

# Online Mental Health Training-Workshop Report



**Mental health**  
TRAINING-WORKSHOP  
for women with migration background (BIPOCs)

**FREE**

**Dr. Andrea B. Martinez**  
Assistant Professor - UP Manila  
Mental Health Practitioner - Mind UK

**Kim Gerlach**  
Breathwork Teacher  
at sun&rise Berlin

ONLINE  
Sept. 19, 2023 - 6:30-8:30 PM  
Sept. 26, 2023 - 7:00-9:00 PM (CEST)

**GABRIELA GERMANY**

**FREE REGISTRATION:**  
limited slots available  
<http://bit.ly/mentalhealthbygabriela>

WE-EMPOWER  
WIDE+  
Co-funded by the European Union

## Attendees:

1. Day 19.09.2023: 19
2. Day 26.09.2023: 11

## Context

Among the most vulnerable groups that were affected by the crisis brought by the COVID-19 were migrant women. Many migrant women, especially BIPOCs (Black, Indigenous and People of Colour), suffer from isolation, anxiety and depression over accumulating loans and interest payments, loss of livelihoods, or the prospect of having to return to- or stay locked down in abusive or violent environments. Their limited or lack of access to services, support networks and institutions as well isolation exacerbate their already difficult situation.

The need for a special support initiatives to help migrant women address their problems related to mental health, and thereby enabling them to participate in political and democratic life is paramount. Gabriela Germany aims to contribute to these initiatives by offering a free mental health training-workshop for women with migration background, especially BIPOCs. This is a two-day online training-workshop that will have an integrated breathwork for wellness sessions (before the workshop on the 19th and after the workshop on the 26th). To acquire a wider and deeper understanding of the theme, and to learn various methods of breathwork for wellness, participants are highly encouraged to par-

ticipate in both training-workshop days. This initiative is supported through the WE-EMPOWER Project lead by WIDE+ (Women in Development Europe - <https://www.facebook.com/FeministWIDE>) with funding from the European Union.

## **About the Trainers**

**Dr. Andrea Martinez** is an assistant Professor of the University of the Philippines - Manila, and a mental health practitioner at MIND UK. In her current work in MIND UK, she works with clients with dual (complex) diagnoses and who are experiencing multiple levels of social deprivation; advocates for their rights to ensure that their voices are heard; facilitates mental health workshops and mental health literacy programmes. She earned her PhD in Psychology in Kings College London in 2023. Her research was about mental health and help-seeking behaviour of Filipino migrant domestic workers, which developed a culturally appropriate mental health intervention using the UK Medical Research Council framework for complex intervention (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/andrea-martinez-eade0730/?originalSubdomain=uk>).

**Kim Gerlach**, she/her, is a scent practitioner and breathworker. Her olfactive work is focused on the cultivation of presence and the creation of new pathways our bodies and minds can follow to heal. She seeks to expand the medium by building and resolving the tension between the familiar and the unknown. She addresses the topics of finding intuition and inner guidance, multiculturalism, and the power of breath (<https://www.sunandrise.com/about>).

## **Organizers: Gabriela Germany**

**GABRIELA** is an alliance of more than 200 grassroots women's organizations, institutions and programs spread across the Philippines. It seeks to fight for the liberation of Filipino women and the poor majority against oppression and repression. It organizes women among the most oppressed sectors of farmers, workers, urban poor and students; undertakes campaigns on women's rights, gender discrimination, violence against women (VAW), women's health and reproductive rights; and provides direct services for marginalized women and victims of VAW.

**Gabriela Germany** is a local chapter of GABRIELA, organizing primarily among the Filipina women diaspora in Germany. It is a collective of Filipinas celebrating their multi-faceted identities, revolutionary history, and rich culture. They work build communities in Germany that are invested in educating, serving, and advocating for the rights and welfare of Filipinas locally and globally. They actively forge friendships, solidarity and alliances with other local and international migrant women organisations in their local areas of work to support each other and advance common advocacies. It is a very young but very dynamic organization, established in 2017 and formally launched in March 2018. Most of its members are currently based in Berlin.

# TRAINING WORKSHOP

## DAY 1

### BREATH WORK SESSION

We practiced somatic exercises that were focusing on breath that were made accessible to practice by everyone online. A professional breathwork practitioner facilitated the session. The participants were guided into more relaxing and slower breath work, according to each participant's tempo.

### DISCUSSION AND WORKSHOP SESSION

#### Objectives:

1. To explain the nature of mental health and illness
2. To identify the signs and symptoms of depression and suicide;
3. To develop important skills needed in facilitating psychological first aid for depression and suicide

TIME	ACTIVITY	TOPICS COVERED/OUTLINE
10 mins	Welcome and introduction Expectation setting	Introduction and expectation setting Reminders of netiquettes/Ground rules Overview of the training programme Aim and objectives
5 mins	Self-assessment	The Depression Checklist
20 mins	Orientation on Mental Health	Lecture-discussion, short video presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Fundamental assumptions on mental health</li><li>- The Ginhawa (wellbeing) framework and the biopsychosocial model of mental health</li><li>- The mental health continuum</li><li>- Risk and protective factors of mental ill health</li><li>- Mental health stigma</li></ul>
20 mins	It's Okay not to be Okay	Lecture-discussion, short video presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Signs and symptoms of depression</li><li>- Risk factors of depression</li><li>- Focus on grief and loss</li><li>- Psychological First Aid action principles for depression</li></ul>
20 mins	On Suicide	Lecture-discussion, short video presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Breaking myths about suicide</li><li>- Warning signs of suicide</li></ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Common causes of/reasons for suicide</li> <li>- PFA action principles for suicide</li> <li>- The Empathy video</li> </ul>
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## QUESTIONS & DISCUSSIONS

How to find support or address own mental health conditions when we face stigma in our family or communities?

How can we support a friend with a child that shows symptoms of severe depression without when the parents stigmatise mental health?

How can we also have better boundaries when we cannot support a friend in psychological distress?

How to find therapeutic support?

## DAY 2

### DISCUSSION AND WORKSHOP SESSION

#### ANXIETY, POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AND SELF-CARE

#### Objectives:

1. To identify the signs and symptoms of anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD);
2. To apply basic PFA action principles on anxiety and PTSD
3. To gain an appreciation of the importance of self-care and develop self-care techniques

TIME	ACTIVITY	TOPICS COVERED/OUTLINE
5 mins	Self-assessment	The Anxiety Checklist
20 mins	On Anxiety	Lecture-discussion, case presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- General symptoms of anxiety</li> <li>- Focus on panic attacks</li> <li>- Common thinking distortions</li> <li>- Risk factors of anxiety</li> <li>- PFA action principles for anxiety</li> </ul>
10 mins	WORKSHOP: Circles of Control	Things I Can and Cannot Control [Breakout Room: Sharing in a small group your perceived circles of control during the pandemic]
15 mins	On Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	Lecture-discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stress vs. acute stress</li> <li>- Signs and symptoms of PTSD</li> <li>- PFA action principles for PTSD</li> </ul>
15 mins	On Self-Care	Lecture-discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why self-care</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Handling burn-out, vicarious traumatisation and compassion fatigue</li> <li>- Helping with boundaries</li> <li>- Looking after yourself</li> <li>- Developing resilience</li> </ul>
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### QUESTIONS & DISCUSSIONS

- We had a sharing and discussions about discrimination at workplace and how to handle those experiences.
- Do I have anxiety if I suddenly feel afraid of sleeping because I might die?
- When do I have to seek mental health support?
- How do I handle problems and stress with raising a child here in the foreign country?

### BREATH WORK SESSION

After the two-day session, we practiced a breath work that is aimed to destress and relax. This is to ensure that all of the participants and even the trainers have the opportunity to bring their emotions and mind in calm and relax state before finally ending the session.

### FEEDBACK AND ASSESMENT SURVEY

Aside from the feedback that the participants have given after the sessions, we conducted a survey on participants to help us assess the success of the event and to gain guidance on how to implement such events in the future. The survey results revealed a positive assessment on how helpful the workshop training was and how well it was done. Below are the figures that indicate the survey results:

Survey Question	Answers/Feedback
How did you learn about this training workshop?	50% through friends 50% through social media
Were your expectations fulfilled	75% Yes 25% Yes partly - it was more theoretical than expected, wished for more exercises
If there is an aspect of the training-workshop that needs to be improved, which one? Please explain briefly. (e.g. pace- too fast or slow, contents, facilitation, etc.)	50% answered just right 50% hope for more exercises, more time to answer some questions, more practical tools
Will you recommend this training to other people?	100% answered Yes
Other feedback, comments, and suggestions.	"Many thanks for setting this up and facilitating" "perhaps a workshop about how to deal with cul-

	tural differences"
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	"Thank you so much. This was such a great training with a lot of directly applicable tools as well as important learnings about mental well-being and illness. "
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Report prepared and written by:  
Jazmine Wenzel and Catherine Abon of Gabriela Germany