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INTERCULTURAL PSYCHOTHERAPY OF DEPRESSION IN MIGRANTS OF FIRST AND SECOND GENERATION

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Intercultural psychotherapeutic treatment must involve the psychological integration of different cultures within an individual as an additional developmental dimension. The literature concerning acculturation and mental health yields heterogeneous results concerning strategies of adaptive acculturation. In intercultural psychotherapy the integration strategy is usually the strategy with the highest adaptability. It is still uncertain which theoretical assumptions might be applicable to a healthy acculturation process. However, it is assumed that increased acculturative stress may lead to higher risk and susceptibility for emotional distress and depression.

Individual change during the course of migration towards a bicultural identity that includes aspects of both the culture of origin and of the host culture has often been viewed as a desirable adaptation, although the theoretical foundation of the concept of bicultural identity remains inadequate. The cultural-dynamic model presented here distinguishes between personal and social identity on the basis of the identity concept proposed by Mead (1988). We discuss implications for the intercultural psychotherapeutic process, for identity configuration in second-generation migrants, for different phases of the lifespan, and in acquiring the language of the host culture.