



Psychosocial support initiatives in the aftermath
of the 2023 earthquakes:
A university-led community approach

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Authors' note: On 6 February, 2023, two major earthquakes occurred in Gaziantep and Kahramanmaraş. These earthquakes caused great destruction in 11 provinces of Türkiye. More than 50000 lives were lost, and many thousands of people lost their homes. We would like to take this opportunity to express our condolences to the relatives of those who lost their lives in the earthquake.

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Abstract

This article discusses the response of a university psychology department to the devastating earthquakes that struck Türkiye on 6 February 2023, resulting in significant loss of life and widespread destruction. This paper focuses on the narrative practices undertaken by a university psychology department in the affected region, particularly the establishment of a psychological support telephone line staffed by volunteer psychologists. Beyond the initial establishment of the support line, the university extended its outreach to address the immediate needs of affected individuals in five cities, and subsequently, within the university premises. A “Tent of Hope” was established within a “container city” of displaced families to continue psychosocial support. This involved the volunteer efforts of psychology students to offer assistance to both children and adults. Initiatives also included the dissemination of a culturally sensitive booklet for the public and the development of a comprehensive booklet for therapists, aiming to empower individuals and communities in the aftermath of trauma. This paper includes reflections from people who contributed to these initiatives, sharing learning and insights relevant to others responding to natural disasters.

Key words: *natural disaster; earthquake; trauma; emergency response; Türkiye; university; children; collective narrative practice*

The earthquakes of 2023 in Türkiye marked a significant humanitarian crisis, affecting millions of lives and necessitating multifaceted responses. This article explores the unique contribution of a university psychology department to the relief efforts, emphasising the importance of addressing psychological experiences alongside traditional relief measures. The seismic events of 6 February 2023 were unprecedented in scale, constituting the most substantial earthquake globally for the year. The affected area encompassed 350000 km², affecting 14 million people and resulting in over 35000 building collapses. Our university is situated in one of the most severely impacted cities, and students, graduates and faculty were directly affected.

Immediate action was initiated by the psychology department of our university (Hasan Kalyoncu University) to address the psychological aftermath of the earthquakes. Recognising the distinct role of mental health professionals, the department established a psychological telephone support line staffed by volunteers. This initiative aimed to provide round-the-clock assistance to individuals grappling with the psychological toll of the disaster.

The support line was launched 20 hours after the first earthquake by 30 psychologists, five supervisors and five coordinators. The initiative evolved to engage 377 volunteer psychologists, 12 coordinators and seven supervisors. The service operated 24 hours a day and received its first call within 15 minutes of its announcement. To ensure the effectiveness of the support line, nine training sessions were conducted, enhancing the skills and capabilities of the volunteer psychologists. Additionally, a comprehensive pool of materials was curated to assist the psychologists in providing targeted support.

Over a span of 20 days, the support line assisted 1867 individuals, with each person offered at least three to five interviews. Interviews were conducted face-to-face, online and in hybrid modes. Specific age groups were catered for in different ways: children (aged 2–6 and 7–12), adolescents (aged 13–18), young adults (aged 19–24), adults (aged 25–50) and seniors (aged 50–65 and 65–80). The average age of recipients was 28 years. Collaborations were established with 10 nongovernmental organisations, facilitating joint efforts and outreach. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 27 amputees, and 17 hospitals were visited to extend support to people with physical injuries.

Immediately after instituting the support line, relief work was also conducted in five affected cities. In our university city (Gaziantep), which witnessed significant building collapses, 3000 displaced individuals sought refuge in our facilities. For a fortnight, our university provided essential needs such as food, clothing and shelter, addressing the immediate concerns of those affected. Recognising the psychological toll on children, our psychology students engaged in daily activities with them. Through games, storytelling, drawing sessions and relaxation exercises, the students aimed to help children cope with anxiety, fear and uncertainty. This voluntary initiative played a crucial role in fostering a positive atmosphere and alleviating the emotional distress of children and their families.

As relief efforts progressed, a container city for displaced families was established, and our university played a pivotal role by initiating psychosocial support within a dedicated container. Termed the “Tent of Hope”, this facility initially focused on children and subsequently extended its services to adults. Ten psychology students initially volunteered to staff the Tent of Hope. After a thorough training session, they conducted activities for children, transforming the container into a space of healing and creativity. Feedback from families highlighted the positive effects of this initiative on children’s wellbeing and family relationships. Recognising the need for psychosocial support among adults, a second container was secured. Weekly programs, including walks, book readings, seminars, crafts, discussions and prayer sessions, were organised. The program’s success led to participants forming independent community groups, further strengthening social bonds.

Despite the demanding nature of the work, 30 student volunteers dedicated three months to the initiative. Their efforts directly affected 250 children, 52 adolescents and 101 adults. During the initiative, volunteer students reached 2000 people in total. The enduring positive effects on individuals and the community underscore the value of sustained psychosocial support in the aftermath of natural disasters.

Because of limited culturally oriented resources about how to respond after a disaster, we sought innovative ways to reach a wider audience with relevant information and ideas. This involved translating academic research into accessible booklets and developing practical guides for therapists engaged in psychological support services. First, drawing from

a recently completed dissertation on psychological resilience in Türkiye (Topçu, 2023), we distilled actionable coping strategies appropriate to the cultural context. The research findings were presented in a reader-friendly booklet available in both Turkish and Arabic. Leveraging social media and mobile communication groups, our community distributed the booklet widely, reaching thousands of individuals affected by the earthquake. Second, recognising the need for resources for professionals in the field, our narrative therapy community conducted a book study resulting in a guide tailored for therapists. The guide included outlines for five distinct group sessions designed for different demographics affected by the earthquake. Dissemination occurred through social media channels and mobile communication groups, aiding therapists on the ground and facilitating their efforts in providing psychological support services.

Narrative approach

In all our work, narrative therapy approaches (Denborough, 2008; Dinç, 2020; Mt Elgon Self-Help Community Project, 2023; White, 2000, 2004) were adopted. These prioritised double listening, empathetic engagement, fostering personal agency and enabling people to make contributions to one another. Everything served as a platform for individuals to share their unique experiences and ways of coping with the emotional aftermath of the earthquakes. The importance of demonstrating solidarity and offering a listening ear was underscored, acknowledging the diverse emotional challenges faced by those in the earthquake-stricken region.

Lessons learnt and practical insights

In the remainder of this article, we have included a series of reflections from those who were involved in these psychosocial support initiatives. They share lessons learnt and offer suggestions to others who may one day find themselves responding to a natural disaster.

Acknowledging the magnitude of the disaster

When there is a major disaster, there is great anxiety – feelings of uncertainty, insecurity and hopelessness. As volunteers trying to respond,

these feelings influenced us also. We tried to *recognise* this anxiety, not to ignore it, not to trivialise it, and yet try to find calm. While trying to remain calm ourselves and to calm people about their concerns, it was very important not to underestimate the disaster. Being aware of the magnitude of the disaster and giving accurate information to the community that we were facing a catastrophe helped us for three reasons. First, if people realised the magnitude of the disaster it summoned up an increased sense of power of endurance and resistance. Second, they prepared themselves with a more realistic perspective, thinking that if there is such a big disaster, the impact will be severe, and it will take us time to recover. And third, if everything was too hard and too much for them and they could not bear it, then in their minds and hearts, they accepted that this was due to the magnitude of the disaster. They did not blame themselves for it; did not see themselves as weak or inadequate.

Being in contact with local organisations

When I went to the region on the second day of the earthquake, I was saddened to see many clothes thrown on the side of the road. While one city received more clothes than it needed, people in other cities were freezing in the cold. For coordination to work properly, for resources not to be wasted and for no-one affected by the disaster to be victimised, it is absolutely necessary to act in contact and coordination with the relevant local organisations and institutions. For all these reasons, when you go to a disaster area, it would be useful to contact the organisations already working there and have a meeting about what is being done, what needs to be done and how you can support them with whatever means, knowledge and expertise you can bring.

Not taking photographs

People are always taking pictures of everything to post on social media. In the earthquake zone, I saw a lot of people taking pictures, especially of their work. But taking pictures can disturb people. This is their current living space. We don't walk into another person's home and start taking photographs, so I refrained from taking any photographs. If we have to take pictures for

some reason, then let's take pictures without disturbing anyone as much as possible. Insincere behaviour from those who are there to help can make the people affected by the disaster very unhappy.

Listening

When we meet people affected by disasters, let's talk less and listen more. In some cases, if possible, let's just listen. In the first days, people mostly want to tell. They want to convey what they have experienced, what they feel, what they think to someone who has not experienced the disaster. Let's let them tell. The more they tell, the easier it will be for them to make sense of what they have experienced and the easier it will be for them to process their thoughts and feelings. I have seen that with some mental health workers, when they go to the region, they think that what is expected of them is to apply some sort of intervention, to start talking and share their expertise without listening or not listening enough. Our priority should be to listen well and carefully. I would like to share with you a passage I read in a book about listening (King, 2011). One of two new acquaintances asks the other: "Are you a talkative person?" The answer is: "It depends on who is listening".

Double listening can lead to contributions

We found that double listening led us to conversations about people's absent but implicit values, hopes skills and dreams (White, 2000).

In the container city, a couple came to meet us. While the male partner was very communicative and talkative, the female partner answered my questions without making eye contact, with her head down and not wanting to talk. The husband explained that his wife locked herself in the house after the earthquake, did not go out, did not want to talk, and sometimes even had difficulty cooking. So I started talking to the wife. I asked where she was from and what she did during the day. We talked about what she did before the earthquake and what was good for her. She talked about what changed in her life after the earthquake. While she was talking, she said that sometimes she didn't even want to cook. Since both of them emphasised cooking, I asked her what kind of food she usually made. The topic of food seemed to

attract her attention quite a bit. We then talked about who she learnt to cook from. She was very excited while speaking about this and turned her attention completely to the conversation. We started talking to her about the local dish, sarma, because she mentioned that this was the dish she makes best. I asked her to give me the recipe for sarma and I carefully wrote it down in step-by-step detail. Afterwards, I hung this recipe on the wall of the container and asked if she would come once or twice a week and give us further recipes. She said she would gladly do this. At this point, I observed that revealing her absent-but-implicit cooking talent or skill was quite good for her.

Residents assisting us and each other

On entering the container city, we'd find ourselves in the living space of others. Support teams often require assistance out in the field, which can be provided by the residents themselves. This includes help with water, food, cleaning, tidying up, announcing events or facilitating them. This not only benefits the support teams but also has a positive impact on the residents.

Action – to do something

One of the proverbs we use in Türkiye is that a little pain is overcome by love and a lot of pain is overcome by work. And yet, in the container city where we provided psychosocial support, people were initially idle all day. It may not be good for people to be idle in the days following a disaster. For this reason, if they had an idea to do something, we'd encourage this and try to make it possible. One of the activities we did was to organise a walk for adults in the morning.

The end of the container city opened up to a forested area. A member of our team was walking there, and there were usually young people who wanted to join them. We soon created a hiking team who would arrive in the morning and together go for a one-hour walk through the forest. We also opened a WhatsApp walking group. People would talk to each other while walking. It would help in building relationships, and more than that, walking would keep them busy and prevent their sadness and pain from constantly weighing them down.

Routines and revealing people's alternative stories

The most effective remedy for major disasters is to try to get back to previous routines as soon as possible. This is undoubtedly very difficult, even impossible. However, the faster we can bring elements of a previous routine into people's lives, piece by piece, the better. Resuming previous routines can range from schools resuming, to people going to work, to shops opening. More than 10000 Bosniaks were killed in Bosnia. 1300 of them were children. Meanwhile, while people feared for their lives, universities did not stop teaching for a single day. During the war, 1500 students received their diplomas and graduated. Fifty-five doctoral studies were completed. During the same period, 250 concerts were given, and 1000 theatre plays were performed. Sometimes the television would announce a concert on the same evening as the news of the victims who had died that day. This was a Bosnian response to death. A response to life.

In the container city we were trying to help people adapt to their new life by reconnecting and performing the kind of life they lived before the earthquake. This included making new routines, and I think this was useful. It was good for families to take care of their children and to see their children's faces smiling. It was good for them that we went to the containers and chatted with them. We kept the culture alive for them there. In our conversations we tried to reveal everything that was going on in their lives *before* the earthquake and then bring this into the present. For example, some of them had previously loved their garden and growing flowers. They placed their flowers in front of the container. Some of them used to make braids and started doing them again. And there was an uncle who was making dolma (a local dish) and cooking them. It was good to start making new routines and keeping personal cultures alive. This was a process of revealing people's alternative stories.

Responding to grief

There were many different ways we tried to respond to devastating grief.

Listening and sometimes crying together

We would talk about whatever the person wanted to talk about at that moment. This varied from person to person. For example, if a person is reading a book, you can go up to him and ask him about the book he was reading, what caught his attention in the book, and what his favourite quote was. Or sometimes people would come to the container and talk about their experiences; about what happened in the earthquake, how they got out from under the rubble, and their losses. One day, a mother who lost her husband and children in the earthquake came. She talked about how they had lost their lives. This was quite difficult for me. Afterwards, she showed me their photos on her phone. I asked her about the stories of those moments when the photographs were taken. In this way we were able to talk together about the loved ones who were lost. She told me all this while crying. I cried too. I think it is very important to be there, to listen, to hear the stories of their losses and the stories of their loved ones. Because what can you say to a person who lost their family? You can just listen to those people's stories and sometimes cry together.

Performing religious and cultural rituals together

We went to a village after the earthquake. A woman in the village had lost her husband and children. She was the only one left alive and she was in great pain. When we visited her in her tent, we asked her if she needed anything; she said she had everything and that state institutions were bringing aid. When we asked her if she wanted to talk, she said she did not want to talk. When we asked her if she would like to read the Qur'an and pray for those she lost, she was very happy and called her friends from the village to the tent. When we read the Qur'an and prayed together, she was very grateful and thanked us.

Making halva

In Türkiye, halva is made in memory of people who have lost their lives. On the first, seventh, fortieth and fifty-second days after a person dies, halva is made and offered to neighbours,

relatives and friends. In this way, people commemorate those who have lost their lives. The support team in the container city made halva for the earthquake survivors and their relatives who lost their lives and honoured them. Hospitality in Turkish culture is very important. For this reason, psychosocial support teams visited the containers during these days and hosted the earthquake survivors.

Recalling good memories

Where appropriate, we would encourage people to talk about those loved ones they had lost by asking them questions to recall good memories they had with them. We'd ask questions that allowed them to describe these times in detail. Often, it was good for them to talk in detail about good memories of the people they had lost.

Emphasising physical care – food and sleep

In Türkiye, there is a saying that pity is one thing and hunger is another. It is spoken often at funerals to encourage people who are grieving to eat because people in great pain may need this kind of support and encouragement. Disaster survivors may sometimes be reluctant to meet their needs for food or sleep due to the fear or pain of the disaster. In some cases, they may not know how and where to meet these needs due to the confusion they are experiencing. If there is such a situation, it is one of our important duties to emphasise physical care. Let people eat and sleep as much as possible.

A food and prayer program

In the container city we organised a food and prayer program in dedication to those we lost. At first the idea was to supply food made by a company, but I objected and said, "let's let those who have lost loved ones do the cooking". We bought the ingredients, and they cooked the food. At the very beginning, there was a woman who had lost many of her relatives, who did not speak to anyone and did not participate in any of our other activities. She took primary responsibility for this food and prayer program. After the program, she came out of her tent and started participating in our activities and talking to people.

Anger

In addition to responding to grief, we also needed to find ways to respond to anger.

Being prepared for, and understanding, anger

There may be people who are rude to us, who talk accusingly, or who think that we cannot understand them in any way. In such situations, it can be helpful to keep calm and try not to respond to every word. It's important for us not to personalise what is being said in anger. At this point, another issue to be considered is how we use our language. Our words can trigger many positive or negative things in people. For this reason, it is necessary to be careful in our use of language. Speaking of "we", not "me" and "you", can sometimes make a difference. As can refraining from giving advice.

There is one family I find it helpful to remember when I think about facing anger. I met a family who came to the container city later. He had been abroad when the earthquake occurred. His wife and their eldest daughter died in the earthquake. He came with his younger daughter, and he was quite tense and angry with me. I found this difficult but then I observed that the little girl who survived often wet her fingers with her tongue and put them on her lips. I asked her aunt about this, and she told me: "During the earthquake, this girl and her grandmother were left under the rubble for a day. Air was coming from a gap created while under the rubble. Since the weather was cold, when this breeze hit the child's face, she felt cold, and her lips became dry. Her grandmother, from under the rubble, told her to wet her fingers and apply them to her lips so that they would not dry out. She continued this behaviour after she was rescued from the wreckage." I remember being frozen while listening to these words. Her aunt was crying heartily while telling the story. I couldn't help but cry too. The father's anger and this little girl wetting her lips. Everyone who experiences a disaster is affected in different ways and responds in different ways.

Reducing the power of "unreasonable anger"

While visiting the container city, I interviewed a man who said he had anger problems towards his family. His house was severely damaged, and his workplace had been destroyed in the

earthquake. He was living in the container city with his wife and three children. He explained to me that his behaviour changed after the earthquake. He stated that he was more angry, tense and now had low tolerance towards his wife and children. So we started having conversations about this anger. We externalised “unreasonable anger” and investigated when it came and when its influence increased and decreased. We talked about how this anger affected both himself and others, and he realised that it was somehow linked to the responsibility he felt for his family’s future. His business was in ruins, life in the city had stopped and there was no place for him to work. He felt cornered and a failure and therefore angry. At the end of these externalising conversations, he realised he was speaking of his deep love for his family and how they should come first. He described ways he was not going to allow “unreasonable anger” to destroy them “being a family”. Having these conversations reduced the power of the problem of unreasonable anger.

Stories from our history

Sometimes stories from our recent and distant history offer company in times of disaster. There is a historical figure in Türkiye called Nasreddin Hodja, famous for his jokes. One day he asked his neighbour to lend him a cauldron. The neighbour gave it to him. Two days later, Nasreddin brought the cauldron back along with another smaller cauldron. When his neighbour asked what this was, the hodja said, “Your cauldron gave birth”. The man was very happy that he now had two cauldrons when he previously had only one and said, “How nice, how good”. Another day, the hodja asked for a cauldron again. His neighbour gave it to him with joy, remembering the previous time. However, the hodja did not give back the cauldron even after time passed. The man was curious and asked the hodja, “What happened to the cauldron?” The hodja said, “Your cauldron died”. The man was very surprised that the hodja said the cauldron had died. The hodja said, “You believed that it was born, why don’t you believe that it died?” An earthquake victim I talked to had lost his wife and children. After telling me this story, he said, “We believe in God when he gives, why not when he takes?”

Children and young people

We needed to think of different approaches for children, young people and adults.

Making children happy

When you make children happy, you also bring their parents relief. Children digest their experiences through play. That’s why play heals them. So, even in the disaster area, we created contexts for children to play; we created contexts for children’s happiness. We took candies, small toys, crayons and other things in our pockets. And we created a place, a container, for children’s play. It was also very useful to let children draw. In the earthquake zone, we had the children play games and draw every day. I was amazed to see how the children’s drawings changed from day to day. The drawings, which were dark and fearful in the first days, gradually became more colourful and included more cheerful subjects as the days went on.

Comforting mothers

An important way to comfort children is to comfort their mothers. Children in Türkiye often make sense of what an experience means by looking at their mothers’ eyes and reactions. If mothers are scared and terrified, children experience more fear and terror. Therefore, comforting the mothers and fathers and ensuring that they receive psychological support if they need it will also be very beneficial for the children.

Young people

In times of crisis, young people sometimes withdraw themselves and remain alone with their fears and anxieties. For this reason, we thought it was very important to recognise them, to find them, and to create contexts in which they could share experiences. We created activities with young people such as volleyball, basketball, ball, chess and Jenga. We also tried to enable young people to have as much responsibility as possible over making plans and projects and ensuring that their contributions were recognised so that they felt valuable.

Our experience as volunteers

There were many elements that assisted us as volunteers.

Helping others was good for us too.

We tried to be there for the people and focus on their stories. Some of the stories we heard were challenging because we too had lost friends and family members. Nonetheless, helping others was good for us too, and hearing about their experiences beyond the earthquake also strengthened us.

It was very good for me to go there right after the earthquake, because the fear was as great for me as for the people there. I was experiencing restless leg syndrome. I couldn't sleep at night. I was incredibly depressed. I didn't want to talk to anyone when I was at home and just wanted to cry all the time. But the first day I went to the container city, the opposite happened. First of all, it was very good to socialise there. I felt incredibly social. I was cheerful. And second, because I was so tired at the end of that day, I went straight to sleep after playing with the children without restless leg syndrome.

They hosted us very well

There were many different ways that the residents of the container city gave back to us. For example, an aunt we visited at the containers gave me violet flowers. This was very precious. When we went to visit the containers, they would not send us away without giving us something to eat or drink. The last period of our visits coincided with the month of Ramadan. They were offering us something even though we were fasting. When we said we were fasting, they put it in a bag and gave it to us to take away for later. They hosted us very well. They treated us like family.

Being a team in harmony

What was it that protected us psychologically? I think the main thing, rather than any method, was that working as a team was important. I achieved harmony with my teammates. I think that instead of being on the field alone, it was necessary to be with a team in harmony.

With nearly 3000 earthquake victims in the container city, it was essential to have a team to plan and execute events and also to share experiences. We developed a regular routine that at the end of each day, while returning from the container city, we would share with

each other three events from that day that had made us happy and feel good. We also shared our observations about the day and areas that needed improvement. This process of reflection helped us a great deal as team members.

Working out how to respond to people's questions

People living through a disaster can have many questions. They may ask you many questions that you cannot possibly know the answers to. Sometimes these questions were about things that were the responsibility of the state; sometimes it may be a religious question or a question about education. I realised that I didn't have to know the answers to these questions – and it was better not to feel bad that I didn't know. If I didn't know the answers to these questions, I knew I shouldn't give the wrong answer! So instead, I could keep in touch with places from which I could learn the answers to these questions. Whenever I was asked a question that I didn't know how to respond to, I would seek out those who knew and then return with an answer.

A small notepad

Before every event and before every holiday, we printed small notepads and gave one to people in the container city. Spoken words fly, but written words remain. On these notepads we wrote our good wishes so that they would have a piece of paper that they could open and look at when they had trouble. They could carry these good words in their pockets. We would also write on these small notepads what time we would roast halva, where and when we would read the Qur'an, and then we could go around the containers and distribute them one by one.

Know yourself well

Before going to assist others in a disaster zone, it is also worth thinking about how manageable it will be for you. Being in a disaster area or with people in difficult times may not be manageable for everyone. If you think that you will find it too difficult, that you will not be able to cope, that you will be harmful rather than helpful, then please consider remote support. There is a lot of important work that can be done remotely.

Taking a long-term view

Major disasters take a long time to recover from. Usually, people volunteer and act quickly in the first days and weeks and try to make great sacrifices. However, after a short time, they often forget or become unable to continue their efforts to help. For this reason, rather than only taking big steps immediately after a major disaster, some of us are trying to think about and plan longer-term sustainable steps. We must spread our plan over a long period of time and know that it is not possible to reach our destination in a short time.

A pocket guidebook

From our experiences as volunteers, we also created a pocket guidebook for psychosocial supporters in earthquake zones. Instead of using any particular technique, we tried to be there for the people and focused on their stories. Some of the stories we heard were challenging because we had lost friends and family members too. Nonetheless, helping others was good for us too, and hearing about others' experiences beyond the earthquake also strengthened us.

As psychosocial support workers, we developed narrative methods to assist people. Narrative therapy-based guidebooks have been produced before (Dinç, 2020; Fareez, 2015; Dulwich Centre Foundation, 2020; Mt Elgon Self-Help Community Project, 2023). However, it is noteworthy that there was no guide for psychosocial support teams working with survivors after an earthquake. We prepared an informative pocket guidebook for psychosocial support workers working with earthquake survivors.

It includes pages at the end where people can write daily notes in response to questions like these:

- What are three things that brought happiness today?
- What were the things you noticed today that kept people strong and/or made them feel good?
- What is a word, song, proverb, prayer, story or attitude you heard and liked today?
- What stories other than the earthquake caught your attention today?
- What are the questions you are asking, or approaches you can develop in your work, from today's experiences?

Conclusion

Our university-led psychosocial support initiative exemplifies the importance of proactive and sustained community action to address the psychological and emotional needs of individuals affected by natural disasters. The voluntary efforts of psychology students played a pivotal role in creating spaces of hope and healing, showcasing the resilience and compassion within the community during challenging times. The success of this endeavour lay in its adaptability, collaborative efforts and a narrative therapy approach that prioritised the psychological agency and local skills and knowledges of those affected. Moreover, these initiatives showcased the transformative potential of academic research when translated into accessible formats (Buldur et al., 2023). By disseminating practical resources, the community not only reached a significant number of individuals affected by the earthquake but also empowered therapists on the ground. This proactive approach, grounded in the principles of narrative therapy, highlights the resilience of individuals and communities in the face of trauma, fostering a sense of agency and support during challenging times.

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