



Juditta Ben-David: Resiliency Skills for Refugees, the MiA Approach, Trauma and Culturally Sensitive Mindfulness



Juditta Ben-David, MA, SEP is a lecturer and supervisor of SE trauma healing, DARE trauma and attachment, is the Director and Trainer of Mindfulness in Arabic. Find out how she has created a mindfulness training suitable for refugees.

TOP EMBODIMENT TIP: To pause from time to time, put one hand on your heart and another on your belly and ask your body how it is, where it is, take in a deep breath and let a long sigh out before returning back to your day.

What is Mindfulness in Arabic: **This is an online Mindfulness training developed for Arabic speaking refugees.**

- A suitable training for aid workers and counsellors who work alongside refugees and often experience vicarious trauma.

MiA Adaptations for Refugees Experiencing Trauma: **Adaptations from a generic mindfulness programme:**

- **Go slow, but not too slow**, to allow the vagus nerve to bring up bodily sensations in small chunks.
- Grounding, Resourcing, Curious attention- use resources, **sounds or touch points as a focus for these**, rather than the breath; as focusing on the breath could trigger traumatic experiences.
- Adding **choice for self regulation** - helps promote agency and a shift in thinking.
- Gradual education in interoception awareness - use language of sensations, and gentle noticing.
- Returning to the Window of Tolerance - if a refugee begins to become overwhelmed or goes out of their window of tolerance, pause and bring them back to an anchor.
- Flexible anchors- the breath might be a trigger so use points of contact, sound, hand, or a resource.

MiA for Resilience: **Bouncing back, appropriate responding and coherence are key to resilience in MiA.**

- **Resilience is largely about Body Awareness** not Rational Thinking.
- Interoception is vital for resilience, so that is why focusing on the senses is a key part of the process.
- Good interoception enables homeostasis, which in turn supports a strong immune system.
- Low resilience individuals show an exaggerated brain response to an aversive interoceptive stimulus.

Resources

- ❖ **Courses:** Mindfulness in Arabic; see website
- ❖ **Website:** <http://www.mindfulnessinarabic.org>
- ❖ **Social:** juditta@mindfulnessinarabic.org, info@mindfulnessinarabic.org
- ❖ **References:** Siegel, Levine, Van der Kolk, Treleaven



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