WORKSHEET 54 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

My first weeks here

A landing plan to find your bearings

AIM

Help the person structure their first weeks in a new country: basic needs, routines, first landmarks and first connections, to reduce the uncertainty and exhaustion of arriving.

WHO IT IS FOR

Recent or imminent arrival in a new country, accompanying partners, international students.

DURATION

20 min in session, ideally before or just after arriving

HOW TO RUN IT

1. List with the person the basic needs to sort out (housing, paperwork, health, money, transport) and put them in order of priority.
2. Plan simple routines that give rhythm: sleep, meals, physical activity, a quiet moment.
3. Choose landmarks in the neighbourhood: a café, a market, a park, a place to come back to.
4. Identify one or two possible first connections (a colleague, a neighbour, an association, a community).
5. Also plan time to rest: you can’t do everything at once.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Arriving is often exhausting, even when wanted. Help the person pace themselves: a few regular things are better than many exhausting ones. Spot situations of hardship that need social or legal help.

REFERENCES

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Achotegui, J. (2009). Estrés límite y salud mental: el síndrome del inmigrante con estrés crónico y múltiple (síndrome de Ulises). Gaceta Médica de Bilbao, 106(4), 122-133.

PSYCHOLOGIST’S NOTES

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WORKSHEET 54 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My first weeks here

The first weeks in a new country are often intense: everything is to be discovered and organised, and you get tired quickly. A small plan helps you find your bearings, step by step.

1. My practical priorities (housing, paperwork, health, money, transport).
2. My routines: sleep, meals, movement, a quiet moment each day.
3. My landmarks in the neighbourhood (a café, a market, a park): _____
4. A possible first connection here: _____

Week	To sort out	Did I keep my routine? (yes/no)	New landmark or connection

What made me feel a little more at home this week?

These exercises do not replace therapy. If you are in distress or having suicidal thoughts: 112 (European Union), 3114 (France) or the emergency number of the country where you live.

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