

SOS Détresse

Migration, a brave act

Migration has always existed in the history of humanity. Since the dawn of time, people have come to a time in their life when they left their country to settle in another one. However, in the last few decades, human displacement has multiplied and our societies are more and more diverse.

Migrating is not something insignificant. It is a huge **risk which requires a lot of courage.**

There are different reasons for restarting a life somewhere else: job opportunity, studies, unemployment and difficult living conditions in the country of origin, rejoining family, political oppression, wars or natural disasters... It is a **search for a better life** for yourself as well as for your family. Sometimes, it is also about a search for new horizons, to discover a different culture or to fulfil a need for freedom. In any case, it is about **wanting a change**, to live differently and to look for somewhere where a better life may be possible. It is an **opportunity for a new beginning.**

The different reasons for leaving, but more importantly, whether being able to **choose freely to leave or being forced to leave your country**, as well the duration of migration, will determine the way in which this experience will be felt and embedded. Migration is an experience that is individual to everyone.

Like an uprooted tree...

The changes encountered as a result of migration, and the new environment, are always a significant upheaval. Although at times migration can be experienced with enthusiasm and excitement, it is in most cases something that causes suffering, it is stressful and difficult to bear. In every case, migrating always involves having to go through **loss and separation** as well as **facing new surroundings.**

By choosing to migrate, we leave behind the life that we built in our home country, our familiar universe, and those who live there. We may feel guilty for following this personal project and distancing ourselves from our family and our friends left behind. **Being far from your own is not always easy.**

By migrating, **we also leave behind our predictable world** with its markers and cultural codes, for an unknown and uncontrolled world. Everything which was straightforward and natural is turned upside down. We have to confront another

culture, another language, new standards and values, and human relationships which seem different to us.

We all deal with hardship differently. If for some it is relatively easy to adjust to new attitudes and behaviours, for others the connection to their home country is such that it may make integration harder. We all must find our own rhythm concerning the integration process.

Migration is a form of **uprooting**, just like a tree that is torn from the ground and planted somewhere else. Like all trees that undergo a change, it becomes weaker. An unknown soil, everything is different: the climate, the ground, the water, nutritional intake... But after some time to adjust and getting the necessary care, the tree builds itself up gently, in its own rhythm.

Migrating involves living with separation and loss, but also having to adapt to another way of life. It is normal to experience difficulties when faced with these challenges. Just like the tree, we have to take care of ourselves and respect our rhythm in the process.