



Photo: UNHCR

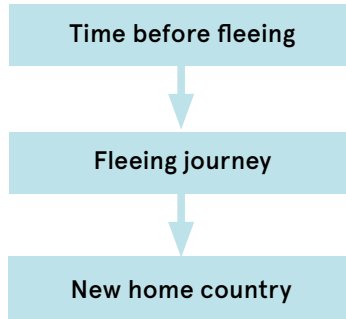
Being a refugee and stress

Information and support to promote
mental and physical health

Some refugees have gone through things that are stressful and traumatic. Experiences threatening one's security and causing stress may have occurred in the home country, when fleeing or in the destination country.

Protective factors

e.g. immediate and extended family, loved ones, education, skills, community acceptance



Stress factors

e.g. loss, violence, fear, insecurity, financial worries

These experiences can have an effect on the body and mind, or manifest themselves in social relationships. Various reactions or sensations can come up immediately after difficult experiences, or only after some time has passed. Reactions or sensations resulting from stress or traumatic experiences can present, for example, in the following ways:

Physical

- Heart palpitations
- Pains in the body
- Trembling, aches
- Fatigue

Mental

- Sleeplessness
- Anxiety
- Memory problems
- Irritability

Social

- Withdrawal from relationships
- Lack of trust
- Feeling of being an outsider

Following stressful and traumatic experiences, it is important to take care of your own well-being and coping, as well as that of your loved ones. You can increase your own well-being by paying attention to the following things, among others:



What increases your well-being?



Even difficult matters can be discussed in confidence with professionals.
If you need help to support your well-being, don't be left alone!

You can seek the following services yourself:

- Social and health centres
- Immigrant services
- MIELI Mental Health Finland, SOS Crisis Centre

Or under the guidance of a professional:

- Centre for Psychotraumatology, Deaconess Foundation
- ODL, Oulu Deaconess Institute
- TAYS, Psychiatry Outpatient Clinic for Refugees
- HUS, Cross-Cultural Psychiatry Outpatient Clinic

Material online:

- Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, TUULI project
- Mielenterveystalo.fi - Terveysylä.fi
- PALOMA Centres of Expertise
- SERENE materials

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