

A Strength-Based Approach to Address the Mental Health of Historically Marginalized Immigrants

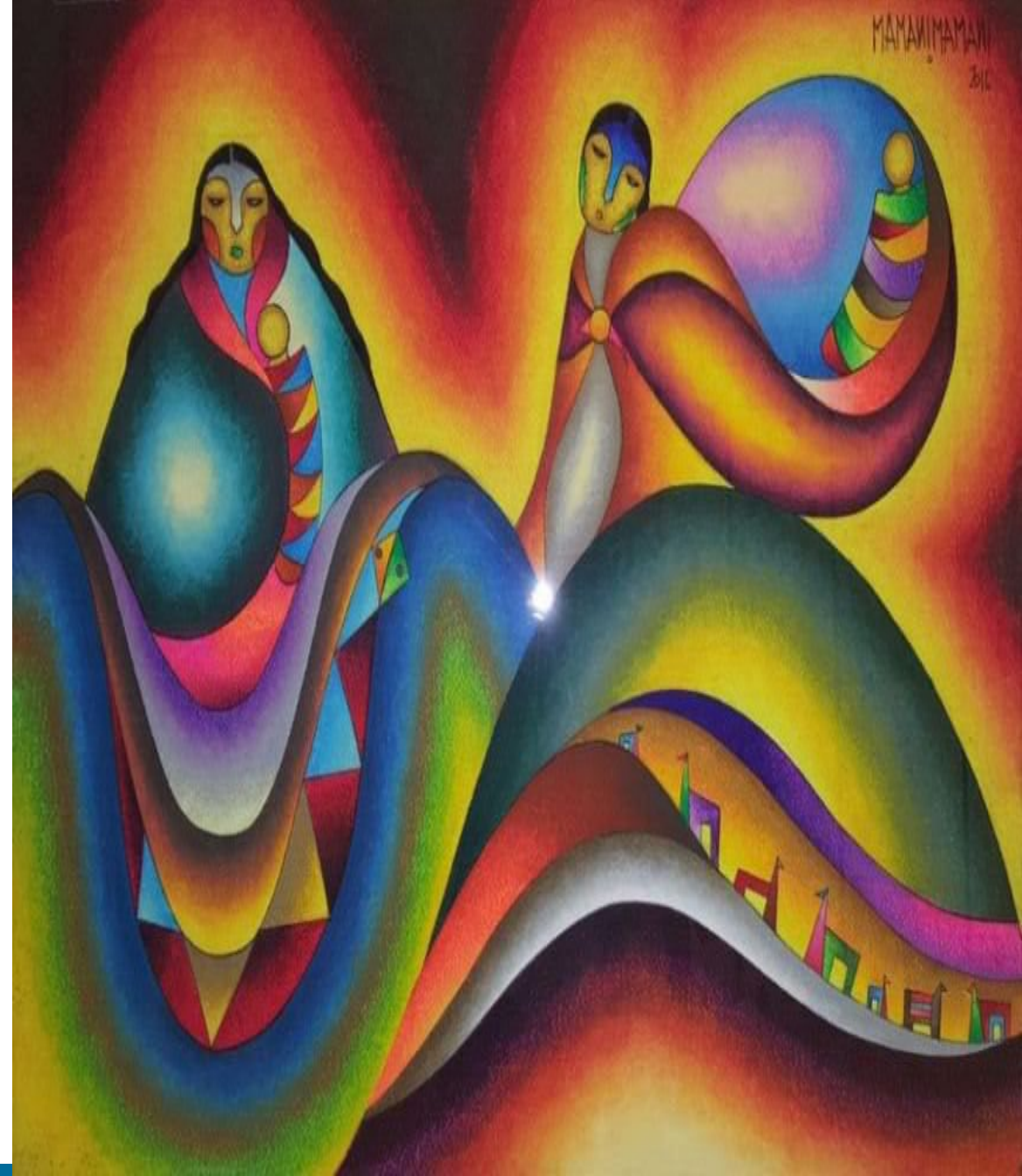
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- Art by Roberto Mamani Mamani



Outline



Objectives Overview



Background and Significance



Ethical reflections and clinical skills



Self-care and Key Takeaways



Questions & Answers



Evaluation and CE requirements



Learning Objectives

- Describe contextual stressors faced by marginalized immigrants
- Explain challenges in mental health assessments and diagnosis among marginalized immigrants
- Identify protective factors used by marginalized immigrants to cope with adversity
- Describe skills or competencies that are important when working with marginalized immigrants
- Identify self-care strategies for providers



Background & Significance

Contextual Considerations

- Considerable proportion of the U.S. population
- Highly heterogeneous
- Socio-economic vulnerabilities and life adversity
- Limited information
- Limited access to services and resources
- Legal immigration system is constrained
- Anti-immigrant rhetoric and actions
- Justified mistrust and fear
- Mental health stigma





Consequences of Context on Immigrants' Health and Wellbeing

- Highly resilient; but health risk over time
- Social disadvantage as a vulnerability to health
 - High prevalence of chronic toxic stress
 - Trauma
 - Diminished physical and mental health
 - Diminished quality of life and functioning
- Interpersonal challenges

Effects of Context on Health & Wellbeing

Mind

Body

Spirit



- Depression
- Anxiety, despair
- Fear, uncertainty
- Irritability
- Obsessions
- Somatization
- Agoraphobia

- Weight changes
- Diminished sleep
- Diminished self-care
- Chronic illnesses
- Infectious diseases
- Substance use
- Chronic pain

- Lower self-efficacy
- Diminish view of self
- Lower sense of control
- Loss of meaning
- Loss of purpose
- Guilt, shame
- Hopelessness

(Garcini, et al. 2024)



Ethical Reflections



Filling Knowledge Gaps

*“Risk comes from
not knowing
what you are doing”
Warren Buffett*



Building Competence

- Build a knowledge base
 - Context, culture, history
 - Complementary approaches to health
 - Non-traditional sources of service delivery
- Develop self-awareness
- Collaborate and consult
 - Ask do not assume

Facilitating Health Conversations

- Approaching clients as experts
- Motivating collaborative discussion
- Validate using affirmation
- Summarize information
- Asking permission to share
- Getting feedback about comfort
- Learning what is important
- Learning what resources are needed





Clinical Skills



Creating Safe Spaces

- Humanistic approach
- Awareness and respect of cultural norms and values
- Strength-based, resilience focused
 - Empower vs. imposing
- Identifying and considering triggers
- Fostering belongingness
 - Building collaborative networks
- Setting boundaries and limits
- Maximize privacy and confidentiality



Resilience

*"IF YOUR HEART IS BROKEN,
MAKE ART WITH THE
PIECES."
SHANE KOYCZAN*

- Cognitive strategies
- Behavioral strategies
- Social support
- Spirituality

Creating a Safety Plan

- Identify options and knowledge of rights
- Acknowledging and addressing financial concerns
- Identifying emergency contacts
- Facilitating communication about the plan
 - Talking to trusted sources
 - Rehearsing plan
 - Directives



Providing Resources

- Social networks or support groups
- Information on opportunities
- Online resources
- Phone/computer applications
- Culturally and contextually informed books
- Health and legal services





Resources and Source of Information



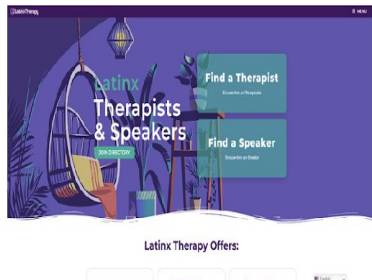
The Latinx Immigrant Health Alliance is a group of Latinx scholars with expertise in epidemiological, basic, and intervention research with immigrant populations. LIHA scholars collaborate to advance research, policy, and effective interventions to improve immigrant mental health and inform effective policy.



Latinx Immigrant Health Alliance

General Resources

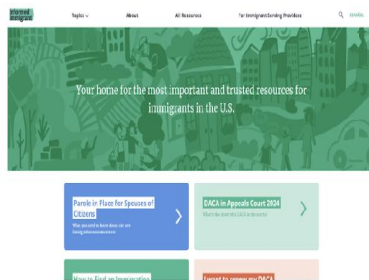
Immigrant & Mental Health



Latinx Therapy

Latinx Therapy helps link individuals to Latinx therapists and speakers. They also have a library full of mental health podcasts, videos, and mobile applications in English and Spanish! Description goes here

Learn More



Informed Immigrant

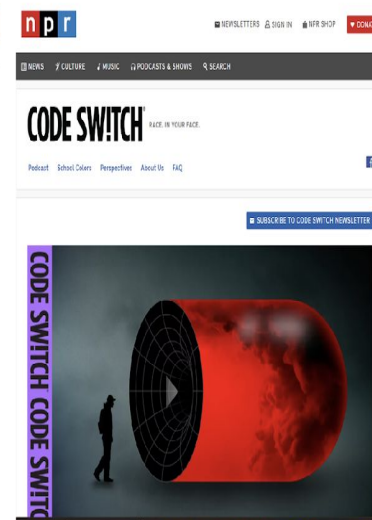
Informed Immigrant empowers individuals to know their rights. They have a great resource library, helpful guides, and can help individuals get connected to lawyers, social workers, and service providers.

Learn More



Mental Health for People of Color

Check out this amazing resource from Online MSW Programs. Here you will find a list of 55 organizations and directories aimed to help



Code Switch

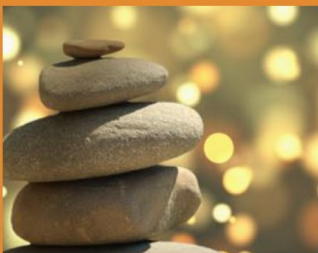
Ever had anyone ask you where you are from after sharing your name? Listen to this bonus

Latinx Immigrant Health Alliance

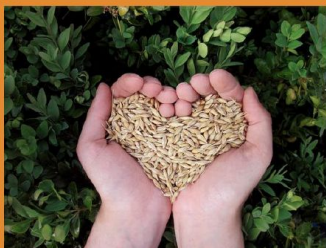
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- 8 PROCESSING GRIEF: TRIGGERS



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Paths

BUILDING STRENGTH IN THE FACE OF LOSS



HONORING

Circle or write ways, big or small,
to honor your loved one

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| Praying | Storytelling |
| Relaxation | Scrapbooking |
| Meditation | Cooking |
| Exercising | Volunteering |
| Music | Helping others |
| Journaling | Teaching |
| Reading | Gardening |
| Building | Learning |
| Cleaning | Traveling |
| Decorating | Animal therapy |
| Creating Art | Socializing |

Surviving and healing are ways of honoring your loved one.

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Paths: Building Strength in the Face of Loss

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Bridges

CREATING BONDS
AND HOPE
BOOK II



UT Health
San Antonio
Center for Research to
Advance Community Health



SOLVING PROBLEMS

Solving problems can be easier with the help of others.

When you have a problem, follow these 4 steps to find out how to solve it.

Step 1: Define the problem as clearly as possible.

Step 2: With the help of people you trust, write three possible solutions to the problem.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Step 3: In a team, evaluate the good and the bad of each solution. Evaluate one solution at a time

The Good

The bad

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 1. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 3. _____ |

Step 4: Choose the best solution and see if it works. If not try the next solution.

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Puentes (Bridges): Creating Bonds and Hope



Provider Self-Care

Self-care and Skills for Working with Immigrant Patients

- Know you ARE making a difference
- Patience above frustration
- Prepare for the unexpected
- Listen carefully
- Its ok to “not know” everything
- Don’t take it personal
- Keep yourself open to learning
- Consult within and outside your field
- Build resources to provide to families



Closing Remarks

Closing Remarks



- Context is putting immigrants at risk
- Translational, interdisciplinary, and community-based efforts are needed
- Our immigrants are essential; our support can help

“Make a difference today for someone who is fighting for their tomorrow”

Jim Kelly

Bridging Forward to Protect Our Future

*“Make a difference
today for someone
who is fighting for
their tomorrow”*

Jim Kelly



Selected References

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Questions & Comments

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