

The Art-Based Trauma Recovery (ABTR) Model:

A Cross-Cultural Framework for Post-Trauma Healing in Japan and the United State

Presented by Rebecca Leong



How can trauma recovery through art therapy be both structured and culturally adaptable across global contexts?

a culturally sensitive and stage based art therapy model (ABTR) integrates

Universal patterns of trauma

+

Culturally distinct practices in healing

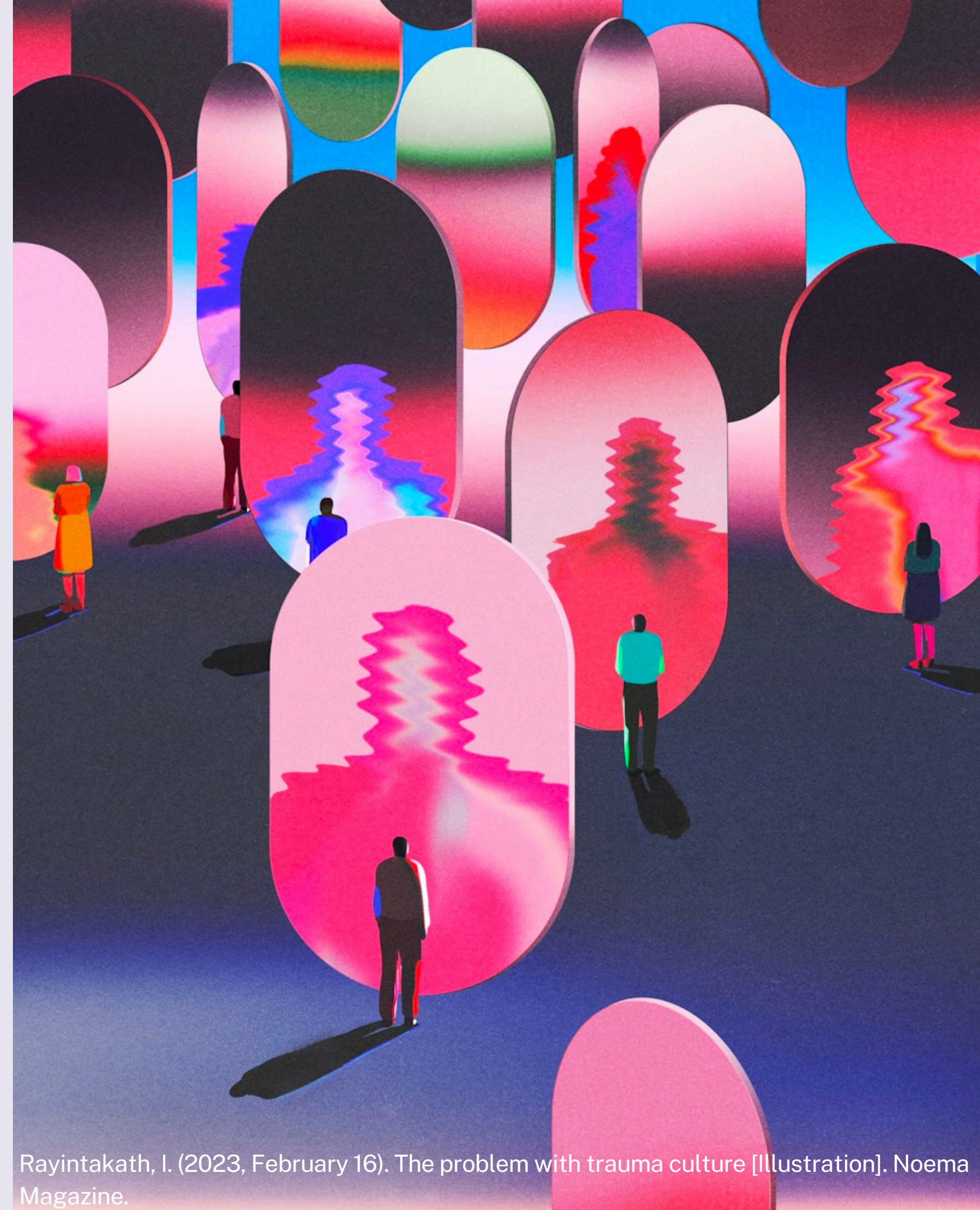
across Japan and the U.S.



Understanding Trauma and Recovery

4(+)%

Trauma: a psychological, cultural, and generational impact



Rayintakath, I. (2023, February 16). The problem with trauma culture [Illustration]. Noema Magazine.



Why art therapy?

Trauma stored in sensory memory

Art therapy externalizes nonverbal
trauma

Flexibility across cultures



Introducing Appleton's Four-Stage Model

Appleton (2001)

01

Shock/
Dissociation

02

Cognitive
Processing

03

Integration

04

Post-Trauma
Growth

Why Cultural Sensitivity Matters

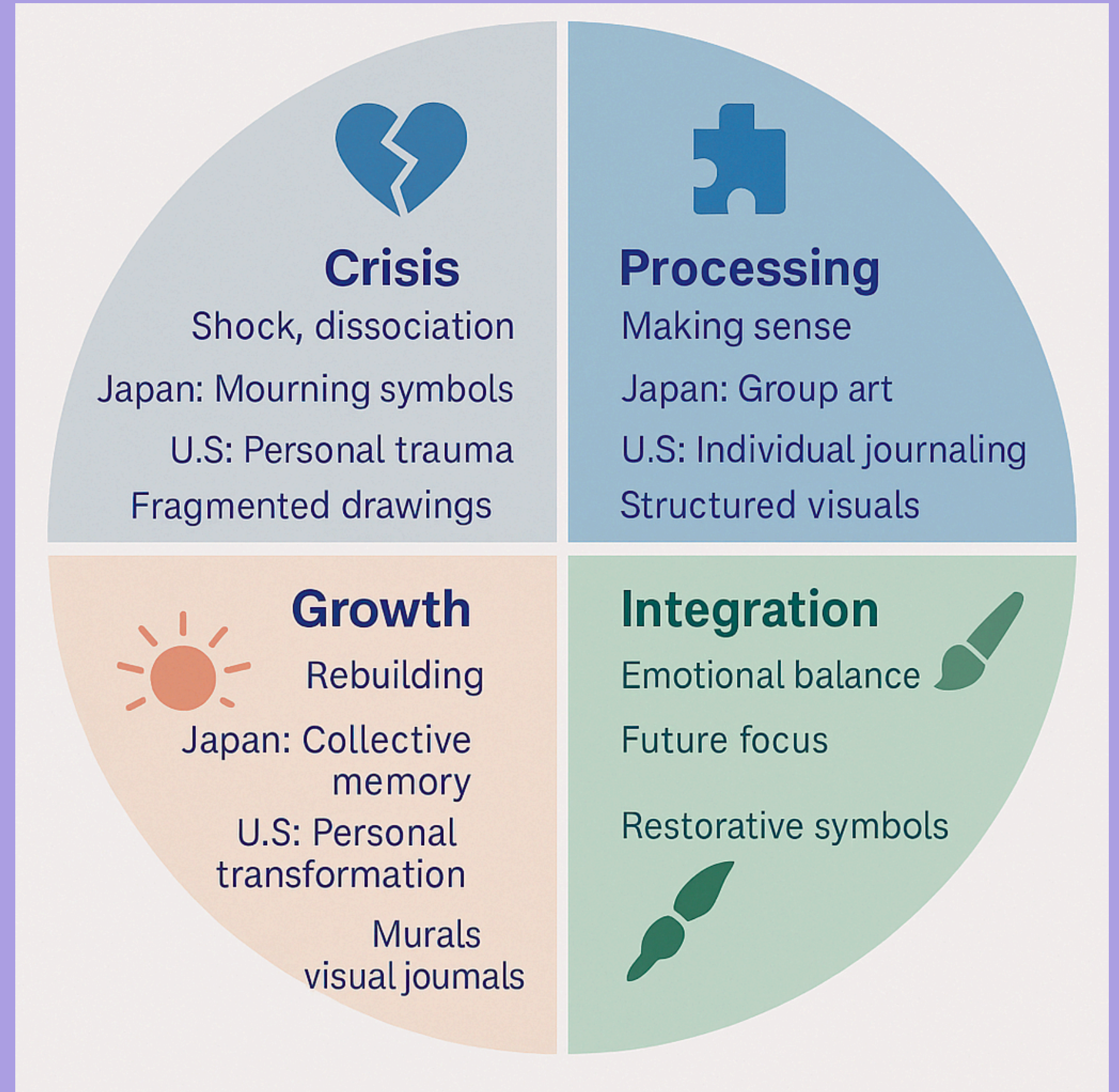
Healing shaped by cultural rituals and community (Gavron, 2020; Summerfield, 1999)

Western vs. Eastern models: Individual vs. Collective focus (Gonzalez-Dolginko, 2002)

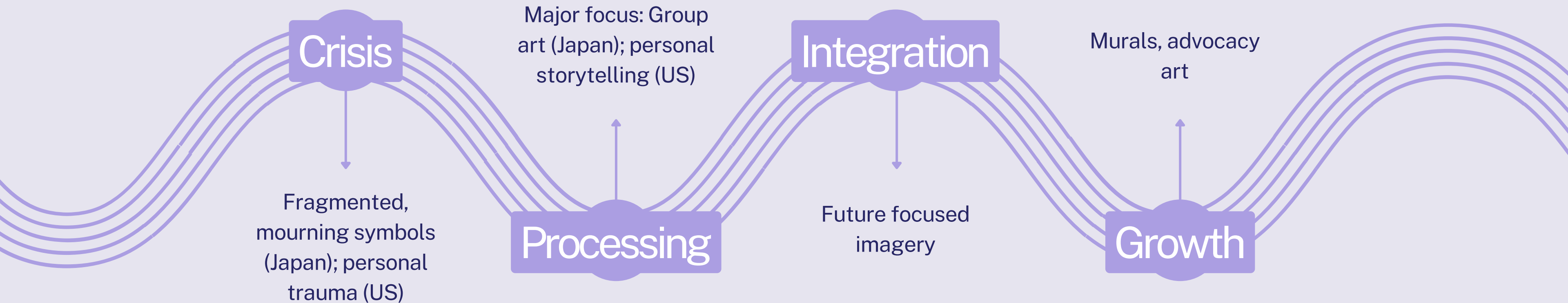


The Art-Based Trauma Recovery (ABTR) Model

- Integrates Appleton's structure + cultural adaptability
- Visual indicators track progress
- Flexible for global settings



ABTR Stages with Cultural Indicators



Why This Matters: Toward Culturally Attuned Healing

Trauma recovery is nonlinear and culturally situated

ABTR model: a structured guide

Future research: Expand cross-cultural trauma studies and measure long-term art therapy outcomes

Implications & Practical Solutions

Model use

Apply the ABTR model to guide trauma recovery through culturally grounded and stage based art therapy

Therapeutic Practice

Adapt materials, symbols and methods to each client's cultural background and healing style

Program

Build flexible and art based trauma interventions in post-disaster settings that reflect local traditions

Program

Standardize outcome measures and support cross-cultural collaboration in art therapy development

Takeaway

Art speaks when words fail

Healing is shaped by tradition, collective practices, and individual expression



Thank you very much!

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