

Lesley University

DigitalCommons@Lesley

---

Expressive Therapies Dissertations

Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences  
(GSASS)

---

Fall 12-6-2023

## Group Art Therapy with Resilience-Based Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Female North Korean Defectors in the United States

yuri kim  
yurik1214@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/expressive\\_dissertations](https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/expressive_dissertations)



Part of the [Art Therapy Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

kim, yuri, "Group Art Therapy with Resilience-Based Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Female North Korean Defectors in the United States" (2023). *Expressive Therapies Dissertations*. 133.  
[https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/expressive\\_dissertations/133](https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/expressive_dissertations/133)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences (GSASS) at DigitalCommons@Lesley. It has been accepted for inclusion in Expressive Therapies Dissertations by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Lesley. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@lesley.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@lesley.edu), [cvrattos@lesley.edu](mailto:cvrattos@lesley.edu).

Group Art Therapy with Resilience-Based Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Female North  
Korean Defectors in the United States

A DISSERTATION

Yuri Kim

In partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

LESLEY UNIVERSITY  
January 2024



Graduate School of Arts & Social Sciences  
Ph.D. in Expressive Therapies Program  
**DISSERTATION APPROVAL FORM**

Student Name: Yuri Kim

Dissertation Title: Group Art Therapy with Resilience-Based Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Female North Korean Defectors in the United States

**Approvals**

*In the judgment of the following signatories, this Dissertation meets the academic standards that have been established for the Doctor of Philosophy degree.*

Dissertation Committee Chairperson: Michele Forinash, DA 12/06/2023

Michele Forinash, DA

(date)

Internal Committee Member: Kelvin Ramirez, PhD 12/06/2023

Kelvin Ramirez, PhD

(date)

External Committee Member: Eunju Yoon, PhD 12/06/2023

Eunju Yoon, PhD

(date)

Director of the Ph.D. Program/External Examiner: Donna Owens, PhD 12/06/2023

Donna Owens, PhD

(date)

*Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences.*

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

Michele Forinash, DA

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dissertation Director

I hereby accept the recommendation of the Dissertation Committee and its Chairperson.

Meenakshi Chhabra, PhD

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean, Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences



## STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

This dissertation has been submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for an advanced degree at Lesley University and is deposited in the University Library to be made available to borrowers under rules of the Library.

Brief quotations from this dissertation are allowed without special permission, provided that accurate acknowledgment of sources is made. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this manuscript in whole or in part may be granted by the head of the major department or the Dean of the Graduate College when in his or her judgment the proposed use of the material is in the interests of scholarship. In all other instances, however, permission must be obtained from the author.

SIGNED: Yuri Kim

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply grateful to the individuals and entities whose profound contributions have been instrumental in guiding me through my academic journey and culminating in the completion of this dissertation.

First and foremost, my heartfelt appreciation goes to Dr. Michele Forinash, my esteemed academic advisor. Her unwavering commitment, guidance, and support have played a pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of my academic and professional growth, and I am sincerely thankful for her mentorship.

I extend my sincere thanks to Dr. Kelvin Ramirez and Dr. Eunju Yoon, esteemed members of my academic committee. Their invaluable insights, constructive feedback, and scholarly guidance have significantly enriched the quality of my research, and I am grateful for their dedication to my academic success.

A special note of gratitude goes to the Department of Expressive Therapy at Lesley University for awarding me the pilot study and dissertation scholarship. These financial supports have allowed me to fully dedicate myself to the comprehensive research and completion of this doctoral study.

To my beloved children, Grace and Joseph, your unwavering love and support have been my constant source of strength. As a mother, your presence has empowered me to surmount every obstacle and persevere through the challenges inherent in this academic journey.

I express my sincere appreciation to Pastor Byun, Elder Han, and Mrs. Han for their consistent prayers and unwavering spiritual support. Their encouragement has been a guiding light, providing solace and strength during the most challenging times.

I am indebted to Jose, Dr. Buck, and Rita for their unyielding support and encouragement. Their courage and inspiration have played a crucial role in instilling in me the bravery needed to confront my fears and expand my clinical knowledge as an art therapist.

Heartfelt thanks are extended to Cathy Moon, my professor at the School of Art Institute of Chicago, for her inspiration and teachings on how to lead a life as an art therapist. Her impact on my professional path has been indelible.

To the participants of this study, I offer my sincere thanks. Your bravery and encouragement were indispensable in conducting this research, overcoming numerous difficulties encountered along the way.

In reflecting on this transformative 11-year journey studying art therapy, I am filled with gratitude and extend my thanks and glory to God for initiating, guiding, and ultimately bringing this endeavor to completion. I eagerly anticipate God's plan as I embark on a new chapter in my life.

As I embrace this achievement, I am profoundly thankful for the collective support and encouragement that have shaped both my academic and personal growth. Each of you has played a crucial role in this success, and I am deeply appreciative of the positive impact you have had on my life.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES.....	8
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.....	9
ABSTRACT .....	10
1. INTRODUCTION .....	12
2. LITERATURE REVIEW .....	22
Immigrants and Refugees in the United States.....	23
The Status of Korean Immigrants in the United States of America.....	25
Problems Faced by Immigrants and Refugees in the United States of Americas...26	
<i>Acculturative Stress</i> .....	26
<i>Discrimination</i> .....	28
North Korean Defectors.....	29
<i>Problems Faced by North Korean Defectors</i> .....	32
<i>Research Trends in Relation to North Korean Defectors</i> .....	33
Attitudes Toward Mental Health Support.....	38
Counseling or Therapy for Refugees or North Korean Defectors.....	41
<i>Art Therapy (AT) or Expressive Therapies (ET) with Refugee</i> .....	42
<i>Studies of Art Therapy (AT) or Expressive Therapies (ET) in</i>	
<i>South Korea</i> .....	44
Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) for North Korean Defectors.....	47
Unified Protocol (UP) .....	51
3. METHOD .....	55
Participants .....	56
Procedures .....	57
First session .....	58
Second session .....	58
Third session .....	58
Forth session .....	59
Fifth session .....	59
Sixth session .....	59
Data Collection .....	60

Data Analysis .....	60
4. RESULTS .....	63
Dialogue .....	63
<i>Who I Am</i> .....	64
North Korean.....	65
Refugee or North Korean Defector.....	66
<i>The Journey of Defecting from North Korea</i> .....	67
Escaping from North Korea.....	68
Life in China.....	69
Life in a Thai Refugee Camp.....	69
<i>Challenges in the United States</i> .....	70
Acculturation.....	71
Isolation.....	72
<i>Physical, Emotional, and Behavioral Responses</i> .....	72
Stressors or Triggers.....	73
Reactions toward Triggers of Stressors.....	74
<i>Cognitive Distortions</i> .....	75
Negative Thoughts.....	76
Thoughts Derived by Emotions.....	77
<i>Restructuring Self-Image</i> .....	77
Positive Sense of Self.....	78
Goals for the Life in the United States.....	79
Participants' Arts .....	80
<i>First Session</i> .....	81
<i>Second Session</i> .....	84
<i>Third Session</i> .....	88
<i>Forth Session</i> .....	94
<i>Fifth Session</i> .....	97
<i>Sixth Session</i> .....	101
<i>The process of changing self-perception</i> .....	105
Participants' Writings.....	111
5. DISCUSSION .....	115
REFERENCES .....	132
APPENDIX A: Informed Consent Form (English Version) .....	174
APPENDIX B: Informed Consent Form (Korean version) .....	176



APPENDIX C: Interview Questions.....178

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1, Themes of participants' interview.....	64
TABLE 2, Self-perception process for Junghee's arts.....	103
TABLE 3, Self-perception process for Soyeon's arts .....	104
TABLE 4, Self-perception process for Hyejung's arts .....	106

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

## Figure

1. Junghee's self-image drawing.....	82
2. Soyeon's self-image drawing.....	83
3. Hyejung's self-image drawing.....	84
4. Junghee's root painting.....	85
5. Soyeon's root painting.....	86
6. Hyejung's root art.....	87
7. Junghee's mountain sculpture.....	86
8. Soyeon's mountain sculpture.....	91
9. Hyejung's mountain sculpture.....	92
10. Junghee's paper book.....	94
11. Soyeon's paper book.....	95
12. Hyejung's paper book.....	96
13. Junghee's painting.....	98
14. Soyeon's painting.....	99
15. Hyejung's painting.....	100
16. Junghee's collage.....	102
17. Soyeon's collage.....	103
18. Hyejung's collage.....	104
19. Junghee's letter.....	112
20. Soyeon's letter.....	113
21. Hyejung's letter.....	114

## ABSTRACT

This study engages in phenomenological qualitative research, focusing on three North Korean defectors residing in the United States. The research comprised six sessions, each lasting ninety minutes. These sessions involved the active participation of the subjects in six face-to-face group art therapy (AT) sessions, adhering to the six guidelines outlined in the Amita Treatment Framework (ATF). These sessions encompassed the following components: 1) analyzing self-image; 2) finding positive qualities; 3) identifying challenges; 4) behaviors driven by emotions in challenging situations; 5) reframing challenges; and 6) reconstructing self-image and goal setting.

Results from the study revealed phenomenological insights into the participants' artistic processes, their interpretations and perspectives on their artwork, and the transformative journey of reframing their self-concept and resilience. The study yielded significant results, demonstrating that participants experienced an increase in self-esteem through the support of group art therapy. In addition, it helped them overcome the psychological challenges associated with adapting to a new culture and fostered an optimistic and hopeful outlook on their new lives in the United States of America.

Participants also acknowledged the pivotal role of art therapy in strengthening their self-confidence and beliefs, equipping them with the resilience necessary to face the challenges of their new lives. These findings suggest that participants' self-image and resilience improved after completing the program. Consequently, these findings underscore the significant contribution of art therapy in the area of psychological support and recovery for North Korean defectors, enabling them to envision a more positive future.

*Keywords: Art Therapy, North Korean defectors, Female, Refugee, Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Amita Treatment Framework (ATF), Group Psychotherapy*

*Author identity Statement: The author identifies as a straight, Asian woman of Korean ancestry.*

## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

The terms *refugee* and *immigrant* are often used interchangeably in media and public discourse, but they are actually distinct. Refugees are people who flee to safer, nearby countries because of a dangerous situation. They are internationally identified as "refugees" by countries, the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNRA), and other programs. Immigrants are people who voluntarily move to other countries to improve their lives, not because of threats, such as armed conflict, persecution, or death. Refugees cannot return to their mother country safely, but immigrants should be able to receive protection by the government if they return to their mother country (Shaeye, 2019; The UN Refugee Agency, 2016).

The term "defector" is commonly employed to refer to an individual who has made a voluntary decision to depart from their country of origin, primarily motivated by political, social, or economic factors. Distinct from refugees and immigrants, defectors exhibit distinctive circumstances in their departure. While refugees are compelled to flee their country due to a well-founded apprehension of persecution, violence, or conflict, defectors actively choose to leave their homeland, often in pursuit of asylum or protection in another nation. Motivations for defection can arise from political dissent, opposition to a specific regime, or a yearning for improved quality of life and opportunities elsewhere. The fact that defectors, like immigrants who obtain permanent residency or citizenship in another country, are guaranteed legal resident status in the country where they settle can create confusion when attempting to differentiate between the two groups (Bell, 2012; Lartige, 2018 ). Nevertheless, it is crucial to note that not all immigrants are defectors, as

many immigrants relocate for reasons unrelated to political circumstances or opposition against their home country's government (Kim, 2012).

Currently, there are about 480 North Korean defectors living in the United States of America. A total of 225 North Korean defectors risked their lives to clandestinely infiltrate into China, crossing borders, and subsequently sought refuge in Southeast Asia as refugees before ultimately resettling in the United States of America. The other 250 North Koreans entered the United States as legitimate immigrants after obtaining Korean citizenship in Republic of Korea (ROK) (Peled, 2017).

The reason North Korean defectors hesitate to relocate to the United States of America is that there are many dangers to such a journey. Despite the risks, North Korean defectors who decide to settle in the United States of America face financial and cultural difficulties. Government assistance—such as financial, legal, and educational aid—is essential to promoting the welfare of North Korean defectors who have settled in the United States of America. Sufficient financial, legal and educational assistance provided by the government facilitates the establishment of a social network among defectors who have faced similar experiences. This network enables them to exchange support and interact with each other effectively (Kim et al., 2019).

Research on North Korean defectors classified as minority refugees in the United States of America is rare. However, according to a study on North Korean defectors who settled in the Republic of Korea (ROK), North Korean defectors face difficulties such as cultural and language differences, physical or mental illness, adaptation stress, economic hardships, prejudice or discrimination, and loneliness caused by the lack of support groups, such as family or friends (Choi et al, 2017; Jung et al., 2017; Noh et al., 2018;

Park et al., 2017). Despite their compromised medical conditions, North Korean defectors often face significant challenges in accessing adequate medical benefits (Kang, 2018), and North Korean defectors living in South Korea lack awareness of their physical health (Korea Hana Foundation, 2014).

Lining in Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), especially under its repressive regime exposes individuals to a range of hardships which can result in various forms of trauma. Factors such as the oppressive political climate, widespread human rights abuses, limited access to basic necessities, and frequent food shortages significantly contribute to the prevalence of trauma among North Koreans (Kim, 2019). The flight from the oppressive regime and the challenges faced while seeking asylum in other countries contribute significantly to the trauma experienced by North Korean defectors. This trauma is multifaceted and includes elements such as physical and emotional abuse, torture, family separation, loss of identity, and the constant fear of repatriation to North Korea. The enduring impact of these traumatic experiences on the mental health of defectors is evident, as they often suffer from symptoms such as anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and difficulties in adapting to their new lives (Noh et al., 2019). Consequently, it is crucial to provide comprehensive support and resources to assist North Korean defectors in their healing process and in reconstructing their lives within a secure and nurturing environment (Kim et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2023; Lee, 2022; Park et al., 2018)

Scholars and researchers have extensively explored the psychological consequences of these traumas on individuals from North Korea, with a particular focus on the high rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, and other



mental health disorders (Shin et al., 2016; Shin & Lee, 2015; Taylor et al., 2017; Yoon et al., 2020). These studies consistently emphasize the urgent need for appropriate support systems and interventions to effectively address the complex mental health challenges faced by the North Korean population.

Engagement in art therapy offers a multitude of advantages for individuals who have experienced trauma. Involvement in artistic endeavors encompassing narrative, visual arts, and performing arts has been acknowledged as a beneficial intervention for individuals with traumatic experiences. By partaking in creative activities facilitated by art therapy, individuals are afforded the opportunity to delve into their emotions, discover personal significance, and engage in self-reflection (Fisher & Gilboa, 2016; Kaimal et al., 2019). Taking part in an ongoing artistic program enables individuals who have undergone trauma to develop strategies to overcome their suffering (Jones et al., 2017; Thomson, 2017; Walker, 2017). Active involvement in art fosters health and well-being, yielding positive effects that encompass enhanced self-expression, reduction of negative thoughts, facilitation of emotional expression, and increased self-esteem (Basil et al., 2020; Moula et al., 2020).

Treating traumatic memories poses a challenge due to their likely organization through sensory elements such as images, sounds, and senses, rather than a structured narrative format (van der Kolk, 2014). The effectiveness of arts-based and experiential therapies in trauma treatment has been demonstrated (Metcalf et al., 2016; Morison et al., 2022; Schouten et al., 2019), with right-brain-centered creative arts therapies like art, dance/movement, drama, and music therapy being utilized as sensory approaches to address trauma (Malchiodi, 2015).

Chang (2019) conducted a single-subject case study involving a male Korean defector with PTSD, illustrating how art therapy can alleviate trauma by providing an outlet for the expression of inner emotions, conflicts, impulses, and desires. The study participant, a North Korean defector in their early 40s, presented with severe mental health issues, including anxiety, nightmares, hyper-awakening symptoms, and post-traumatic stress. The treatment spanned from November 2018 to March 2019 and comprised a total of 26 individual art therapy sessions. To measure the effects, the researcher employed the Korean version of the Posttraumatic Diagnosis Scale, the Impact of Event Scale-Revisited, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, and the Subjective Units of Distress Scale. Exposure-based Acceptance and Commitment Art Therapy resulted in a reduction of post-traumatic stress symptoms, a transformation of the intensity of event impact from severe to mild, alleviation of depression and anxiety symptoms, and a shift towards normal levels of depression as measured by MMPI tests (Chang, 2019). The participant of the study reported experiencing relief from traumatic symptoms and positive emotional changes. However, the findings of this dissertation cannot be generalized beyond the scope of the study due to the insufficient number of participants.

When immigrants encounter difficulties in assimilating into a new culture, they may experience a loss of belonging and suffer from identity confusion (Szabo & Ward, 2015). According to Benartzy (2020), art therapy, expressive approaches, cross-cultural interventions, existential perspectives, and narrative techniques hold great potential for facilitating identity exploration. These approaches prioritize self-expression, multicultural sensitivity, symbolic meaning creation, and narrative reconstruction (p. 32).

Resilience interventions aim to identify individuals' strengths and enhance their ability to overcome challenging situations, while cognitive behavioral therapy targets the improvement of negative thoughts and associated maladaptive behaviors (Dubus, 2022).

According to the American Psychological Association (2012), resilience is defined as the process of adapting to adversity, trauma, tragedy, threat, or stress, and it signifies an individual's capacity to return to a normal level of functioning following negative or stressful events. Resilience plays a crucial role in promoting positive mental health outcomes during stressful circumstances by leveraging protective factors and healthy resources to navigate difficulties (Stainton et al., 2019). It effectively supports individuals in utilizing their strengths and attaining their goals by engaging in productive life activities and achieving personal milestones (Echezaraga et al., 2019). In the face of adversity, resilience facilitates the effective utilization of internal resources, such as individual strengths, as well as external resources, such as support from religion, family, and friends (Nichter et al., 2020; Raghavan & Sandanapitchai, 2019). For instance, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, resilience has been shown to enhance mental health and foster self-acceptance, allowing individuals to respond to their emotions as they arise (Havenn et al., 2020; Osimo et al., 2021).

Numerous studies have explored the impacts of resilience interventions and cognitive-behavioral therapy in various domains. These investigations have encompassed resilience promotion through cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and mindfulness-based techniques (Joyce et al., 2018), the effectiveness of diverse resilience programs (Liu et al., 2020), comparisons of more efficient resilience-enhancing interventions to positive psychological interventions (White et al., 2019), and interventions targeting self-control,

optimism, and anxiety reduction (Dubus, 2022). Additionally, research has delved into the validity and acceptability of tailored cognitive–behavioral resilience training (TCBRT) for trauma-exposed individuals (Zalta et al., 2016) and highlighted cognitive-behavioral therapy as an evidence-based intervention for resilience enhancement (Naem, 2020).

Belief in oneself being a crucial element of resilience, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) assists North Korean defectors in modifying negative thought patterns about themselves (Lee et al., 2019). By controlling their emotions through cognitive restructuring, individuals can enhance their resilience. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is grounded in the theory that our thoughts influence our feelings and behavior, thus greatly impacting our core beliefs regarding unpleasant or challenging situations (National Alliance on Mental Illness, n.d.). Thinking patterns and core beliefs play a vital role in cognition (Iacoviello, 2014). For instance, cognitive behavioral therapy has been shown to enhance psychological recovery among adolescents participating in group mental education programs (Şahin & Türk, 2021).

When beginning this dissertation, I was situated at the intersection of personal history, cultural heritage, and academic curiosity. I was born in South Korea and immigrated to the United States of America. However, my lineage is intricately woven into the fabric of North Korea, as both my maternal and paternal roots are from there. Growing up, I was inspired by the qualities of my ancestors, such as grit, faithfulness, and warmth. The legacy of my grandparents, who bravely escaped North Korea during the tumultuous Korean War, instilled in me a profound sense of pride. However, despite my admiration for their stories, I could not ignore the pervasive biases that the media had

instilled in me about North Koreans. Media narratives often distort the reality of North Korea and its people by focusing on political, social, and cultural differences. This can create a disjunction between familial narratives and media portrayals, which can cause tension, especially in the context of my new life in the United States. Engaging with the North Korean community proved challenging due to the protective nature of private organizations and church leaders, and the hesitancy of defectors to disclose their existence to the public.

This situation forced me to face the fact that I was relying on biased information from external sources. However, my perspective changed during a pilot study. Through the perspective of individual art therapy, I had the opportunity to observe North Korean refugee women as they navigated the complex process of integrating their identities into the cultural fabric of the United States. This transformative experience has strengthened my resolve to further explore the psyche of North Korean defectors. As a researcher, my journey is both personal and scholarly. I am driven by the quest to bridge the gap between biased narratives and the lived realities of those who have traversed borders and overcome adversities.

After 23 years-long stay in the United States, I have resettled in my homeland, South Korea, I am at a crossroads of identity, belonging, and cultural reintegration. I have a unique perspective on navigating the benefits and challenges of straddling two worlds. Returning to my home country as a foreigner with U.S. citizenship has eliminated the culture and language barrier and allowed me to reconnect with old friends and family. However, this apparent ease of assimilation into familiar surroundings belies a more complex reality. My identity was fundamentally shaped during my time in the United

States. The contrast between my experiences has created a paradoxical sense of not truly belonging anywhere. Despite physically returning to my place of origin, the imprints of my time abroad linger, shaping a unique perspective that transcends conventional notions of homecoming. Reintegrating my identity, now characterized by the amalgamation of foreign and native influences, feels both necessary and disconcertingly alien.

Delving into my own personal narrative as a researcher has been an illuminating journey, prompting me to broaden my gaze to encompass the transformative experiences of individuals facing parallel challenges. This introspection has fueled a profound curiosity about the nuanced journeys of these individuals as they grapple with the multifaceted task of defining their identity. The confluence of my own reflections and the exploration of their narratives seeks to uncover the intricate interplay between personal histories, cultural dynamics, and the resilient human spirit in the face of profound transitions.

The research question for this study was, “What are the experiences of North Korean defectors in group art therapy with resilience-based cognitive behavior therapy.” The study found that North Korean defectors benefited from self-reflection, behavior and thought modification, and self-concept reconstruction via a combination of group art therapy and Resilience-Based Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. The approach helped them gain a positive self-image. It is important to note that while art therapy and resilience-based cognitive-behavioral therapy have shown promise in supporting individuals who have experienced trauma and aiding in the process of adaptation, each person's experiences and needs are unique. Individualized and culturally sensitive approaches should be utilized to address the specific challenges faced by North Korean defectors and

promote their overall well-being. Additionally, further research and evaluation are needed to assess the effectiveness and long-term impact of these interventions on the mental health and resilience of North Korean defectors.

## CHAPTER 2

### Literature Review

Immigrants and refugees play a significant role in the cultural, economic, and social fabric of the United States of America (Azoulay et al., 2022). As a diverse nation built by individuals from around the world, the United States of America has experienced waves of immigration throughout its history, with each group facing unique challenges and opportunities. This literature review aims to explore several key aspects related to immigrants and refugees in the United States of America, focusing specifically on the status of Korean immigrants, the problems faced by immigrants and refugees in general, as well as the specific challenges encountered by people defecting from The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). Furthermore, this review examined research trends concerning North Korean defectors, attitudes toward mental health support among immigrants and refugees, and the types of psychotherapy including art therapy available for North Korean defectors. By analyzing and synthesizing existing literature, this review provides a comprehensive understanding of the issues and complexities surrounding these populations, shedding light on the importance of support systems and mental health interventions tailored to their unique needs.

There is a dearth of literature or research for the North Korean defectors in the United States, with the majority of this literature review focusing on the experiences of defectors from North Korea in South Korea. The use of literature reviews that focus on North Korean defectors' experiences in South Korea to study defectors in the United States has notable limitations. Contextual differences between the two countries in terms of culture, politics, and social factors may significantly affect the transferability of the



findings. The transition from a primarily homogeneous society in South Korea to the diverse cultural environment of the United States presents distinctive challenges and intricacies that may be insufficiently considered in literature that is focused solely on South Korea. Additionally, the particular hardships encountered by North Korean defectors in the U.S., including acculturation issues, may not be thoroughly articulated or contextualized in studies that predominantly focus on the South Korean perspective. In the United States context, the scarcity of literature presents a significant challenge, underscoring the necessity for focused research that specifically examines the complexities of the experiences of North Korean defectors within the distinctive sociocultural milieu of the country. These limitations highlight the significance of conducting focused research within the American context to achieve a more extensive and nuanced comprehension of the particular difficulties encountered by North Korean defectors in this unique environment.

### **Immigrants and Refugees in the United States of America**

According to a 2019 report by the Current Population Survey, there are about 90 million immigrants who live in the USA with their U.S. born children (Migration Policy Institute, 2020). The Pew Research Center (2015) predicted that the proportion of immigrants in the USA will rise to about 36% by 2065. The median income of immigrant households is \$60,000, with 15% of immigrant households living in poverty (Migration Policy Institute, 2020). Along with the growing immigrant population, the settlement of refugees is also increasing in the USA, which is one of the most resettled third countries for refugees (UNRA, 2017). About 30,000 refugees settled in the USA in 2019, up 33% from the 20,491 admissions in the fiscal year 2018. The Democratic Republic of Congo,

Myanmar (also known as Burma), Ukraine, Bhutan, Eritrea, and Afghanistan account for 84% (25,296 people) of U.S. refugees.

Refugees are thought to confront the problem of overcoming identity confusion and heterogeneity in different cultures in the process of establishing self-identity in a new society. Many participants in the study (Hack-Polay et al., 2021) exhibited a tendency to refrain from identifying themselves as refugees or migrants during their interactions with the new community, as they perceived such identities as more of a burden than a form of social capital. This hesitance primarily stemmed from the negative media coverage and labeling that often marginalized and excluded migrants. Notably, the research also revealed that forced migrants exhibit diverse identities based on contextual factors and transactional considerations, such as the imperative to establish connections with local residents for survival. Collectively, these findings shed light on the intricate and nuanced processes through which forced migrants construct their identities, as they navigate and respond to external socio-economic factors.

Traumatic experiences and migration stress can lead to the development of mental illness in refugees (Bogic et al., 2015). They report that refugees are traumatized by both the dangerous journey they have undergone and the increasingly stringent immigration conditions they encounter, such as detention, border-crossing procedures and exploitation, and heavily fortified borders (Gammeltoft-Hansen et al., 2017). Refugees who overcome these barriers often face social and financial difficulties after settling in the host country, and their difficulties worsen when they are not provided adequate support in their new community (Al-Roubaiy et al., 2013). The negative experiences of

refugees are stressors that can be either short- or long-term, depending on the individual, and can negatively impact their health (Uribe Guajardo et al., 2016).

The experience of discrimination based on cultural differences socially isolates refugees and immigrants and negatively affects their access to welfare. Another study found that unemployment rates of immigrants and ethnicity and migration status of refugees were directly related to discrimination against these groups, which eventually affected participants' health even after they had jobs and adapted to society (Dhalimi et al., 2018). Despite the need for mental health care and government aid, refugees and asylum seekers often do not seek help, likely out of fear of being arrested or deported by the host country's government agencies. Also, the experience of distrust and fear stemming from various forms of discrimination and negative treatment in host societies makes them even more hesitant to ask for assistance (Douma, 2013).

### **The Status of Korean Immigrants in the United States of America**

Korean immigrants comprise one of the fastest-growing ethnic minority groups in the USA. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2021), Korean Americans represent the fifth largest group of Asian Americans, with about 1,900,000 Korean Americans living in the country. Koreans began immigrating to the USA in the early 20th century, and the numbers began to increase after 1965. The Korean diaspora has a relatively more recent history of immigration compared to other Asian communities and is not established enough to provide social support to new immigrants (Kim, 2021). Korean immigrants are more likely to have completed higher education than other groups. According to a demographic analysis of the 2017 U.S. Census, 34% of South Korean immigrants held a bachelor's degree. This rate is notably higher when compared to 18% of the foreign-born

population and 20% of the U.S.-born population who hold the same level of education. Furthermore, 20% of Korean immigrants hold graduate or professional degrees, compared to 13% of other immigrants and 12% of native-born individuals (Migration Policy Institute, 2019).

### **Problems Faced by Asian Immigrants in the United States of America**

Nineteen percent of Korean immigrants report speaking only English at home, compared to 16% of the total immigrant population (Migration Policy Institute, 2019). However, only 47% of Korean Americans born in Korea are proficient in English, while 70% of Asian Americans are fluent in English overall (Pew, 2015). For example, Korean immigrants may face challenges in employment and income due to lower English proficiency compared to Filipino or Asian Indian immigrants (C. Lee, 2018). Korean schools are often not accredited by American educational institutions, which can limit the employment prospects for Korean immigrants, as their educational qualifications may not be highly valued in the job market.

### ***Acculturative Stress***

As members of a minority group that needs to adapt to a new society, many Korean immigrants experience high levels of stress due to language barriers, social isolation, socioeconomic adjustment, and family relationship difficulties (Choi et al., 2014). Despite differences in immigration history, occupation, language, culture, and religion, Asian immigrants have been seen as "model minority" who appear to have achieved social and economic success equally with white people in the mainstream United States society. This stereotype can have a devastating impact on Asian Americans'

self-concept and mental health by putting pressure on Asian Americans to assimilate into mainstream culture and live up to their stereotypes (Shih et al., 2019).

The adaptive stress experienced by Korean Americans is the struggle for social status as immigrants, which appears to affect their mental health and lead to acculturation stress. Acculturation stress is one of the potential explanations for the elevated prevalence of depression among Korean immigrants, along with challenges interacting with others and difficulty learning English (Koh, 2018). In previous research, C. Lee (2018) discovered a significant negative impact on the mental health of South Korean adolescents in the USA due to the challenges faced by immigrants. Participants faced a variety of stressors, such as communication, ethnic prejudice, academic pressure, homesickness, and interpersonal conflict and reported that these stressors contributed to negative emotions such as embarrassment, discomfort, anger, discomfort, and anxiety.

In a study of 107 Korean American immigrants living in East Coast metropolitan areas, Lee et al. (2018) found that this high level of adaptive stress was closely related to negative, problem-oriented, impulsive actions; avoidance behaviors; or evasive tendencies when solving problems. The Acculturative Stress Index, Vancouver Index of Acculturation, Asian Values Scale-Revised, Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale, and Social Problem-Solving Inventory Revised were applied to measure the relationship between acculturative stress, coping, and the depressive symptoms of Korean American immigrants. The results showed that acculturation to the host culture was a significant predictor for depression ( $B = -.03$ ,  $SE B = .01$ ,  $95\% CI = [-.055, -.007]$ ,  $\beta = .28$ ,  $p = .013$ ). The authors highlighted the significance of addressing cumulative stress through problem-solving therapy as an effective treatment approach. However, there was

a limit to only recruiting participants from Korean organizations in the USA, which could have led to sampling bias. Also, not all Korean immigrants living in the USA.

participated in Korean group activities, so extensive research on Korean immigrants who did not participate in Korean group activities should be conducted in order to enhance their external validity.

### ***Discrimination***

Asian Americans have been subject to discrimination because their culture is distinct from the mainstream one of their host countries. This discrimination is mainly due to their non-native English abilities and the fact that they are considered foreigners (Chen et al., 2023). Immigrants are often concerned that the government's policies encourage discrimination against immigrants and anti-immigration sentiment in society (Rhodes et al., 2015). For example, the recent hostile political and social climate toward immigrants in the USA has led to Latinx immigrant families experiencing discrimination; detention and deportation; economic disadvantages; and emotional stress (Ayon, 2015). Likewise, while the number of hate crimes committed against Asian Americans increased during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, various forms of discrimination experienced by Asian Americans were reported, such as verbal harassment, shunning, and physical assault (Jeung & Nham, 2020). The perception of China and surrounding Asian countries have amplified the anxiety about threats posed by Asian Americans. Some Asian Americans have even made efforts to hide their identities and claim their rights as U.S. citizens to protect themselves from hate crimes (Buscher, 2020; Tang, 2020).

As far back as 2009, Asian Americans were experiencing racism which caused psychological and physical health degradation by increasing pain and disability (Pascoe

& Richman, 2009). Internalized racial discrimination and the use of stereotypes and negative attitudes toward minority groups among White people has damaged the mental health of Asian Americans (Millan & Alvarez, 2014). Asian American experiences of racial discrimination have been found to be related to decreased life satisfaction and self-esteem, increased anxiety and depression, and the escalation of suicidal thoughts (Hwang & Goto, 2008).

### **North Korean Defectors**

The terminology used to refer to North Korean defectors has evolved over time. Various names have been employed, including "North Korean defectors (Talbukja)," "refugees," and "Satumin." In 2005, the South Korean government introduced the new term "Satemin" as a reference to North Korean defectors, as the term "North Korean defector (Talbukja)" could have negative connotations in the Korean language. However, many North Korean defectors' organizations have opposed the use of the term "Satemin." This is because it could imply that the defectors left North Korea solely for economic reasons, disregarding their concerns for human rights and mistrust of the North Korean government (Kim, 2020). North Korean defectors who have resettled in the USA entered as refugees, yet they still use the term "North Korean defector," translating the Korean word "Talbukja."

The number of North Korean defectors has steadily increased since the 1990s. As of 2020, it is estimated that there are approximately 35,000 North Korean defectors residing in South Korea (Ministry of Unification, 2020). A smaller number of North Korean refugees have resettled in the USA and other countries. In November 2016, around 200 North Korean defectors entered the United States, and the total population of

North Koreans living in USA is estimated to be around 400 (George W. Bush Institute, n.d.). Despite the language and cultural challenges, they often choose to settle in the USA due to perceived economic and social advantages. Some North Korean defectors have sought asylum in English-speaking countries to improve their competitiveness and employment prospects by acquiring English language skills, experiencing multicultural environments, and securing a better future for their children (Jung et al., 2017). The U.S. government has historically supported refugees and asylum seekers through its federal programs, but under the Trump administration, a more conservative approach was taken towards refugees and asylum seekers (Poorman, 2019). Recently, negative perceptions of North Korea have been prevalent in the USA because of revelations about North Korea's human rights abuses and nuclear threats to America. According to a year-long YouGov poll conducted from October 2019, which surveyed American respondents on their perceptions of different countries, 65% of respondents reported having a negative awareness of North Korea (Chung, 2020). Research has identified various factors that influence the perception of North Korea. Sim (2017) analyzed the perceptions and attitudes of South Koreans over a decade, starting from the official implementation of the South Korean government's multicultural policy in 2007. The study examined survey data from seven government and major social institutions regarding South Koreans' perception of North Korean defectors between 2007 and 2015. The survey included 9,147 participants from 16 cities in South Korea, ranging in age from 18 to 75 years. The findings indicated that political factors (such as awareness of North Korea and policy evaluation), economic factors (including national economic outlook, economic satisfaction, and expectations of reunification), cultural factors (such as identity,



multicultural acceptability, and contact with North Korean defectors), and demographic factors (such as gender, generation, and education) all played a role in shaping perceptions.

Seol and Cho (2017) examined the reporting of major political and social events in North Korea by prime-time broadcast news programs in South Korea in 2013 to evaluate attitudes and perspectives toward North Korea. Analyzing North Korea-related evening news from three South Korean broadcasters (KBS, MBC, and SBS), the researchers found that most reports on the execution of Jang Sung-Taek (Kim Jung-Eun's uncle) and subsequent North Korean trends were presented in a fragmentary, anecdotal manner focused on human interest. The researchers categorized a total of 483 news articles collected from the broadcasters' websites for the study based on their form and content. On the formal side, articles were classified into those with an *anecdotal-focused frame* (focused on specific events), a *topic-focused frame* (exploring social structures, historical backgrounds, etc., that led to the events), or a combination of the two. Furthermore, up to three content frames were identified in each article, and a data-coding process was used for analysis.

Seol and Cho (2017) revealed that news coverage about North Korea aimed to depict the challenging reality and promote security awareness by expressing various values. However, there was still an excessive amount of news that amplified distrust, tension, anxiety, and conflict. The study has limitations in terms of its focus solely on South Korean news broadcasts, making it challenging to generalize the research results to the USA. Nevertheless, it highlights the significance of the role of U.S. media and broadcasting in raising awareness about North Korea and North Korean defectors.

### ***Problems Faced by North Korean Defectors***

Due to the increasing number of North Korean defectors, studies about the challenges that North Korean defectors confront have been revitalized. According to research by Poorman (2019), North Korean defectors residing in South Korea experience loneliness and isolation. They are typically engaged in low-wage and low-skill jobs, and often have financial difficulties because they experience job turnover due to the unstable status of their employment. North Korean defectors face several problems upon arrival in the capitalist South, such as orientation, housing, living expense, work, education, and ideology (Chung, 2008). Even after resettlement in South Korea, defectors are known to experience mental health problems due to acculturative stress involving political and cultural differences, identity crises, financial difficulties, and other issues (Park et al., 2017).

Prior research has shed light on the multifaceted experiences of North Korean defectors in South Korea, highlighting the complexities surrounding their identity and adaptation. Chun (2022) discussed the ambivalent status of North Korean defectors in South Korean society, where they are considered ethnically the same but culturally different. This created a sense of identity confusion for North Korean defectors, who are caught between the rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion. Additionally, they noted that North Korean defectors often struggle with identity and adaptation issues, as they are asked to navigate their ideas and feelings about their experiences before and after coming to South Korea. The research underscored North Korean identity was complex and heterogeneous, shaped by both socio-cultural traits of North Korea and the legal and political regime of South Korea.

The mental health issues of North Korean defectors are thought to be related to the process of defection and their experiences of staying in a third country before their destination (Noh et al., 2018). North Korean defectors may experience trauma from (a) imprisonment, (b) torture, (c) human trafficking, (d) arrest, (e) repatriation to North Korea, (f) loss of family members, and (g) worsened mental health from trauma, which can all lead to negative self-evaluation and unemployment (Kim et al., 2010). North Korean defectors living in single-person households in South Korea were reported to suffer from existential loneliness, such as loss of meaning in life or instability in identity due to their lack of something to rely on. Witnessing the death of a parent or spouse, or going through a divorce, is thought to amplify the loneliness. The experience of the disintegration of the family unit in North Korea or a third country can lead to fears about forming a new family after their arrival (Kim et al., 2014). However, North Korean defectors are unable to relieve or share their personal psychological stresses due to the influence of North Korea's closed culture that limits personal freedom, as they lack a sense of concept for the treatment of stress (Noh et al., 2018).

### ***Research Trends in Relation to North Korean Defectors***

Park (2012) reviewed journal articles, theses, academic conferences, seminars, and research about North Korean defectors conducted between 2007 and 2011 in the South Korea. The researcher analyzed the trends related to North Korean defectors and divided them into three areas: research topics, methods, and content. Park divided the subjects into (a) gender, (b) life cycle, (c) entry time difference, (d) region, (e) generation, and (f) educational background, and then classified the content of the research into *settlement status and support plan, social culture, education, health care,*

*environment, ecology, and division and integration.* The author's findings indicate the importance of public-private cooperation in researching and supporting North Korean defectors. Additionally, the study reveals that research methods in this field are expanding beyond qualitative approaches to include panel data construction and field research. Based on the analysis, the researcher suggested the need to promote research and overcome current limitations, in addition to changing North Korean defectors' perceptions and establishing a community to share research data and organize multicultural perspectives. This study is out of date and the researcher did not provide much detail about the studies that were chosen for examination. Therefore, the findings of this study are not enough to support the conclusion. However, Park's aim to develop a settlement support program by reviewing the topics of academic studies on the theme of supporting North Korean defectors is an important one.

Yang (2018) similarly compared and analyzed research topics with settlement support services that were required by North Korean defectors. According to an analysis of 555 academic research studies in the South Korea comparing the demands of North Korean defectors' settlement support and extant research from 1994 to 2016, the prevalence of topics such as education, employment, and economic activity were congruent. However, topics such as *social and cultural adaptation* and *psychotherapy and health care* were ranked as highly prevalent in the research while the North Korean defectors' demands for these were low. One of the North Korean defectors' most frequent demands for settlement and support for the residence ranked lowest as a topic of research. The study was limited by the choice to only analyze research published by South Korean academics, and the number of North Korean defectors who responded to the survey was

confined to only 70 participants who lived in Seoul, South Korea, making it hard to generalize. However, it is significant that the North Korean defectors' settlement support suggests the need to be approached by researchers and government officers, and that it emphasizes the need for active participation of North Korean defectors in the research and policy process.

Yang and Yoon (2017) explored studies of the mental health of North Korean defectors published by the Korea Research Foundation between 1997 and 2016. They categorized these studies by year, academic journal, field, research subject, and method, selecting the final 142 papers for analysis. As a result, the authors found that research into the mental health of North Korean defectors had been conducted since 1997, with studies in psychological science, social welfare science, political diplomacy, and mental science being the most frequent. Seventy-one percent of participants were adults, and studies of the elderly and children were considered methodologically poor. The topic of 43% of studies was mental illness such as depression, anxiety, and PTSD; and many studies were descriptive ones that analyzed the relationship or causality of variables. Studies into recovery, such as quality of life and post-traumatic growth, were also added.

The researchers suggested four ways to prepare for the reunification of the two Koreas (North and South) and to improve the mental health of North Korean defectors: (a) the need for mental health research of wider age groups; (b) multidimensional understanding of the mental health of North Korean defectors; (c) expansion of focus from mental illness such as depression, anxiety, and trauma to addiction or suicide; and (d) the creation of a treatment manual to provide practical services. This study is particularly meaningful in that it focuses on research into the mental health of North

Koreans and encourages them to find practical solutions by analyzing research trends and results. However, the inclusion of only one study published in the Korean Research Foundation (KRF) journal shows the geographical limitations of the research data. It is expected to be necessary to include data covered by domestic and foreign research and media in the future.

Lee and Kim (2020) examined research trends in studies of North Korean defectors by extracting 3,912 keywords from 866 papers on North Korean defectors from between 2005 and 2018 and conduct a semantic network analysis to compare and suggest future research trends on North Korean defectors abroad. The main keywords of North Korean defector studies were “support,” “settlement,” “unification,” “adaptation,” “education,” “necessity,” “process,” “experience,” “children,” “marriage,” and “relationships.” This showed that the keywords were various and ranged from macro-level (policy, unification, government, support, etc.) to micro-level topics (culture, education, marriage, human rights, etc.) for their settlement and adaptation to South Korean society. The findings showed that macro-level topics were more frequent than micro-level ones. Through cohesion analysis, the researchers found research sub-topics on North Korean defectors, such as policy, identity, parenting and health, information skills and welfare services, mental health, human rights, political participation, and adaptation.

This study is notable because it analyzes research data from 2005 to 2018 in broader research domains than in former studies. In addition, the researchers addressed the need to analyze the differences in topics for research on North Korean defectors who live in South Korea and those who live in foreign countries. They stated that, compared

to research conducted overseas, studies about the discrimination and difficulties faced by North Korean defectors in South Korean society and foreign countries are rare. This study has a limitation in that it fails to analyze research trends according to specific categories (e.g., era or scholar). In addition, it was difficult to include all of the terms associated with North Korean defectors when researchers analyzed data because they varied (i.e., North Korean defectors, North Korean refugees, and “Saetemin”).

Kim (2017) insisted that the South Korean government's policy support for North Korean defectors has changed to support settlement more specifically and realistically from a long-term perspective, rather than through one-off support such as settlement subsidies or housing support. The author proposed several methods to support the government's policies and to facilitate the integration of North Korean defectors. First, the researcher stressed that the settlement of North Korean defectors should be separated from the issues of unification and policy or political issues related to North Korea. Second, “customized” support based on individual circumstances should be provided for North Korean defectors to promote their human rights. Third, the support system should be supplemented so that policies can be implemented efficiently. Fourth, education of North Korean defectors and education to improve the perception of South Koreans is needed to promote a mutual understanding of the differences between South Koreans and North Korean defectors. Fifth, the policy to support North Korean defectors should be considered in relation to the fairness of general welfare policies. The “special” legal status currently applied to North Korean defectors could weaken the independence of North Korean defectors' and incite South Koreans negative perceptions and treatment of North Korean defectors. Sixth, support for settlement requires education on human rights

and culture for North Korean defectors to adapt to the values of South Korean society. This article is significant in that the author provides supplemental plans for current governmental policy. Although the article was recognized by a government-approved agency, the author's proposal can be considered her own. It is difficult to gauge the credibility and validity of what the author claims.

### **Attitudes Toward Mental Health Support**

Social prejudice about mental illness is widespread across the world (Bizumic et al., 2022; Del Olmo-Romero et al., 2019). Discriminatory behaviors directed towards individuals with mental illness often manifest as blame, shame, disinterest, annoyance, a desire for social distance, and the dehumanization of those affected. Research findings suggest that the public continues to harbor fear and stigmatize individuals with mental illness, viewing it as a shameful condition. Consequently, individuals grappling with mental health challenges face difficulty in openly discussing their struggles with others (Marchand et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2018). Social prejudice is seen to affect a person's life in many ways, such as through employment or interpersonal relationships (Scottish Association for Mental Health [SAMH], 2016). Stigma associated with mental illness has been identified as a significant concern that is the reluctance of individuals to seek help or treatment, which ultimately diminishes the likelihood of treatment adherence (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2020). In 2019, only 23 million (44.8%) of the 51.5 million adults with mental illness in the United States accessed mental health services (National Institute of Mental Health, 2021). Furthermore, WHO estimates that depression will be the most onerous disease in 2030 (Proudman et al, 2021).



Minority groups face various challenges, including affordability and insurance limitations, workplace prejudice leading to fear of disadvantages, transportation inadequacies, limited awareness of mental illness, and concerns regarding treatment effectiveness (Nursing@USC, 2018). It is expected that the culture-based prejudices of minority groups toward mental illnesses prevent them from taking time off from work to receive psychiatric treatment. Due to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color, including higher infection rates, increased exposure to pandemic-related stressors, and limited access to mental health services, the decline in mental health during the pandemic was likely more pronounced among Black, Hispanic, and Asian adults (Thomeer et al., 2023).

Park and Jeon (2016) conducted a meta-analysis to investigate prejudice and discrimination toward those suffering from mental illness based on the results of existing studies in the South Korea. They found that the public's perception of mental illness was improving, but that there was still a negative reaction to the idea of having personal relationships with people with mental disorders. Under the influence of this prejudice, mentally ill people can suffer from a compounded burden of not only the disease itself, but also the stinging eyes of society and the resulting disadvantages. Furthermore, negative prejudice and discrimination toward mental illness can cause mentally ill people to avoid psychological and medical treatment; thus, the vicious cycle of recurrence of mental illness and long-term hospitalization.

According to Park and Jeon (2016), research emphasizes the need to improve the public's perception of mental illness and to assess prejudice, as well as to develop various forms of educational data or programs based on the evidence. This is significant in that it

proposes that the development of new programs and various strategies should be carried out through cooperative solidarity between the public and private sectors. However, it is not clear what the researchers base their analysis on because they do not provide information about how they arrived at their assertions. It is also questionable whether the methods proposed in the study will fit the situation in the South Korea because most of the cases examined are foreign.

Refugees and asylum seekers can face social distrust, racism, hostility, and rudeness in medical institutions (Rhodes et al., 2015). Refugees who have endured war and poverty may have not only a poor understanding of mental health care, but also mistaken perceptions of psychiatric treatment or counseling (Ba"ar"nhelm et al., 2017). Distrust and awareness generated by the experience of discrimination in medical services causes poor health for refugees and immigrants; they begin to avoid seeking help and undergoing treatment, or they develop a passive attitude toward treatment compliance (Pollock et al., 2012).

North Korea's closed political system makes it difficult to obtain information about risk factors, treatment, prejudice, and other mental illnesses. There can also be large discrepancies between the official North Korean data from the federal government and the actual prevalence of mental health issues, due to underreporting (Ahn et al., 2015). North Korean defectors' self-reported physical health scores are significantly lower than those of South Koreans. (Wang et al., 2014). Since their division, South and North Korea have developed into independent countries with different ideologies, without much mutual exchange. For this reason, North Koreans who defect to the South experience differences in culture and language, lack of understanding of the medical

system, and difficulty in communicating with medical staff for treatment (Wang et al., 2015). In addition, North Korean defectors, who are economically challenged, like refugees, feel burdened by medical expenses despite state-level support, such as from the South Korean Medical Assistance Act (Noh et al., 2019).

### **Counseling or Therapy for Refugees or North Korean Defectors**

Between 2012 and 2013, Jeon et al. (2020) conducted a study with North Korean defectors ( $N = 38$ ) who were discharged from Hana Center, a South Korean government resettlement center for North Korean refugees. The participants ( $n_{female} = 33$ ,  $n_{male} = 3$ ) ranged in age from 20 to 60 years. The Korean version of the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D), State-Trait Anxiety Inventory-State, and Impact of Event Scale-Revised were used to gather data to evaluate the effectiveness of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) on treating symptoms of anxiety, depression, and trauma in North Korean refugees.

Among the 38 participants, 15 were placed in the CBT program and 23 were engaged in simple relaxation as a control condition. Jeon et al. (2020) conducted a pre-test to compare the effects of the program on participants' mental states, with a post-test conducted 8 weeks after each program ended. The results showed that individuals who received CBT presented a significant decrease in CES-D scores ( $p = .023$ ) compared to those who participated in simple relaxation ( $p = .554$ ). However, it is difficult to generalize the results of the study because of the small number of participants. The CBT program was conducted weekly for 8 weeks, while the simple relaxation program was conducted only five times over 2 days, making it difficult to say that the two interventions were conducted under the same conditions. It is also not convincing to

argue that the treatment reduced participants' depression because their histories of mental illness were not reviewed.

Kim (2013) conducted a study on the effectiveness of the Thank You, Sorry, Love (TSL) family program for improving mental health and marital adaptation in a small sample of North Korean female married defectors ( $N = 12$ ), half of whom received the intervention while the other half received no intervention. Psychosocial and biomedical tests were used as pre-, post-, and follow-up measures, with follow-up occurring one month after the program ended. A comparison of changes in depressive symptoms for the two groups was used to measure psychosocial indicators of program intervention. To verify that there is a significant difference between the experimental and control groups in terms of pre-post variations, a pairwise comparison was conducted through the Mann-Whitney U-test. The post-tests ( $p = .037$ ) and follow-up tests ( $p = .077$ ) showed that the change in depression reduction by the program intervention was significant in the experimental group compared to the control group. The intervention of the TSL Family Program for North Korean defectors improved their mental health, while the measurement of the program through a convergence of social science and medical life science was a good way to secure the internal validity of the study.

### ***Art Therapy (AT) or Expressive Therapies (ET) with Refugees***

Expressive Therapies (ET) uses the arts to facilitate expression of inner feelings and the unconscious in a tangible way. In ET, the process of self-exploration and self-expression, in which clients explore and symbolize feelings and conflicts, is prioritized over the artistic quality of the product. Various methods and materials—including visual art, music, dance/exercise, drama, and writing—are integrated in this approach. Double

visual art uses art creation methods such as painting, sculpture, collage making, and photography.

Art Therapy (AT) was initiated by Margaret Naumburg in the 1940s. AT has emerged as a prevalent patient treatment modality, demonstrating positive outcomes for individuals within the medical community. (Degges-White & Davis, 2018). Traumatic memory is characterized as latent in the human body, and action-oriented art therapy is theorized to correct the helplessness experienced by trauma patients (van der Kolk, 2014). Preliminary studies show that AT offers a variety of benefits to refugees and asylum seekers who were traumatized. This literature will be reviewed first, followed by research specific to Korean defectors.

In Kalmanowitz and Ho's (2017) research, 12 adult refugees and asylum seekers from Africa and Iran ( $n_{female} = 9$ ,  $n_{male} = 3$ ) aged from 18 to 45 years participated in four intensive, full-day AT and mindfulness workshops in Hong Kong. The researchers collected data derived from observation of art-making and non-verbal behaviors, video and audio recordings of sessions, session discussions, reflective writings, and individual interviews. Transcripts and written data were used for phenomenological analysis. The researchers reported that, through AT, the 12 traumatized refugees who participated in the study were able to realize what they had not previously felt, control their emotions, express themselves, and recognize events and feelings that had happened to them.

Feen-Colligan et al. (2020) conducted a quasi-experimental study on the effectiveness of a 12-week AT program in treating post-traumatic stress and separation anxiety in Syrian refugee youths ( $N = 15$ ) between the ages of 7 and 14 years. Weekly 90-min sessions that integrated AT with CBT were held for 12 weeks. The program

included art therapy interventions of creating puppets, weaving, and painting collages, as well as story-telling. The main goals of the program were (a) to reduce participants' stress from adapting to the new environment; (b) to reduce symptoms of PTSD, anxiety, and depression; and (c) to teach coping skills. Self-report psychological questionnaires including the Screen for Child Anxiety Related Emotional Disorders and the UCLA Child/Adolescent PTSD Response Index for children were provided in both English and Arabic, in both written and oral forms. The researchers found that AT had a significant effect on reducing participants' post-traumatic stress and separation anxiety ( $p = .05$ ,  $d > .8$ ). Due to the reduction in stress, participants showed interest in artistic activities and demonstrated active agility in the process of creating art (e.g., interaction with the media, problem solving, and participant-led coping strategies). However, because the study did not include a control condition, the researchers cannot determine that it was the intervention that produced change, as opposed to other nonspecific factors such as group cohesion.

### ***Studies of Art Therapy (AT) or Expressive Therapies (ET) in South Korea***

South Korean researchers have continuously studied the effects of AT on North Korean defectors. They have found that AT has a positive effect on cultural adaptation stress (Kang, 2018), improving self-esteem (Cho, 2012; Yoon & Kim, 2021), promoting emotional expression (Park, 2013; Jin, 2016), fostering psychological wellbeing (Yoo, 2017), increasing self-efficacy (Jeong, 2017), establishing self-concept and identity (S. K. Park, 2021), and reducing feelings of depression and guilt (Sung, 2018).

Jin (2016) conducted a study on the effect on self-control and emotional expression of children ( $N = 20$ ) who participated in a group AT program using local

children's centers. Participating children were between 7 and 12 years old, and included four disabled children, three multicultural family children, and two North Korean defectors. Sixteen 60-min sessions of group AT were provided, either once or twice a week (1.2 times a week on average) for the experimental group ( $n = 10$ ). The control group ( $n = 10$ ) did not receive any clinical intervention. The researchers used the Emotional Expressivity Scale, consisting of 17 self-reported items, to measure emotional expression. Analysis of pre- and post-emotional differences in the experimental group showed that the overall average of emotional expression increased from 56.10 to 62.40, which was statistically significant ( $t = 2.572, p < 0.05$ ). The overall average of emotional expression for the control group increased from 60.00 to 60.90, but this was not a statistically significant change ( $t = 1.140, p > 0.05$ ). The study showed that children who participated in AT improved their self-control and emotional expression skills through the process of creating art and communicating with other group members.

Yoo (2017) sought to investigate the impact of the creative process on psychological wellbeing and mental health for 622 university students in the Seoul and metropolitan areas. The researcher distributed about 1,000 copies of a questionnaire in the form of e-mail, Google Documents, mail, and print from August to December 2014. The self-report instrument was used as a tool for measuring creativity in AT, in addition to use of the Creative Connection scale, the Post-traumatic Stress Diagnostic Scale, the Symptom Checklist-90-Revision, and the Psychological Well-Being Scale.

Yoo (2017) found a statically significant correlation between creative connection and psychological wellbeing ( $r = .62, p < .001$ ), with the standard path coefficient of creative connection to psychological wellbeing being significantly affected ( $r = .83, p$

< .001). Psychological wellbeing affected negative mental health ( $r = -.58, p < .001$ ), reducing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD;  $r = .64, p < .001$ ). In other words, creativity was shown to have a fully dual-mediated effect on psychological wellbeing and mental health in relation to PTSD. The research was conducted with many participants. However, the researcher did not provide detailed information about the questionnaire, such as number of items, or who created it. The absence of detailed explanations of the participants' answers and questionnaires reduces the validity of the findings.

Choi and Son (2011) explored the effectiveness of the Korean Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (K-MBSR) program, which utilizes body movements through meditation and stretching to promote mental stability and self-expression. A total of 13 North Korean defectors were divided into a treatment group of six and control group of seven. Eight 90-120 min sessions of K-MBSR program were provided to the treatment group. The sessions consisted of stretching, meditation practice, and sharing thoughts and feelings. The experimental group members were required to practice meditation for 30 minutes every day and write a meditation diary at home, then submit it in a later session. The researchers used the Acceptance and Action Questionnaire to measure the effort to avoid unwanted emotions and the degree to which they were not accepted. The White Bear Thought Suppression inventory was used to measure the extent to which unwanted accidents were contained and avoided, while the Personal Feelings Questionnaire was used to estimate levels of shame and guilt. The researchers found that the K-MBSR program did not significantly reduce PTSD symptoms, accident suppression, nor the shame of North Korean defectors. However, among the symptoms of PTSD, avoidance



and paralysis were reduced initially but increased again 4 weeks after the completion of the program.

There is a limit to generalizing Choi and Son's (2011) results because the number of participants in the study was small and they were from a similar location. However, the application of the meditation-based K-MBSR is meaningful because it encouraged North Korean defectors to implement programs in their daily lives following the study to maintain the positive effects they gained from the program. The study also encouraged participation in future treatment programs by promoting ET programs. As the researchers stressed, it is important to continue to create treatment for North Korean defectors, considering that PTSD symptoms of the North Korean defectors tend to increase when they avoid contact with others and are unwilling to open themselves up. However, there is currently a lack of studies on ET with North Korean defectors in the United States.

### **Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) for North Korean Defectors**

In 2010, the South Korean government revised the North Korean Refugee Act, including the establishment of a regional adaptation center, a professional counselor system, and the establishment of the North Korean Refugee Support Foundation. This act was to set the stage for South Korean society to systematically support psychological counseling for North Korean defectors (Ministry of Unification of the Republic of Korea, 2020)

Since then, counselors, therapists, or researchers used various tools in counseling and therapy. Career developing programs (Ji et al., 2021), programs for adaptation of school (Suh et al., 2017), meditation programs (Kim, 2015), applying Transactional Analysis (TA) theories (Kang & Sung, 2019), ethical counseling programs (Park, 2020),

literary therapy (J. I. Park, 2021), school-based mental programs (Ro & Oh, 2018), art therapy (Oh & Yang, 2017; Kim et al., 2016), music therapy (Lee, 2019), and sand therapy (Lee & Jang, 2015) have been implemented for psychological treatment for North Korean defectors based on their age, gender, and purpose and method of treatment.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) was developed by Aron Beck in the 1960s. CBT is supported by European-American values, as is the case with other types of psychotherapy in modern use (Neem et al., 2019; Stone et al., 2018). Cognitive behavioral therapy is a systematic and goal-oriented form of treatment that focuses on positively modifying patterns of thinking and behavior so that clients can control their emotions and enhance their life. In cognitive behavioral therapy, the therapist helps to seek diagnosis and problem interpretation according to the situation and apply appropriate treatment protocols to solve a wide range of problems (i.e., depression, anxiety, trauma, obsessive compulsive disorder, eating disorder, panic disorder, etc.) faced by the client (Cuijpers et al., 2019; Sahranavard et al., 2019; Webb et al., 2019).

Many scholars have found that cognitive behavioral therapy is being used effectively in various situations. Cognitive behavioral therapy is effective for anxiety disorders and depression (Arnfred et al., 2018; Campbell, 2014; Roberge et al., 2018) and people with a history of traumatic illness (O'Cleirigh, 2019; Bisson et al., 2013). It can be beneficial for women who survived intimate partner violence (Iverson et al., 2011; Lowell & Renk, 2018) or women who experienced gender-based violence (Courtois & Ford, 2016; Erfold et al., 2016; Gillies et al., 2016; Lenz et al., 2017). Furthermore, there is growing evidence that CBT can be an effective treatment for people in other cultures

unfamiliar with Western culture (Acarturk et al., 2019; Hinton & Jalal, 2019; Li et al., 2017; Shaw et al., 2018; Shirozuki et al., 2014; Yoshinaga, 2013).

Cecil (2016) conducted a pilot study with two adolescent participants to explore the potential benefits of combining art therapy with cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) in the treatment of anxiety disorders. The study found that art therapy complements CBT and DBT in several ways. Firstly, it incorporates creative expression and engages multiple senses, enhancing the effectiveness of CBT and DBT. Secondly, it provides a nonverbal form of communication, which is beneficial for individuals who struggle to express themselves verbally. Additionally, art therapy is flexible and can be adapted to suit individual needs, offering personalized therapeutic interventions. Lastly, engaging in artmaking within a therapeutic context normalizes psychotherapy and reduces stigma. However, the study has limitations, including a small participants, lack of long-term follow-up, and insufficient details on the integration of therapies. Further research is necessary to determine the ongoing effects and future outcomes of the intervention in clinical practice, as well as how to effectively integrate different treatments for long-term follow-up. Such research is essential in light of the limitations identified in this study.

The researchers have studied the effectiveness of CBT on refugee populations. They have found that CBT is effective treatment in reducing symptoms of depression, anxiety, and PTSD in refugee children (Gormez et al, 2017; Ooi et al., 2016; Sarkadi et al., 2018; Schottelkorb et al., 2012), decreasing symptoms of trauma (Cohen et al., 2016), mental problems (Buhmann et al., 2015), and promoting cultural adaptation (Baland et al, 2020; Eskici et al., 2023; King & Said, 2019) and resilience (Joyce et al., 2018).

Kananian et al. (2017) found that CBT reduced the general mental problems of refugees and contributes to improving their quality of life. Kananian et al. (2017) conducted a study to investigate feasibility with male Farsi-speaking refugees from Afghanistan and Iran ( $N = 7$ ) who in refugee camps or were referred to the counseling center for Refugees at the Goethe University Frankfurt. The participants' mean age was 25.6 ( $SD = 9.0$ ), and M.I.N.I. measurements diagnosed PTSD ( $N = 7$ ), major depression ( $N = 5$ ), panic disorder ( $N = 2$ ), and generalized anxiety disorder ( $N = 2$ ). Twelve 90-min sessions of Culturally Adapted Cognitive Behavioral Therapy that included emotion regulation, modification of catastrophic cognitions, and teaching emotional distancing were provided once a week. The researchers used the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-28) to measure (1) somatic symptoms, (2) anxiety/insomnia, (3) social dysfunction, and (4) severe depression, Affective Style Questionnaire (ASQ) to measure three emotion regulation styles: (1) concealing, (2) adjusting, and (3) tolerating, Posttraumatic Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5) to measure the five clusters of the DSM-5 for PTSD, Somatic Symptom Scale (SSS-8) to assess somatic symptoms, and Emotion Regulation Scale (ERS) to measure the ability to distance from dysphoric affects. There are significant increases in GHQ-28 ( $d = 2.0$ ) and WHOQOL scales ( $d = 1.0-2.3$ ) in the Wilcoxon test. Large effect sizes were observed on the WHOQOL and GHQ scales, but there is no statistically significant changes were found on the WHOQOL subscale body health, GHQ-28 subscale body symptom and body symptom scales (SSS-8). The study shows that cognitive behavioral therapy has a significant effect on depression and anxiety, especially in relation to an improved quality of life.

### **Unified Protocol (UP)**

Unified Protocol (UP) was developed by David Barlow and a team of researchers at Boston University Center for Anxiety and Related Disorders (CARD), combining factors such as meditation, cognitive therapy, and behavioral therapy (Barlow, Farchione, Bullis et al., 2017; Barlow, Farchione, Sauer-Zavala et al., 2017). The UP aims at changing dysfunctional emotions driven behaviors by increasing mindful emotion awareness, cognitive flexibility, and encourage confrontation (Barlow et al., 2004).

The researcher found that UP could be applied to various disorders and populations, such as children and adolescents (Martin et al, 2022; Milgram et al., 2022; Sandín et al., 2021), veterans (Gutner et al., 2022), self-injury (Bentley, 2017), PTSD (Hood et al., 2021), depression and anxiety (Southward & Sauer, 2022), and emotional disorder (Zemestani et al., 2022).

Gutner et al. (2022) conducted a study to compare the effectiveness of the unified protocol (UP), presented centered therapy (PCT), and treatment as usual (TAU) in trauma-exposed veterans. Thirty-seven trauma-exposed veterans ( $N=37$ ) enrolled in the VA Boston Healthcare System (VABHS) were recruited via clinician referral between January 2017 and July 2018. Participants were randomized to treatment condition UP ( $n=13$ ), PCT ( $n=13$ ), or TAU ( $n = 11$ ). Most of the participants were male (81.1%), White (73.3%), and non-Hispanic (83.3%) with a mean age of 46.85 ( $SD = 13.70$ ). The researcher conducted baseline, post treatment (3–4 months after baseline), and at 3-month follow-up to assess. The UP and PCT group were participated 12-weekly individual therapy sessions that consists of 8 modules: (1) enhancing motivation, (2) psychoeducation on the adaptive nature of emotions, (3) mindful emotion awareness, (4)

cognitive flexibility, (5) identifying and preventing patterns of emotional avoidance, (6) increasing awareness and tolerance of emotion-related physical sensations, (7) emotion-focused exposures, and (8) relapse prevention and completed all 12 sessions within 21 weeks of the baseline assessment. The results showed that UP demonstrated the greatest change. Only UP led to a decrease in the number of comorbid diagnoses ( $d = -0.71$ ), exhibited significant decreases in self-reported anxiety and depression. In the comparison of the difference of the group in UP and PCT were medium to large and statistically significant for depression across two measures ( $d = -0.72$  to  $d = -1.40$ ). Despite conducting the study with small populations, it was the first systematic test attempt of the UP in the routine treatment setting and showed the possibility that UP can play as an important role to implement single diagnosis protocols (SDPs).

In the study of Southward et al. (2022), the researcher examined whether the UP can reduce a level of loneliness as well as role of its skill to these reductions. Seventy participants ( $N = 70$ ) with at least one anxiety, depressive, or related disorder based on Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders criteria (5th ed.; DSM-5; American Psychiatric Association, 2013) were recruited from Kentucky from November 2019 to September 2020. The mean age was  $M = 33.74$  ( $SD = 12.64$ ), and most participants identified as female ( $n = 47$ ; 67.1%), white ( $n = 52$ ; 74.3%), and heterosexual ( $n = 52$ ; 74.3%). The treatment consisted of the five core modules of the UP, with all but one (i.e., Countering Emotional Behaviors) delivered over two weekly, 50–60-min individual sessions in a randomized order. Overall Anxiety Severity and Impairment Scale (OASIS), Overall Depression Severity and Impairment Scale (ODSIS); three-Item Loneliness Scale (TILS), and Unified Protocol Skill Use Scale (UPSUS) were used as

assessment tools. Participants were randomized to receive one of three UP modules (i.e., Prioritizing modules that capitalized on relative strengths ( $n = 24$ ; 34.3%), prioritizing modules that compensated for relative deficits ( $n = 21$ ; 30.0%), or the standard published order of UP modules ( $n = 25$ ; 35.7%)). Participants were re-randomized to either discontinue treatment after session 6 ( $n = 35$ ; 50.0%) or complete the remaining six sessions ( $n = 35$ ; 50.0%) before mid-treatment. The results emphasize that six sessions of the UP led to significant decreases in loneliness ( $B = -0.08$ ,  $SE = -0.03$ ,  $p = .02$ , 95%-CI  $[-0.15, -0.01]$ ,  $d = -0.22$ ). In examining UP skill frequency, quantity, and specific UP skills on loneliness, there were significant decreases in loneliness ( $B = -0.11$ ,  $SE = -0.05$ ,  $p = .02$ , 95%-CI  $[-0.21, -0.02]$ ,  $R^2 = 0.03$ ). Although the demographic homogeneity of small study samples and participants may be limited in generalizing the findings, the use of UP and promoting patients' UP skills can be helpful in reducing the patients' levels of loneliness.

Schaeuffele et al. (2022) investigated the relevance of the transdiagnostic processes (i.e., mindfulness, cognitive flexibility, anxiety sensitivity, and avoidance) in the UP in an internet-based setting for emotional disorders. The participants ( $N = 132$ ) with anxiety, depressive, or somatic symptom disorder were recruited by self-selection in online mental health forums, on social media platforms, and over targeted ads on a popular search engine. The intervention was provided to the participants through a 10-week adaptation of the German translated UP workbook for internet-based use. The book consisted of 10 modules: 1) motivation and goal setting; 2) understanding emotions; 3) mindfulness; 4) cognitive flexibility I; 5) cognitive flexibility II; 6) countering avoidance; 7) interoceptive exposure; 8) emotions exposure I; 9) emotions exposure II; 10) relapse

prevention. Participants were asked to work on one module per week, and the researcher used a self-rated assessment on an online platform to navigate the outcome. The researcher assessed symptom distress, mindfulness, cognitive flexibility, anxiety sensitivity, avoidance, experiential avoidance, and behavioral activation to navigate outcomes. There were significant changes in overtime for all transdiagnostic processes, such as mindfulness, cognitive flexibility, anxiety sensitivity, behavioral activation, and experiential avoidance ( $F = 5.30-16.40$ ,  $df = 1-2$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). In single mediator model, the treatment effect was interfered by mindfulness ( $PM = .13$ ), cognitive flexibility ( $PM = .06$ ), experiential avoidance ( $PM = .09$ ), and behavioral activation ( $PM = .15$ ), but not anxiety sensitivity. In multiple mediator mode, the treatment effect was only affected by mindfulness ( $PM = .09$ ) and cognitive flexibility ( $PM = .06$ ). The researcher emphasized the importance of focusing on mindfulness and cognitive flexibility, as well as the need for research on trans diagnostic processes through UP having a positive effect on changes in cognitive behavior in patients. The results derived from the study are significant in that research results on Internet-based treatment have been derived at a time when online sessions are increasing since Pandemic.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Method**

This chapter emphasizes the nature of the research, providing a description of the methods employed to conduct the study. The following sections encompass details on the research nature, utilized methods, and study design, encompassing aspects such as the target population, sampling techniques, data collection procedures, analysis methods, and the instruments employed in the study.

#### **Method – Creative Arts Experiments**

A phenomenological study that combines qualitative and art-based research methodologies was utilized for this study. Three participants were interviewed for demographics and to sign the consent form. In this study, the group art therapy directives were created using the AMITA Treatment Framework (ATF). The ATF is adapted from David Barlow's Unified Protocol (UP). The ATF consists of 14 modules: 1) goal setting; 2) mindful breathing; 3) the function of emotions; 4) breaking down an emotion; 5) motivation; 6) non-judgmental mindful emotion awareness and anchoring in the present; 7) automatic negative thoughts and cognitive flexibility; 8) cognitive appraisal; 9) driven behaviors by emotions and alternative actions; 10) learning by doing; 11) distress tolerance; 12) interpersonal effectiveness; 13) review of treatment skills; and 14) relapse prevention (Rhew & Ammon, 2017). The AMITA Health Behavioral Medicine Institute brought together decades of clinical experience and research through the ATF to provide a single intervention that is effective across numerous mental disorders and conditions (Rhew & Ammon, 2017). Participations had six in-person group AT sessions with six directives: 1) analyzing self-image; 2) finding positive qualities; 3) identifying

challenges; 4) behaviors driven by emotions in challenging situations; 5) reframing challenges; and 6) reconstructing self-image and goal setting. After the final session, the researcher individually interviewed the participants about their experiences.

The group was led by an art therapist currently working at a behavioral hospital located in a metropolitan Midwest city. All sessions were recorded by the researcher using a digital voice recorder and camcorder to capture the experiential process. The data collected from the six sessions of group art therapy explained the art directive, artmaking, and the sharing of thoughts and feelings about participants' arts. The data showed the researchers' phenomenological observations for the participants' art-making process, the interpretations and perspectives of arts, and the changing and reconstruction process of the participants' self-concept and resilience. The researcher created session notes, journal entries, and took photos of the artwork.

### **Participants**

The research project entailed studying three female defectors from North Korea who fled to China and eventually settled in the Midwestern United States. In this study, it was important to observe the participants' discriminatory or unfair experiences as women in relation to their identity as being North Korean and their processes of defection from the country. The researcher explored how these facts affect the female North Korean defectors' resilience. All of the participants were adult women over the age of 18 and were recruited regardless of their length of residence in the United States and experience of AT. Participants were asked to complete an informed consent form to participate in the study. They also were asked for consent with regards to the use of their artwork. In this

research, the participants will be identified by the pseudonyms Junghee, Soyeon, and Hyejung.

Junghee is a woman in her late 20s who has been in the United States for seven years. Junghee escaped from North Korea due to financial difficulties. Junghee settled in South Korea and attended college before she moved to the United States. She is currently living with her husband in the United States.

Soyeon is a woman in her late 20s who grew up in a relatively wealthy environment in North Korea and has sought asylum in the United States for about seven years. After her mother left for South Korea, her family faced financial difficulties, and Soyeon grew up with her younger brother under the care of their father in North Korea. At the recommendation of her mother, who defected to South Korea, Soyeon was in a Thai refugee camp and moved to the United States. She currently lives alone in the United States, while her father and younger brother live in North Korea, and her mother lives in South Korea.

Hyejung is a woman in her early 20s who defected with her father after the death of her mother. Hyejung faced several life and death crises while crossing the border. She escaped from Beijing to Thailand with the help of a Korean underground church in China. She currently lives in the Midwest with her father, stepmother, and half-sister, where she attends college.

## **Procedures**

Artistic experientials were used to explore the North Korean defectors' experience of the art-making process. Three participants participated in six in-person AT sessions lasting 90 minutes. Participants were provided with art materials (markers, crayons,

colored pencils, oil pastels, clay, watercolors, etc.). During each session, the participants' stories and the art making process were video- and audio-recorded. The participants were encouraged to communicate their feelings and thoughts in the sessions. The participants' works of art and writing were collected. The researcher conducted individual interviews about the group AT experience with the participants at the end of the final session.

Researcher and group leader shared information and knowledge about ATF through prior meetings, while researchers provided ATF art guidance training to group leader. The art therapist was participating in the study as a group leader without compensation. Prior to the start of group AT, the researcher conducted individual interviews to explain the research process to the participants and helped them to sign the consent forms. The researcher asked about the participants' general backgrounds and histories, such as their migration background and their life in North Korea and the United States, and briefly introduced what AT is in the interview.

The directive of the first session was analyzing self-image. Participants were asked to create a drawing of themselves using various art materials. The image could be realistic or abstract. The group was encouraged to reflect on themselves by presenting their work and sharing how they think and feel about themselves.

In the second session, participants were asked to create a drawing of tree roots and were asked to think about their positive qualities. A list of positive traits were provided to stimulate ideas. The group shared their strengths and how their positive qualities help them in their lives.

During the third session, the participants were given the task of creating 3D images using different art materials to represent a paper mountain sculpture symbolizing

their personal challenges. They were asked to identify their challenges. The group leader encouraged participants to provide examples of emotions they have felt. The group shared their emotions and thoughts about their challenges without judgment. The group discussed both pleasant and unpleasant emotions that exist and how it was helpful to be aware of them.

In the fourth session, participants were asked to create a paper book that navigated their approach to challenges. The group leader explained that emotions were made of three parts: thoughts, physical sensations, and behavior. The group leader explained how emotions were triggered by a situation or event and how responding to emotions had short-term and long-term consequences. The group discussed alternative behavior.

In the fifth session, participants were asked to create paintings with Japanese marble painting tool. The group discussed how the way they interpreted a situation affects how they felt. They talked about how they were more likely to experience automatic negative thoughts, than encounter difficulties. The group discussed the challenges of automatic negative thoughts (ANTS) and the development of cognitive flexibility.

In the sixth session, participants were asked to create a collage that represented themselves and to write a letter to themselves. The participants shared their perception of themselves, what they needed to learn or improve, and positive expectations about the future. The participants were prompted to apply their positive qualities to their challenging situations. The group discussed their future goals and how they could cope with their challenges to achieve their goals. The participants shared their experiences of group AT.

The researcher conducted a debriefing with the group leader after each group. After the group AT sessions were completed, participants were interviewed by the researcher regarding their experiences in the group. Interview protocol can be found in Appendix B.

### **Data Collection**

The researcher used audio/video recordings, the participants' works of art and writing, the researcher's journal, and transcripts of interviews about the participants' experiences in art therapy sessions as data. All recorded statements were transcribed in the language expressed by the study participants, and non-verbal expressions such as laughter and silence were recorded.

### **Data Analysis**

The researcher described the research process and outcome in two sections. In the first section, the researcher analyzed the Interviews collected in each session and identified relevant themes. In the second section, the researcher analyzed the participants' art creation processes and works of art to explore their association with the themes found in the first section.

The data analysis process in the first section was conducted using the first four stages of van Manen's qualitative research method (i.e., focusing on the nature of experience, investigating experience, reflecting on analytical phenomenology, describing, and reviewing analytical phenomenology, maintaining oriented relationships, and balancing the part and the whole (van Manen, 1990, p. 30). In the first stage of focusing on the nature of the experience, the researcher formulated a phenomenological question— “What are the experiences of North Korean defectors engaged in 6 weeks

Resilience-Based Cognitive Behavioral group AT?”—and observed how the participants reflected on their challenges, thinking, and emotional and behavioral reactions. The second stage of experience exploration was a process of investigating experiences as they were. The researcher used the participants’ interviews, audio/video recordings, works of art, researcher’s journals, and the transcripts of individual interviews as data. In the third stage of the analytical phenomenology process, involving the reflective step, a meticulous analysis of the collected data was undertaken. This analysis primarily employed detailed text reading methods, wherein the researcher thoroughly immersed themselves in the participants' statements. The goal was to extract meaningful keywords or identify recurring topics within the dataset. The researcher systematically identified essential themes that were observed to be threaded through the entire body of collected data. This process aimed to uncover the underlying patterns and structures inherent in the participants' experiences. Moving on to the fourth stage, which centered on articulating the analytical phenomena, the researcher synthesized their observations from the Art Therapy (AT) group. This synthesis involved organizing the identified themes and insights gained from the analysis. The final step culminated in the comprehensive write-up of the research results, providing a coherent and nuanced understanding of the analyzed phenomena within the context of the Art Therapy group. This analytical approach ensured a rigorous exploration of the participants' statements, revealing the core themes that captured the essence of their experiences in the art therapy setting.

In the second section, the researcher conducted a thorough analysis of the participants' narratives and reflections regarding their artistic choices. Thematic analysis was employed to detect recurring patterns, symbols, or themes within the artworks,

resulting in insights into the psychological and emotional dimensions of the creative process. Additionally, the researcher examined the context of the art-making experience, which includes the selection of materials and the artists' interactions throughout the process.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Results**

This chapter presents the results obtained from interviews conducted with and artwork created by female North Korean defectors participating in a group art therapy program. This study's aim was to observe the impact of resilience-based cognitive behavioral group art therapy on the participants. By analyzing the interviews and examining the artwork produced during the sessions, valuable insights are gained into the experiences and perspectives of the participants, shedding light on the impact in addressing their unique challenges.

### **Dialogue**

Based on the analysis the researcher identified six themes and 13 subthemes. The researcher identified the subthemes by categorization of topics that repeatedly appeared during sessions or topics that incorporated similar content and then derived the main themes based on them. There were six main themes identified: "Who I am," "The Journey of defecting from North Korea," "Challenges in the United States," "Physical, Emotional, and Behavioral Responses," "Cognitive Distortions," and "Restructuring Self Image." There were thirteen subtopics. The topics derived through analytical and phenomenological reflection are presented below.

Table 1

## Themes of Participants' Interview

<b>Session</b>	<b>Main Theme</b>	<b>Subtheme</b>
1	Who I Am	North Korean Refugee or North Korean defector
2	The Journey of Defecting from North Korea	Escaping from North Korea Life in China Life in Thai refugee camp
3	Challenges in the United States	Acculturation Isolation
4	Physical, Emotional, and Behavioral Responses	Stressors or triggers Reactions toward triggers or stressors
5	Cognitive Distortions	Negative thoughts Thoughts derived by emotions
6	Restructuring Self Image	Positive sense of self Goals for the life in the United States

***Who I Am***

The main objective of North Korean defectors in discussing their self-identity was to validate their integration and adaptation in the new society while also evaluating their sense of belonging and connectedness. During the exploration of the question "who I am," participants engaged in discussions encompassing various aspects of their identity, which proved to be complex and multifaceted. Some participants identified themselves as

North Koreans, while others associated with the labels of refugees or defectors. Their responses using terms such as "North Koreans," "refugees from North Korea," and "defectors" shed light on the intricate implications surrounding their self-identity. This complexity arose from the interconnectedness of their identities as North Koreans, refugees, or defectors, which intertwine to shape their self-concept, rooted in diverse experiences and backgrounds. Additionally, cultural factors played a significant role, influencing their values, social roles, and self-perception profoundly. Moreover, participants' self-identity experienced integration or division, and they faced internal conflicts due to such diversity. Social status and identity also played crucial roles, impacting how participants perceive themselves and their positions within society. North Koreans, refugees, or defectors showcased the fluidity of their identity. The participants continued to feel the impact of their North Korean background, despite having acquired U.S. citizenship and residing in the United States.

### **North Korean**

Participants shared that identifying themselves as "North Koreans," "refugees from North Korea," or "North Korean defectors" played a crucial role in their resettlement in the United States as refugees and obtaining citizenship. However, they frequently encountered challenges when it came to attending school, finding employment, or socializing in their unfamiliar environment. Despite their pride in their North Korean heritage, they faced prejudice and discrimination in the United States due to misconceptions and stereotypes surrounding North Korea and its people.

When Soyeon disclosed her North Korean background at work, she found herself bombarded with numerous inquiries about political and social matters, which became

increasingly burdensome and challenging. She gradually refrained from mentioning her North Korean heritage.

*The majority of people would ask about what they had heard through the media or news outlets. Questions such as, "What are your thoughts on Kim Jong-un?" and "Don't North Koreans endure extreme hardships?" As English is not my strong suit, I feel embarrassed when faced with such questions, unsure of how to respond.*

Hyejung faced significant challenges in her high school years, particularly in her relationships with friends. Hyejung felt hesitant about revealing her identity to her classmates due to their overwhelming curiosity about North Korea. Additionally, she often found herself pausing before introducing herself as a Korean American, as she noticed a distinct perception among South Koreans that set them apart from their North Korean counterparts.

*I would sometimes mention that I was from North Korea. Upon hearing this, American students would express curiosity about my escape from North Korea, assuming I had gone through a difficult journey. On the other hand, international students from South Korea would often distance themselves from me, seemingly treating me differently from their fellow South Koreans.*

### **Refugee or North Korean Defector**

Participants shared their experiences of encountering subtle discrimination based on their identities as refugees and North Korean defectors. They expressed that some locals tend to underestimate their social and economic standing due to the support they have received from the U.S. government in resettling them in the United States.

Additionally, participants disclosed that they often encountered a similar trend in their interactions with South Koreans.

Junghee, who had attended college in South Korea before relocating to the United States, frequently experienced feelings of isolation and depression due to a lack of intimacy with her colleagues in South Korea. The university class posed such a tremendous challenge that she found herself struggling, yet she had no friends she could turn to for assistance. The absence of a support network left her feeling despondent and disconnected.

*Whenever I engaged in conversations with some of my acquaintances about food or brands, they would question, "How are you familiar with this?" Each time, my self-esteem took a blow, and I sensed a disregard for my presence. Establishing a sense of trust and closeness with my friends seemed unattainable in this situation.*

Soyeon took extraordinary pride in her job and her ability to support herself financially. However, some individuals assumed that she was impoverished because she came from North Korea.

*I arrived as a refugee and found refuge in the United States with the assistance of the government. Nevertheless, I have a job that allows me to sustain myself and earn enough income to support my family back in North Korea, so it is unfair to underestimate my social and economic standing.*

### ***The Journey of Defecting from North Korea***

The purpose of navigating the journey of defecting from North Korea was to understand and shed light on the experiences, challenges, and complexities faced by individuals who have chosen to leave their home country to seek refuge in other nations.

Defecting from North Korea was a significant and life-altering decision, driven by various factors, such as political oppression, economic hardship, and human rights violations. The participants confronted numerous life-threatening situations as they navigated through heavily guarded borders. They were constantly on the move, plagued by unease, unable to eat or drink properly, and living in fear of being apprehended. Moreover, they had to endure discrimination and inequality due to their defector status. The participants shared accounts of escaping from North Korea, revealing a disturbing pattern of human rights violations that persisted throughout their entire journey.

### **Escaping from North Korea**

Occasionally, participants would resort to bribery, offering incentives to the soldiers responsible for security or paying exorbitant fees to brokers who could provide them with an escape route from North Korea. When they chose the path across mainland China, they embarked on a grueling journey spanning thousands of kilometers on foot. This perilous decision exposed them to the constant threat of being apprehended and forcibly returned to North Korea, where they faced the grim prospects of detention or even execution in the notorious political prison camps.

Hyejung's father discovered a way to flee from North Korea with the assistance of a broker. In order to facilitate their escape, he also made payments to border soldiers. During Hyejung's frantic escape, she realized that she had left behind a crucial picture along with a bag containing photographs of her family, her journal, and an emergency kit. However, she was unable to stop running for fear of facing death if her escape was discovered.

*One night, I discreetly boarded a boat, disembarked at a remote location, and embarked on a long and arduous journey. The fear of being caught and facing dire consequences compelled me to continue running without dwelling on my loss. My primary objective was to survive with my father, so I tirelessly walked during the day and sought refuge at the base of the mountains during the cover of night.*

### **Life in China**

The participants reported that escaping from North Korea involved human rights violations almost from start to finish. Once participants arrived in China, they were more likely to be subject to persecution and couldn't ask or receive protection from the Chinese government. China does not offer asylum or refugee status to North Koreans; instead, they are generally treated as illegal immigrants and are deported back to North Korea. The participants were stressed and suffered from anxiety and fear during the process.

In a bid to steer clear of the worst-case scenario, Soyeon embarked on a daunting journey.

*I traveled to many cities by bus in China to go to Thailand, so I could not sleep or eat well. I did not even take a bath because I heard from other women that I should be careful not to be sexually assaulted. Every time the bus stopped, I was afraid the police would catch me, and I tried my best to keep it out of sight.*

### **Life in a Thai Refugee Camp**

Thailand's Bangkok refugee camp served as the final gateway for North Korean defectors seeking to relocate to South Korea or the United States. Upon reaching the refugee camp, these defectors were given the opportunity to choose the country in which they wished to settle. In China, North Korean defectors faced a significant risk of being

repatriated to North Korea, as their residence there is deemed illegal. However, the Thai refugee camps offered a protective haven, as the Thai government ensured there was no danger of repatriation to North Korea. Two participants expressed their comfort while staying in the Thai refugee camp, as they were relieved to be free from the scrutiny of the Chinese public security bureau and felt a sense of security and protection.

Junghee cherished her stay in a shared room with fellow North Koreans at the Thai refugee camp, despite the challenge of accommodating numerous people.

*Being surrounded by others who could empathize with my experiences brought a profound sense of relief. Finally free from constant surveillance and threats, I experienced a level of comfort that had been missing for so long. Engaging in meaningful conversations and fostering a positive atmosphere, we made the most of our time together.*

### ***Challenges in the United States***

Unlike regular immigrants, North Korean defectors faced significant challenges in adapting to a new settlement due to their impoverished lives in North Korea, constant threats to their survival, and persecution in the intermediate settlements they pass through. After enduring the challenges of defecting from North Korea, the participants reflected on their experiences of resettling in the United States, meticulously analyzing the harsh realities they encountered. The participants expressed gratitude for safely entering the United States as refugees and legally residing there. They chose the United States because it is home to many refugees from around the world and they believed they would have better educational and work opportunities. However, apart from Hyejung, who fled with her father, the participants Junghee and Soyeon encountered difficulties in



assuming responsibility for their own livelihoods due to the absence of family support. They all experienced emotional and cultural differences. Two of them faced limitations in employment due to their limited English skills, making it difficult for them to find jobs. Previous negative experiences, such as being scammed by other North Korean defectors or facing judgment from people in the United States, significantly impacted their trust in others and their ability to form new relationships. The participants reported various challenges, including loneliness, discrimination, language barriers, and more, upon settling down in the United States.

### **Acculturation**

Participants with no prior exposure to Western culture found themselves facing significant challenges when it came to adapting to their new environments at school or work. The process of adjusting to a completely different culture and system was a major source of stress for them. Language barriers often led to miscommunication or caused them to withdraw from interpersonal relationships.

Junghee, for instance, expressed how particularly difficult it was for her to acclimate to the school system, which differed from what she was accustomed to in North Korea. Junghee faced considerable challenges due to her limited proficiency in English. In North Korea, individuals are required to suppress their true selves, making it difficult to openly communicate. As a result, she found it hard to establish meaningful connections and make friends, as there was little common ground to share.

*Coming from North Korea, where English education was not emphasized, I struggled to express my opinions and thoughts freely. Everything I encountered in the U.S. was incredibly unfamiliar, and it took me a considerable amount of time*

*to grasp the intricacies of the school system and navigate relationships with teachers and classmates, as they vastly differed from my experiences in North Korea.*

### **Isolation**

Participants expressed their struggles due to the lack of companionship and support from friends and family to share their experiences and worries. Additionally, they faced challenges in connecting with fellow North Korean defectors who were going through similar circumstances, as well as encountering difficulties in locating organizations that could provide assistance.

Junghye contemplated the idea of bringing her father and brother from North Korea to the United States whenever she frequently found herself struggling with unexpected bouts of loneliness. This feeling seems to intensify, particularly when she encountered difficult customers or experienced elevated levels of stress.

*Since arriving in the U.S., I have made efforts to connect with various individuals. However, past experiences have left me emotionally wounded, making it difficult for me to fully open up and trust others. Despite the numerous hurdles to overcome, having my dad and brother by my side will provide a sense of security. Unfortunately, the hope of making this a reality has diminished since the onset of the pandemic.*

### ***Physical, Emotional, and Behavioral Responses***

To attain a comprehensive understanding of the participants' well-being and adaptation to their new circumstances, in-depth exploration was conducted on their physical, emotional, and behavioral responses in challenging situations. The monitoring

of both physical and emotional reactions was instrumental in enhancing self-awareness among the participants. Moreover, a particular focus on analyzing their behavioral responses enabled them to gain insights into how they navigated and coped with the challenges of their changed environment. This encompassed their social interactions, communication patterns, and employed coping mechanisms, providing valuable insights into their adaptive strategies. All three participants coincidentally shared concerns about their physical and emotional well-being. They found it challenging to discover effective methods for alleviating their stress, and their unfavorable physical and emotional states significantly influenced their behaviors.

### **Stressors or Triggers**

North Korean defectors who chose to settle in the United States often faced challenges in adapting to the unfamiliar American culture, particularly in the realm of relationships. These individuals struggled with personal identity and often hesitated to disclose their true identities, as they undertook their journey alone. Consequently, their social connections tend to revolve around religious groups, resulting in limited interpersonal relationships. Many participants expressed reluctance to engage with fellow defectors from North Korea, fearing that it would remind them of their traumatic experiences and reopen old wounds associated with the defection process.

Hyejung expressed her distress over being overlooked by groups of friends due to their misconceptions about North Korea. My friends passed judgment on me without truly knowing me, making assumptions solely based on their preconceived notions. Hyejung felt incredibly upset as she believed the individuals, she was spending time with were engaging in bullying towards her.

*On multiple occasions, my friends questioned me about my experience with snacks or cookies in North Korea, mocking the country and its leader, Kim Jong-un. While I also hold reservations about Kim Jong-un, the comments they made about North Korea were hurtful and difficult for me to bear. It intensified my feelings of being an outsider, making me question whether I truly belonged in that social setting.*

Junghee faced significant challenges in securing employment when she disclosed her North Korean background.

*My status as a North Korean defector posed an additional complication in securing a job. Whenever I divulged this information to interviewers, I could discern a discernible shift in their facial expressions. Since then, I had to introduce myself as an immigrant from South Korea.*

Soyeon shared that she once trusted a North Korean defector and asked for his help, only to be betrayed and threatened. This traumatic experience still lingers, making it difficult for her to move forward.

*I am now mindful of avoiding interactions with North Koreans in the United States, given my past encounters with defectors tainted by fraud, discreditation, and deceit. My intention is to steer clear of any potential encounters with North Korean defectors.*

### **Reactions toward Triggers of Stressors**

Participants expressed their limited capacity to withstand stress or triggers, as they were living in the United States under legal status. However, they harbored deep concerns about the potential consequences if they were entangled in an unfavorable

situation and faced the risk of deportation. To mitigate these risks, they believed it was prudent to maintain silence and distance themselves from others, as they lacked a support network to seek assistance from in dire circumstances. The prospect of accessing expert guidance, such as lawyers, was particularly daunting, as their financial resources did not allow for such expenses.

Soyeon found herself trapped in a situation where she couldn't express her grievances, no matter how badly customers or owners treated her.

*The lack of a support system left me fearing that any unfortunate events could leave me on my own, risking the loss of her legal status in the United States. This persistent state of tension burdened me greatly. In order to cope, I suppressed my feelings and emotions, growing distant from others. It seemed as though my life was slowly shrinking, becoming more constricted.*

Junghee said she did not want to recall her painful past and kept worried about her family's safety in North Korea.

*I rarely come across North Koreans in my day-to-day life, except for encounters at church. Discussing the painful wounds, I carry is something I hesitate to do with others, as I cannot determine who might be affiliated with North Korea, and there's a risk that speaking openly could bring harm to my family.*

### ***Cognitive Distortions***

The aim of exploring the participants' cognitive distortions was to gain insights into how their unique experiences may contribute to the development or manifestation of irrational and biased thought processes. These distortions, in turn, can lead to negative emotions, maladaptive behaviors, and challenges in adapting to new circumstances.

Through a deep examination of cognitive distortions, the participants shared their psychological struggles, especially when adapting to a different cultural and social context, such as resettling in a foreign country like the United States. Participants emphasized that any instance of prejudice and criticism directed towards North Korea triggers a deeply personal response within them.

Participants consistently expressed their experiences of encountering cognitive distortions, particularly when others failed to acknowledge the diverse range of experiences among North Korean defectors. They emphasized that the public perception of North Korean defectors often revolves around those who have publicly testified or gained media attention. However, participants stressed the significant variations in backgrounds and defection experiences among North Korean defectors, emphasizing the need for a multicultural perspective to understand their individual circumstances. They urged people to refrain from generalizing about the experiences of defectors and instead advocated for the recognition of the unique narratives of everyone. Also, participants also argued that it was important to highlight the stories of ordinary defectors who were not involved in external activities.

### **Negative Thoughts**

Soyeon's clients conveyed stories from social media or broadcasting platforms that the growing tensions between the United States and North Korea regarding nuclear concerns, a narrative often amplified by conservative media labeling North Korea as an "axis of evil" and a global peace threat.

*Being a U.S. citizen myself, I could not shake off the worry that the client might associate me with the negative portrayal of North Korea propagated by the*

*media. Anxious and nervous, I found myself troubled by the potential negative perception my clients might have of me, and it saddened me to think that I had to bear the weight of my North Korean identity while residing in the United States.*

### **Thoughts Derived by Emotions**

Junghee came to the realization that her perception of how others viewed her was heavily influenced by her emotions. She noticed that whenever she received distressing news about North Korea from the United States, she tended to internalize it and feel personally responsible or blame herself in some way.

*When I first met the reserved and less talkative clients, I found myself interpreting their behavior as a reaction to something I might have done wrong. Alternatively, I would try to decipher their expressions for signs of disapproval. However, as I gained more confidence and maintained a positive mindset, I began to understand that this was simply the client's natural disposition. I became more open-minded, acknowledging that there are still negative aspects surrounding North Korea, but I didn't let it affect my interactions with this client.*

### ***Restructuring Self-Image***

The participants experienced a significant shift in their identity and self-perception when they escaped and settle in a different country. The process of adjusting to a new society, culture, and way of life were extremely challenging, leading to various issues such as cultural shock, identity crisis, and feelings of isolation. Restructuring self-image involved helping the participants rebuild a positive and healthy sense of self, free from the oppressive and indoctrinated beliefs they might have internalized. This included

addressing trauma, reevaluating past experiences and beliefs, and building new self-concepts that align with their current environment and aspirations.

Participants emphasized that the process of defecting from North Korea presented them with a chance to develop inner strength. Overcoming challenges to establish a new life in the United States became a transformative experience that allowed them to demonstrate their resilience and overcome numerous obstacles. Throughout the interview, the defectors expressed their ability to endure hardships and displayed their unwavering commitment to living responsibly and taking ownership of the paths they had chosen.

### **Positive Sense of Self**

The personal attributes and strengths exhibited by North Korean defectors have played a crucial role in their adjustment to life in the United States. The participants perceived themselves as resilient individuals, displaying independence and inner strength developed through navigating the challenges they faced on their own.

Soyeon also stressed concepts of strength and independence that she never thought about when she was under the North Korean dictatorship.

*North Korean defectors are highly capable and resilient individuals. I am among them, and I possess the independence and skills needed to thrive on my own, regardless of the circumstances. I made the decision to come to the United States in search of a brighter future and to escape the difficulties I faced in North Korea. Here, I hope to find a better life and embrace the opportunities that lie ahead.*



Junghee voiced her frustration about feeling restricted within a process that primarily revolved around her own individual growth. Nevertheless, she remained determined to overcome these challenges and continue her personal development.

*I strive to give my utmost effort in everything I do, drawing strength from the myriad challenges I faced during my escape from North Korea. There are moments when my own limitations make me feel stuck and hitting barriers can be incredibly frustrating. However, each time I overcome these obstacles, I sense personal growth and development. It is through these experiences that I find the motivation to continue pushing myself forward.*

### **Goals for the Life in the United States**

Participants determined to escape the struggles of survival in the United States by obtaining a guaranteed legal status and achieving economic stability. Although they lacked experience in American society, their unwavering determination drove them to strive for a livelihood. They eagerly sought knowledge, education, and self-actualization within the United States. Their aspirations included finding purpose in life, attaining financial success, and aiding the people in North Korea. They held hope that the diverse and multicultural society of the United States would embrace them as they were, as long as they lived honestly. It was evident that they felt a profound sense of relief and gratitude for being in the United States, and they actively sought to discover meaning in their lives to face the challenges that lay ahead.

For Junghee, this translated into the freedom to pursue her aspirations without the burden of intense competition weighing her down.

*I am planning to visit South Korea, but my intention is to reside in the United States. The reason I am drawn to America is because it offers a less competitive environment. Here, you have the freedom to pursue your own goals and aspirations without the pressure of intense competition. It allows individuals to focus on what they can achieve or truly desire to do.*

Hyejung wished to have a job and study more.

*I aspire to secure a job and pursue my studies in this place. However, I have concerns about affording it since I lack the support of a family and must handle all responsibilities independently. Nonetheless, I am determined to give my best in my work and lead a diligent life. I take pride in my ability to survive on my own, even without financial resources, after enduring the challenging journey of defecting from North Korea. If circumstances allow, I would love to further enhance my knowledge through additional studies.*

Soyeon focused on opportunity and the individualistic society in the U.S. versus the collectivist society in Korea.

*I want to establish a stable life in America, not because I am unable to return to North Korea, but because I perceive abundant opportunities in this country. One advantage is the freedom from having to worry about others and focus on my own growth and ambitions.*

### **Participants' Arts**

This analysis of the participants' art focused on exploring the themes, symbols, and visual elements depicted in their artworks. By examining the artistic expressions, we aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' inner experiences, emotions,

and narratives. The artworks were analyzed individually and collectively to identify commonalities and differences and explore how the participants used art for self-expression and communication.

### ***First Session***

The first session's main objective was to establish a foundation of trust, rapport, and safety within the group. By fostering a non-judgmental and accepting atmosphere, the group leader created an environment that encouraged participants to freely express themselves. Through artmaking and discussion, the session aimed to facilitate self-reflection, enhance emotional awareness, and initiate the process of healing and personal growth. The session began with an introduction to the group and an explanation of the session's theme: self-expression. The group leader outlined the purpose of art therapy and its potential benefits for self-exploration and emotional healing. Various art materials, such as paint, colored pencils, pastels, clay, and collage materials, were made available to participants. The therapist motivated participants to contemplate and articulate their preferences, personal identities, and objects or abstract images that symbolize them. The Participants were encouraged to explore different artistic techniques, experiment with materials, and allow their creativity to flow without judgment or critique.

In the process of expressing herself through various objects, Junghee was reminded of her own experiences and memories. Through flowers, butterflies, rabbits, children, and balloons, she depicted happy moments with her family during her childhood as cheerful, active, and sociable. The rock wall serves as a representation of Junghee's struggle to adapt to life in both South Korea and the U.S. following her defection. It also reflects her feelings of anxiety. In contrast, the wall clock and the horses offer insights

into her fast-paced and time-constrained modern lifestyle. Furthermore, the phoenix stood as a symbol of auspiciousness and forthcoming rewards. The deliberate arrangement of objects mirrors her inclination for precision. Junghee seemed to perceive life as a voyage of ups and downs with her diverse encounters. According to her, her engagement with her paintings facilitated a focus on positive self-perception and the freedom she has enjoyed, particularly in the U.S., leading her to uncover fresh facets of her identity.

**Figure 1.**

*Junghee's self-image drawing*



Soyeon embraced the "live happily ever after" mindset, actively seeking a positive outlook on her current circumstances. Through this approach, she nurtured her self-confidence and encouraged herself to excel. She creatively incorporated symbols of optimism, such as her beloved fruit—strawberries—as well as cheerful icons like smiley faces and penguins (a Korean comic character). These choices are reflections of her ongoing efforts to maintain positivity. Soyeon expressed her aspiration to cultivate a life that harmonizes intellectual depth, feminine grace, and a touch of humor. Her design choices appear deliberately aimed at infusing her life with positivity and optimism.

**Figure 2.**

*Soyeon's self-image drawing*



Hyejung portrayed herself as a bird soaring with unrestrained freedom. She expressed her yearning to merge with nature, much like a tree or a flower. Whether she journeys past oceans and mountains or glides through boundless skies to witness unfamiliar realms, her aspiration remains vivid. Hyejung stated that her relocation to the U.S. has unfolded a tapestry of experiences beyond the confines of her North Korean expectations. Amidst these experiences, she uncovered fresh dimensions of her own being. Notably, Hyejung sketched a lotus flower imbued with the essence of her name. Through this symbol, Hyejung signifies her unwavering wish to embrace her distinct identity, drawing a parallel to the lotus that serenely floats upon water, steadfastly asserting its presence despite shifting tides.

**Figure 3.**

*Hyejung's self-image drawing*



The participants' impressions of the first session exhibited a wide range of responses. Soyeon expressed that living in the U.S., she seldom gets the chance to open up about her feelings, making the session a valuable opportunity for honest self-expression and introspection. Junghee conveyed her excitement about discovering further insights through the art-making process. Meanwhile, Hyejung revealed that the contemplation involved in selecting and completing her painting led to profound reflections on her life, particularly her goals and aspirations. She also appreciated the captivating colors and imagery present in the final artwork

### ***Second Session***

The participants were tasked with reflecting on their positive qualities, symbolized by drawing a picture of a tree root. To aid them in contemplating their strengths, a list of positive traits was provided. Throughout the exercise, the group leader

offered encouragement for participants to delve into the ways their positive qualities have influenced and shaped their lives.

Junghee's artistic expression unfurled through a distinct portrayal of interconnectedness among individuals. This was exemplified by her depiction of people as blossoming flowers intertwined by intricate roots. Within her artwork, she conveyed a yearning to fathom the profound depths of those who surrounded her, as their emotional cores intertwined with her own. She characterized herself as tender and delicate, mirroring the fragile exterior of a flower. However, beneath this fragility laid a wellspring of inner strength and empathy, empowering her to forge profound connections with others. Junghee's empathy extended not only to her elderly acquaintances but also to her circle of friends. In moments when they confided in her, she displayed a remarkable ability to sensitively absorb their emotions. Her move to the U.S. catalyzed a shift in her priorities. Junghee said she placed a premium on authenticity, selectively cultivating only a handful of deep and genuine relationships.

**Figure 4.**

*Junghee's root painting*



Soyeon expressed her enduring patience and unwavering work ethic that have been rooted in her since childhood, based on deep introspection about her own life. While acknowledging her dedicated efforts in her work, she humbly recognized constraints in exploring new ideas due to a lack of creativity. The colors and lines she chose represent her thoughtful nature and also showcase her ability to actively listen and exhibit patience through interactions, forming meaningful connections with kind individuals in the United States. Soyeon stated that her authenticity and diligence that transcend cultural and linguistic differences have enabled her to establish positive relationships both in professional and personal domains within the United States, marking her as possessing valuable qualities.

**Figure 5.**

*Soyeon's root painting*



Hyejung explained that within her paintings, the symbolism of roots embodies the essence of fundamentals and identity. Having lived in diverse countries such as North



Korea, China, Thailand, and the United States, she emphasized how her varied experiences have significantly shaped her sense of self. The pivotal moment of adopting Christianity upon her arrival in the U.S. holds immense significance, forming a cornerstone of her present life. Hyejung elaborated on how her Christian beliefs play a paramount role in shaping her outlook. The analogy of tree roots served as a poignant representation of her personal journey. Like tree roots, which remain anchored in the soil while deriving nourishment from external sources like manure and fertilizer, her growth has been influenced by encounters with different environments. Just as roots subtly adapt and navigate the soil, Hyejung expressed how she, too, absorbs and integrates external factors, contributing to her personal strength and development. In her artwork, the dual luminosity of her Christian identity and her North Korean roots shined brilliantly. Hyejung confidently stated that these intertwined aspects grant her unwavering assurance, providing the fortitude to conquer any obstacle or hardship that presents itself on her path.

**Figure 6.**

*Hyejung's root art*



Junghee, Soyeon, and Hyejung conveyed their positive personal characteristics and experiences through their artwork. Their strengths were developed through various relationships. Junghee highlighted interconnectedness, disclosing that while she may appear fragile on the surface, she possesses a strong sense of empathy and connection internally. Soyeon emphasized her perseverance and work ethic, highlighting her ability to form meaningful relationships through interaction. Hyejung explained how her diverse experiences shape her identity, with her Christian beliefs and North Korean roots playing a significant role in both her work and personal life. Although each individual expressed themselves uniquely, they all exhibited a common affinity for building positive relationships and placing high importance on authenticity and perseverance.

### *Third Session*

The participants took part in a captivating creative exercise involving the crafting of intricate 3D paper mountain sculptures, each symbolizing their unique personal challenges. Embracing a diverse array of art materials, they immersed themselves in this artistic endeavor. Concurrently, they engaged in introspection, prompted to identify and articulate the specific challenges they confronted. This dual approach seamlessly integrated artistry and self-reflection, offering a profound and holistic exploration of their individual struggles.

Junghee depicted a remarkable challenge and struggle in the decision-making process within the sculpture. The two crumpled mountains represent the burden of uncertainty for important choices and the unforeseen obstacles she faced to achieve success. The painting displays broken mountains and twisted clouds, symbolizing the adversities due to external factors and visually portraying her lack of control over such

situations. In the process of adapting to a new environment in the United States, contrasting her familiar surroundings, Junghee carried deep fears. Despite possessing a strong work ethic, she always harbored fears about the outcomes of her efforts. Nevertheless, driven by curiosity and a desire for achievement, she overcame these fears. The yellow-highlighted mountains symbolize the challenges for her future in the United States, yet her positive mindset signifies the strength to navigate through these difficulties. Through art, Junghee expressed inner conflicts and anxieties while standing at the crossroads of life in North Korea and choices within her family. Confronting the two diverging paths, she evoked the imagery of sculpting her existence like a grand mountain range. Junghee said what she pursued was a harmonious and fulfilling life amidst the balance between her career and family, seeking contentment.

**Figure 7.**

*Junghee's mountain sculpture*



In her artwork, Soyeon masterfully conveyed her profound experiences through a captivating visual narrative. The mountains she portrayed hold profound symbolic

significance, embodying contrasting obstacles she has encountered on her life journey. The mountain depicted on the left encapsulates a passive barrier, representing an adversity beyond her control - her mother's defection, which left her stranded in North Korea alongside her father and younger brother. On the other hand, the mountain on the right embodied an active obstacle, symbolizing a courageous decision she made - the choice to leave North Korea, fully aware that return would be impossible. Soyeon recounted the poignant difficulty of enduring separation from her mother, her uncertainty about her mother's return, and her sense of powerlessness regarding her family's circumstances. She shares, "The frustration of helplessness weighed more heavily on me than the responsibility I had to bear." Despite this weight of responsibility, she mustered the courage to embark on the challenging journey of leaving North Korea, an endeavor she undertakes independently. Notably, the subsequent challenges she confronted were met with unwavering resolve. While the decision to depart was arduous, she discovered that the subsequent hurdles are no more daunting, as she takes complete ownership of her choices. This journey proved to be rewarding as she discovers ways to support her father and brother financially. In her evocative artwork, Soyeon sculpted mountains in varying sizes to mirror the intensity of the pressures she felt, while employing vibrant and colorful paper to express the joyful rewards and triumphant endings that result from overcoming difficulties. The resulting artistic expression unveiled a poignant tale of resilience, choice, and triumph, shedding light on Soyeon's profound emotions and remarkable personal growth.

**Figure 8.***Soyeon's mountain sculpture*

Hyejung's narrative revolved around her trials and tribulations, which began unfolding vividly from the age of 12. Abruptly separated from her friends due to family circumstances, she was unable to continue her education. A year later, at the age of 13, she displayed remarkable courage by defecting from her homeland, leaving behind all that was familiar, including her loved ones. Upon arriving in the United States and as she entered her twenties, Hyejung grappled with profound existential inquiries, contemplating the path she should tread and how to construct a purposeful journey ahead. Within her artistic creations, Hyejung managed to encapsulate the very essence of "Mount Paektu," the emblematic North Korean Mountain that embodied her life's meaning. Colorful balls of wool showed that it became evident to her that her pursuit of a purposeful life comprised diverse journeys analogous to exploring multiple trails up a mountain. Every life Hyejung lived in North Korea and later in the United States

represented a unique route towards her ultimate aspirations. Hyejung conveyed that she drew inspiration from the demanding yet awe-inspiring process of ascending a mountain. Blue paint on the top of mountain represented the gratifying triumph of reaching its summit. Hyejung shared that she firmly believed that surmounting hardships played a pivotal role in attaining personal aspirations, and she cherished the elation that arose from the realization of one's goals.

**Figure 9.**

*Hyejung's mountain sculpture*



Junghee, Soyeon and Hyejung employed art to depict their personal challenges and development. In contrast to the initial session, the participants were more audacious in their selection of materials and modes of expression. Soyeon, residing alone in the United States while still supporting her family in North Korea, discussed her challenges with familial matters. Junghee, who is beginning a family with her husband, conveyed uncertainty through depiction of decision-making and difficulties. Hyejung, whose father defected from North Korea, exemplified the process of overcoming obstacles to succeed

in personal aspirations. Junghee and Hyejung, who have family in the United States, appeared to have faced more challenges related to their own identities, whereas Soyeon, who does not have such family connections, encountered issues concerning her parents and younger sibling. The creative work produced by these participants showcases their process of self-reflection and personal development.

### ***Forth Session***

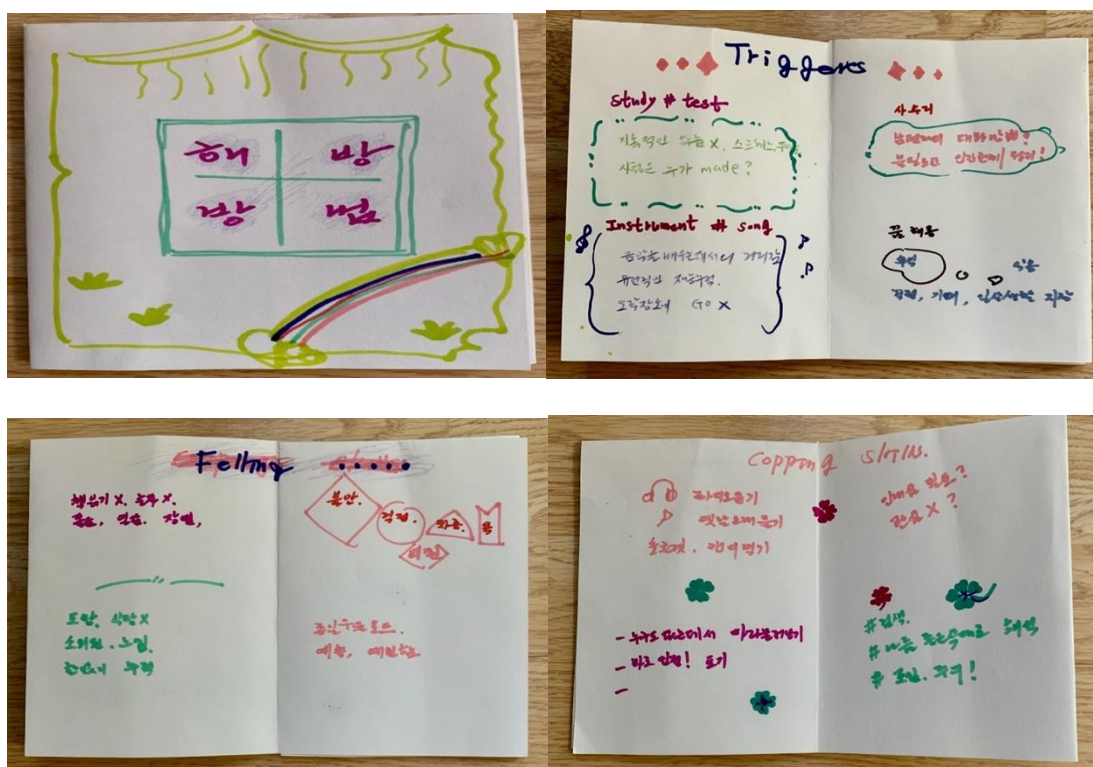
The participants were involved in a creative exercise, wherein they were assigned the task of crafting a paper book detailing their distinctive approaches to overcoming challenges. Guiding the participants through this process, the group leader expertly elucidated the intricate nature of emotions, which comprise three essential components: thoughts, physical sensations, and behavior. By delving into the concept of emotional triggers originating from specific situations or events, the leader highlighted the significance of understanding how our responses to emotions can have both immediate and far-reaching consequences. This insightful discussion prompted the group to explore alternative, more constructive behaviors in handling emotional experiences.

During her studies of physical therapy in South Korea, Junghee faced tremendous difficulties that required supplementary support for her academics. Based on her inclusion of dream interpretation with academic performance, social relationships, and communication in her triggering factors, Junghee demonstrated a shamanistic tendency. Junghee said she frequently experienced a sense of isolation due to the absence of supportive friends in the face of stress. Her description of physical symptoms like indigestion, colds, and irregular heartbeats in response to overwhelming pressure suggested an understanding of how she understood such stress adversely affected her

overall well-being. The interplay of stress, loneliness, and anxiety ultimately led her to prematurely discontinue her studies. However, after immigrating to the United States, Junghee discovered effective coping strategies to mitigate the impact of stress. Junghee narrative in her writing that through activities such as music and walking, combined with regulating her thoughts and emotions, she could effectively restore her mental and emotional harmony.

**Figure 10.**

*Junghee's paper book*



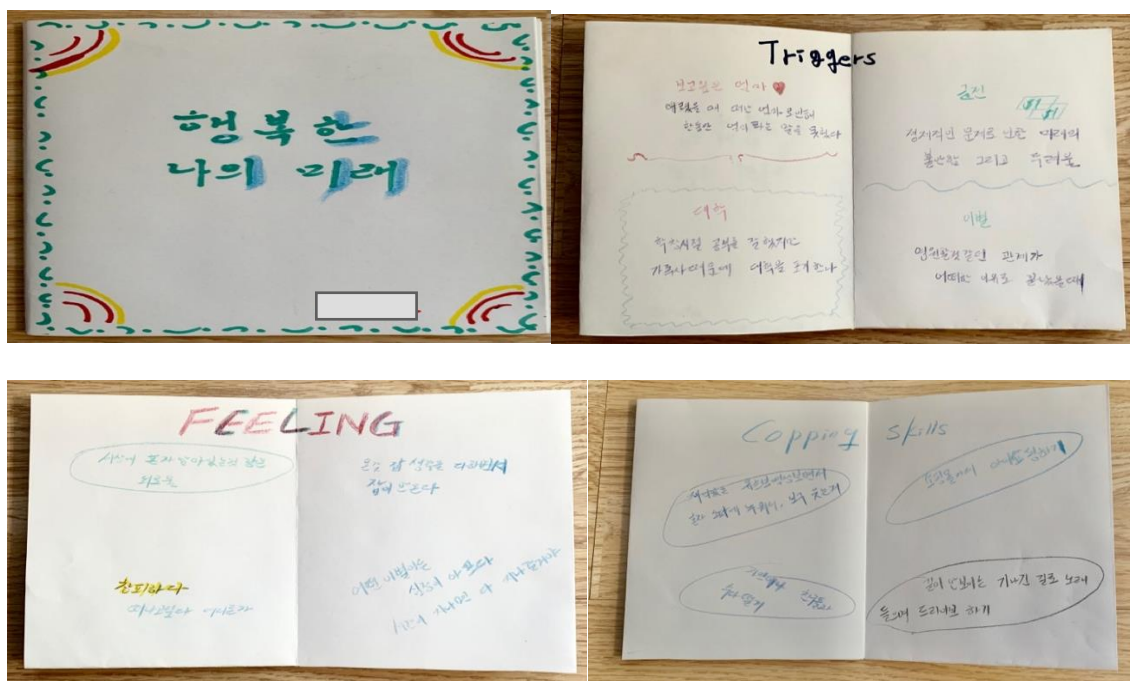
Due to her mother's defection, Soyeon faced discrimination that impeded her pursuit of higher education, despite consistently achieving exceptional academic performance. She concealed her mother's defection from her friends, lacking the courage to broach the topic. Soyeon's writing about the physical toll represented how her challenges manifested as body sensations, such as heart palpitations, intense headaches,



and a profound loss of energy. Soyeon said this left her feeling powerless to address these symptoms. In her writing, she confessed that the most challenging advice to embrace was admitting her struggles as they were. Soyeon wrote in her book art that engaging in mindless TV watching – particularly enjoying edited videos featuring humorous stories – finding solace in aimless drives and wandering without a destination, as well as spending time on park benches, were her coping skills to manage physical, emotional, and behavioral stability.

**Figure 11.**

*Soyeon's paper book*

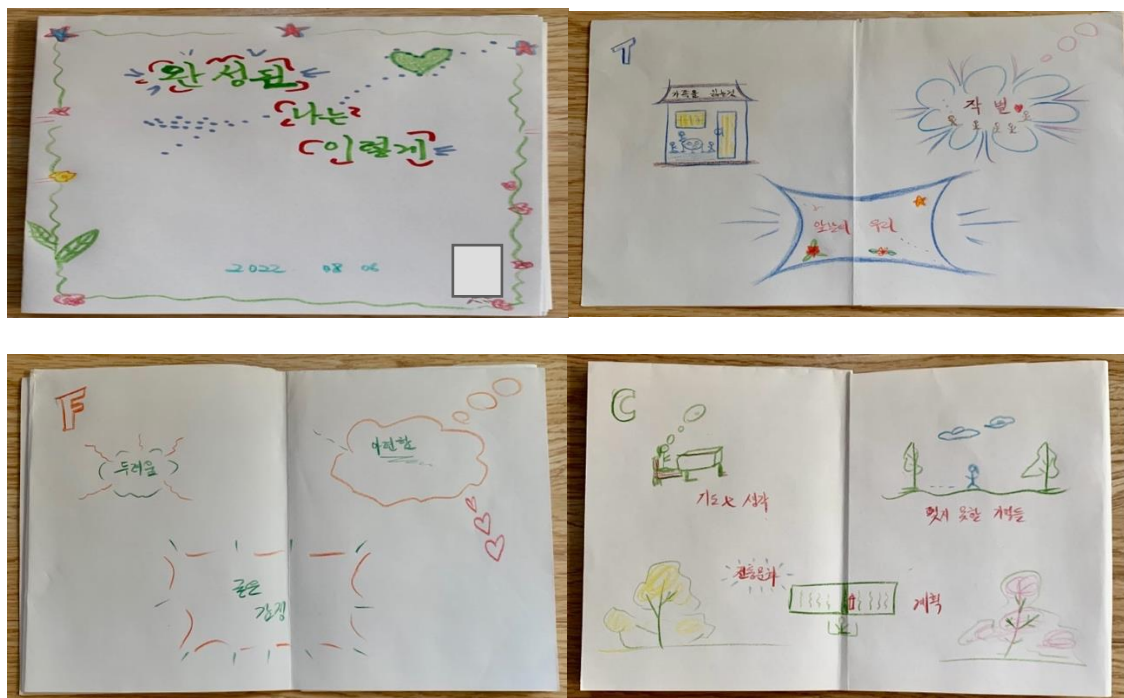


Hyejung's encounters with distorted or critical narratives about North Korean defectors on platforms like YouTube or broadcasts triggered intense anger within her. She firmly held the belief that the struggles faced by these defectors significantly contributed to the unfavorable portrayal of North Korean people. The recollections of her family in North Korea elicited a complex array of emotions, including sorrow, regret,

nostalgia, and pain. Occasionally, her anger became so overwhelming that words proved insufficient to convey its depth, leading to both frustration and physical unease. Hyejung said she turned to prayer and reflection on past memories to navigate these overpowering emotions. Engaging in the act of writing about positive experiences and her aspirations for the future provided her with solace, serving as a mechanism for nurturing her mental and emotional well-being positively. Through this creative outlet, she managed to rekindle hope and rediscover a renewed sense of purpose in life.

**Figure 12.**

*Hyejung's paper book*



During the "Book Making" session, the project was divided into four sections (book cover, 1-2 pages, 3-4 pages, and 5-6 pages) by the group leader, who also established a specific time limit for participants to complete their books. The participants acknowledged that this structured approach helped them comprehend the task and increased their productivity.

The participants explored techniques for managing their emotions through creative exercises, while the importance of emotions was highlighted under the guidance of the group leader. During this time, Junghee, Soyeon and Hyejung each contributed their individual experiences and viewpoints. Junghee outlined her academic challenges and shamanistic inclinations, enduring stress and seclusion and achieving emotional regulation and well-being via walking and music. Soyeon depicted her mother's history of defection and discrimination, facing physical symptoms and helplessness whilst finding coping mechanisms in watching TV and walking. Hyejung tackled intense feelings of animosity towards North Korean defectors and familial recollections, surmounting her emotions through prayer and writing, whilst discovering meaningful prospects. The participants found efficient methods ensuring emotional regulation by comprehending and controlling their emotions, considering their unique experiences and circumstances with objectivity.

### ***Fifth Session***

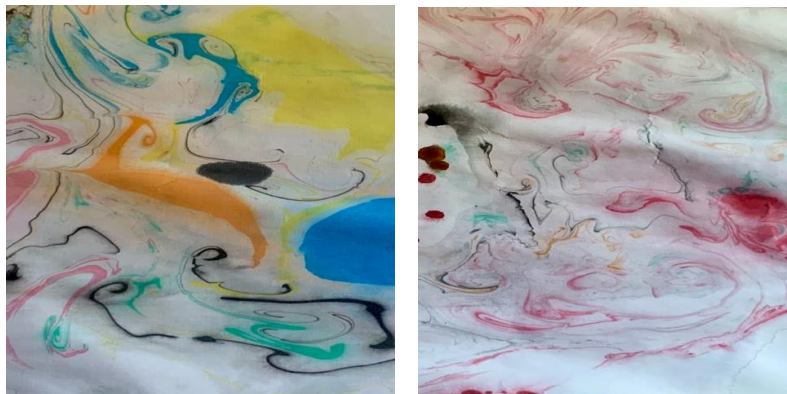
The participants engaged in a creative exercise using Japanese marble painting tools to create paintings. Under the guidance of the group leader, the participants were instructed on how to craft the artwork and were encouraged to explore various creative avenues. During our session, the participants presented the group with a diverse selection of art pieces, and they encouraged them to share the emotions and images that each artwork evoked in them. Through this process, they explored the unique perspectives and interpretations of the participants, delving into the personal connections they formed with the art. The subsequent group discussion revolved around the profound influence of one's interpretation of situations on their emotional states. They candidly shared their

experiences of frequently encountering automatic negative thoughts (ANTs) and how this tendency overshadowed their ability to effectively cope with challenges. Furthermore, the group explored the concept of cognitive flexibility as an essential skill to overcome these cognitive obstacles.

Junghee conveyed that when she immerses herself in a painting, a profound and immersive experience emerges, where her consciousness becomes intensely attuned. In this heightened state, she interprets the artwork through a lens molded by her unique thoughts and emotions, granting her diverse and distinct insights into its essence. Junghee discovered a striking congruence between the patterns or meanings she discerns in the painting and the thoughts echoing within her own mind. She shared that during moments of homesickness, her self-assurance falters, ushering in a deep melancholic state. Amid this emotional turbulence, regrets about past decisions gain strength, and self-critical thoughts take hold and flourish. To navigate these inner conflicts, she advocated for embracing homesickness as an integral facet of her identity. Furthermore, her painting, which combines various colors and dynamic movements, shows how her past experiences reconstruct her way of thinking and create a positive mindset in shaping her life.

**Figure 13.**

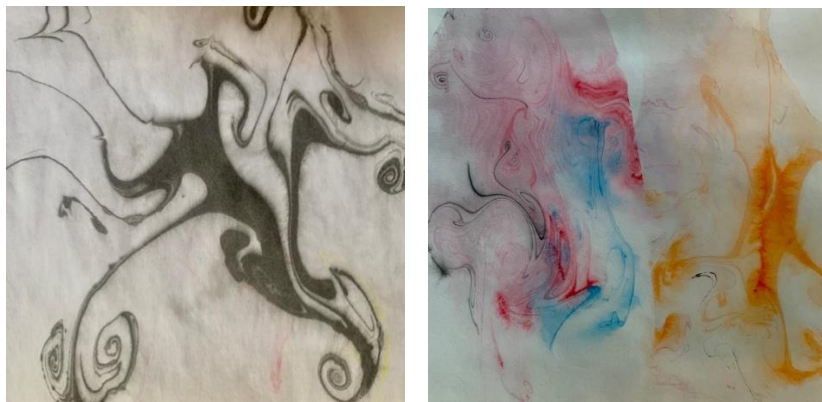
*Junghee's painting*



Soyeon mentioned that her artwork resembles the shapes of spiders or islands, and she described the enigmatic and celestial images felt through her paintings as captivating. After briefly closing her eyes and reopening them, Soyeon expressed a sense of new creativity, discussing novel colors and visions that had previously been beyond her sight. In two contrasting paintings, one combining monochromatic and various colors, Soyeon depicted her contrasting emotional states. Her pieces representing moments of positive emotions bear vibrant and lively characteristics. In contrast, the paintings conveying negative emotions exhibit a quiet yet rapidly expanding sense of melancholy and unease. Soyeon took note of how these depictions in her artworks fascinatingly mirror her emotional states. She admitted to lacking innate talent for creating art and occasionally struggling with impatience and self-doubt. Nevertheless, as she began to create images using new painting techniques, her confidence grew. She stated that this newfound approach helped infuse joy into her life.

**Figure 14.**

*Soyeon's painting*



Hyejung often found her academic achievements led to heightened self-confidence. However, she noted that her confidence wavered when her grades didn't meet her expectations, causing her to question her abilities and potential. Hyejung's painting

represents her aspiration for a constant state of evolution and growth through the fluidity of water and the shifting of colors. At the same time, she expressed a strong desire to increase self-achievement in her painting via infusing her artwork with more vibrant and dynamic colors. In her first painting, two different shapes (spread and lined shapes) and blue and yellow combination in her second painting symbolize cultivating a positive mindset and transforming one's self-perception can lead to successful collaboration. Hyejung's belief helped her to change Hyejung's perception about her life's challenges, so Hyejung viewed them as opportunities to showcase her resilience rather than victimize herself. Despite her initial reservations about experimenting with new artistic materials, she eventually crafted exquisite pieces. Throughout her artistic journey, Hyejung's confidence in her ability to find happiness through creative expression became resolute.

**Figure 14.**

*Hyejung's painting*



Participants were able to interpret the abstract art pieces and identify the meaning and symbolism that lay embedded. Junghee's experience resulted in a positive reorganization of her mental states as she explored the various emotional dimensions that were revealed in the mysterious and ethereal depictions of her work. Soyeon discovered that her artwork reflects her diverse emotional states, as depicted in the enigmatic and

ethereal images. Hyejung found that the fluidity and color variations in her artwork were indicative of her desire for continuous progression and growth in academic attainment and personal fulfilment. Participants reported that the process of creating artworks freely enabled them to delve deeper into their emotional and visual representations. They shared that their distinct perspectives and interpretations brought novel insights to their artworks and that trying out new techniques nurtured their self-assurance in art creation.

### ***Sixth Session***

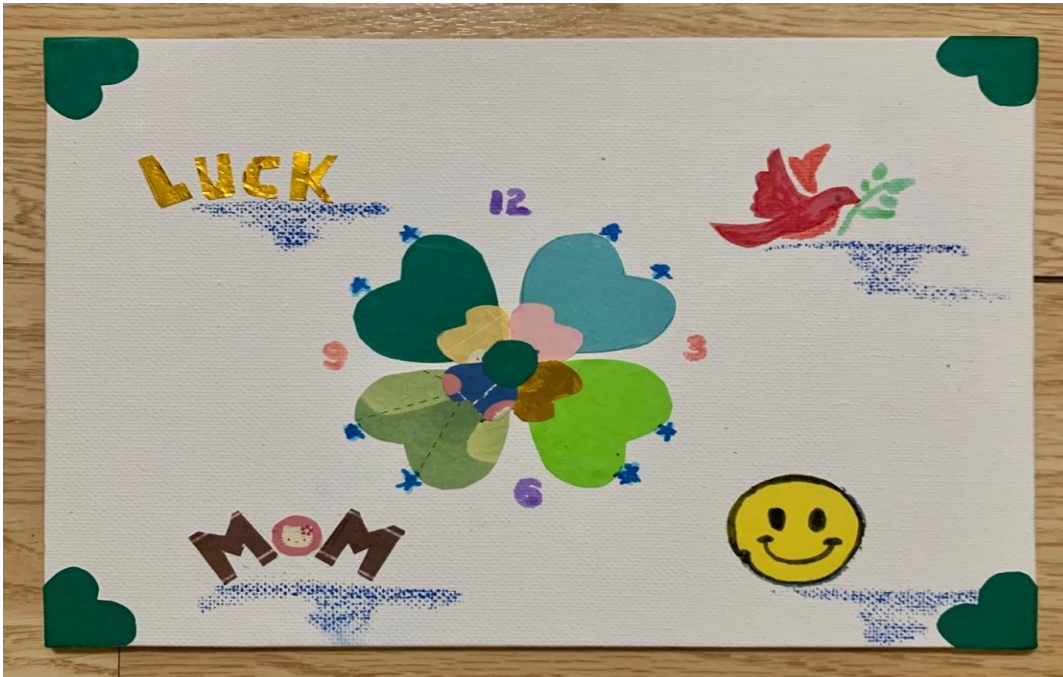
The participants took part in an activity where they crafted collages symbolizing their unique identities. Alongside their art, they composed heartfelt letters addressed to themselves. Through this creative process, the participants openly expressed their self-perceptions, areas they wished to grow and develop, as well as their optimistic aspirations for the future. Moreover, they were encouraged to apply their inherent positive qualities to overcome difficult situations. Participants engaged in a reflective process, sharing their thoughts and emotions regarding the evolution of their artwork by comparing the images they created during the initial session with the ones they produced in the current session. Subsequently, the group engaged in interactive discussions regarding their envisioned future goals and the strategies they could employ to effectively confront and surmount challenges on their path to achievement.

Junghee artfully portrayed her aspirations, drawing inspiration from the clover's symbolism of fortune. Her yearning to embrace motherhood and foster a fortunate, harmonious, and affectionate family was vividly articulated. By expressing the value of unwavering determination in pursuing her dreams with color of green, she also highlighted her positive willingness about the necessity of harnessing her personal

attributes — courage, determination, adaptability, and self-directedness. Junghee said embracing new challenges and cultivating a positive outlook centered on possibilities, rather than obstacles to bolster her self-assurance by.

**Figure 16.**

*Junghee's collage*



Soyeon underscored the importance of maintaining faith in one's abilities in her collage. Soyeon said she endeavors to conquer these traits despite grappling with emotional sensitivity and the tendency to be easily wounded due to a tender heart. In her collage, she curated a piece incorporating visuals tied to her future ambitions with the images of dreamcatcher, flower, heart and pine tree. In the same time, she included impactful words (i.e., happy, smile, positive) she plans to hold dear. Soyeon understood the importance of self-confidence and relax within her busy schedule. The words 'future' and '365 days' in her collage signify that she is no longer bound by the past, but rather



concentrating on the present and future. Through the word 'Life,' Soyeon expresses her desire for a life in which the positive values embedded in her work harmonize naturally.

**Figure 17.**

*Soyeon's collage*



Through her creation of a Japanese apricot collage, Hyejung conveyed the profound significance of community and interconnectedness in her life. She underscored how the combined support and affection from numerous individuals played a pivotal role in shaping her identity, mirroring the way water, sunlight, and air collectively nurture the growth of a tree. Just as the Japanese apricot tree thrives, sending forth branches and bearing fruit, Hyejung articulated her unwavering commitment to continuous personal development and a purposeful existence centered on uplifting others. Hyejung remarked that the process of crafting art served as a reflection of her deep gratitude towards the people. She represented the elements (i.e., community, friends, family, church members) that fostered her maturation through drawing nature and sky background that contribute

to the resilience of a sturdy tree. She shared that creating collage was her journey of self-discovery and she could affirm her qualities and beliefs. Furthermore, she realized that pursuing her dreams brought her immense joy.

**Figure 18.**

*Hyejung's collage*



Each participant approached their collage work with a different personality. Junghee, who emphasized symbolism from the first session, used clovers to symbolize hope and motherhood, highlighting her indomitable determination and positive will. Her work included a variety of images that conveyed her intentions concisely and clearly. Soyeon emphasized the importance of the future and positive values, and the process of overcoming emotional sensitivity through self-awareness. By utilizing realistic imagery in her piece, she was able to effectively express her opinions. Hyejung emphasized community and connectedness, likening her growth to the collaboration of community

and nature. She used a combination of collage and drawing without regard for white space to enhance her work, and emphasized her journey of self-discovery and the affirmation of her abilities and beliefs through her artwork.

Participants mentioned that they liked the variety of images they were able to choose as they recreated their image through collage work. They felt that the process of thinking about who they are now, rather than who they were in the past, and creating artwork with images that reflected that, was similar to the experience of creating anima. The visual experience also allowed them to reframe their beliefs about themselves and identify their strengths and resilience.

Participants compared their collage work to the images they had created in the first session, reaffirming their strengths as they drew tree roots, and commonly noted that this experience crystallized and clarified their sense of self in their collage works.




### ***The process of changing self-perception***

In her early work, Junghee represented herself as a chaotic assemblage of different images, but as her work progressed, each individual photograph within the group gained clarity and came together harmoniously. Unlike her earlier drawings, the combination of different images and texts represents a progression in her ability to enhance herself. In addition, the transformation or integration of the same objects (e.g., a wall clock into a four-leaf clover clock, a phoenix into a dove symbolizing peace and the word "LUCK," several objects that represented happy moments into a smiley emoji, and a picture of a child symbolizing her childhood into the word "MOM") expresses a change in her positive outlook on her life. Junghee was happy to use the clover to symbolize luck while also harmonizing her depictions of peace, happiness, motherhood, and joy. This

artistic fusion represents the union of her past, present, and future, symbolizing a positive self-image reconstructed through her artistic endeavors.

**Table 2**

*Self-perception process for Junghee's arts*

		
<p>Self-image drawing</p> <p>Unclear and distracting lists of objects with blurry, thin lines.</p>	<p>Positive qualities drawing</p> <p>While the objects remain distracting, they are now interconnected in a unique manner.</p> <p>Adding color to the borders of the drawing imparted a sense of structure and coherence.</p>	<p>Self-image collage</p> <p>Utilized two or more artistic mediums.</p> <p>Generated a diverse array of images and text.</p> <p>Replaced or merged previously depicted objects with fresh ones.</p>

Soyeon's artworks exemplify the process of integrating realistic depictions of objects with abstract expressions to create entirely new compositions. In the initial sessions, Soyeon depicted familiar subjects and images, revealing a lack of self-reflection through simple descriptions and uniform placement of elements. In her second artwork, Soyeon expressed her strengths abstractly and freely, particularly through the utilization of Eastern drawing techniques, which reflected a profound introspection into her North Korean heritage and self-exploration while showcasing her creative boldness in the art-making process. Indeed, Soyeon pointed out that her journey through collage work

brought about deeper transformations in her self-reflection. As the collage creation progressed and she contemplated conventional approaches to achieving life goals, she conveyed how she discovered numerous optimistic messages within her inner self, conveyed through a multitude of words. Furthermore, she emphasized the significant role played by diverse images sourced from magazines in solidifying these thoughts and emotions.

**Table 3**




*Self-perception process for Soyeon's arts*

 <p data-bbox="326 1157 578 1192">Self-image drawing</p>	 <p data-bbox="695 1157 1029 1192">Positive qualities drawing</p>	 <p data-bbox="1138 1157 1382 1192">Self-image collage</p>
<p data-bbox="305 1234 613 1339">Objects are restricted to straightforward and lifelike representations.</p> <p data-bbox="305 1377 548 1413">A lot of space left.</p> <p data-bbox="305 1451 613 1518">Things are arranged in a row.</p>	<p data-bbox="683 1234 1045 1270">A well-proportioned margin</p> <p data-bbox="683 1308 1036 1375">The artwork merges reality with abstraction.</p>	<p data-bbox="1089 1234 1419 1375">Freeform lines of varying lengths and thicknesses are drawn with creative liberty.</p> <p data-bbox="1089 1451 1370 1518">Space was efficiently distributed.</p>

From the first session, Hyejung created artwork with a consistent theme: nature, in which she represented the spatial and temporal differences in her life with the sea, mountains, and sky. In particular, she represented the differences in her identity as a defector and a North Korean by likening herself to a bird and a lotus flower. By trying

new combinations of materials and artistic techniques in the process of creating her artwork, Hyejung demonstrated her ability to creatively express her important values. The change from representing herself as a small lotus flower to a large, strong tree later on indicates that her self-awareness has become stronger and clearer. In addition, Hyejung's focus on the sturdy trunk of the tree and the abundance of fruit shows that she has a forward-looking self-view. Hyejung emphasized that the collage technique was the perfect medium for her, allowing her to embody herself more powerfully in a communal context. Hyejung said that her artistic creations reflect her desire to utilize her abilities as a driving force to move forward, aiming to create a positive world by working closely with her community.

**Table 4***Self-perception process for Hyejung's arts*

 <p style="text-align: center;">Self-image drawing</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Positive qualities drawing</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Self-image collage</p>
<p>The three distinct spaces, symbolizing the sea (her North Korean experience), the mountain (her defection journey), and the sky (her current life), are portrayed using a palette of diverse colors (blue, green, and white) and various forms of lines (curved, straight, and margins).</p> <p>The bird, symbolizing her present self, and the lotus, representing her roots, are intentionally placed in separate settings: the bird soars in the sky, while the lotus thrives in the water and mountains.</p>	<p>A diverse range of art materials has been skillfully employed in the creative process.</p> <p>The cross makes frequent appearances, either on fabric or within paintings.</p> <p>Elaborate line work, incorporating various line techniques, has been skillfully applied.</p>	<p>The sea has vanished, and the sky seamlessly merges into the mountainous background, symbolizing the fusion of past and present.</p> <p>A majestic tree, adorned with a bird symbolizing the self and a lotus flower symbolizing one's roots, takes center stage.</p> <p>A colossal tree has been meticulously rendered to represent the self, employing an array of colors and techniques.</p> <p>The focus has shifted away from the roots, with greater emphasis now placed on the trunk and its fruits.</p>

There were certain recurring elements in the work of the participants. Their artworks progressed from representational depictions to symbolic ones: rudimentary and

indeterminate images were progressively assimilated and turned abstract and lucid. The series of works documented the participants' evolving concepts and bettered their self-expression via diverse art media like painting, sculpture, and collage.

Additionally, the art creation process allowed participants to express unfavorable feelings about themselves, their country of origin, and the journey to North Korea. This led to rediscovering beauty through their art, implying a shift in self-perception during the art-making process.

Participants who received art therapy eventually related the creative process to their personal experiences. They viewed the process of creating art as akin to their journey of defection. Initially, lacking knowledge about art therapy and unfamiliar with the subject, they faced struggles. Nevertheless, they overcame these challenges, unearthing their abilities and perfecting their skills to express themselves. Participants visually depicted their personal experiences, including their home country of North Korea, their journey of defection, their families, and themselves, through artwork. This process of creative expression empowered the participants and provided them with a source of empowerment both now and in the future. The act of sharing their personal stories was made possible through the courage they obtained from overcoming the fear of uncertainty. Consequently, even initially introverted participants became more confident in expressing their struggles and emotional upheavals.

There were divergences in interests and self-perceptions among the participants, in addition to similarities. Soyeon directed her focus towards merging and refining her self-awareness, while Junghee prioritized honing her self-awareness as well as her relations with those around her. Hyejung expressed a desire to develop her self-



awareness, social connections, and community building. The variations among Soyeon, Junghee, and Hyejung demonstrate differing approaches to self-awareness, relationships, and social belonging. Soyeon prioritizes self-awareness, self-acceptance, authentic self-esteem, and identity, while Junghee forms close and interdependent relationships with others who share her level of self-awareness. Hyejung values social belonging and seeks relationships based on a sense of community.

### **Participants' Writings**

Writing, which is phenomenological text generation, was the final step in this research. This writing led to a deeper understanding of human experience and allowed us to understand and see various aspects of human existence, thus imbuing previously overlooked phenomena with richer meaning (van Manen, 1990/1994). If the participants were able to explore their emotions and thoughts through the process of creating artwork, writing served as an opportunity for them to organize their feelings and thoughts and complete their experience in art therapy.

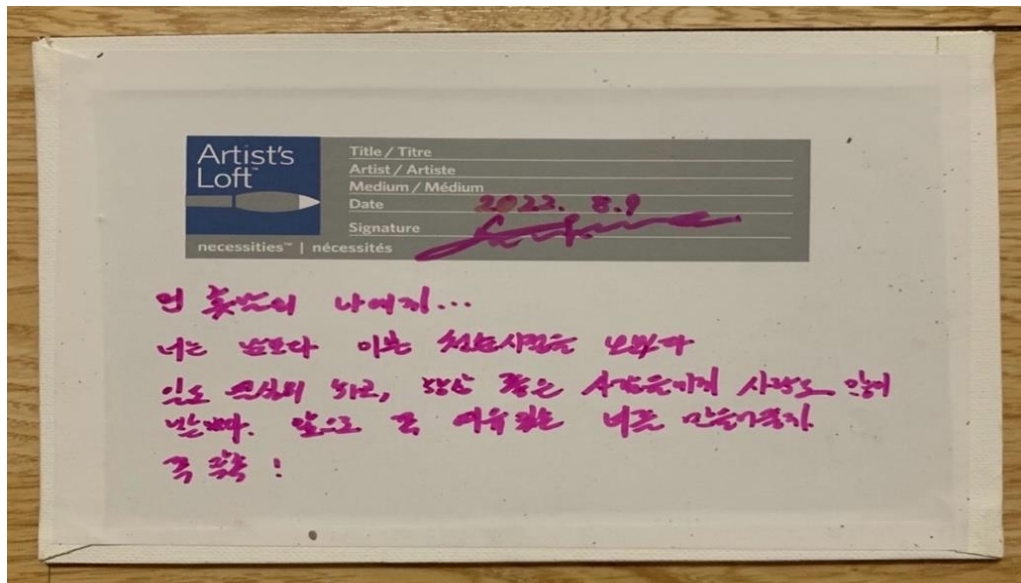
The participants were instructed to write a letter to themselves on the back of their artwork. They had the option to address themselves as a loving friend or an objective observer, offering criticism, praise, or encouragement at the end of the therapy. The participants appeared somewhat uneasy and unfamiliar with this exercise. Upon analyzing the participants' writings, several common themes emerged, including self-acceptance, encouragement, and feelings of being blessed.

Junghee recounted her contemplative journey while composing a letter, reflecting on her future self. She discerned a resonance between her words and the affectionate expressions her parents bestowed upon her during her upbringing. Recognizing this

connection helped Junghee to make a commitment to extend the same level of self-love she had experienced from her parents.

**Figure 19.**

*Junghee's letter*



*To my future self,*

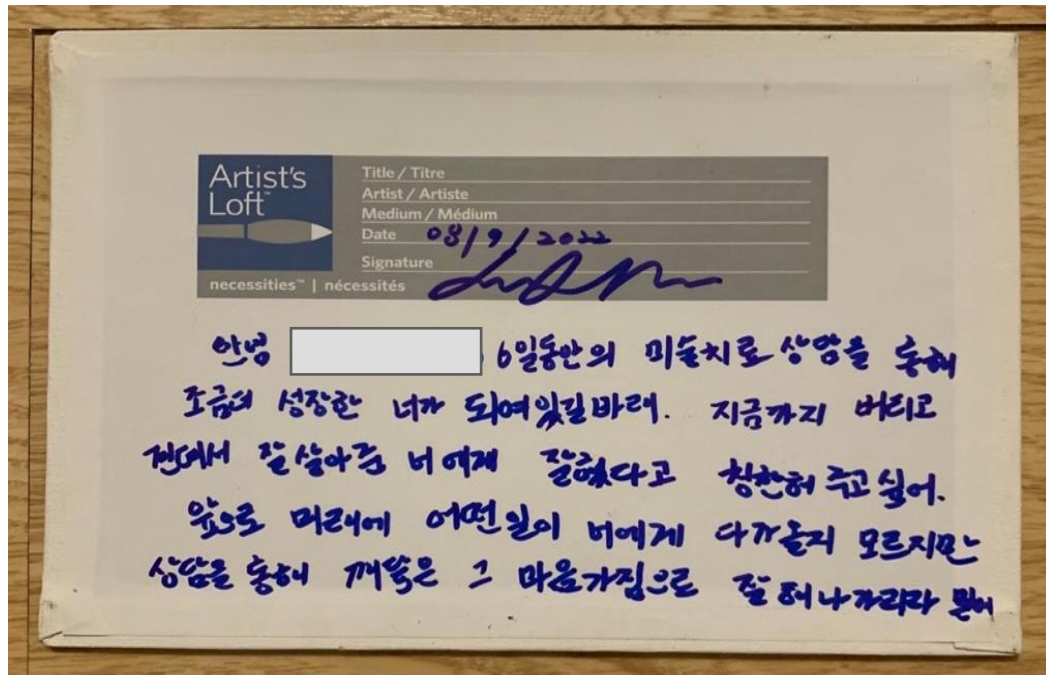
*You have spent a beautiful youth, prettier than others. You worked hard and received much love from good people. Let's create a relaxed version of yourself in the future.*

*Definitely a promise!*

Soyeon conveyed her aspiration to retain the positive attributes she unearthed through group art therapy. She underscored the paramount importance of cultivating self-love as a prerequisite for extending it to others. Her aim was to nurture an authentic and profound sense of self-appreciation. Soyeon acknowledged that her busy and demanding life had left little room for introspection, but she looked forward to dedicating time to enhance her self-esteem and confidence.

**Figure 20.**

*Soyeon's letter*

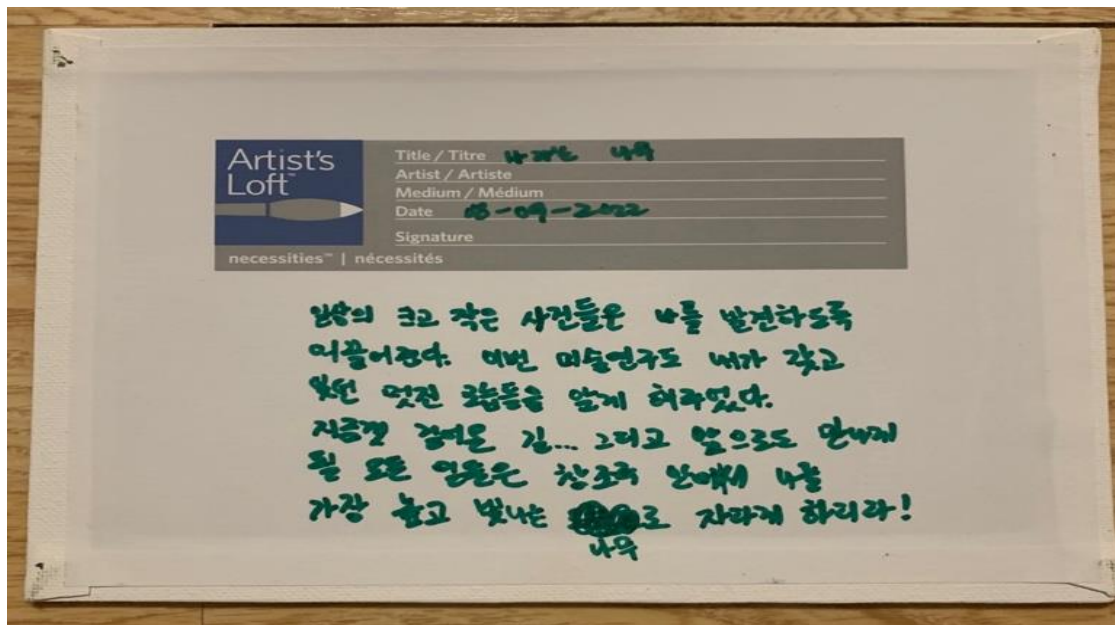


*Hi Soyeon, I hope you have grown a little through the group art therapy. I want to acknowledge and praise you for enduring and persevering until now. I believe that with the mindset you've discovered through therapy, you'll handle whatever comes your way in the future.*

Hyejung underscored the vital significance of self-care, advocating for self-prioritization over external relationships and societal pressures. The process of composing the letter brought her immense delight, allowing her to cherish the love she held for herself.

**Figure 21.**

*Hyejung's letter*



*The big and small events of everyday life lead me to discover myself. The group art therapy has also allowed me to recognize the distant and hidden aspects I possessed. The path I have walked so far, and all the things I will encounter in the future, will make me grow into the tallest and brightest tree within the Creator!*

The participants shared that collectively experienced a newfound sense of joy, likening writing letter to themselves to rekindling a connection with a long-lost friend. They agreed that this form of self-communication was indispensable for maintaining mental equilibrium and nurturing self-assurance and faith in themselves.

## CHAPTER 5

### Discussion

Unlike previous studies focusing on trauma and mental health issues, this study was meaningful in observing the experiences of North Korean defectors who participated in a 6-week Resilience-Based Cognitive Behavioral group art therapy program.

The primary objective of this dissertation was to investigate Resilience-Based Cognitive Behavioral group art therapy on the reconstruction of self-image and the resilience among North Korean defectors. Through qualitative analysis and the gathering of participant feedback, this study yielded insights into the experiences of North Korean defectors.

The Resilience-Based Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) with group art therapy has addressed as a transformative intervention, allowing these participants to navigate their struggles, increase self-expression, and unlock the benefits of creative communication. The creative process inherent in artmaking helped the North Korean defectors communicate their emotions, trauma, and aspirations in nonverbal ways, which supports the findings of several scholars (Fisher & Gilboa, 2016; Kaimal et al., 2019; Metcalf et al., 2016). This is particularly significant for North Korean defectors who might struggle with language barriers or cultural differences in verbal expression (Jin, 2016; Kang, 2018; Park, 2013). Through artistic mediums like painting, sculpture-making, and drawing, the North Korean defectors externalized their internal struggles, providing therapists with insights into their emotional landscapes. Art therapy empowered defectors by validating their experiences and encouraging them to take agency over their own narratives.

As Jin (2016), Kalmanowitz And Ho (2017), and Park (2013) had observed, the act of creation served as a cathartic release, allowing these North Korean defectors to process their emotions and experiences in a safe and non-threatening manner. By transforming their thoughts and feelings into tangible artistic forms, the North Korean defectors gained a renewed sense of control over their narratives and memories. This process of externalization not only aided in reducing the emotional burden but also fostered a deeper understanding of their own emotions, facilitated the identification of triggers and coping mechanisms.

In addition, art therapy promoted a sense of accomplishment and self-esteem as defectors witnessed their creative abilities unfold. This research supports the findings of Jeong (2017) and Park (2021), who found that art therapy had a positive impact on improving self-efficacy and building self-concept and identity. The affirmation received from peers and therapists in the group setting encouraged further exploration of their artistic potential. As the North Korean defectors became more adept at using art as a means of expression, they found it easier to articulate their experiences to others, bridging the gap between their internal worlds and external communication. In our present study, participants echoed the multifaceted challenges they faced in their arduous search for refuge in a foreign land, extending beyond physical borders, aligning with the findings of Noh et al. (2018) and Park et al. (2017). Apart from the tangible struggles of adapting to unfamiliar cultures, languages, and societal structures, defectors often grappled with a myriad of psychological and emotional hurdles stemming from their traumatic experiences in North Korea. To navigate these intricate concerns and cultivate a comprehensive perception of well-being, the application of Resilience-Based CBT

accompanied by art therapy exhibited a positive impact. Notably, it had provided a powerful means to enhance the self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-empowerment of North Korean defectors.

In line with the discoveries made by Yoo (2017) and Joyce et al. (2018), our research also revealed that the fusion of Resilience-Based Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) with group art therapy presented a promising and comprehensive approach to bolstering the psychological well-being and resilience of North Korean defectors. The defector's journey is fraught with a myriad of challenges, spanning from acculturation obstacles and traumatic encounters to identity crises and negative self-perceptions (Kim et al., 2010; Park et al., 2017). Extensive research underscores the pivotal role of self-belief in fostering resilience among individuals (Lee et al., 2019). The emergence of Resilience-Based CBT with group art therapy offered a beacon of hope to these North Korean defectors, furnishing a well-structured and an all-encompassing framework that adeptly addresses the intricate interplay between cognitive restructuring, emotional regulation, and self-expression.

In this research, participants drew positive awareness of North Korea through the artmaking, discovered their strengths as human beings, and re-recognized their identities as resilient survivors. The term "survivor" is defined as "one who persists in living or existing, enduring. To continue to operate or flourish." Another interpretation presents "an individual who manages to endure or thrive despite facing opposition, hardship, or setbacks." (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). The participants identified with the definition that described an individual who transcends a distressing situation and continues to thrive. The participants substituted their identity as "survivor," shifting the sentence's focus from

their faced difficulties to the individual who endured harm, redirecting emphasis toward one's own narrative.

The potency of CBT lies in its foundational premise that thoughts exert a substantial influence on emotions and behaviors (Iacoviello, 2014; National Alliance on Mental Illness, n.d.) This principle is especially pertinent to the experiences of these North Korean defectors, whose journey frequently entails navigating intricate psychological landscapes marred by adverse thought patterns and maladaptive core beliefs (Lee et al., 2019). The participants tapped into the potential of cognitive restructuring to slowly cultivate a renewed sense of self-esteem and empowerment. The amalgamation of Resilience-Based CBT with group art therapy introduced an innovative layer to this process, empowering defectors to channel their emotions, memories, and aspirations through creative expression. The visual and tactile nature of art seamlessly complemented the cognitive restructuring process, offering a multi-dimensional platform for introspection, catharsis, and growth.

In the context of Şahin and Türk's (2021) research, which found that a group mental health education program based on CBT can enhance the psychological recovery of adolescents, this study has discovered that utilizing adaptive cognitive patterns can foster resilience and positive coping mechanisms. By introducing resilience-based CBT and group art therapy to North Korean defectors, this research may have equipped these participants with the skills to confront challenges and reframe their thinking. As a result, they have gained powerful tools to enhance their adaptability and emotional regulation, enabling them to navigate the challenges of their new lives more effectively.



The research conducted by Diamond and Shrira in 2020 offered a compelling demonstration of the efficacy of art therapy in enhancing resilience and serving as a coping mechanism, particularly among elderly Holocaust survivors. This study's findings draw intriguing parallels with the experiences of the participants under scrutiny in the present investigation. These individuals, too, have come to recognize the profound potential of art therapy to empower them in transcending the obstacles that life presents, transforming art creation into a profoundly constructive outlet.

In line with existing research demonstrating the efficacy of art therapy in fostering resilience and overcoming adversity, particularly among teenagers and refugees, the application of group art therapy was an instrumental approach for North Korean defectors as well. Just as studies have highlighted the positive impact of online art therapy on teenagers' resilience by offering an immediate and supportive platform (Safega, 2021), and how art therapy empowered refugee participants to confront new challenges (Kalmanowitz, 2016), a similar transformative process unfolded for the participants of this study.

At the outset of their engagement with art therapy, many participants expressed trepidation stemming from their limited exposure to and familiarity with the world of artistic creation. The notion of channeling their thoughts and emotions through art was foreign, and doubts regarding their artistic capabilities loomed large. To address this initial hesitation, the researcher adroitly introduced a diverse array of art materials, deviating from conventional methodologies. This strategic approach was designed not only to ignite interest but also to awaken a sense of curiosity about the artistic process.

Through candid interviews, participants shared that their initial reservations gradually evolved into a palpable sense of empowerment and self-assurance as they delved deeper into the realms of artistic expression. The very act of crafting art became a wellspring of newfound courage, granting them the tools to confront novel challenges with a heightened sense of confidence. This transformative journey underscored the potential of art not merely as a creative outlet, but as a mechanism for bolstering emotional resilience. It became evident that the creative process could be harnessed to articulate complex emotions and navigate periods of emotional turbulence with remarkable efficacy.

The embrace of art creation was instrumental in not only surmounting initial reservations but also in unlocking art's innate potential for therapeutic self-expression and emotional regulation. The introduction of diverse art materials proved instrumental in nurturing an environment of curiosity and active engagement. Through this, participants unearthed latent creative capacities, finding solace and empowerment in their artistic pursuits. As such, this study underscores the potency of artmaking as a versatile tool for the North Korean defectors to navigate the intricate tapestry of their lives, akin to the manner in which art therapy illuminated avenues of resilience for Holocaust survivors.

As Kim And Shin (2020) suggested art therapy has emerged as a powerful tool to help defectors deal with unconscious aspects of their experiences and promote emotional healing. The act of creating art is used as a tool to bring out latent, unconscious thoughts and feelings. For North Korean defectors grappling with the complex issues of government control, economic hardship, and cultural adjustment, art therapy provided a unique way to explore and process these issues. In interviews conducted prior to the

group art therapy, the participants openly discussed the myriad challenges they encountered. The participants said that these challenges stemmed from factors such as government control, unfair treatment during defection, and the socio-cultural disparities they faced after resettlement in the U.S. Consequently, their self-esteem and confidence had dwindled, leading to adverse psychological effects.

To address these psychological and emotional wounds, participants engaged in art therapy by creating works of art that were closely related to their personal identity, challenges, coping mechanisms, thought processes, and self-awareness. Through this artistic expression, participants were able to reflect on their life journey from an objective perspective and transform internalized negative thoughts into positive ones. This supports the work of Jung (2015), who emphasized that art therapy promotes the restoration of personal identity through self-confession, exposure, and repeated expression. Through creative expression, participants were able to recognize, externalize, and analyze their feelings and thoughts.

This study specifically reinforced previous research by Moon (2016), which suggests that group art therapy serves as a medium for participants to express both negative and positive emotions in their artwork. Additionally, it supports the idea, proposed by Cho (2019), that this approach can effectively unveil long-standing emotional scars and distorted cognitive patterns. In the context of art therapy, the creative process played a pivotal role in extracting deeply buried emotions that North Korean defectors were not consciously aware of. By translating these emotions into art, they were able to reconstruct memories and build a more positive self-image. In the study conducted by Hayen And Staal (2021), the researchers examined how participants were

able to reframe negative facts in a positive and receptive manner through the artistic process. Likewise, North Korean defectors underwent a similar process of imbuing fresh meaning into and reevaluating their experiences by visually portraying their life narratives through art in the same study. This transformative journey enabled participants to find healing for their past traumas and garner the positive energy needed for embarking on a new chapter in their lives. In essence, the act of artistic expression became a tool through which their narratives were reshaped, and their inner strength cultivated. The findings in this study support the assertions made by McDonald et al. (2019) and Tong et al. (2021) regarding the beneficial impact of group art therapy on promoting social interaction and enhancing social connections.

One of the significant outcomes of the group art therapy was its positive influence on the formation of social bonds and the enhancement of emotional regulation among North Korean defectors. As they engaged in the process of artistic self-expression, they unearthed latent abilities and nurtured empathy towards themselves and their peers. This process bolstered their self-efficacy, laying a foundation for their increased engagement within the broader social context. The participants could diminish the deep-seated feelings of isolation that often accompany the experiences of North Korean defectors. The sense of displacement and alienation they felt in their new environments is overwhelming (Park et al., 2017). However, through the creative process of artmaking within a supportive group, the North Korean defectors found themselves in the company of peers who share similar journeys. This shared experience fostered a sense of belonging and camaraderie, allowed them to open and connect in ways that might have otherwise seemed insurmountable.

Within the therapeutic setting, participants were gently guided by a group leader to candidly express their emotions, recounting their unique life experiences. The environment cultivated was one free from judgment, allowing for an open dialogue about both positive and negative emotions. This practice underscored the importance of acknowledging and comprehending the full spectrum of emotions for personal growth and adaptive coping mechanisms.

For North Korean defectors, the journey of leaving behind painful memories, distrust, and concerns for the safety of their family members left behind in North Korea can be overwhelming (Han, 2016; Kim, 2019). In this context, the safe and brave space provided by group art therapy emerged as a pivotal channel through which these participants could express their suppressed narratives. The group art therapy offered a distinct refuge for North Korean defectors who, owing to their backgrounds of discrimination, interpersonal mistrust, and personal safety threats, struggled to find a suitable outlet for sharing their stories. This therapeutic modality created a secure space for them to voice their thoughts and feelings, paving a path towards connection and communication. This approach was particularly beneficial for those North Korean defectors who lacked familiarity with traditional counseling methods or held reservations about them. Art therapy became a vessel for the stories they couldn't verbalize, and it acted as an avenue of emotional support and solace. Through this artistic medium, they not only found a way to communicate their experiences with others but also discovered a reservoir of resilience within themselves.

In line with the findings of Shin et al. (2021), who emphasized the role of group art therapy as a potent tool for facilitating the social reintegration and emotional healing

of North Korean defectors, our study also highlights the significance of group art therapy as a vital means through which individuals can simultaneously explore their complex emotions tied to past experiences and reconnect with their cultural heritage. Participants were able to reaffirm their identity as North Koreans and reestablish their understanding of their homeland. Moreover, through group art therapy, participants could reevaluate and come to terms with the challenging memories associated with their journey from North Korea. Group art therapy played a pivotal role in their healing journey, offering profound benefits that extend beyond traditional therapeutic approaches.

In addition, as Huang et al., (2021) Otting and Prosek, (2016) argued that engaging in artistic expression acts as a catalyst for self-esteem and self-discovery, the participants in this research explored various art forms, used their strengths and talents to discover new aspects of their identity, and further amplified positive feedback and environment. Participants conveyed that art therapy played a pivotal role in fortifying their confidence and convictions, empowering them to tackle newfound life challenges with resilience.

The research participants experienced an increased sense of empowerment through participation in group art therapy. This discovery corroborates Kim and Kim's (2016) assertion, suggesting that group art therapy not only improves social relationships and self-esteem but also instills a strong sense of competence in displaced individuals. Through the process of creative expression, they regained agency over their narratives, allowed them to externalize complex emotions that words might fail to convey. This newfound experience is particularly empowering for individuals who have faced systemic oppression and loss of voice (Garcia & Potash, 2019; Royster, 2021). By sharing their

stories through art, the North Korean defectors reclaimed control over their experiences and projected their inner strength outward, inspired others with their resilience.

In essence, the utilization of group art therapy represents an innovative and effective approach to addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by North Korean defectors. Beyond the artistic aspect, these therapy sessions provide a sanctuary where their silenced stories find resonance and validation. The transformational potential of creative engagement becomes evident as participants not only find healing but also tap into wellsprings of personal growth. This holistic approach showcases that the journey of healing is not only about addressing past traumas but also about harnessing the power of creativity and connection to shape a more promising future.

While Asylum-Seekers and Refugees are physically safe from violence, they still grapple with a range of individual and relational challenges. Among the individual challenges are sensations of social isolation, identity uncertainty, and low self-esteem (Utržan & Wieling 2020). Self-esteem serves as a buffer and helps people think positively when they are motivated to make extreme choices (like suicide) due to stress or negative stimulation in their daily lives (Damle & Dabir, 2019; Jung & Ko, 2009; Lin, 2015). The participants expressed their desires so that getting support, such as group art therapy, could enhance their self-esteem, mitigate the psychological challenges associated with adapting to a new culture, and enable them to approach their settlement in the United States with optimism and hope.

Resilience becomes evident as individuals tap into their inherent characteristics, skills, and coping mechanisms to acquire and cultivate positive resources. The quest for resilience often takes center stage when navigating traumatic experiences and pursuing

self-growth or constructive outcomes (Morland & Levine, 2016; Ungar, 2019). This phenomenon represents a subjective human experience achievable as individuals delve into their internal reservoirs of positivity and apply them in their reality (Blayney, 2019). Drawing from prior research, it has been demonstrated that resilience not only cultivates a sense of hope (Duggal et al., 2016) but also exerts a positive influence on individuals in their capacity as child caregivers (Cassidy et al., 2014), while also playing a constructive role in fostering post-traumatic growth (Ogińska-Bulik & Kobylarczyk, 2016).

Facilitating the advancement of resilience and harnessing its increasingly burgeoning interest necessitates a more comprehensive inquiry into the sociological, cultural, and ethical impacts by researchers (Münch et al., 2021). Several instances of cultural sensitivity encompass aspects such as understanding the cultural background of service users, navigating language barriers and ensuring accurate translation, gauging levels of cultural adaptation, considering socio-cultural components, fostering effective treatment relationships, and aligning treatment styles with established literature (Hwang et al., 2015; Naeem et al., 2019; Ward & Brown, 2015).

The cultural and sub-cultural backgrounds of individuals play a pivotal role in shaping their beliefs about well-being, perceptions of illness causation, preferred remedies, approaches to seeking help, healing systems, and even the practitioners they trust (Altweck et al., 2015; Hagmayer & Engelmann, 2014).

It is essential for therapists to recognize that the way a client's physical and emotional symptoms manifest, as well as the interpretation of these symptoms, can vary significantly based on their specific social and cultural milieu (Stainton et al., 2019; Olausson, 2016). To effectively assist clients, therapists must grasp how these symptoms



are perceived within their cultural framework. This underscores the importance of delivering culturally appropriate care, a concept emphasized by researchers like Beck & Naz (2019) who advocate for changes in services to enhance the availability of culturally adapted therapy.

In light of this, Hakim et al. (2019) conducted a study evaluating the transition from Black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) community mental health workers to IAPT low-intensity psychological well-being practitioners, highlighting the ongoing discourse surrounding culturally appropriate care. Additionally, Brooks (2019) emphasized the value of employing the reflective practice model, self-practice, and critical incident analysis when working with service users with complex needs, including refugees and asylum seekers. As a result, the integration of self-practice and self-reflection became imperative in their therapeutic approach.

To address these complexities, Li et al. (2017) highlighted the necessity of tailoring treatments and considering cultural, spiritual, and related factors during therapy. Their findings further underscored the importance of adapting cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) approaches for non-Western cultural contexts. This recommendation aligned with the broader understanding that the conventional psychological counseling techniques often employed may not sufficiently account for the intricate interplay of cultural influences on healing processes.

Many models and directives have emerged to aid in the complex process of adaptation. Notably, Zgueb et al. (2019) underscored the importance of considering family systems, religion, and local cultural beliefs when delivering culturally tailored CBT. One pivotal aspect highlighted by the authors is the delicate handling of religious

and cultural beliefs, with an emphasis on the central role of the family in the therapeutic process (Kada, 2019; Mir et al., 2019). Incorporating family members actively into therapy, addressing emotions of shame and guilt, and understanding local practices including magical rituals are essential components of this approach. The authors also emphasized the importance of cultural sensitivity by advocating for the involvement of faith or religious healers in therapy. The academic discourse has delved into various effective strategies for conveying CBT principles while also serving as tools for emotional regulation. Expanding on these ideas, Patel et al. (2022) recommended the inclusion of culturally appropriate analogies, proverbs, and narratives to enrich the therapeutic process. By seamlessly integrating components that align with the cultural backgrounds of patients, therapists can enhance cultural self-esteem and cultivate more robust therapeutic alliances.

Taking this concept further, Zigarelli et al. (2016) delved into the considerations relevant to non-English speaking individuals in the context of CBT. They emphasized the significance of using interpreters as a means to provide effective treatment to culturally diverse populations. Tutani et al. (2018) extended this discussion, acknowledging the complexities involved in working with interpreters while underscoring the potential positive outcomes such collaborations can yield.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge the limitations of the existing research landscape. Most studies have predominantly originated in Europe and North America, leaving a gap in our understanding regarding the applicability of CBT for ethnic minorities and other underrepresented groups (Weiss et al., 2011). Moreover, the

theoretical underpinnings of CBT models are largely rooted in Western frameworks, potentially limiting their cross-cultural effectiveness (Yoshinaga et al., 2013).

Given these factors, the practitioners need to critically reflect on their own practices and be open to cultural modifications that might enhance the effectiveness of CBT interventions. This should be extended to researchers as well, so they can embark on further investigations that extend beyond the scope of case studies, thereby broadening our understanding of the effectiveness of CBT in diverse cultural contexts. By embracing a more inclusive and culturally sensitive approach, CBT can become a more powerful therapeutic tool for individuals from various backgrounds, ultimately leading to improved mental health outcomes.

To provide appropriate Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) to North Korean defectors, a culturally sensitive approach must be adopted, considering their unique background and experiences. Consequently, understanding the socio-cultural context is crucial when providing support for North Korean refugees' healing, as conventional psychological counseling techniques and activities aimed at psychological stabilization might fall short in addressing these contextual nuances (Kim, et al., 2017).

Examining issues of race, ethnicity, and culture within CBT, Naz et al. (2019) offered insights to support therapists and service managers in delivering culturally competent therapy. Their work particularly focused on minimizing inequalities in mental health services for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) individuals. Naz et al. (2019) not only defined these concepts but also interpret them in the context of CBT practice. Their research underscored the necessity of integrating race, ethnicity, and culture within therapeutic approaches to ensure equitable and effective treatment.

Moving beyond cultural adaptation, Stone And Arroll (2019) delved into broader concerns encompassing race, politics, and health systems. They shed light on potential conflicts arising from these intricate issues, which could impact therapists' practices. Recognizing the paramount importance of these factors, it became clear that infusing cultural considerations into CBT training was imperative. Stone and Arroll's research also highlighted the lack of awareness about modern psychotherapies in low- and middle-income countries, where a medical model often prevails. To bridge this gap and improve healthcare approaches, promoting evidence-based therapies through media and providing training for healthcare workers is essential.

The study conducted by Shin (2019) highlighted the positive impact of mentoring networks on the work attitudes of North Korean defectors. To establish effective cooperative relationships and networks supporting the settlement of these defectors, it is crucial to delve into the specific roles played by government entities, local administrations, and private organizations. Currently, a scarcity of specialized institutions exists for aiding North Korean defectors once they attain citizenship, leaving them in need of professional assistance that goes beyond the offerings of unprofessional religious groups and individuals. The participants in this study reported that biased media reports on North Korean defectors could boost distortion and prejudice against North Korean defectors. It will be effective for society to promote the success and exemplary settlement cases of North Korean defectors internally and externally, rather than focusing on the process of defection or human rights violations to improve the image of North Korean defectors and reduce discrimination and prejudice.

In conclusion, this research underscored the significant role of Resilience-Based Cognitive Behavioral group art therapy in bolstering the well-being and resilience of North Korean defectors. By furnishing them with a platform for self-expression and peer connections, this therapeutic approach has the potential to address the distinct psychological challenges encountered by the North Korean defectors. As we forge ahead, it is imperative that practitioners, policymakers, and researchers take heed of these findings to formulate more comprehensive and efficacious support systems for individuals undergoing analogous journeys of displacement and adaptation.

Although this study has made important contributions, it is not devoid of limitations. One significant restriction is the relatively narrow participant pool. This highlights the need for future investigations to expand the demographic spectrum under scrutiny. Furthermore, the study's concentration on a specific subset of participants, North Korean defectors, introduced complexities due to their unfamiliarity with art therapy and existing biases against counseling. Recruiting participants posed challenges and could have potentially influenced outcomes. To address this, future research should prioritize comprehensive strategies to enhance awareness and enthusiasm for art therapy and counseling within the community of North Korean defectors. Additionally, the study emphasizes the need for prolonged investigations to delve into the enduring impacts of such interventions and assess their sustainability over an extended period. By addressing these limitations, future research can aim to provide more comprehensive insights into the effectiveness and applicability of art therapy, especially within the distinctive context of North Korean defectors.

## References

- Acarturk, Z. C., Abuhamdeh, S., Jalal, B., Unaldi, N., Alyanak, B., Cetinkaya, M., Gulen, B., & Hinton, D. (2019). Culturally adapted transdiagnostic CBT for SSRI resistant Turkish adolescents: A pilot study. *The American journal of orthopsychiatry*, *89*(2), 222–227. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ort0000310>
- Ahn, J. H., Kim, W. H., Choi, H., Jeon, J. Y., Song, I. G., & Bae, J. N. (2015). Stigma of mental illnesses as perceived by North Korean defectors living in South Korea. *Psychiatry Investigation*, *12*(1), 9-15. <https://doi.org/10.4306/pi.2015.12.1.9>
- Al-Roubaiy, N. S., Owen-Pugh, V., & Wheeler, S. (2014). The experience of exile-related stress among Iraqi refugee men in Sweden and its implications for counselling and psychotherapy: A qualitative study. *Counselling Psychology Review*, *28*(2). <https://doi.org/10.53841/bpscpr.2013.28.2.53>
- Arnfred, S. M., Aharoni, R., Hvenegaard, M., Poulsen, S., Bach, B., Arendt, M., Rosenberg, N. K., & Reinholt, N. (2017). Transdiagnostic group CBT vs. standard group CBT for depression, social anxiety disorder and agoraphobia/panic disorder: Study protocol for a pragmatic, multicenter non-inferiority randomized controlled trial. *BMC psychiatry*, *17*(1), 37. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-016-1175-0>
- Altweck, L, Marshall, TC, Ferenczi, N, & Lefringhausen, K (2015). Mental health literacy: across-cultural approach to knowledge and beliefs about depression,

schizophrenia and generalized anxiety disorder. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6.  
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.01272>

Ayon, C. (2015). Economic, social and health effects of discrimination on Latino immigrant families. Migration Policy Institute.  
<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/economic-social-and-health-effects-discrimination-Latino-immigrant-families>

Azoulay, P., Benjamin F. J., Kim, J. D., & Miranda, J. (2022). Immigration and Entrepreneurship in the United States. *American Economic Review: Insights* 4(1), 71–88.

Ba`a`rnhelm, S., Laban, K., Schouler, M., Rousseau, C., & Kirmayer, L. J. (2017). Mental health for refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons: A call for a humanitarian agenda. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 54 (5-6), 565-574.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1363461517747095>

Basli, E., Ozmen, S., Demirci, E., Kendirci, M., Tatli, Z. U., & Kondolot, M. (2020). The effects of art therapy techniques on depression, anxiety levels and quality of life in the adolescent with type 1 diabetes mellitus: A Preliminary study. *Erciyes Medical Journal*, 42(4), 431.

<https://doi.org.ezproxyles.flo.org/10.14744/etd.2020.45548>

Barlow, D. H., Allen, L. B., & Choate, M. L. (2004). Toward a unified treatment for emotional disorders. *Behavior Therapy*, 35(2), 205–230. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0005-7894\(04\)80036-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0005-7894(04)80036-4)

Barlow, D. H., Farchione, T. J., Bullis, J. R., Gallagher, M. W., Murray-Latin, H., Sauer-

Zavala, S., Bentley, K. H., Thompson-Hollands, J., Conklin, L. R., Boswell, J. F., Ametaj, A., Carl, J. R., Boettcher, H. T., & Cassiello-Robbins, C. (2017). The unified protocol for transdiagnostic treatment of emotional disorders compared with diagnosis-specific protocols for anxiety disorders: A randomized clinical trial. *JAMA Psychiatry*, *74*(9), 875–884.

<https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2017.2164>

Barlow, D. H., Farchione, T. J., Sauer-Zavala, S., Latin, H. M., Ellard, K. K., Bullis, J.

R., Bentley, K. H., Boettcher, H. T., & Cassiello-Robbins. (2017). *Unified protocol for transdiagnostic treatment of emotional disorders: Therapist guide*. Oxford University Press.

Beck, A., & Naz, S. (2019). The need for service change and community outreach work to support trans-cultural cognitive behavior therapy with black and minority ethnic communities. *The Cognitive Behavior Therapist*, *12*, E1.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1754470X18000016>

Bell, M. (2012). *Refugees, Defectors or Economic Migrants?*. NKNEWS.

<https://www.nknews.org/2012/06/refugees-defectors-and-economic-migrants/>

Benartzy, A. (2020). Place-based intercultural liminality and the potential of art therapy in cultural identity negotiations. (Publication No. 345) [Doctoral dissertation, Lesley University]. ProQuest Dissertation and Theses Global.

Bentley, K. H. (2017). Applying the Unified Protocol transdiagnostic treatment to non-suicidal self-injury and co-occurring emotional disorders: A case illustration.

*Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *73*(5), 547–558.

<https://doi-org.ezproxyles.flo.org/10.1002/jclp.22452>



- Bisson, J. I., Roberts, N. P., Andrew, M., Cooper, R., & Lewis, C. (2013). Psychological therapies for chronic post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in adults. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, 12, Article CD003388.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD003388.pub4>
- Bizumic, B., Gunningham, B., & Christensen, B. K. (2022). Prejudice towards people with mental illness, schizophrenia, and depression among mental health professionals and the general population. *Psychiatry Research*, 317, 114817.  
<https://doi-org.ezproxyles.flo.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2022.114817>
- Blayney, S. (2019). Industrial fatigue and the productive body the science of work in Britain, c. 1900–1918. *Social History of Medicine*, 32(2), 310–328.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/shm/hkx077>
- Bogic, M., Njoku, A., & Priebe, S. (2015). Long-term mental health of war-refugees: A systematic literature review. *BMC International Health and Human Rights*, 15(1), 29-70. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12914-015-0064-9>
- Brooks, M. (2019). The importance of using reflective practice when working with refugees, asylum seekers and survivors of torture within IAPT. *The Cognitive Behavior Therapist*, 12, E16. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1754470X19000023>
- Buhmann, C., Andersen, I., Mortensen, E. L., Ryberg, J., Nordentoft, M., & Ekstrøm, M. (2015). Cognitive behavioral psychotherapeutic treatment at a psychiatric trauma clinic for refugees: description and evaluation. *Torture : quarterly journal on rehabilitation of torture victims and prevention of torture*, 25(1), 17–32. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7146/torture.v25i1.109506>
- Buscher, R. (2020). *Reality is hitting me in the face: Asian Americans grapple with*

*racism due to COVID-19*. WHYY. <https://whyy.org/articles/reality-is-hitting-me-in-the-face-asian-americans-grapple-with-racism-due-to-covid-19>

- Campbell, J. (2014). Climate-Change Migration in the Pacific. *The Contemporary Pacific*, 26, 1-28. <https://doi.org/10.1353/cp.2014.0023>
- Cassidy, T., Giles, M., & McLaughlin, M. (2014). Benefit finding and resilience in child caregivers. *British Journal of Health Psychology*, 19, 606–618. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjhp.12059>
- Cecil, R. (2016). Supplementing Art Therapy with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) during Treatment of Childhood Anxiety Disorders: A Pilot Study. [Unpublished Master's thesis]. West Virginia University. <https://doi.org/10.33915/etd.5328>
- Chang, I. S. (2019). *PTSD thalpwuk namseng cisok nochwul kipan miswulchilyo salyey yenkwu* [A case study of art therapy based on prolonged exposure to a male North Korean defector with PTSD]. [Unpublished Master's thesis]. Myung-ji University. Retrieved from <http://www.riss.kr/link?id=T15350434>
- Chen, W. T., Sun, W., Huang, F., Shi Shiu, C., Kim, B., Candelario, J., Toma, L., Wu, G., & Yune, J. A. (2023). Lost in Translation: Impact of Language Barriers and Facilitators on the Health Care of Asian Americans Living with HIV. *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-023-01674-7>
- Cho, E. B. (2019). *Incihayngtong miswulchilyoka wuwulcangaylul kacin senginyesenguy wuwulkwa catongcek sakoey michinun yenghyang* [The effects of cognitive behavioral art therapy on automatic thoughts and depression of adult women with

*depression*]. [Unpublished Master's thesis]. Konkuk University. Retrieved from [https://m.riss.kr/search/detail/DetailView.do?p\\_mat\\_type=be54d9b8bc7cdb09&control\\_no=23792e64a0af0d19ffe0bdc3ef48d419](https://m.riss.kr/search/detail/DetailView.do?p_mat_type=be54d9b8bc7cdb09&control_no=23792e64a0af0d19ffe0bdc3ef48d419)

- Choi, H. O., & Son, C. N. (2011). Hankwukhyeng maumchayngkimey kipanhan suthuleysu kamso(K-MBSR) phulokulaymi pwukhanithalcwuminuy oysang hwu suthuleysu cungsang, kyenghemhoyphi mich swuchisimey michinun hyokwa [The effects of the Korean Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (K-MBSR) program on posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms, experiential avoidance, and shame in North Korean defectors]. *Korean Journal of Health Professionals*, *16*(3), 469-482. <https://doi.org/10.17315/kjhp.2011.16.3.003>
- Choi, Y., Lim, S. Y., Jun, J. Y., Lee, S. H., Yoo, S. Y., Kim, S., Gwak, A. R., Kim, J. C., Lee, Y. J., & Kim, S. J. (2017). The Effect of Traumatic Experiences and Psychiatric Symptoms on the Life Satisfaction of North Korean Refugees. *Psychopathology*, *50*(3), 203–210. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000468544>
- Cho, Y. S. (2012). *Misulchiryoga bukhan talbuk adong baldale michisnun younhyang: hangdong joonsim*. [The influence to the development of self-esteem of children of North Korean refugees by art therapy: Around design activities]. [Unpublished Master's thesis]. Jeonnam University.
- Choi, J., Kushner, K., Mill, J., & Lai, D. (2014). The experience of Korean immigrant women adjusting to Canadian society. *Journal of Cross Cultural Gerontology*, *29*, 277–297. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10823-014-9235-8>
- Chun, K. H. (2022). North Korean defectors as cultural other in South Korea: Perception

and construction of cultural differences. *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding*, 1-29.

Retrieved from

<https://www.kci.go.kr/kciportal/ci/sereArticleSearch/ciSereArtiView.kci?sereArticleSearchBean.artiId=ART002847283>

Chung, B. H. (2008). Between defector and migrant: Identities and strategies of North Koreans in South Korea. *Korean Studies*, 32, 1-28.

<https://doi.org/10.1353/ks.0.0002>

Chung, R. W. (2020, October 28). *The most hated country among Americans is North Korea. "Negative awareness 65%"*. YNA.

<https://www.yna.co.kr/view/AKR20201028024600504>

Cohen, J. A., Mannarino, A. P., & Deblinger, E. (2016). *Treating trauma and traumatic grief in children and adolescents* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.

Courtois, C. A., & Ford, J. D. (2016). *Treatment of complex traumatic: A sequenced, relationship-based approach*. Guilford Press.

Cuijpers, P., Noma, H., Karyotaki, E., Cipriani, A., & Furukawa, T. A. (2019).

Effectiveness and acceptability of cognitive behavior therapy delivery formats in adults with depression: A network meta-analysis. *JAMA psychiatry*, 76(7), 700–

707. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2019.0268>

Damle, A., & Dabir, S. (2019). Study of self-concept as a predictor of suicidal ideation among engineering college students. *Annual International Conference on Cognitive & Behavioral Psychology*, 55–61.

[https://doi.org/10.5176/2251-1865\\_CBP19.76](https://doi.org/10.5176/2251-1865_CBP19.76)

Degges-White, S., & Davis, N. L. (2018). *Integrating the expressive arts into*

*counseling practice : theory-based interventions* (Second edition.). Springer Publishing Company.

Del Olmo-Romero, F., González-Blanco, M., Sarró, S., Grácio, J., Martín-Carrasco, M. Martínez-Cabezón, A. C., Perna, G., Pomarol-Clotet, E., Varandas, P., Ballesteros-Rodríguez, J., Rebolleda-Gil, C., Vanni, G., González-Fraile, E., & INTER NOS group (2019). Mental health professionals' attitudes towards mental illness: professional and cultural factors in the INTER NOS study. *European archives of psychiatry and clinical neuroscience*, 269(3), 325–339.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00406-018-0867-5>

Dhalimi, A., Wright, A. M., Yamin, J., Jamil, H., & Arnetz, B. B. (2018). Perception of discrimination in employment and health in refugees and immigrants. *Stigma and Health*, 3(4), 325–329. <https://doi.org/10.1037/sah0000068>

Diamond, S., & Shrira, A. (2018). Psychological vulnerability and resilience of Holocaust survivors engaged in creative art. *Psychiatry Research*, (264), 236-243. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2018.04.013>

Douma, M. (2013). *Therapeutic alliance with traumatized refugees and asylum seekers in relation to treatment change* [Unpublished Master's thesis]. Utrecht University. <https://studenttheses.uu.nl/bitstream/handle/20.500.12932/16466/Thesis%20Marianna%20Douma.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>

Dubus, N (2022) Resiliency with Forced Migrants: A qualitative study of providers and forced migrants through a resilience perspective. *Behavioral Sciences*, 12(2), 27. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs12020027>

Duggal, D., Sacks-Zimmerman, A., & Liberta, T. (2016). The impact of hope and

resilience on multiple factors in neurosurgical patients. *Cureus*, 8(10), e849.

Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.849>

Erfold, B. T., Gunther, C., Duncan, K., Bardhoshi, G., Dummett, B., Kraft, J., Deferio, K., Falco, M., & Ross, M. (2016). Meta-analysis of counseling outcomes for the treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 94, 13–30. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12058>

Eskici, H. S., Hinton, D. E., Jalal, B., Yurtbakan, T., & Acarturk, C. (2023). Culturally adapted cognitive behavioral therapy for Syrian refugee women in Turkey: A randomized controlled trial. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 15(2), 189–198.

<https://doi-org.ezproxyles.flo.org/10.1037/tra0001138>

Feen-Calligan, H., Ruvolo Grasser, L., Debryn, J., Nasser, S., Jackson, C., Seguin, D., & Javanbakht, A. (2020). Art therapy with Syrian refugee youth in the United States: An intervention study. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 69, Article 101665. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aip.2020.101665>

Fisher, A., & Gilboa, A. (2016). The roles of music amongst musician Holocaust survivors before, during, and after the Holocaust. *Psychology of Music*, 44(6), 1221-1239. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305735615624772>

Gammeltoft-Hansen, T., & Tan, N. F. (2017). The end of the deterrence paradigm: Future directions for global refugee policy. *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 5(1), 28–56. <https://doi.org/10.14240/jmhs.v5i1.73>

García, L. M., & Potash, J. S. (2019). Art Therapy as Psychosocial Support for FARC

Reincorporation. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 14(2), 109–124.

<http://ezproxyles.flo.org/login?url=https://www.jstor.org/stable/48603248>

George W. Bush Institute. (n.d.). *Education and Employment among U.S.-based North Koreans*. <https://gwbceneter.imgix.net/Resources/gwbi-education-employment-north-koreans.pdf>

Gillies, D., Maiocchi, L., Bhandari, A. P., Taylor, F., Gray, C., & O'Brien, L. (2016). Psychological therapies for children and adolescents exposed to trauma. *The Cochrane database of systematic reviews*, 10(10), CD012371.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD012371>

Gormez, V., Kilic H. N., Orenhul, A. C., Demir, M. N., Mert, E. B., Makhoulta, B., Kinik, K., & Semerci, B. (2017). Evaluation of a school-based, teacher-delivered psychological intervention group program for trauma-affected Syrian refugee children in Istanbul. *Turkey Psychiatry and Clinical Psychopharmacology*, 27(2), 125–31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/24750573.2017.1304748>

Gutner, C. A., Song, J., Canale, C. A., Suvak, M. K., Litwack, S. D., Niles, B. L., & Stirman, S. W. (2022). A pilot randomized effectiveness trial of the Unified Protocol in trauma-exposed veterans. *Depression & Anxiety (1091-4269)*, 39(12), 813–823. <https://doi.org/10.1002/da.23288>

Hack-Polay, D., Mahmoud, A. B., Kordowicz, M., Madziva, R., Kivunja, C. (2021). “Let us define ourselves”: forced migrants’ use of multiple identities as a tactic for social navigation. *BMC Psychology* 9, 125. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-021-00630-6>

- Haeyen, S., & Staal, M. (2021). Imagery rehearsal based art therapy: Treatment of post-traumatic nightmares in art therapy. *Frontiers in Psychology, 11*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.628717>
- Hagmayer, Y., & Engelmann, N (2014). Causal beliefs about depression in different cultural groups – what do cognitive psychological theories of causal learning and reasoning predict? *Frontiers in Psychology, 5*.  
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.01303>
- Han, J. W. (2016). An ethnographic study on North Korean defectors` experiences of Christianity. *Multiculturalism and Peace, 10*(2), 134-154.  
<https://doi.org/10.22446/mpisk.2016.10.2.007>
- Hakim, N., Thompson, A. R., & Coleman-Oluwabusola, G. (2019). An evaluation of the transition from BAME community mental health worker to IAPT low intensity psychological wellbeing practitioner. *The Cognitive Behavior Therapist, 12*, E15.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1754470X18000296>
- Havnen, A., Anyan, F., Hjemdal, O., Solem, S., Gurigard Riksfjord, M., & Hagen, K. (2020). Resilience moderates negative outcomes from stress during the COVID-19 pandemic: A moderated-mediation approach. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 17*(18), Article 6461.  
<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17186461>
- Hinton, D. E., & Jalal, B. (2019). Dimensions of culturally sensitive CBT: Application to Southeast Asian populations. *The American journal of orthopsychiatry, 89*(4), 493–507. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ort0000392>
- Hood, C. O., Southward, M. W., Bugher, C., & Sauer-Zavala, S. (2021). A preliminary



evaluation of the Unified Protocol among trauma-exposed adults with and without PTSD. *International Journal of Environmental Research & Public Health*, 18(21), 11729.

<https://doi-org.ezproxyles.flo.org/10.3390/ijerph182111729>

Huang, C., Su, H., Cheng, S., & Tan, C. (2021). The effects of group art therapy on adolescents' self-concept and peer relationship: A mixed-method study. *New Directions for Child & Adolescent Development*, 179, 75–92. <https://doi-org.ezproxyles.flo.org/10.1002/cad.20435>

Hwang, W. C., Myers, H. F., Chiu, E., Mak, E., Butner, J. E., Fujimoto, K., & Miranda, J. (2015). Culturally adapted cognitive behavioral therapy for Chinese Americans with depression: a randomized controlled trial. *Psychiatric Services (Washington, DC)*, 66, 1035–1042. <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.201400358>

Hwang, W., & Goto, S. (2008). The impact of perceived racial discrimination on the mental health of Asian American and Latino college students. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* 14(4), 326-335. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1099-9809.14.4.326>

Iacoviello, B. M., & Charney, D. S. (2014). Psychosocial facets of resilience: implications for preventing post trauma psychopathology, treating trauma survivors, and enhancing community resilience. *European journal of psychotraumatology*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.3402/ejpt.v5.23970>

Iverson, K. M., Gradus, J. L., Resick, P. A., Suvak, M. K., Smith, K. F., & Monson, C.

- M. (2011). Cognitive-behavioral therapy for PTSD and depression symptoms reduces risk for future intimate partner violence among interpersonal trauma survivors. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 79*(2), 193–202.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022512>
- Jeon, S., Lee, J., Jun, J. Y., Park, Y. S., Cho, J., Choi, J., Jeon, Y., & Kim, S. J. (2020). The effectiveness of cognitive behavioral therapy on depressive symptoms in North Korean refugees. *Psychiatry Investigation, 17*(7), 681–687.  
<https://doi.org/10.30773/pi.2019.0134>
- Jeong, K. H. (2017). *Tulemul hwalyonghan thalpwukhaksaynguy cakhionungkam hyokwaey kwanhan yenkwu [A study on the self-efficacy effect of North Korean escapee students using drum]*. [Unpublished Master's thesis]. Joongang University. Retrieved from <http://dcollection.cau.ac.kr/common/orgView/000000196920>
- Jeung, R., & Nham, K. (2020). *Incidents of coronavirus discrimination: A Report for A3PCON and CAA*. Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council.  
[http://www.asianpacificpolicyandplanningcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/STOP\\_AAPI\\_HATE\\_MONTHLY\\_REPORT\\_4\\_23\\_20.pdf](http://www.asianpacificpolicyandplanningcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/STOP_AAPI_HATE_MONTHLY_REPORT_4_23_20.pdf)
- Ji, E., Shin, Y. J., Kim, J. S., Choi, S. J., & Konuk, A. Işıl. (2021). Analysis of trends and qualitative indicators of career counseling programs for North Korean defectors. *The Journal of the Humanities for Unification, 86*. 325-358.  
<https://doi.org/10.21185/jhu.2021.03.86.325>
- Jin, A. Y. (2016). Community center adongul daesanguro jagi jojulgua gamjung pyohyunae michinun group misul chiryo younghyang yeongu [The effects of group art therapy on self-control and emotional expression of children in community centers].

[Unpublished Master's thesis]. Seoul Women's University. Retrieved from  
<https://www.kci.go.kr/kciportal/ci/sereArticleSearch/ciSereArtiView.kci?sereArticleSearchBean.artiId=ART002133814>

Jones, J. P., Walker, M. S., Drass, J. M., & Kaimal, G. (2017). Art therapy interventions for active duty military service members with post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury. *International Journal of Art Therapy Inscope*, 23(2), 70–85. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17454832.2017.1388263>

Joyce, S., Shand, F., Tighe, J., Laurent, S. J., Bryant, R. A., & Harvey, S. B. (2018). Road to resilience: A systematic review and meta-analysis of resilience training programs and interventions. *British Medical Journal Open*, 8(6), e017858. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2017-017858>.

Jung, K., Dalton, B., & Willis, J. (2017). The onward migration of North Korean refugees to Australia: In search of cosmopolitan habitus. *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 9(3), 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.5130/ccs.v9i3.5506>

Jung, Y. I. (2015). Miswulchilyo kwancemeyse pon cakikopaykmiswuluy chiyuseng: Iwuicu pwulucwuawa thuleyisi eyminuy cakphwumul cwungsimulo [Healing Properties of Self Confession Art from the Perspective of Art Therapy: Focusing on the Works of Louise Bourgeois and Tracey Emin]. *Korea Art therapy Association*, 22(2), 296-315. <https://doi.org/10.35594/kata.2015.22.2.002>

Jung, M., & Ko, G. (2009). Kwun pyengsatuluy caaconcwungkamkwa wuwuli casaluytoey michinun yenghyang - wuwuluy maykayhyokwa kemcung [The Effect of Military Soldiers' Self-esteem and Depression on Suicide Intention: Verification of the Mediated Effect of Depression].

*Social Welfare Research*, 40(4): 453-483. Retrieved from

<https://www.kci.go.kr/kciportal/ci/sereArticleSearch/ciSereArtiView.kci?sereArticleSearchBean.artiId=ART001409871>

Kada, R. (2019). Cultural adaptations of CBT for the British Jewish Orthodox community. *The Cognitive Behavior Therapist*, 12, E4.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1754470X18000120>

Kaimal, G., Jones, J. P., Dieterich-Hartwell, R., Acharya, B., & Wang, X. (2019).

Evaluation of long- and short-term art therapy interventions in an integrative care setting for military service members with post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injury. *Arts in Psychotherapy*, 62, 28–36.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aip.2018.10.003>

Kananian, S., Ayoughi, S., Farugie, A., Hinton, D., & Stangier, U. (2017).

Transdiagnostic culturally adapted CBT with Farsi-speaking refugees: A pilot study. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 8(2), 1–10.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/20008198.2017.1390362>

Kang, D. Y. (2018). Pwukhanithalcwuminuy sahyo cekungkwa cengchak ciwen pangan :

poken · uylyo pwunya silthaywa kwaceylul cwungsimulo [Social Adjustment of North Korean Defectors and Support Plans for Their Settlement]. *The Journal of Political Science and Communication*, 21(2), 185-205. Retrieved from

<https://www.dbpia.co.kr/journal/articleDetail?nodeId=NODE07469181>

Kalmanowitz, D. (2016). Inhabited studio: Art therapy and mindfulness, resilience,

adversity and refugees. *International Journal of Art Therapy: Inscape*, 21(2),

75–84. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17454832.2016.1170053>

- Kalmanowitz, D. L., & Ho, R. T. H. (2017). Art therapy and mindfulness with survivors of political violence: A qualitative study. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 9(1), 107–113.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/J.AIP.2016.05.012>
- Kang, H. J., & Sung, S. N. (2019). Thalpwukcauy simli.cengsecek mwunceyhaykyel panganulosse kyolyupwunsek iloncekyonguy kanungsengey tayhan yenkwu [The study on the possibility of TA as a method for solving psychological problem of North Korean defectors]. *Korean society of Transactional Analysis and Counseling*, 9(2), 143-163. Retrieved from  
<https://www.kci.go.kr/kciportal/ci/sereArticleSearch/ciSereArtiView.kci?sereArticleSearchBean.artiId=ART002542166>
- Kang, S. J. (2018). *Cey3kwukeyse thayenan thalpwukmin canyeuy cekung suthuleysu kamsolul wihan ciptan miswul chilyo salyey yenkwu suthuleysu kamsolul wihan ciptanmiswulchilyo salyey yenkwu* [A case study of group art therapy for the reduction of acculturation stress among the children of North Korean refugees born in a third country]. [Unpublished Master's thesis]. Daegu cyber University. Retrieved from  
[https://m.riss.kr/search/detail/ssoSkipDetailView.do?p\\_mat\\_type=be54d9b8bc7cd b09&control\\_no=a0a45dbffbfd1d42ffe0bdc3ef48d419](https://m.riss.kr/search/detail/ssoSkipDetailView.do?p_mat_type=be54d9b8bc7cd b09&control_no=a0a45dbffbfd1d42ffe0bdc3ef48d419)
- Kim, E., Yun, M., Jun, J. Y., & Park, W. S. (2019). Pre-migration trauma, repatriation experiences, and PTSD Among North Korean refugees. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*, 21(3), 466–472. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10903-018-0742-5>
- Kim, H. A., Cho, Y. A., & Kim, Y. W. (2014). Thalpwuk 1in kakwuuy

namhansaynghwal kyenghemey kwanhan cilcek yenkwu [A qualitative research study on the experience of living in South Korea of a single North Korean defector family]. *Korea Institute for Health and Social Research*, 34(4), 321-353. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.15709/hswr.2014.34.4.321>

Kim, H., Kim, Y., Yoon, J., Nam, J. K., & Kim, Y. (2023). A phenomenological study on the North Korean refugees' trauma experience and recovery process during the escape and resettlement in South Korea. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 92. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2022.101742>

Kim, H. J. (2013). Thalpwukyesenguy cengsinkenkangkwa pwupwucekungul wihan TSL kacokphulokulaym kayip hyokwa : uysayngmyengsahoykwahakcek kwancem(Bio-Medico-Social(BMS) Perspective)ul cwungsimulo [*The effect of intervention in TSL family program for mental health and couples adaptation of North Korean defectors: Focusing on Bio-Medico-Social (BMS) perspective*]. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Yonsei University. KDMT1201323091

Kim, J., Park, J., Nam, K. W., Kwack, A. R., & Feng, Y.(2017). Thalpwuk thulawumaeytayhan inmwunhakcek chiyu panganuy kanungseng-kwuswul chiyu pangpeplonul cwungsimulo [The Possibility of Humanistic Healing for North Korean Defection Trauma - Focusing on Oral Healing Methodology]. *The Korean Journal of Unification Affairs*, 29(2), 199-240. Retrieved from [https://preview.kstudy.com/W\\_files/kiss10/7g615042\\_pv.pdf](https://preview.kstudy.com/W_files/kiss10/7g615042_pv.pdf)

Kim, J., Park, S. H., Youn, Y. S., Han, A., & Kim, M. (2019). Stress and coping associated with acculturation among North Korean defectors. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 59(2), 211–231.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022167816631107>

- Kim, J. H., & Kim, S. H. (2016). Ciptanmiswulchilyoka namhan kecwu pwukhanithalchengsonyenuy oysang hwu sengcangkwa caathanlyeksengey michinun hyokwa [Effects of group art therapy on post-traumatic growth and self-resilience in North Korean refugee adolescents living in South Korea]. *Journal of Art Psychotherapy Research* 12(1), 197-219. Retrieved from [https://m.riss.kr/search/detail/DetailView.do?p\\_mat\\_type=1a0202e37d52c72d&control\\_no=bd87c268a789a1c9b7998d826d417196](https://m.riss.kr/search/detail/DetailView.do?p_mat_type=1a0202e37d52c72d&control_no=bd87c268a789a1c9b7998d826d417196)
- Kim, J. Y. (2021, March 30). Enthaykthu sitay, thalpwukminuy cengsinkenjang' seymina, pwukhanithalcwuminuy kholona pullwulul nonhata 2phyen - ciyekisahoyeyseyu thalpwukmin cengsinkenjang ciwen [Seminar on "Untact era, mental health of North Korean refugees," Discussing corona blue of North Korean Refugees Part 2 – Supporting the mental health of North Korean refugees in the community]. *Ministry of Unification of the Republic of Korea*.  
<https://blog.naver.com/gounikorea/222292659759>
- Kim, K. H. (2015). Pwulancungsangul kacin thalpwukyeesenguy kyenghemey tayhan naylethipu thamkwu - myengsangsangtam salyeylul cwungsimulo [Narrative inquiry into the experience of a North Korean refugee woman suffering from anxiety - emphasis on meditation counseling case]. *The Journal of the Korean Association for Buddhist Studies*, 75, 429-465. Retrieved from <https://www.kci.go.kr/kciportal/ci/sereArticleSearch/ciSereArtiView.kci?sereArticleSearchBean.artiId=ART002036310>
- Kim, K. U., & Shin, D. Y. (2020). Mantala miswulchilyolul hwalyonghan cwungnyenki

yesenguy kaysenghwa kyenghemey kwanhan hyensanghak yenkwu [A phenomenological study on the characterization experience of middle-aged woman using mandala arts treatment]. *Korean Buddhist Association*, 5(2), 33–40.

Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.21186/IPR.2020.5.2.033>

Kim M. J. (2021). Acculturation, social support and suicidal ideation among Asian immigrants in the United States. *SSM - population health*, 14, 100778.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2021.100778>

Kim, N., Lee, J., & Jeong, M. (2016). Thalpwukchengsonyenuy thulawuma haykyelul wihan thonghapcek yeyswulchilyo cheyhemyenkwa [The experience research on the integrative arts psychotherapy for trauma resolution of North Korean adolescent refugees]. *The Korean Journal of Dance Studies (KRSDS)*, 62(5), 17-32.

Retrieved from

<https://www.kci.go.kr/kciportal/ci/sereArticleSearch/ciSereArtiView.kci?sereArticleSearchBean.artiId=ART002186642>

Kim, S. K. (2017). *Pwukhanithalcwumin cengchakciwenuy panghyangkwa kwacey: 'poho'eyse 'thonghap'ulo* [North Korean defectors direction and tasks of settlement support: from protection to integration]. Korea Institute of National Unification.

Retrieved from <https://repo.kinu.or.kr/handle/2015.oak/8470>

Kim, S. Y. (2020). *Thalpwukca? saythemim? ...kongsik yongenun 'thalpwukmin'* [Talbuja? satemin? 'The official name is talbukmin']. NMNEWS.

<https://www.nongmin.com/news/NEWS/POL/ETC/326149/view>



- Kim, S. K. (2012). "Defector," "Refugee," or "Migrant"? North Korean settlers in South Korea's changing social discourse. *North Korean Review*, 8, 94-110.  
<https://doi.org/10.3172/NKR.8.2.94>
- Kim, T. H. (2019). Pwukhan cwuminuy inkwen silthay [Human rights situations in the DPRK]. *New Asia Research Center*, 26 (1), 14-44. Retrieved from  
[https://www.kci.go.kr/kciportal/landing/article.kci?arti\\_id=ART002451370](https://www.kci.go.kr/kciportal/landing/article.kci?arti_id=ART002451370)
- Kim, Y. H., Jeon, W. T., & Cho, Y. A. (2010). Pwukhanithalcwumin cengsinkenkang mwuncey yupyengyulkwa yenghyangyoin: 2007nyen ipkwukca cwungsimulo [A study on the prevalence and the influencing factors of the mental health problems among recent migrant North Koreans: A focus on 2007 entrants]. *Unific Policy Study*, 19, 141-174. Retrieved from  
<https://www.kci.go.kr/kciportal/ci/sereArticleSearch/ciSereArtiView.kci?sereArticleSearchBean.artiId=ART001518000>
- Kim, Y. G (2019). Pwuksongkyenghemthalpwukyesengtuluy thalpwukkwaceng mich cekungey kwanhan sayngaysa yenkwu [A life history study of North Korean women's experiences of defection and adjustment to North Korea]. *Welfare and Cultural Diversity Studies*, 1(1), 25-67. Retrived from  
<https://scholar.kyobobook.co.kr/article/detail/4050027334835>
- King, D., & Said, G. (2019). Working with unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people: Cultural considerations and acceptability of a cognitive behavior group approach. *The Cognitive Behavior Therapist*, 12.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1754470X18000260>
- Koh, E. (2018). Prevalence and predictors of depression and anxiety among Korean

Americans. *Social Work in Public Health*, 33(1), 55-69.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/19371918.2017.1415178>

Korea Hana Foundation(2014). *Pwukhan ithal cwumin cengchak silthay cosa* [Survey of North Korean defectors living in South Korea].

Korea Hana Foundation.

file:///Users/yurikim/Downloads/202202211106512895%20(1).pdf

Lartigue, C. (2018). *Defectors vs. refugees over North Korea's denuclearization*.

KOREANTIMES.

[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2018/04/728\\_247591.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2018/04/728_247591.html)

Lee, B. Y., & Jang, M. K. (2015). Pwukhan ithal chengsonyenkwa namhan chengsonyenuy molaynoli chilyoeyseuy simlicek cwucey mich iyaki phyohyen pikyo [Comparisons between North Korean adolescent defectors and South Korean adolescents in psychological themes and stories expressed in sandplay therapy]. *Child Welfare Research*, 6(2), 31-45. Retrieved from

<https://www.dbpia.co.kr/journal/articleDetail?nodeId=NODE08821186#>

Lee, C. (2018). Migration to the “first large suburban ghetto” in America: Korean immigrant merchants in South Central Los Angeles in the 1980s. *Historical Reflections*, 44(2), 87-106. <https://doi.org/10.3167/hrrh.2018.440206>

Lee, J. H. (2022). The Effects of Trauma Types at Pre-Migration, Transit, and Post-Migration Stages on Depression and PTSD among North Korean Refugees in South Korea. *Challenges*, 13(2).

<https://doi.org/10.3390/challe13020031>

Lee, J. M. (2019). *Pwukhanithalchengsonyenuy cekungyuyenseng hyangsangul wihan cicicek*

*nolaysimlichilyo cekyong salyey* [A Case Study on Supportive Song Psychotherapy to Improve Resilience of North Korean Adolescent Refugees]. [Unpublished Master's thesis]. Ewha Womans University. Retrieved from [https://m.riss.kr/search/detail/DetailView.do?p\\_mat\\_type=be54d9b8bc7cdb09&control\\_no=5fcebddebfd6cfc3ffe0bdc3ef48d419](https://m.riss.kr/search/detail/DetailView.do?p_mat_type=be54d9b8bc7cdb09&control_no=5fcebddebfd6cfc3ffe0bdc3ef48d419)

Lee, M., Nezu, A. M., & Nezu, C. M. (2018). Acculturative stress, social problem solving, and depressive symptoms among Korean American immigrants. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 55(5), 710–729. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363461518792734>.

Lee, S. (2018). Understanding the dynamics among acculturative stress, coping, and growth: A grounded theory of the Korean immigrant adolescent experience. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 94, 105. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2018.09.030>

Lee, S., Lee, W., Lee, H., Cheon, J., Noh, J., & Han, W. (2019) *Survey of traumatic human rights infringements suffered by North Korean defectors, 2017* [Data set]. National Human Rights Commission of the Republic of Korea ; National Medical Center [Producers]. Korea Social Science Data Archive (KOSSDA) [Distributors]. <https://doi.org/10.22687/KOSSDA-A1-2017-0012-V1.0>.

Lee, W. J., & Kim, J. Y. (2020). Pwukhanithalcwuminuy yenkwutonghyang pwunsek: khiwetu neythuwekhu pwunsekkipepul cwungsimulo [North Korean Refugees Research Trends: Based on Keyword Network Analyses]. *Welfare & Cultural Diversity Studies*, 2(2), 1-19. Retrieved from <https://www.riss.kr/link?id=A107214656>

Lenz, A. S., Haktanir, A., & Callender, K. (2017). Meta-analysis of trauma-focused

- therapies for treating the symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 95, 339–353. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12148>
- Li, W., Zhang, L., Luo, X., Liu, B., Liu, Z., Lin, F., Liu, Z., Xie, Y., Hudson, M., Rathod, S., Kingdon, D., Husain, N., Liu, X., Ayub, M., & Naeem, F. (2017). A qualitative study to explore views of patients', carers' and mental health professionals' to inform cultural adaptation of CBT for psychosis (CBTp) in China. *BMC Psychiatry* 17, 131. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-017-1290-6>
- Lin, C. (2015). The relationships among gratitude, self-esteem, depression, and suicidal ideation among undergraduate students. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 56(6), 700–707. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sjop.12252>
- Liu, J. J. W., Reed, M., & Fung, K. P. (2020). Advancements to the multi-system model of resilience: Updates from empirical evidence. *Heliyon*, 6(9), e04831. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e04831>
- Lowell, A., & Renk, K. (2018). Cognitive-behavioral treatment of PTSD with a young boy and his mother following experience of chronic domestic violence. *Clinical Case Studies*, 17(3), 166–187. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1534650118771220>
- Malchiodi, C. A. (2015). Neurobiology, creative interventions, and childhood trauma. In C. A. Malchiodi (Ed.), *Creative interventions with traumatized children* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 3–23). Guilford.
- Marchand, K., Palis, H., & Oviedo-Joekes, E. (2016). Patient perceptions of prejudice and discrimination by health care providers and its relationship with mental disorders: Results from the 2012 Canadian community health-mental health

survey data. *Community mental health journal*, 52(3), 294–301.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-015-9949-2>

Martin, M. R., Bolden, J., & Walton, J. (2022). A socially distanced case study:

Implementing the Unified Protocol-adolescent in the treatment of comorbid depression and anxiety via telehealth. *Clinical Case Studies*, 21(6), 516–532.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/15346501221099651>

McDonald, A., Holttum, S., & Drey, N. S. J. (2019). Primary-school-based art therapy:

exploratory study of changes in children’s social, emotional and mental health. *International Journal of Art Therapy: Inscape*, 24(3), 125–138.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17454832.2019.1634115>

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Survive. *In merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. Retrieved

May 31, 2023 from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/survive>

Metcalf, O., Varker, T., Forbes, D., Phelps, A., Dell, L., DiBattista, A., Ralph, N., &

O’Donnell, M. (2016). Efficacy of fifteen emerging interventions for the treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder: A systematic review. *Journal of*

*Traumatic Stress*, 29, 88–92. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.22070>

Migration policy institute. (2019). *Korean Immigrants in the United States*. Migration

Information Resource.

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/korean-immigrants-united-states-2017>

Migration policy institute. (2020). *Frequently requested statistics on immigrants and*

*immigration in the United States*. Migration Information Resource.

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states#Immigrants%20Now%20and%20Historically>

- Milgram, L., Tonarely, N. A., & Ehrenreich-May, J. (2022). Youth top problems and early treatment response to the Unified Protocols for transdiagnostic treatment of emotional disorders in children and adolescents. *Child Psychiatry & Human Development, 53*(3), 582–598. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10578-021-01151-4>
- Millan, J. B., & Alvarez A. N. (2014). Asian Americans and internalized oppression: Do we deserve this? In J. R. David (Ed.), *Internalized oppression: The psychology of marginalized groups* (pp. 163–190). Springer.
- Ministry of Unification. (2020). *Number of North Korean refugees entered the south*. <https://www.unikorea.go.kr/unikorea/business/NKDefectorsPolicy/status/lately/>
- Mir, G., Ghani, R., Meer, S., & Hussain, G. (2019). Delivering a culturally adapted therapy for Muslim clients with depression. *The Cognitive Behavior Therapist, 12*, E26. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1754470X19000059>
- Moon, B. L. (2016). *Art-based group therapy: Theory and practice* (2nd ed). Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publisher Ltd.
- Morison, L., Simonds, L., & Stewart, S. F. (2022). Effectiveness of creative arts-based interventions for treating children and adolescents exposed to traumatic events: a systematic review of the quantitative evidence and meta-analysis. *Arts & health, 14*(3), 237–262. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17533015.2021.2009529>
- Morland, L. & Levine, T. (2016). Collaborating with refugee resettlement organizations:

Providing a head start to young refugees. *YC Young Children*, 71(4), 69-75.

Retrieved from <https://researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/32557>

Moula, Z., Powell, J., & Karkou, V. (2020). An Investigation of the effectiveness of arts therapies interventions on measures of quality of life and wellbeing: A pilot randomized controlled study in primary schools. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.586134>

Münch, N., Mahdiani, H., Lieb, K., & Paul, N. W. (2021). Resilience beyond reductionism: ethical and social dimensions of an emerging concept in the neurosciences. *Medicine, health care, and philosophy*, 24(1), 55–63. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11019-020-09981-0>

National Alliance on Mental Illness. (n.d.). *Popular types of psychotherapy*.

<https://nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Treatments/Psychotherapy>

National Institute of Mental Health (2021). *Mental health service received past year among U.S adults with any mental illness 2019*.

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/mental-illness.shtml>

Naeem, F., Irfan, M., & Javed, A. (2020). Coping with COVID-19: Urgent need for building resilience through cognitive behavior therapy. *KHYBER MEDICAL UNIVERSITY JOURNAL*, 12(1), 1–3. <https://doi.org/10.35845/kmu.j.2020.20194>

Naeem, F., Phiri, P., Rathod, S., & Ayub, M. (2019). Cultural adaptation of cognitive–behavioral therapy. *BJPsych Advances*, 25(6), 387-395.

<https://doi.org/10.1192/bja.2019.15>

Naz, S., Gregory, R., & Bahu, M. (2019). Addressing issues of race, ethnicity and culture

in CBT to support therapists and service managers to deliver culturally competent therapy and reduce inequalities in mental health provision for BAME service users. *The Cognitive Behavior Therapist*, 12, E22.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1754470X19000060>

Nichter, B., Haller, M., Norman, S., & Pietrzak, R. H. (2020). Risk and protective factors associated with comorbid PTSD and depression in U. S. military veterans: Results from the National Health and Resilience in Veterans Study. *Journal of Psychiatric Research*, 121, 56–61. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychires.2019.11.008>

Noh, J. W., Lee, Y., Park, H., & Lee, S. H. (2019). Medical expenses of North Korean defectors with post-traumatic stress disorder. *Psychiatry investigation*, 16(2), 154–158. <https://doi.org/10.30773/pi.2018.12.12>

Noh, J. W., Park, H., Kim, M., Kwon, Y. D., Kim, J. S., & Yu, S. (2018). The effects of discrimination experience on life satisfaction of North Korean refugees: Mediating effect of stress. *Psychiatry Investigation*, 15(1), 49–53. <https://doi.org/10.4306/pi.2018.15.1.49>

Nursing @USC (2018, May 10). Understanding barriers to minority mental; health care. *Nursing@USC*. <https://nursing.usc.edu/blog/discrimination-bad-health-minority-mental-healthcare/>

O'Cleirigh, C., Safren, S. A., Taylor, S. W., Goshe, B. M., Bedoya, C. A., Marquez, S. M., Boroughs, M. S., & Shipherd, J. C. (2019). Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Trauma and Self-Care (CBT-TSC) in men who have sex with men with a history of childhood sexual abuse: A randomized controlled trial. *AIDS and behavior*, 23(9), 2421–2431. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10461-019-02482-z>



- Oh, M. H., & Yang, Y. J. (2017). Thalpwuk chengsonyenuy cengseancengul wihan miswulchilyo salyeyyenkwu [A case study of art therapy for emotional stability of North Korean refugee adolescents]. *The journal of clinical art psychotherapy*, 7(2), 95-118. Retrieved from [https://www.kci.go.kr/kciportal/landing/article.kci?arti\\_id=ART002307963](https://www.kci.go.kr/kciportal/landing/article.kci?arti_id=ART002307963)
- Ogińska-Bulik, N., & Kobylarczyk, M. (2016). Association between resiliency and posttraumatic growth in firefighters: The role of stress appraisal. *International Journal of Occupational Safety and Ergonomics*, 22(1), 40–48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10803548.2015.1109372>
- Olaussen, S. J., & Renzaho, A. M. N. (2016). Establishing components of cultural competence healthcare models to better cater for the needs of migrants with disability: a systematic review. *Australian journal of primary health*, 22(2), 100–112. <https://doi.org/10.1071/PY14114>
- Ooi, C. S., Rooney, R. M., Roberts, C., Kane, R. T., Wright, B., & Chatzisarantis, N. (2016). The efficacy of a group cognitive behavioral therapy for war-affected young migrants living in australia: A cluster randomized controlled trial. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7:1641. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15040591>  
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01641>
- Osimo, S. A., Aiello, M., Gentili, C., Ionta, S., & Cecchetto, C. (2021). The influence of personality, resilience, and alexithymia on mental health during COVID-19 pandemic. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, Article 630751. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.630751>
- Otting, T. L., & Prosek, E. A. (2016). Integrating feminist therapy and expressive arts

with adolescent clients. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 11(1), 78–89.  
<https://doi-org.ezproxyles.flo.org/10.1080/15401383.2015.1019167>

Park, H. (2020). Mincwusiminkyoyukulose thalpwukchengsonyen yunlisangtam phulokulaym kaypal mich cekyongey kwanhan cilcek yenkwu [A qualitative research on the development and application of ethics consultation program for North Korean refugees as democratic citizenship]. *The Journal of Learner-Centered Curriculum and Instruction*, 20(12), 459-480. Retrieved from <https://www.kci.go.kr/kciportal/ci/sereArticleSearch/ciSereArtiView.kci?sereArticleSearchBean.artiId=ART002601922>

Park, J. I. (2021). A Study on Literary therapy Counseling for North Korean Defectors Focusing on Human Relationship. *North-South Hana Foundation (North Korean Refugee Assistance Foundation)research*, 1-89.  
<https://www.dbpia.co.kr/Journal/articleDetail?nodeId=NODE11055147>

Park, J. I., & Jeon, M. (2016). The stigma of mental illness in Korea. *Journal of Korean Neuropsychiatric Association*, 55(4), 299-309.  
<https://doi.org/10.4306/jknpa.2016.55.4.299>

Park, J. R. (2012). *Bukhan ital joomin yeongu donghyanggua guaje: Jooje, bangbub, naeyong* [Research trends and challenges for North Korean defectors: Subject, method, content]. *KDI Review of the North Korean Economy*, 54-71.  
<https://www.dbpia.co.kr/journal/articleDetail?nodeId=NODE09368040>

Park, M. J. (2013). *Cakiphyohyenyey elyewumul kyekknun thalpwuk atongul wihan miswulchilyo salyey yenkwu* [A case study of art therapy on North Korean refugee child having difficulties with self-expression]. [Unpublished Master's thesis]. Han-

yang University.

- Park, S., Lee, M., & Jeon, J. Y. (2017). Factors affecting depressive symptoms among North Korean adolescent refugees residing in South Korea. *International Journal of Environment Research and Public Health*, *14*(8), 912-922.  
<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14080912>
- Park, S., Lee, Y., & Jun, J. Y. (2018). Trauma and Depression among North Korean Refugees: The Mediating Effect of Negative Cognition. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *15*(4), 591.  
<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15040591>
- Park, S. K. (2021). *Thalpwuk hwuki chengsonyenuy caacengcheykamul wihan miswulchilyo cilcek salyeyyenkwu* [North Korean late teen defectors: A case study on personal art therapy for ego-identity]. [Unpublished Master's thesis]. Ewha Womans University. Retrieved from  
<https://dspace.ewha.ac.kr/handle/2015.oak/258401>
- Pascoe, E., & Richman, L.S. (2009). Perceived discrimination and health: A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin*, *135*(4), 531-554.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016059>
- Patel, Z. S., Casline, E. P., Vera, C., Ramirez, V., & Jensen-Doss, A. (2022). Unaccompanied migrant children in the United States: Implementation and effectiveness of Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*. Advance online publication.  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1037/tra0001361>
- Peled, S. (2017, September 17). North Korean defectors, resettled in the US, torn as

tensions escalate. *CNN*. <https://www.cnn.com/2017/09/17/us/north-koreans-defectors-us/index.html>

Pew Research Center. (2015). *Social and demographic trends: Korean-Americans*.

<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/asianamericans-graphics/Koreans>

Pollock, G., Newbold, K. B., Lafrenière, G., & Edge, S. (2012). Discrimination in the doctor's office: Immigrants and refugee experiences. *Critical Social Work*, 13(2), 61–79.

[file:///Users/yurikim/Downloads/5866-Article%20Text-15924-1-10-20190515%20\(1\).pdf](file:///Users/yurikim/Downloads/5866-Article%20Text-15924-1-10-20190515%20(1).pdf)

Poorman, E. (2019). North Koreans defectors in South Korea and asylum seekers in the United States: A comparison. *Northwestern Journal of Human Rights*, 17(1), 97–113.

<https://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1221&context=njihr>

Proudman, D., Greenberg, P. & Nellesen, D. (2021). The growing burden of Major Depressive Disorders (MDD): Implications for researchers and policy makers. *Pharmacoeconomics* 39, 619–625. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40273-021-01040-7>

Raghavan, S., & Sandanapitchai, P. (2020). The relationship between cultural variables and resilience to psychological trauma: A systematic review of the literature.

*Traumatology*, Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1037/trm0000239>

Rhodes, S. D., Mann, L., Simán, F. M., Song, E., Alonzo, J., Downs, M., Lawlor, E.

- , Martinez, O., Sun, C. J., O'Brien, M. C., Reboussion, B. A., & Hall, M. A. (2015). The impact of local immigration enforcement policies on the health of immigrant Hispanics/Latinos in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health, 105*, 329–337. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2014.302218>
- Roberge, P., Provencher, M. D., Gosselin, P., Vasiliadis, H. M., Gaboury, I., Benoit, A., Antony, M. M., Chaillet, N., Houle, J., Hudon, C., & Norton, P. J. (2018). A pragmatic randomized controlled trial of group transdiagnostic cognitive-behavior therapy for anxiety disorders in primary care: study protocol. *BMC psychiatry, 18*(1), 320. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-018-1898-1>
- Ro, E., & Oh, I. S. (2018). Cey3kwuk chwulsayng pwukhanithalcwumin canyelul wihan sangtam mich kyoyukcek kayippangan : hakkyokipan cengsinkenkang phulokulaymul cwungsimulo [A study on counseling and educational Interventions for North Korean defectors' children born in the third counties : Focused on school based mental health program]. *The Korean Journal of Unification Affairs, 30*(2), 227-264. <https://doi.org/10.46561/KUA.2018.30.2.07>
- Royster, R. (2021). Dolls4Peace Memorial: Liberatory Community Art Action and Praxis. *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy, 21*(1). <https://doi.org/10.15845/voices.v21i1.3153>
- Şahin, H., & Türk, F. (2021). The impact of cognitive-behavioral group psycho-education program on psychological resilience, irrational beliefs, and well-being. *Journal of Rational-Emotive & Cognitive-Behavior Therapy 39*, 672–694. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10942-021-00392-5>
- Sahranavard, S., Esmaili, A., Salehiniya, H., & Behdani, S. (2019). The effectiveness of

- group training of cognitive behavioral therapy-based stress management on anxiety, hardiness and self-efficacy in female medical students. *Journal of education and health promotion*, 8, 49. [https://doi.org/10.4103/jehp.jehp\\_327\\_18](https://doi.org/10.4103/jehp.jehp_327_18)
- Sapega, S. (2021) *Telehealth art therapy: Helping youth build resilience*. Penn Medicine News. <https://www.pennmedicine.org/news/internal-newsletters/system-news/2021/march/telehealth-art-therapy-helping-youth-build-resilience>
- Sandín, B., García-Escalera, J., Valiente, R. M., Espinosa, V., & Chorot, P. (2020). Clinical utility of an internet-delivered version of the Unified Protocol for transdiagnostic treatment of emotional disorders in adolescents (iUP-A): A pilot open trial. *International Journal of Environmental Research & Public Health*, 17(22), 8306. <https://doi-org.ezproxyles.flo.org/10.3390/ijerph17228306>
- Sarkadi, A., Adahl, K., & Stenvall, E. (2018). Teaching recovery techniques: Evaluation of a group intervention for unaccompanied refugee minors with symptoms of PTSD in Sweden. *Europe Child Adolescent Psychiatry*, 27(4), 467–479. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00787-017-1093-9>
- Schaeuffele, C., Bär, J., Buengener, I., Grafiadeli, R., Heuthaler, E., Strieder, J., Ziehn, P., Knaevelsrud, C., Renneberg, B., & Boettcher, J. (2022). Transdiagnostic processes as mediators of change in an internet-delivered intervention based on the Unified Protocol. *Cognitive Therapy & Research*, 46(2), 273–286. <https://doi-org.ezproxyles.flo.org/10.1007/s10608-021-10272-y>
- Schottelkorb, A. A., Douma, S. D. M., & Garcia, R. (2012). Treatment for childhood refugee trauma: A randomized, controlled trial. *International Journal of Play Therapy*, 21(2):57–73. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0027430>

- Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH). *A world to belong to social networks of people with mental health problems. Scotland: Scottish Association for Mental Health.* <http://www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/5707-A%20world%20to%20belong%20to.pdf>
- Schouten, K. A., van Hooren, S., Knipscheer, J. W., Kleber, R. J., & Hutschemaekers, G. J. M. (2019). Trauma-Focused Art Therapy in the Treatment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: A Pilot Study. *Journal of trauma & dissociation : the official journal of the International Society for the Study of Dissociation (ISSD)*, 20(1), 114–130. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15299732.2018.1502712>
- Seol, J. A., & Cho, A. R. (2017). Pwukhanuy cengchisahoycek isyuey tayhan cisangpha pangsongpoto phuleyim pwunsek : 2013nyen cangsengthayk chehyeng sakenul cwungsimulo [A study of Korean terrestrial broadcasters' news framing about North Korea's socio-political agenda]. *Media science research*, 17(2), 129-163. <https://doi.org/10.14696/jcs.2017.06.17.2.129>
- Shaeye, A. (2019). Dynamics of English fluency return for refugees and other immigrants in the United States. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 17(4), 457–475. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2018.1547939>
- Shaw, S. A., Ward, K. P., Pillai, V., & Hinton, D. E. (2019). A group mental health randomized controlled trial for female refugees in Malaysia. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 89(6), 665–674. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ort0000346>
- Shih, K.Y., Chang, T. F. & Chen, S. Y. (2019). Impacts of the model minority myth on

Asian American individuals and families: Social justice and critical race feminist perspectives. *Journal of Family Theory Review*, 11(3), 412-428.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12342>

Shin, H. M., Lee, S. J., & Choi, H. (2021). Chokikayip miswulchilyolul kyenghemhan thalpwuk hwukichengsonyenuy namhancengchakkwacengey tayhan sayngaysa yenkwu [A life history study on the settlement process of North Korean defector late adolescents who experienced early intervention art therapy]. *Journal of Art Therapy Research*, 28(5), 1097-1121. <https://doi.org/10.35594/kata.2021.28.5.003>

Shin, G., & Lee, S. J. (2015). Mental health and PTSD in female North Korean refugees. *Health Care for Women International*, 36(4), 409-423.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/07399332.2013.817412>

Shin, H. J. (2019). Pwukhanithalcwuminuy meyntholing yenkyelmang thukseng, meyntholing kinung, kuliko kyengceyceck mancokto kanuy kwankyeyey tayhan kwucopangcengsik mohyeng yenkwu [Structural Relationship Analysis Among Variables of Mentoring Network Characteristics, Mentoring Functions, and the Working Attitudes of North Korean Defectors]. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 45(3), 373-381. UCI : [G704-001638.2014.30.4.008](https://doi.org/10.1080/07399332.2013.817412)

Shin, H. Y., Lee, H., & Park, S. M. (2016). Mental health and its associated factors among North Korean defectors living in South Korea. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health*, 28(7), 592-600.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/101053951666019>

Shirotsuki, K., Kodama, Y., & Nomura, S. (2014). The preliminary study of individual



- cognitive behavior therapy for Japanese patients with social anxiety disorder. *Psychological Services, 11*, 162–170. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0034781>
- Sim, Y. S. (2017). *Thalpwukminey tayhan hankwukinuy insik thuksengey kwanhan yenkwu* [A study on the characteristics of South Korean perceptions towards North Korean refugees]. [Unpublished Master's thesis]. Sungkyul University.
- Southward, M. W., & Sauer-Zavala, S. (2022). Dimensions of skill use in the unified protocol: Exploring unique effects on anxiety and depression. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 90*(3), 246–257. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ccp0000701.supp>
- Stainton, A., Chisholm, K., Kaiser, N., Rosen, M., Uptegrove, R., Ruhrmann, S., & Wood, S. J. (2019). Resilience as a multimodal dynamic process. *Early intervention in psychiatry, 13*(4), 725–732. <https://doi.org/10.1111/eip.12726>
- Stone, L., & Arroll, M. A. (2019). Cognitive behavioral therapy training in Tanzania: a qualitative study of clinicians' experiences. *The Cognitive Behavior Therapist, 12*, E24. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1754470X19000084>
- Stone, L., Beck, A., Hashempour, F., & Thwaites, R. (2018). Introduction to the special issue on cultural adaptations of CBT. *The Cognitive Behavior Therapist, 11*, E15. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1754470X18000181>
- Suh, M., Yang, D. H., Kim, H. Y. (2017). *Thalpwukchengsonyenuy hakkyocekungul wihan ttolaysangtam phulokulaym kaypal* [Development of a peer counseling program for school adjustment of North Korean defectors]. *The Korea Journal of Youth Counseling, 25*(1), 197-223. <https://doi.org/10.35151/kyci.2017.25.1.010>
- Sung, J. Y. (2018). *Thalpwukcauy salmkwa cengcheysengey tayhan yeyswul kipan*

*yenkwu* [Arts-based research on the lives and identities of North Korean Defectors]. [Unpublished Master's thesis]. Seoul University. Retrieved from <https://s-space.snu.ac.kr/handle/10371/143471>

Szabo, A., & Ward, C. (2015). Identity development during cultural transition: The role of social cognitive identity processes. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 46, 13-25. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2015.03.019>

Tang, T. (2020). *From guns to GoPros, Asian Americans seek to deter attacks*. WGME. <https://wgme.com/news/nation-world/from-guns-to-gopros-asian-americans-seek-to-deter-attacks-04-24-2020>.

Taylor, B. E., Chekaluk, E., & Bennett, J. (2017). Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Depression and Anxiety among North Korean Refugees: A meta-analysis. *Psychiatry investigation*, 14(5), 550–561. <https://doi.org/10.4306/pi.2017.14.5.550>

The UN Refugee Agency. (2016). *UNHCR viewpoint: 'Refugee' or 'migrant' – Which is right?* Information Resource. <https://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/7/55df0e556/unhcr-viewpoint-refugee-migrant-right.html>

The UN refugee agency. (2017). *Resettlement in the United States*. Refugee Resettlement Fact. <https://www.unhcr.org/resettlement-in-the-united-states.html>

Thomeer, M. B., Moody, M. D., & Yahirun, J. (2023). Racial and ethnic disparities in mental health and mental health care during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of racial and ethnic health disparities*, 10(2), 961–976. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-022-01284-9>

- Thomson, P. (2017). Trauma, attachment, and creativity. In: Marks-Tarlow, T., Solomon, M., & Siegel, D.J. (Eds.), *Play and Creativity in Psychotherapy* (pp. 167–190). Norton, New York.
- Tong, J., Yu, W., Fan, X., Sun, X., Zhang, J., Zhang, J., & Zhang, T. (2021). Impact of group art therapy using traditional Chinese materials on self-efficacy and social function for individuals diagnosed with schizophrenia. *Frontiers in psychology, 11*, 571124. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.571124>
- Tutani, L., Eldred, C., & Sykes, C. (2018). Practitioners' experiences of working collaboratively with interpreters to provide CBT and guided self-help (GSH) in IAPT; a thematic analysis. *The Cognitive Behavior Therapist, 11*, E3. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1754470X17000204>
- Uribe Guajardo, M. G., Slewa-Younan, S., Smith, M., Eagar, S., & Stone, G. (2016). Psychological distress is influenced by length of stay in resettled Iraqi refugees in Australia. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems, 10*, Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13033-016-0036-z>
- Ungar M. (2019). Designing resilience research: Using multiple methods to investigate risk exposure, promotive and protective processes, and contextually relevant outcomes for children and youth. *Child abuse & neglect, 96*, 104098. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2019.104098>
- United States Census Bureau. (2021). *Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month: May 2021*. <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2021/asian-american-pacific-islander.html>
- Utržan, D. S., & Wieling, E. A. (2020). A phenomenological study on the experience of

- Syrian asylum-seekers and refugees in the United States. *Family Process*, 59(1), 209–228. <https://doi.org/10.1111/famp.12408>
- van der Kolk, B. A. (2014). *The body keeps the score: Brain, mind, and body in the healing of trauma*. Viking Penguin.
- van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. State University of New York Press.
- Walker, M. (2017). Integrative approaches to treating PTSD and TBI: Art therapy approaches within the national intrepid center of excellence at Walter reed national military medical center. In P. Howie (Ed.), *Art therapy with military populations: History, innovation, and applications* London (pp. 111-123). Routledge.
- Wang, B. R., Young Dae Kwon, Y. D., Jeon, W., & Noh, J. W (2015). Factors associated with the frequency of physician visits among North Korean defectors residing in South Korea: a cross-sectional study. *BMC Health Services Research*, 15(90). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-015-0736-0>
- Wang, B. R., Yu, S., Noh, J. W., & Kwon, Y. D. (2014). Factors associated with self-rated health among North Korean defectors residing in South Korea. *BMC public health*, 14, 999. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-14-999>
- Wang, K., Link, B. G., Corrigan, P. W., Davidson, L., & Flanagan, E. (2018). Perceived provider stigma as a predictor of mental health service users' internalized stigma and disempowerment. *Psychiatry research*, 259, 526–531. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2017.11.036>
- Ward, E. C., & Brown, R. L. (2015). A culturally adapted depression intervention for

- African American adults experiencing depression: Oh Happy Day. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 85(1), 11–22. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ort0000027>
- Webb, C. A., Stanton, C. H., Bondy, E., Singleton, P., Pizzagalli, D. A., & Auerbach, R. P. (2019). Cognitive versus behavioral skills in CBT for depressed adolescents: Disaggregating within-patient versus between-patient effects on symptom change. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology*, 87(5), 484–490. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ccp0000393>
- Weiss, B. J., Singh, J. S., & Hope, D. A. (2011). Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for immigrants presenting with social anxiety disorder: Two case studies. *Clinical case studies*, 10(4), 324–342. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1534650111420706>
- White, C. A., Utzl, B., & Holder, M. D. (2019). Meta-analyses of positive psychology interventions: The effects are much smaller than previously reported. *PLoS ONE*, 14(5), e0216588. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0216588>
- Yang, K. S. (2018). Pwukhanithalcwumin cengchakey kwanhan yenkwutonghyang pwunsek : pwukhanithalcwumin selmwuncosa pikyolul thonghaye [Analysis on the trends of research on the Settlement of North Korean defectors: Based on the comparison of surveys conducted to North Korean defectors]. *Integrated Social Welfare Research*, 1(1), 7-25.  
Retrieved from <http://www.riss.kr/link?id=A106071672>
- Yang, O. K., & Yoon, J. H. (2017). Pwukhanithalcwuminuy cengsinkenkang yenkwu tonghyang pwunsek: sukhophing kochal pangpepul cwungsimulo [Scoping review on the mental health studies of North Korean defectors in Korea]. *Multiculturalism and Peace*, 11(2), 172-196.

<https://doi.org/10.22446/mnpisk.2017.11.2.007>

Yoo, N. R. (2017). Phyohyenyeyswulchilyouy changcosengkwa oysang hwu suthuleysu cangayuy kwankyeyeyse simlicek annyengkamkwa cengsinkenkanguy icwungmaykayhyokwa [Double mediation effects of psychological well-being and mental health on the relationship between creativity of expressive art therapy and post-traumatic stress disorder]. *Journal of Art Psychotherapy*, 13(2), 93-109.

Retrieved from

<https://www.kci.go.kr/kciportal/ci/sereArticleSearch/ciSereArtiView.kci?sereArticleSearchBean.artiId=ART002243491>

Yoon, M. S., Feyissa, I. F., & Jung, E. H. (2020). The long way to refugee status acquisition and mental health in post-migration: Based on asylum seekers and refugees in South Korea. *Psychiatric Quarterly*, 91(2), 403–416.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11126-020-09714-9>

Yoon, S. A., & Kim, K. S. (2021). Miswulchilyolul hwalyonghan incihayngtongsangtam phulokulaymi chotunghaksaynguy pihaplicek sinnyemkwa caaconcwungkamey michinun hyokwa [Effects of a cognitive behavioral counselling programs using art therapy on irrational beliefs and self-esteem in primary school children]. *The Korean Journal of Elementary Counselling*, 20(4), 427-449.

<https://doi.org/10.28972/kjec.2021.20.4.427>

Yoshinaga, N., Kobori, O., Iyo, M., & Shimizu, E. (2013). Cognitive behavior therapy using the Clark & Wells model: A case study of a Japanese social anxiety disorder patient. *The Cognitive Behavior Therapist*, 6, E3.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1754470X13000081>

- Zalta, A. K., Tirone, V., Siedjak, J., Boley, R. A., Vechiu, C., Pollack, M. H., & Hobfoll, S. E. (2016). A pilot study of tailored cognitive-behavioral resilience training for trauma survivors with subthreshold distress. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 29*(3), 268–272. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.22094>
- Zemestani, M., Ommati, P., Rezaei, F., & Gallagher, M. W. (2022). Changes in neuroticism-related constructs over the Unified Protocol for transdiagnostic treatment of emotional disorders in patients on an optimal dose of SSRI. *Personality Disorders: Theory, Research, and Treatment, 13*(2), 171–181. <https://doi.org/10.1037/per0000482>
- Zgueb, Y., Ouali, U., Achour, R., Jomli, R., & Nacef, F. (2019). Cultural aspects of vaginismus therapy: a case series of Arab- Muslim patients. *The Cognitive Behavior Therapist, 12*, E3. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1754470X18000119>
- Zigarelli, J. C., Jones, J. M., Palomino, C. I., & Kawamura, R. (2016). Culturally responsive cognitive behavioral therapy: Making the case for integrating cultural factors in evidence-based treatment. *Clinical Case Studies, 15*(6), 427-442. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1534650116664984>

## APPENDIX A

### Informed Consent Form (English Version)

Title: What experiences are North Korean defectors having in group art therapy with Resilience - Based CBT?

Principal Investigator: Yuri Kim, Doctoral candidate in Expressive Therapies, Lesley University

Session leader: Nayoung Kim, Art therapist at Thorek Memorial Hospital in Chicago

You are invited to participate in this study to examine the effects of group art therapy experiments on North Korean defectors. The purpose of this study is to explore the North Korean defector's experience in group art therapy with Resilience-Based CBT.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, consent to participate in "Group art therapy with North Korean defectors in the United States."

I understand that:

- The group art therapy session will include six in -person sessions conducted from 9/2022 to 10/2022 at Mideast area.
- I have been informed of the process and guidelines of participating research.
- Sessions will be audio-recorded and videotaped. Art made in the sessions will be photograph and analyzed by the researcher.
- I am free to choose to not participate in the research and to discontinue my participation in the research at any time without facing negative consequences.
- Identifying details will be kept confidential by the researcher. Data collected will be



coded with a pseudonym, the participant's identity will never be revealed by the researcher, and only the researcher will have access to the data collected.

- Any and all of my questions will be answered at any time, and I am free to consult with anyone (i.e., friend, family) about my decision to participate in the research and/or to discontinue my participation.
- Participation in this research poses security and privacy issues in online platform and negative emotions or thoughts.
- If any problem in connection to the research arises, I can contact the researcher Yuri Kim at (312)912-1000 and by email at [ykim16@lesely.edu](mailto:ykim16@lesely.edu) or the Lesley University sponsoring faculty Michele Forinash ([michele.forinash@lesley.edu](mailto:michele.forinash@lesley.edu))
- The researcher may present the outcomes of this study for academic purposes (i.e., articles, teaching, conference presentations, supervision etc.)

I am 18 years of age or older. My consent to participate has been given of my own free will and I understand all that is stated above. I will receive a copy of this consent form.

---

Participant's signature

---

Date

---

Researcher's Signature

---

Date

There is a Standing Committee for Human Subjects in Research at Lesley University to which complaints or problems concerning any research project may, and should, be reported if they arise. Contact the Committee Chairpersons at [irb@lesley.edu](mailto:irb@lesley.edu)

## APPENDIX B

### Informed Consent Form (Korean version)

#### 그룹 미술 치료 연구 사전 동의서

**연구 주제 : 미국에 거주하는 탈북 여성들의 인지 행동 치료 기반 그룹 미술 치료**

연구자: 김 유리 / Lesley university 표현 예술 치료 박사 과정 학생

그룹 리더: 김 나래 / 시카고 Thorek Memorial Hospital 미술 치료사

여러분은 집단 예술 치료 실험이 탈북자들에게 미치는 영향을 조사하기 위해 이 연구에 참여하도록 초대되었습니다. 이번 연구의 목적은 미국에 거주하는 탈북자의 회복력 기반에 인지 행동 집단 미술 치료 경험을 탐구 하는 것입니다. 미술 치료 세션은 세션 리더가 진행하며, 연구자가 참관인으로 그룹에 참여합니다. 세션 리더와 연구자는 각 세션이 완료된 후 브리핑 미팅을 갖습니다. 세션 리더는 연구 데이터 분석 또는 날짜 수집 과정에 참여합니다.

본인, . 는 미국에서 거주하는 여성 탈북자들과 함께 하는 집단 예술 치료에 참여 하는 것 에 동의하며 다음 사항을 이해합니다.

- 미술 치료 세션은 8/2022 에서 9/2022 까지 총 6 회 개인 미술 세션으로 시카고 교외 지역에서 진행됩니다.
- 연구자에게 연구 참여 과정과 가이드라인을 안내 받았습니다.

- 미술 치료 세션은 오디오 녹음 및 비디오로 녹화됩니다. 세션에서 만들어진 작품은 연구자가 사진을 찍고 분석하는데 사용됩니다.
  - 저는 언제든지 연구에 참여하지 않고 중단하는 것을 선택할 수 있으며 이로 인해 어떤 불이익도 당하지 않습니다.
  - 저에 대한 모든 개인적인 정보는 연구자가 기밀로 유지합니다. 수집된 데이터는 가명으로 코딩 되고, 참가자의 신원은 연구자에 의해 절대 공개되지 않으며, 연구자 및 미술 치료사만 수집된 데이터에 액세스할 수 있습니다.
  - 연구자는 언제든지 모든 질문에 답변할 수 있으며, 연구에 참여하거나 참여를 중단하기로 결정한 사항에 대해 타인 (친구, 가족)과 상의할 수 있습니다.
  - 연구 과정에서 문제가 생기면 김 유리 연구자에게 유선 (312)-912-1000 및 이메일 (ykim16@lesley.edu) 또는 Michele Forinash 교수 (michele.forinash@lesley.edu)에게 연락할 수 있습니다.
  - 연구자는 본 연구의 결과를 학술적 목적(즉, 기사, 강의, 학술회, 발표, 감독 등)으로 제시할 수 있습니다.
  - 본인은 6 번의 그룹 미술 치료에 대한 사례비 \$200 을 받을 것 입니다.
- 저는 18 살 이상입니다. 참여에 대한 저의 동의는 저의 자유 의지로 주어졌고 저는 위에 언급된 모든 것을 이해합니다. 저는 이 동의서 사본을 받을 것입니다.

---

참가자 서명

---

날짜

---

연구자의 서명

---

날짜

레슬리 대학교에는 연구과제에 대한 불만이나 문제가 발생할 경우 보고되어야 하는 윤리위원회가 있습니다. 만약 귀하가 도움이 필요할 경우 위원회 위원장에게 문의하십시오. ([irb@lesley.edu](mailto:irb@lesley.edu)).

## APPENDIX C

### Interview Questions

1. How would you describe yourself?
2. Could you share the objects that represent you?
3. What are you most grateful for in your life?
4. What makes you unique?
5. What's something you've achieved that you are most proud of and why?
6. How do your positive qualities work in your life?
7. What characteristic of yours has led to your success so far?
8. What are the biggest challenges for you?
9. Describe a time when you dealt with challenges.
10. What are your emotional, physical and behavioral reactions toward your challenges?
11. How do you recover from challenging situations?

12. Can you see your challenges from a different perspective?
13. What are the obstacles for you to see your challenges from a different perspective?
14. When have you felt demotivated, and what did you do to overcome this?
15. What is an injustice you have experienced? If yes, could you share how you overcome it?
16. What other positive qualities have you noticed during the group art therapy?
17. How will your strengths help you in the future?
18. What motivates you in your life?
19. What are your experiences of group art therapy?
20. What are the benefits or disadvantages of group art therapy?