When Words Are Not Enough
building an effective program for SGBV recovery in Nepal

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Common Threads Project / Sajha Dhago

- Comprehensive trauma treatment program for survivors of SGBV
- **Integrative:** body/emotions/social relations/mind/spirit
- **Connection with others:** Power of the group
- **Wisdom of an ancient practice:** story cloths
Group Work Relieves Stigma and Shame

“The solidarity of a group provides the strongest protection against terror and despair, and the strongest antidote to traumatic experience.”

Judith Herman 1992
Why story cloths for trauma?

- Connection
- Emotional Safety
- Self Expression
- Self Regulation
- Gradual Pace
- Sense of Mastery
Neurobiological Rationale for CTP

The body’s response to trauma:

- ANS and limbic system engage
- Cerebral cortex deactivates
- Visual cortex and sensorimotor systems activate
- Traumatic memory stored in images, sensations, sensorimotor experience
- Sensory, non-verbal, somatic, experiential approach

We are designed for SURVIVAL
Common Threads Methodology

- Psycho-education
- Coping skills
- Art making
- Somatic work
- Peer support
- Storycloths
- Safe trauma processing
The CTP journey with TPO Nepal

- **2014**
  - TOT on Sajha Dhago for TPO staff

- **2014-2016**
  - continued Sajha Dhago program (Phase – I & II) delivered to Bhutanese and Urban Refugees: Pakistani and Afghani refugees women – supported by UNHCR

- **2016**
  - Earthquake affected women local community – collaboration with Children and Women ministry and UNICEF, Nepal

- **2016**
  - second TOT for TPO staff and local community psychosocial counselors

- **December, 2017**
  - Earthquake affected women local community – collaboration with Children and Women ministry and UNICEF, Nepal

- **2018**
  - GBV women group in local community, Bhaktapur district – collaboration with local government

- **2018 - 2021**
  - initiated to serve diverse populations in need, including Rohingya refugees, survivors of sex trafficking, and exploited teen girls
Established Sajha Dhago in March, 2022

SAJHA DHAGO

Advanced TOT

Beginners TOT

supported by common threads PROJECT
First group of CTP facilitators in Nepal, 2014
Process of empowerment
Self Expression

“That moment I never forget”
Threatened by abuser not to say anything to anyone..........

“Nobody wants to marry a sexually abused person”
Role play with dolls..........

“Thinking for Mastery”
Disclosing a secret by sewing......
Women able to teach and be involved as co-facilitators
Sustainability
Training, self-care and supervision with Sajha Dhago facilitators
www.commonthreadsproject.org

www.sajhadhago.org.np