

# A Model for Collective Healing

“Our sessions are becoming a strong anchor, harboring a safe venue where we are developing deep connections, learning about ourselves and each other together as we wade through these senseless and confusing times of unimaginable personal and community tragedies, searching for ways to begin the process of healing”.

- Tigray Healing Advisory Council Member reflecting on Collective Healing Support

## The Team:

We are a diverse and collaborative team of seasoned professionals in the areas of intercultural communication, world peace initiatives, collective trauma, transcultural health and collective healing.

With decades of practice, training, consulting, research and writing, along with cross-cultural development through the arts & humanities, we are joining the global effort to re-awaken bridges of human connection and Collective Healing Action.



### People of Tigray = Tegar

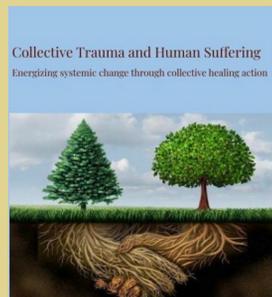
Three generations of Tegar have experienced collective trauma, starting with the 1984 conflict-induced famine, the 1990 Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict, and the current violence which has been described as a “full scale humanitarian crisis” by UNHCR (2020). Tegar are noted to have ancient & indigenous ties to this land/mountains ecosystem, with repeated persecution for its people and its natural resources.

Experiencing re-traumatization due to loss of family members and communication, the diaspora are susceptible. Additionally, Tegar survivors have reached out to the diaspora US to request a 'strengthening' in order to support post-war recovery of those most affected by war.

In their response, two generations of 15 Tegar diaspora leaders sought out an intercultural collective healing intervention through the World Peace Foundation. Bridge to Belong (BTB) consultants aided, bringing wellness and assisted with the establishment of the Tigray Healers Advisory Council (THAC).

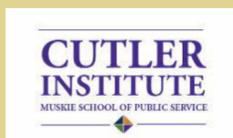
## Research:

“The latest research on this topic has indicated that Western clinical interventions are not as effective as a multimodal approach, encompassing better engagement [education, healthcare and community systems], inter-family communication, and community based opportunities that are cohesive and culturally rich. (Sheffield and St. Thomas)”



Upcoming book 2022-23

## Affiliates:



### OBJECTIVE

To seek partnership in funding an established and intercultural group supporting a collective and sustainable healing model with Tegar-American Diaspora.

### METHODOLOGY

Bridge to Belong Consultants, Tigray Healers Advisory Council and the Muskie School of Public Service (University of Southern Maine, Portland) are embarking on a pilot project entitled “Collective Healing through Peer Support” which will test a three-part model of providing trauma-informed peer support that is grounded in knowledge of intercultural, collective healing.

### RESULTS

We envision sharing the success of this model with other communities in an open-source process. Leaders and bridge builders are everywhere: in neighborhoods and diasporas, in corporations, health care and school systems, in civil society and non-profits. It is our belief that when global bridge builders are trained and facilitate Collective Healing, systemic change happens.

## Analysis:

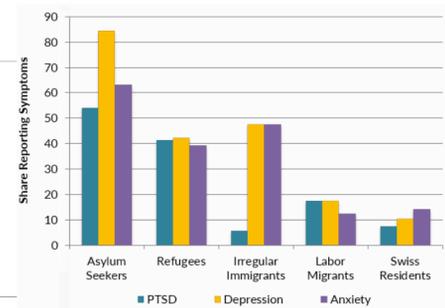
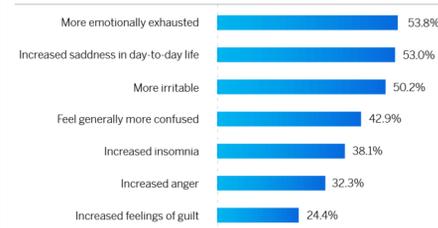
Multiple pandemics (Covid, mounting systemic racism, climate change, generational and historic traumas, and global conflicts) are resulting in a mental health crisis of global collective trauma. Collective trauma is different from Western concepts of individual pathology. Specifically, it underscores the devastation of losing the community and often the culture within which people heal. The fragmentation and disconnection created by such losses further alienate and separate people and their recovery. These times are affecting not just individuals but systems, systems which bolster resiliency, reliance on others and self, and collective action for healing.

Black, brown, indigenous, immigrants, and people of color (BIPOC) continuously experience collective loss, stacking current and historic trauma upon each other. One such BIPOC community is the Tigray Healers Advisory Council (THAC), a group of 15 Tigray American (Tegar) community leaders, based in New England who together represent 15,000 constituents across the region.

During the three phases of the Collective Healing project, we will create an ongoing network with our Intercultural Advisory Council that will chart the way forward as we share our model. By the end of the project, we will have a deeper understanding of the cultural adaptability of our model and how to share it with others. Over time we anticipate building upon this expanding community of facilitators from across the globe to spread Collective Healing and restorative action.



### Mental health symptoms since COVID-19 outbreak



April 14, 2020

JANUARY 30, 2018

<https://www.qualtrics.com/blog/confronting-mental-health/>  
<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/life-after-trauma-mental-health-needs-asylum-seekers-europe>

## There is Hope

As BTB trainers have experienced over the past twenty plus years, and THAC have been the present-day recipients, Collective Healing promotes the integration of traumatic wounds, sustains individual and community resilience, seeds hope and grows peace and stability. Now is the time to pilot a Collective Healing and action process that will not only support the Tegar diaspora community in New England, but has the potential to serve as a model for healing and peace building on a larger scale across cultures.

To find out more information please email [Bridge2belong@gmail.com](mailto:Bridge2belong@gmail.com) or visit [Bridge2belong.com](http://Bridge2belong.com)



Forest Churches in Tigray Ethiopia