

This years Refugee Week theme is **Courage.**

We can think of courage as heroic acts depicted in the news or in movies. But courage can also be found in everyday moments, such as asking for help, starting again after loss, or facing uncertainty.

For many refugees and asylum seekers, courage is a part of everyday life. Leaving behind your home, loved ones, and future plans can be incredibly challenging. Many have experienced war, persecution or trauma before embarking on uncertain journeys to safety. Many have lost contact with family members, not knowing if they are dead or alive. Many experience survivors guilt.



The impact of displacement on mental health can be significant, with many asylum seekers and refugees experiencing loneliness, grief and the effects of trauma.

Adapting to life in a new country with a different language, a new culture, and complex systems to navigate can be incredibly overwhelming. Waiting for asylum decisions means living in limbo whilst a stranger determines your fate. The asylum decision process can take years, which means years of uncertainty and instability, years of being unable to make your own decisions about your life and future.

**Yet courage is not
the absence of fear.
It is continuing to
move forward
despite it.**

**COURAGE!
COURAGE!
COURAGE!
COURAGE!**

1,416 referrals since Flourish began in 2022

19,051 attendees to our groups since 2022

What do we offer:

Having a separate project specifically for asylum seekers and refugees ensures they have no barriers when accessing HMN's service, with Flourish outreach workers having specialist knowledge and skills to understand and effectively support displaced individuals.

We also deliver drop-in groups across the county at multiple asylum hotels, ensuring asylum seekers have access to mental wellbeing and practical support on site where they live. We attend the SouthHill Centre every Tuesday to provide drop-in support to asylum seekers and refugees in the community.

We see courage from our clients every day. The resilience our clients show is inspirational.

We support asylum seekers and refugees to keep moving forward, building connections, facing challenges, and making choices for themselves whenever possible. We advocate for our clients in systems which were not built to support them.

We give clients time to speak in their own language, at their own pace. We provide guidance and tools to increase independence and coping skills, and prioritise listening to what clients say they need, rather than what we think they need.







We invite you to join us!

We would love for our colleagues to shadow us. We hope through seeing what we do and by meeting our clients, you will feel more confident when working with people who may have language or cultural barriers, and have a deeper understanding of the experiences of asylum seekers and refugees in the UK.

(Please contact Joanne Potter- Flourish Team lead with your availability.)

Hear from our clients:

 Thank you, you really helped me. You helped me communicate with other professionals when I couldn't. You have given me the strength to do things for myself. You didn't let the language barrier or the fact I can not read stop you from helping me, you adapted and continued to help me. Thank you. 

 This is a safe space and I feel supported. I have not had someone look out for me since my brother and my grandmother both died, until you have. You help me, and listen to me when everybody else looks at me bad. You pick up the phone and call me which nobody else does. Thank you. 



I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your kind and continued help and support. You helped me during a very difficult time in my life when no one was there to help me.

When I met you at our first session I was emotionally down, feeling depressed, anxious, was feeling useless and was isolated. I tried to get help from my GP which was not helpful for me as well but when I started the sessions with you I was feeling better because you patiently listened me and gave me the right support and help which was really necessary for me at that time.

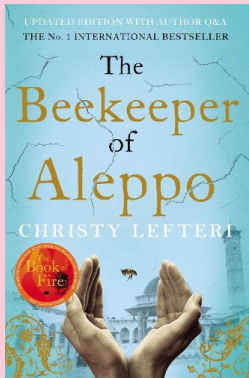
I feel like I have started a new life and I want to thank you again for that but I am not able to find the correct words to thank you. You were a life saver for me and I appreciate all the support and help you gave me. I will always remember you as truly amazing person in my life.

Thank you very much again. 

Publications and Media we'd recommend:



BOOKS:

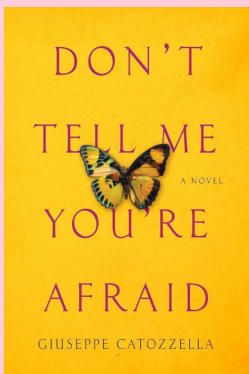
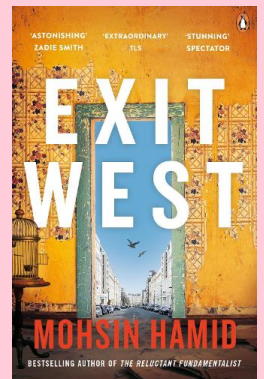


The Beekeeper of Aleppo - Christy Lefteri

The unforgettable love story of a mother blinded by loss and her husband who insists on their survival as they undertake the Syrian refugee trail to Europe.

Exit West – Mohsin Hamid

The novel follows Nadia and Saeed, two young lovers in an unnamed city facing civil war. They flee their war-torn homeland through a network of magical doors that act as portals to other countries, ultimately exploring themes of love, displacement, and the universal experience of migration.

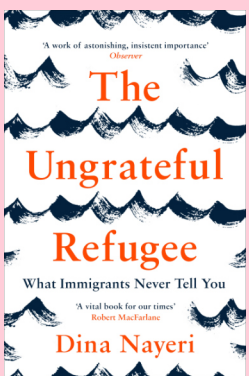
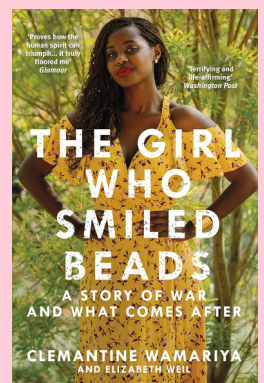


Don't Tell Me You're Afraid – Giuseppe Catozzella

Based on a remarkable true story, an unforgettable Somali girl risks her life on the migrant journey to Europe to run in the Olympic Games.

The Girl Who Smiled Beads - Clemantine Wamariya & Elizabeth Weil

The memoir follows Wamariya's experience as a childhood refugee from Rwanda.



The Ungrateful Refugee: What Immigrants Never Tell You – Dina Nayeri

This non-fiction book weaves together her own childhood experience of fleeing Iran with the personal stories of other asylum seekers, challenging dehumanizing stereotypes and recalibrating the public conversation around forced migration.

PODCASTS:



Asylum Speakers

This podcast is a media platform that exists to amplify voices, educate, inspire and debunk some of the common myths and misconceptions around migration today.

We are VOICES

This is an award-winning podcast co-produced by the British Red Cross and the VOICES Network, featuring 12 refugees and asylum seekers sharing their stories.



FILM & TV:

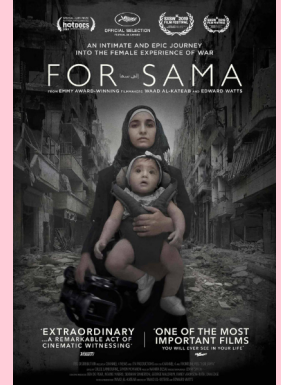


The Swimmers (Netflix)

The true story of Syrian sisters Sara and Yusra Mardini, who swam for hours across the Mediterranean Sea to safety before competing at the Rio Olympics.

For Sama (Channel 4)

An intimate, BAFTA-winning documentary filmed by Waad al-Kateab over five years of the uprising in Aleppo, Syria.



The Old Oak (BBC iPlayer)

A pub landlord in a previously thriving mining community in County Durham struggles to hold on to his pub, while tensions rise in the town when Syrian refugees are placed there.



Limbo (Prime)

Separated from his family, a young musician anxiously expects to hear back about the status concerning his asylum claims as he shoulders the weight of his grandfather's oud.

