WORKSHEET 60 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

My plan for difficult days, far from home

Knowing what to do and whom to call when I'm not well, in the country where I live

AIM

Help the person prepare in advance a simple plan for difficult days abroad: warning signs, what helps, people to contact (here and in the country of origin) and emergency numbers in the country where they live.

WHO IT IS FOR

Anyone living abroad, especially if isolated, newly arrived or with a history of psychological difficulties.

DURATION

20 min in session; to keep on the phone

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Identify personal warning signs (sleep, withdrawal, thoughts going round in circles, alcohol use…).
2. List what helps (activities, places, people) and what makes things worse.
3. Write down contacts: one or two people here, one or two in the country of origin, taking the time difference into account.
4. Look up together the emergency and helpline numbers of the country where the person lives (112 works throughout the European Union) and a professional who can be reached.
5. Suggest keeping the plan on the phone and rereading it from time to time.

POINTS TO WATCH

> If there are suicidal thoughts, this plan does not replace a safety plan built with a professional or a risk assessment. Check the emergency numbers of the country of residence: they vary from one country to another.

REFERENCES

Stanley, B. & Brown, G. K. (2012). Safety planning intervention: A brief intervention to mitigate suicide risk. Cognitive and Behavioral Practice, 19(2), 256-264.

Bhugra, D. & Becker, M. A. (2005). Migration, cultural bereavement and cultural identity. World Psychiatry, 4(1), 18-24.

PSYCHOLOGIST'S NOTES

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WORKSHEET 60 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My plan for difficult days

When you live far away, you don't always know where to turn when things go wrong. Prepare this plan in advance, when you are well, and keep it on your phone.

1. My warning signs (sleep, withdrawal, thoughts…): _____
2. What helps me: _____
3. The people I can call, here and in my country (with the time difference).
4. The emergency number in the country where I live: _____ and a professional I can reach: _____

Person or service	Here or in my country	Number	When to call

What do I want to remind myself on difficult days?

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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