what you have learned through your difficulties? Were you able to identify and focus on yourself as a good person who has dignity and self-worth, and who is deserving of forgiveness?</i> • <i>Were you able to identify some of your specific strengths that have helped make you a survivor? Would you like to share some of your strengths?</i> • <i>Were you able to write these down or draw a picture representing these qualities and put them somewhere you can see it, to remember the good things in life?</i> 	
25 min	Inner Core Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Last week we reflected on how the people and things we miss affect our daily lives, and how we can draw strengths and lessons from those we have lost. Today, we will talk about our own strength and value in our daily lives, our contributions to the community, and planning for the future.</i> • Show a pre-drawn picture of a tree with falling leaves and cut branches. The tree will have roots that are not broken, and despite the falling leaves and cut branches, there are also a few small signs of new life, such as a small flower bud beginning to grow from one part of the tree, and fruit hanging from the remaining branches. 	The Picture of the Tree



- Ask the group members: *What do you see?* Most of them will identify a tree and its features.
- Then ask: *Is the tree still a tree, even though it has lost its leaves?* Most or all of them will say “yes, the tree is still a tree,” but some may disagree. *Why? Why not?*
- During this discussion, the Peer Dance+Therapy Leader should point out that the tree is still a tree *because it still has its inner core* — it still has the heart or soul of a tree.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point out the trunk of the tree and ask: <i>What does the trunk represent?</i> Suggest: dignity, strength, resilience, the heart of the tree, etc. • Refer to the cut branches, and ask: <i>What can this mean? When we lose people we love, we can feel like part of us is missing. Often, we also may have lasting physical injuries or pains, which make us feel like we have lost a part of who we are. We may also have emotional injuries, and although they cannot be seen, they may make us feel like we are missing a piece of ourselves. How does this relate to your own feelings?</i> • Empathize with and validate these responses. Point to the little sprouts and ask: <i>What are these? How does this new growth relate to our lives? Where do we see new growth and possibilities in ourselves and our lives?</i> • Refer to the roots of the tree and ask the group: <i>What functions do the roots perform?</i> Suggest: the roots give nourishment to the tree, the roots are the foundation of the tree, the roots help the tree to remain standing, etc. • Point to the fruit of the tree, and ask: <i>How does the tree still produce fruit, even if it has a broken branch?</i> Suggest: the tree still has roots that keep it alive and allow it to draw nutrients to produce the fruit; even if a branch is cut, it can grow back and continue to produce fruit, etc. • Ask the group members: <i>What about us – how are the people in this group like the tree? Can any of you tell us about your own roots?</i> • Let the group members comment on what they consider to be their roots. Some may say that they feel that their ancestors are their roots, or their relatives, or God or spirituality. Any answer can be correct if it is a meaningful source of strength and sustenance for the group member. • <i>Can any of you tell us what your fruit is, the things you bear that you give to others?</i> 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the group members to list what they feel is their fruit. What do they contribute to their family, friends, church, and community? Group members may say that they take care of their children, cook meals for their family, help their neighbor in need, sing at their church, make money, listen to a friend, play football, take care of a disabled relative, create art – all community activities and talents here can be their fruit. <p>NOTE: Sometimes group members will be inclined to go into long discussions in this section about being uprooted and not being able to thrive in bad soil. This is not helpful. Reframe the discussion of roots as being core to who they are and emphasize that they can access the strengths of the roots wherever they are. Other groups may focus only on the broken parts and have trouble seeing the new life. Adapt the drawing and discussion in a way that can validate the feelings but also gently challenge them to identify the new sprouts of life for themselves, even if it is something small. By this time, it is likely you will know the group members well enough to highlight healing or helpful changes in their lives that you have seen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude the discussion with sharing: <i>We are people of value, and people whose lives are important and meaningful. We need to be able to think about our future and to have hopes and dreams. Although we have encountered losses, we have been talking about what we still have, that is, our dignity and value, our inner core, our roots. We are still connected to the world around us through our roots and our fruits.</i> Ask each one to identify a type of tree they can associate their inner core/strength with: Everyone stands up and starts walking in a circle chanting – e.g. “I am a Tamarind tree; my trunk and roots are very strong, and my fruits are nutritious.” 	
20 min	Future Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Now that we know we are people of value, and people whose lives are important and meaningful, we need to be able to think about our future – a future with hopes and dreams.</i> Ask the members: <i>Have you ever thought about what you would like to do, become or achieve in your future?</i> Go around the group and ask each group member to share about 	The Drawing of a Ladder with a star on top; paper, pencils, crayons

what they hope to do, achieve or be in the future. This could be 5 years, 10 years, or a lifetime – for the ladder exercise, we will focus on a smaller 1-month goal.

- To stimulate further discussion, hand every member a clean drawing of a ladder with a star at the top. The star represents their goal.



- *When we climb a ladder, do we arrive at the top just by thinking about it? No, we can't. If we just stand there and stare at the top, we will never arrive at the top. In order to get to the top, we need to take actions that will help us reach where we want to go.*
- *How can we reach the top of the ladder? The answer is: step-by-step. By taking one step at a time, we will be able to reach the top of the ladder. This can feel like it takes a long time, but when you are on a ladder you are heading in the right direction, you are progressing on the ladder, even if it feels slow or gets confusing. You have already taken big steps by participating in this group, etc.*
- Point out at the top of the ladder and share that the star represents their goal. To help the group members choose a practical goal, indicate that they should choose a goal that they

		<p>can accomplish <i>in the next month</i>. We are helping them develop skills to be able to set achievable goals, and this gives them a framework within which to practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>If we want to achieve our goals, such as</i> [mention some of the goals that the group members shared during the discussion], <i>we need to take some steps that will help us do so. For example, if your goal is to complete your education, what are some steps you might need to take?</i> Draw out some responses, such as “attend school regularly,” “pay attention to the teacher,” “complete my homework,” “study hard for exams,” etc. • <i>What do you need to take the next step? Does anyone climb the ladder with you? We shouldn’t expect that we can achieve all of our goals on our own – sometimes, we need to seek help, support and guidance from others. Who are some people that might help you achieve your goals?</i> Use as many examples as possible until the group understands the concept of goals and taking steps towards goals. Make sure the examples are appropriate for the group. • On their picture of a ladder, have them write or draw their goal in the star, and then on each step of the ladder, write or draw a step they can take to complete their goal. They should choose something that can realistically be achieved <i>in the next month</i>. Have them share their pictures with the group. • <i>What do you like most about this goal? How will fulfilling this goal be good for you? How will fulfilling this goal help the community or be good for the community? What challenges or obstacles do you think you might encounter in your efforts to fulfill this goal? What steps can you take now that will help you reach this goal in the future?</i> • Optional: To stimulate group interaction, instead of asking the person herself or himself, you may wish to ask the other group members: • <i>What challenges or obstacles do you think [group member’s name] might encounter in his/her efforts to fulfill this goal? What steps could [group member’s name] take now to be able to reach this goal in the future?</i> 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask them to keep their ladders and reflect on their significance in their lives. They can always adjust them. 	
20 min	Learn a Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get members to dance to upbeat songs/rhythms that portray strength, pride, optimism. • The Acholi Larakaraka dance may be fitting. • Remind group members that as part of this Dance+Therapy programme, they will be doing two community outreaches to share with others their learning in the group and to bring awareness about mental health to their communities. They can choose a dance they can perform to attract the community to hear them. • Let the group members discuss which dance they would like to perform and practice it together. 	Musical instruments/ loudspeaker; dance costumes
5 min	Home Practice Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask group members to continue reflecting on what they still have, that is, their dignity, value, and self-worth: this is their inner core; some might like to think of it as their soul. Ask how they are still connected to the world around them through their “roots and fruits.” • Ask them to continue to fill out the steps in their ladder (if they did not finish) to help them reach their goal. Draw a picture of yourself at the bottom of the ladder and a picture of yourself at the top of the ladder. Have them note the differences in how they look; also, have them write down words for both themselves at the bottom and top and describe their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. If they want, they can also draw a picture of a family member, friend, teacher, etc. or a group of people who observe them at both the bottom of the ladder and at the top. Ask them to note their reactions to their forward progress and personal growth. • They can then bring in the ladder the next week to share with the group. Encourage them to start working on taking the first step or two towards their goal. 	

5 min	Closing with Vigorous Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affirm that it was inspiring to hear of their hopes for the future and know that despite the challenges of life everyone still has “roots and fruits.” Also, everyone has goals for the future, but we cannot reach those goals by just sitting – rather, we have to be proactive and do certain things to reach where we want to go. • Acknowledge to the group that next week will be the last session. Tell the group that they will have a chance to acknowledge what they have learned, and how they have grown together. • Invite group members to join in a vigorous dance. As they dance, invite each to shout out loud what they learned today that they hope will help them feel better going forward. • Serve snacks for closing as group members hang out informally and depart. 	Snacks; musical instruments/ loudspeaker
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STAGE 3: BUILDING A MEANINGFUL FUTURE

SESSION 12: Closing & Celebration

Objectives of the session:

- To review the gains that group members have made through the group process (learning and support/healing).
- To help group members to create a behavioral plan for applying coping skills to their lives.
- To discuss plans for two post-group community outreaches to share their learning with others and bring awareness about mental health to their communities.
- To emotionally process and symbolize the end of the cycle and model a healthy, appropriate process for saying goodbye.

Preparations and materials needed for the session:

- ✓ Time for the session is 90 minutes
- ✓ Make sure you have the list of the expected group members
- ✓ Organize the room/space and the mats/chairs/benches/tables so all sit in a circle facing each other
- ✓ Remember what happened last session
- ✓ Practice reading the script for the Keep, Stop, Start exercise
- ✓ Keep, Stop, Start illustration
- ✓ Pre-drawn Session Outline
- ✓ Flipchart
- ✓ Pager, pencils, and crayons
- ✓ Musical instruments and/or loudspeaker with popular songs to dance to
- ✓ Dance costumes
- ✓ Snacks/refreshments for group members

TIPS:

The Session Narrative is a guide. Please note: the text in **BLUE** is a suggested script on what you could use when facilitating. The Peer Dance+Therapy (D+T) Leaders need not be rigid about the script. It is good to be flexible, adapting context-appropriate activities while maintaining the set structure and allocated time. Feel free to express the content in your own words but please keep the intended meaning.

SESSION FLOW

Time	Activity	Process/script	Materials needed
5 min	Welcome and Opening Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warmly welcome everyone to the group while acknowledging their commitment, motivation, and courage in continuing to come to the group up to this last day. • Invite the group members to do their opening practice. Make sure that this practice is performed by different people each session so that the whole group owns the ritual. • Remind them that this is the last session but that there will be two community outreaches. <p>NOTE: Remember that saying goodbye can be hard when you have created a meaningful relationship or shared a meaningful experience. Goodbyes can carry an even deeper challenge for group members if they have certain past experiences where their loved ones left or left them without a formal goodbye, e.g., when fleeing, or when others left suddenly, were abducted, were killed, etc. Be aware of this connection when saying goodbye to the group.</p>	Mats/chairs/benches
10 min	Check-in and Recap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-in with the group members about how they are doing. Have them focus on thoughts, feelings, and sensations they may be having now or may have had since the last session. • Ask the group members to share: 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HEAD: What's on your mind? - to explore current thoughts - you can invite them to touch their head as they ask themselves and answer ○ HEART: What's in your heart? - to explore current feelings - you can invite them to put their hand on their chest and share how they feel ○ HAND: What do you feel in your body now? - to explore current sensations - you can invite them to put their hand on their lower belly as they ask themselves and answer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask participants about the home practice: <i>In the previous session, we talked about reaching our goals which is like climbing a ladder to reach a star. Who would like to share their steps in the ladder to help them reach their goal?</i> 	
20 min	What Is in My Toolbox? – Keep, Stop, Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>As you all know, today is the last session for (name of group) to work together on Dance+Therapy. After this, we will continue with the bigger Empowerment Group as before. For today's session, we are going to focus on bringing this group to a close and saying goodbye.</i> ● <i>For this session to be helpful and for us to continue to grow, we will want to think practically about how we will take action on the things we have learnt.</i> ● Give each group member a blank sheet of paper or ask them to use their journal if they have it with them. Use the pre-drawn Session Outline or draw symbols to represent the topics of each group. For each session 1-12, have participants comment on what they remember and what they learned or valued from the session. ● After the reflection, ask: <i>What are the things that are working well for you and you want to keep doing?</i> (Examples might include: “grounding exercises,” “dancing” “thinking encouraging thoughts”) 	Paper, Pencils, Crayons; Pre-drawn Session Outline

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are the things in your life in that you feel are still causing you problems and you want to stop doing?</i> (Examples might include: “yelling at my family,” “isolating myself,” “staying in bed all day”) • <i>What are the things you have never done before and want to start doing?</i> (Examples might include: “movement breathing every day,” “keeping a journal,” “looking at a photograph of a lost loved one and thinking positive thoughts”) • Ask them to write down or draw those things and reflect on how they will continue to apply those lessons to their life after the group ends. Remind them that it is easier to make changes in life if we can think of specific actions we will take – remind them of the Ladder and the Star. • Have each person share with the group what they will KEEP, STOP, START. 	
15 min	Plan for Awareness Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Now that we have gained connection with ourselves, it is important to connect with our community, too. Together, we want to promote mental health and fight stigma associated with mental health problems through outreach. Now that we have completed the Dance+Therapy programme, we have the power to help not only ourselves but also others!</i> • Seek their consent if this can be done twice over the course of six months. Outreach can be done together with the bigger Empowerment Group of which the D+T Group is a part, however it will be the D+T group members who will lead the discussions on mental health for the communities. Encourage them that their participation in the 12-week D+T programme has been so good that they can share their positive change stories with their communities. Let them know that they do not have to provide a formal lesson but rather talk from the heart like they did during their programme. THRIVEGulu staff can always be invited to give the technical information. • Invite the members to think of an idea for the outreach in their community. <i>If you were a member of the community, what do you think you would want to know about mental health during one brief session?</i> Encourage them to think creatively. 	Flipchart

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind them about the Ladder and the Star. Tell them that it is also possible to think about the Ladder and the Star as steps leading up to a goal <i>for an entire group</i>. Invite all members to think about what needs to happen (steps on the ladder) to make their idea (outreach event) a reality. Be creative, but also mindful about what is realistic: small actions can be as meaningful as big ones as long as they are done thoughtfully. Help them capture their ladder and star on a flip chart, making sure the planning is realistic. 	
25 min	Learn a Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite group members to celebrate their achievements during the 12 weeks together by dancing together. <i>This is a celebration of our achievements together for 12 weeks – it is a moment of joy!</i> <i>Let’s try to remember all the dances that we have danced during our 12 weeks together – this will be a joyous way to close our final session.</i> Remind group members that last session they selected a dance that they can perform during the community outreaches. This can be a chance for them to practice that dance or to select another dance they are willing to perform as part of the outreach. <p>NOTE: If possible, since Bwola is a ceremonial dance, it can be ideal to do more of it in this session.</p>	Musical instruments/ loudspeaker; dance costumes
5 min	Home Practice Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask members to reflect on their KEEP, STOP, START. Remind them that this is a helpful way for them to remember the many lessons, coping techniques, and forward-looking exercises they learned in the Dance+Therapy Programme. Determine or review their schedule for reaching out to the community. 	
10 min	Closing with Vigorous Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As you close the session invite the group members to reflect on: <i>What does it mean to successfully complete all of our objectives? How do you feel knowing that you have begun a healing process that will benefit you for the rest of your life? How does it feel that you are on the path to building a future that is full of hope and meaning? How does it feel to know</i> 	Snacks; musical instruments/ loudspeaker

		<p><i>that as part of a group, you had a positive impact on all of the other group members, so that they, too can feel strong, confident, happy and whole?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite group members to join in a vigorous dance. As they dance, invite each to shout out loud what they learned over the past 12 weeks that they hope will help them feel better going forward. Acknowledge that we are doing this practice for the last time. Reinforce the meaning and benefits of the practice. • Serve snacks for closing as group members hang out informally and depart. Since this is the final session, a simple meal or a cake is ideal. In many cultures, sharing a meal is a way of showing respect and caring for one another, of acknowledging the courage and commitment participants showed by remaining with the group for the duration of the cycle, and of celebrating the relationships they have made. 	
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