Embodying Personal and Social Transformation

Owen Karcher, MA, LPC
(they/them or he/him)
An invitation to center...
Our Services

- Art Therapy & Counseling
- Bilingual Spanish Mental Health Support (including U-Visa letters)
- Evaluations for gender related hormones and surgery
- Consultation for organizations on intersectional social justice approaches to working with LGBTQ people
- Full-Spectrum Birth Doula Services

"Trauma-informed therapy is important, but Social Justice-informed therapy is even more important. One cannot truly do fully trauma-informed therapy without understanding the trauma of social INjustice."

—Dr. Maria Paredes

www.representationmatters.ml
The Four Agreements
Don Miguel Ruiz

Be Impeccable with your Word

Speak with integrity. Use the power of your word in the direction of truth and love.

Don’t Take Anything Personally

Don’t Make Assumptions

Find the courage to ask questions and express what you really want. Communicate clearly.

Always do your Best
Training Objectives

1. Participants will be able to discuss five challenges transgender people face when seeking support.

2. Participants will be able to identify and understand five components of holistic care when supporting transgender people.

3. Participants will be able to describe five personal interventions to take to support the joy and healing of transgender people in their own communities.
Write down in a column on the left-hand side of a blank piece of paper the initials of six to ten people whom you trust the most who are not family members.

We will revisit the list later.
What decisions did you make today that relate to your sexual orientation or gender identity?
What do you remember learning about your own gender as a child?
What reservations or questions do you have about talking about transgender identity or sexual orientation today?
Group Brainstorm:
What mental, physical, and spiritual health concerns do transgender people have?
Key Concepts
Intersecting Identities

Race
Ability
Immigration status
Gender
Age
Class

Language
Sexual Orientation
Education
Health Status
Body Size/Appearance
Religion
Institutionalized Oppression

- Familial
- Religious
- Housing
- Employment

- Education
- Healthcare
- Legal/ Criminal System
- Identity Document
- Policies
Internalized Oppression

- Subscribing to society’s negative messages about your own identity
- Internalized false or negative beliefs about yourself
- Rejecting parts of yourself because the majority rejects those parts
Transgender Health

Transgender health involves all services, protections, and resources that transgender people need to live healthy lives in safe communities.

This includes:

- A range of primary and other health care services
- Socioeconomic determinants of health such as identity document policies, poverty, employment, housing, and public acceptance of LGBTQ+ people.

(Open Society Foundations Public Health Program, 2013)
Barriers to Care

- Link between experiences of marginalization & poor physical and mental health outcomes
- Lack of informed health care + minority stress
- Discriminatory treatment by providers
- Lack of providers trained to offer appropriate care
- Refusal by state/national health systems and insurance programs to cover services
- Familial rejection

(James et al., 2016; Open Society Foundations Public Health Program, 2013)
Get out your list of names...
How do different sites impact our shape?
What embodiment are we practicing?

- Internal/Individual
- Relational
- Community
- Society
- Landscape
- Spirit
What happens when you’re met with ambiguity? How do you relate to that?

What are your limits related to trans identities and experiences?
How do we ethically work with transgender people?
Three Ways...

Trauma Informed Hospitality
Treat your clients like an honored guest. Anticipate their needs, make them feel welcome and comfortable, show them you care and have thought about how to make them feel welcome.

Warmth, Kindness, Generosity.

Validate and Normalize
Give context for what’s “normal”, remind them all of the ways that they’re not alone in their experience, honor their truth as real and valid.

Empathy, Awareness, Reverence.

Understand the Systems
Build your awareness of the unique challenges and barriers to success your client is navigating based on their unique circumstances and combinations of identities.

Intersectionality, Education, Familiarization.
Center for Community Healing
Chelsea O'Neil Karcher, MA, LPC-IT
Owen Karcher, MA, LPC
artherepymadison.com

BAÑOS PARA TODOs
INCLUSIVE RESTROOM

BLACK LIVES MATTER

Todos son bienvenidos aquí

YOU are... LOVED!

You can. And you will.
Validate and Normalize

- You are not alone in this experience
- There’s nothing wrong with you
- The gender binary limits everyone
- Your body is wise
- Hold hope when the client cannot
- “The struggle is real”
- Microaggressions / Macroaggressions
- Impacts / Symptoms of Oppression
Understand the Systems

- Cultural norms
- Resources available
- Barriers to care/necessities
- Bias and discrimination
- Points of exclusion
- Work to change them
What words should I say?

- Tell me more about your partner(s).
- How do they identify?
- What name or pronoun would you like me to use for you?
- Tell me about the people who live in your house.
- Who are the adults responsible for your child’s care?
- I have not heard that term before. What do you want me to know about you?
Understand Your System

○ What’s it like to walk into your place of work?
○ Who works well with transgender people?
○ Are there staff available to help transgender people navigate their healthcare?
○ Do mental health providers write letters for procedures? Which ones?
○ How much will care cost?
○ Do doctors operate with informed consent, WPATH SOC, or some combination or other model? (5 calls)
○ Where can one find this information?
**Action Steps**

- Practice language - pronouns, questions you ask, etc.
- Challenge your own assumptions & conditioning
- Connect to resources in your community
- Read/watch stories *by* transgender people
- Observe & challenge internal biases
- Work towards organizational/community/systemic change
- Deepen your trauma-informed practices
- Care for your body & the collective body
Additional Resources

- US Transgender Survey
- PHMDC LGBTQ+ Profile
- WPATH Standards of Care
- UCSF Center for Excellence
- Fenway
- GenderSpectrum.org
- welcomingschools.org
- GLAAD.org
- Transequality.org
- Lgbthealtheducation.org
- www.translifeline.org or 877-565-8860
- United Way -Cuéntame Más Report & Race to Equity
- Diverse & Resilient
- WI Trans Health Coalition
- Fair Wisconsin
- PFLAG
- Outreach LGBT Center (Madison)
- Milwaukee LGBT Community Center
Thank you!
Any questions?
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