

Art students, on April 8, at Lehman College, CUNY, in the Bronx, sketching an Olmec Head replica – the original, pre-dating Columbus' arrival to the "New World", is in Mexico.

Considering the Whole Person: Contexts for LGBT Peoples of Color Mental and Behavioral Health Treatment

By

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Today's Presenter



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TheNationalCouncil.org



Contexts for mental health treatment for Black and peoples of color.

We'll look at:

- Slavery (historical and contemporaneous manifestations);
- Racism's effect;
- Trauma (intergenerational, contemporaneous, and vicarious);
- Cultural contexts (thinking, biases and approaches); and
- Incorporate LGBTQ+ language - pronouns



Audience Poll

How prepared do you feel to treat/work with LGBTQ people of color in behavioral health settings? (5 - very prepared, 1 - not prepared)

- 1 – not prepared
- 2
- 3 – neutral
- 4
- 5 – very prepared



Charlestown, July 24th, 1769.

TO BE SOLD,

On THURSDAY the third Day
of AUGUST next,



A CARGO

OF

NINETY-FOUR

PRIME, HEALTHY



NEGROES,

CONSISTING OF

Thirty-nine MEN, Fifteen BOYS,
Twenty-four WOMEN, and
Sixteen GIRLS.

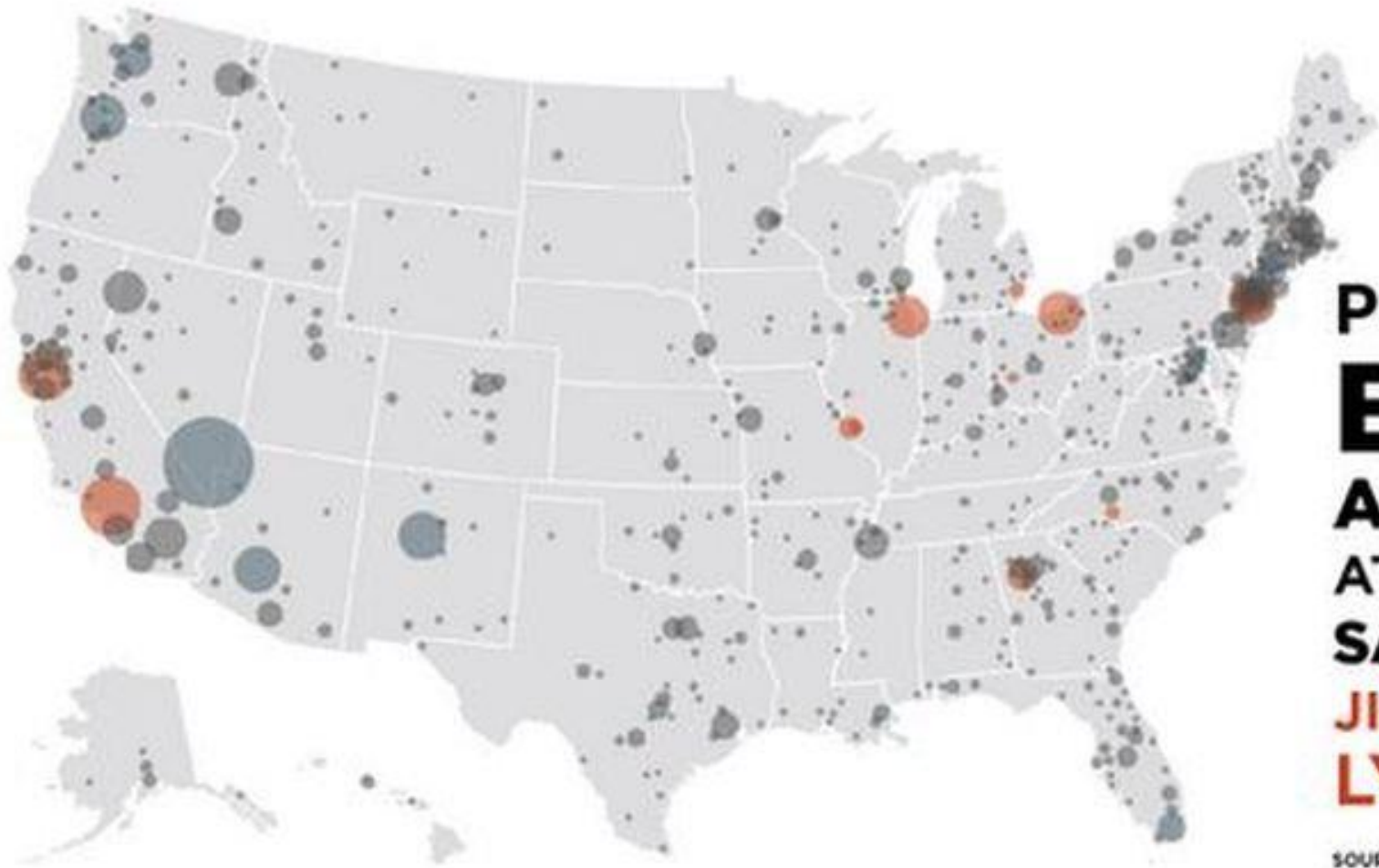
JUST ARRIVED,

In the Brigantine *DEMBIA*, *Francis Bare*, Master, from SIERRA-
LEON, by

DAVID & JOHN DEAS.



National Memorial for Peace and Justice (aka Lynching Memorial), Montgomery, Alabama



**POLICE *KILL*
 BLACK
 AMERICANS
 AT NEARLY THE
 SAME RATE AS
 JIM CROW ERA
 LYNCHINGS.**

2000-2014 INCOMPLETE FEDERAL DATA ON POLICE KILLINGS
 INSUFFICIENT FEDERAL ACTION TO STOP THEM

SOURCE:
 "Mike Brown's shooting and Jim Crow lynchings
 have too much in common. It's time for America
 to own up," *The Guardian* 08/25/14
<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/aug/25/mike-brown-shooting-jim-crow-lynchings-in-common>



Source: *The Guardian*, Aug. 24, 2014





Types of Trauma Impacting Mental Health

Intergenerational Trauma

- Slavery, separation and racist eras
- Joy DrGryu, Ph.D. – Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome

Trauma's Neurological Effects

- Freud's "repetition compulsion"
- Jung's "consciousness returns as destiny", "Collective Unconscious"
- Bessel Van Der Kolk pre-frontal cortex "speechless terror"
- Stress-related cortisol flooding hippocampus and amygdala – in infants and children

Trauma's Community Effects

- Children experience less sleep
- Affected attention and learning abilities
- Risk behaviors – depression, suicidal ideation

Maternal Trauma

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
- Stress Response Systems (SRS)
- Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)
- Hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis
- Maternal Stress during pregnancy – Respiratory Sinus Arrhythmia (RSA)

Contemporaneous Trauma

- Urban Trauma with civilian/social PTSD
- Separation (**incarceration**)
- **Police Killings**, detentions, arrests
- Vicarious Trauma
- Physical, sexual, psychological and emotional abuse
- Economic Trauma – food racism, wage earning, racism in education, racism in employment
- Healthcare and Mental Health Care Trauma – disparities in care, therapists not culturally sensitive
- Legal Trauma – glaring disparities in justice for Blacks compared to Whites – prosecutions and judgements
- Identity Trauma – voting rights, LGBTQ+ rights, denial of self

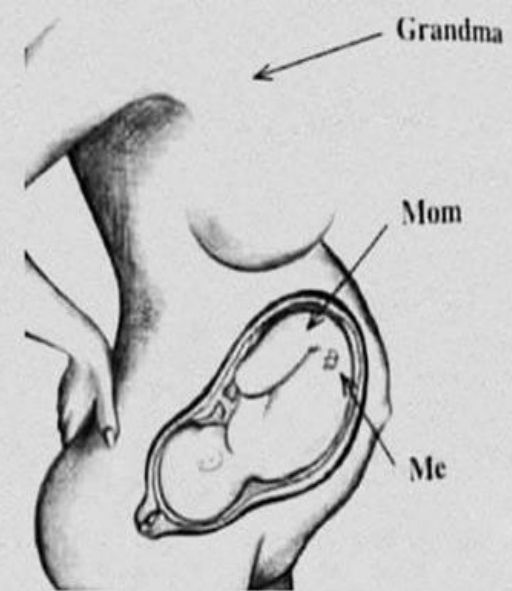


“The way an impala jumps influences its unborn child.” – the Tsonga People in Chibuto, Mozambique.

Maternal Transgenerational Trauma

"...maternal history of childhood abuse predicts hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis functioning in her offspring. These findings are consistent with life course theory, which posits that health trajectories are influenced by recent events and reflect cumulative exposure, suggesting that consideration of both current stressors and experiences across a mother's lifespan are needed to understand intergenerational health disparities. An infant's developing ANS, and therefore future self-regulation and mental health risk, are likely influenced by a combination of a mother's experience of prenatal stress and her own earlier exposures to adversity."

"Thinking Across Generations: Unique Contributions of Maternal Early Life and Prenatal Stress to Infant Physiology", co-authored by Sara Gray, Ph.D., et. al.

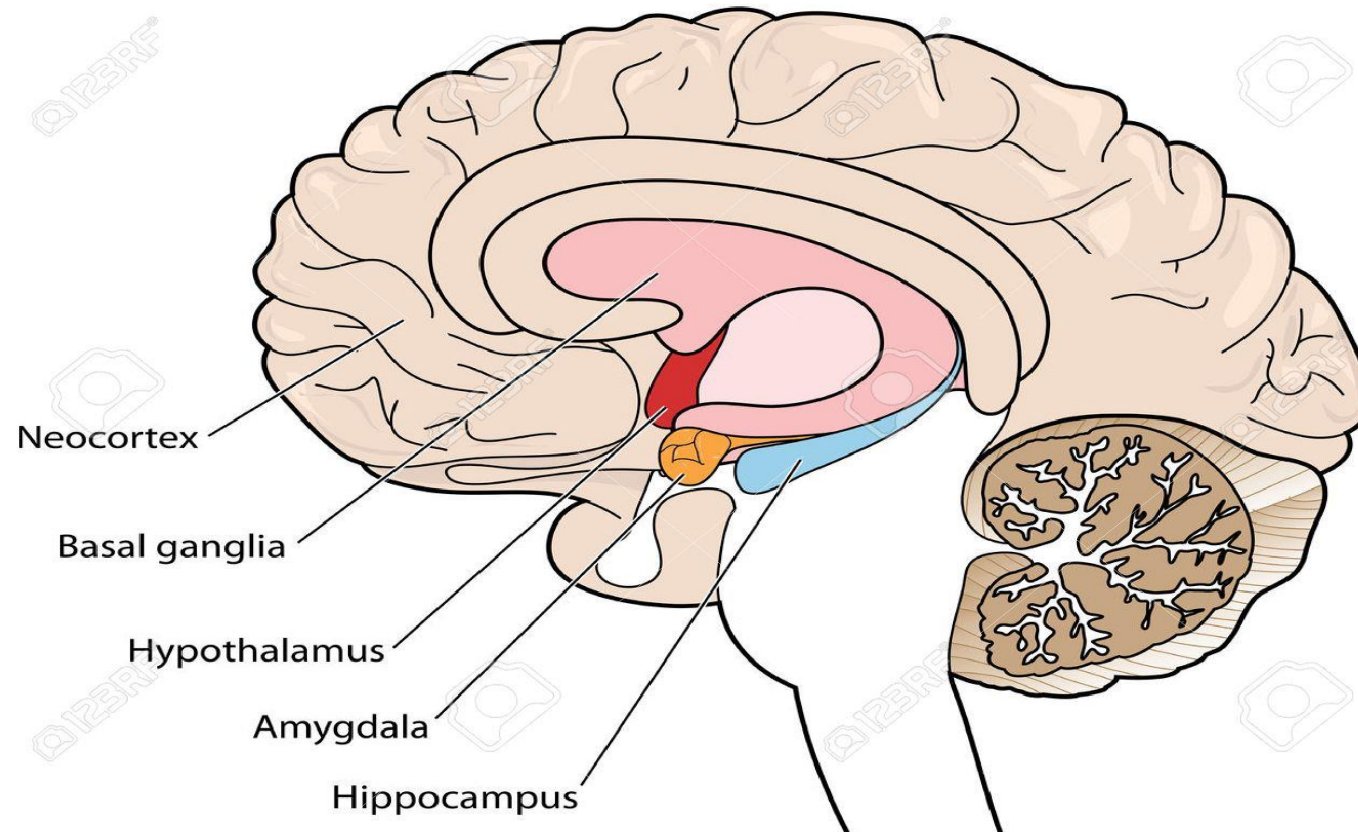


This is so amazing.. Did you know that your grandmother carried part of you inside her womb? But how? Well, a female fetus is born with all the eggs she will ever have in her lifetime. So when your Grandmother was carrying your Mother in her womb, you were a tiny egg in your Mother's ovaries. The three of you have been connected for a very long time
Women are amazing!



Contemporaneous Trauma

"Living With Neighborhood Violence May Shape Teens' Brains", by Darby Saxbe, Ph.D., *The Conversation*, June, 2018





Dr. Thema
@drthema



Childhood trauma can lead to an adulthood spent in survival mode, afraid to plant roots, to plan for your future, to trust, to let joy in.

It is a blessing to shift from surviving to thriving. It is not simple but there is more than survival.

“Let's raise children who won't have to recover from their childhoods.”

— Pam Leo



"Thinking about your mental health, which includes stress, depression and problems with emotions, how many days during the past 30 days would you say your mental health was 'not good'?"



Signs you are healing from trauma

- ~ You are aware of your triggers and patterns
- ~ You are not as easily and intensely triggered
- ~ Quicker return to your normal state after you've gone into fight/flight/freeze
- ~ Your emotional intelligence has improved
- ~ Feelings of powerlessness and helplessness change into confidence, worthiness and inner strength
- ~ Selfsabotage, shame and guilt are diminishing
- ~ Feelings of being stuck turn into realisation that taking a step forward is possible



SOULDIPITY COACHING

Her children were sold. Her men were lynched. She was raped. But she fought on and she's still fighting. #TheBlackWoman

The Black Woman



Approaches

Breaking the cycle involves:

- **First**, recognizing and acknowledging, if White, that a Black or person of color is human – in all aspects, no differences;
- **Second**, incorporate a Black or other person's culture, that is, their ancestral and intergenerational history – what were the traumas experienced by the person's immediate forebears?
- **Third**, looking at the trauma they experienced from birth to their current presentation, "What are some of the things that happened to you, as far back as you can remember to now, and how have you been affected?"

A Mother Speaks About Her Son – Nigel Shelby



Some Factors Affecting Black Gay Men's Mental Health

Coming from interviews and from the film, "**You Are Not Alone**", the following six themes emerged as psychosocial and sociocultural factors contributing to the mental health destabilization impacting Black gay men, and led to depression, suicidal ideation and attempts:



Some Factors Affecting Black Gay Men's Mental Health

- ❖ **Acceptance by family and friends** at an early age – need to examine the sociocultural factors which drive acceptance; research tells us a child's parents acceptance early in their lives, are able to become better and well adjusted members of the family, community and society;
- ❖ **Effect of sexual abuse** – the trauma leading to the biopsychoneurological rewiring, reliving this trauma every day as if it just happened and afraid to tell others for fear of not being believed or accused of encouraging the abuse;
- ❖ **Religious influenced homophobia** – churches continue to preach hatred against sexual orientation and gender identity, which leads to ostracism – whether self or forced by family, including many LGBTQ+ who are evicted from their homes;

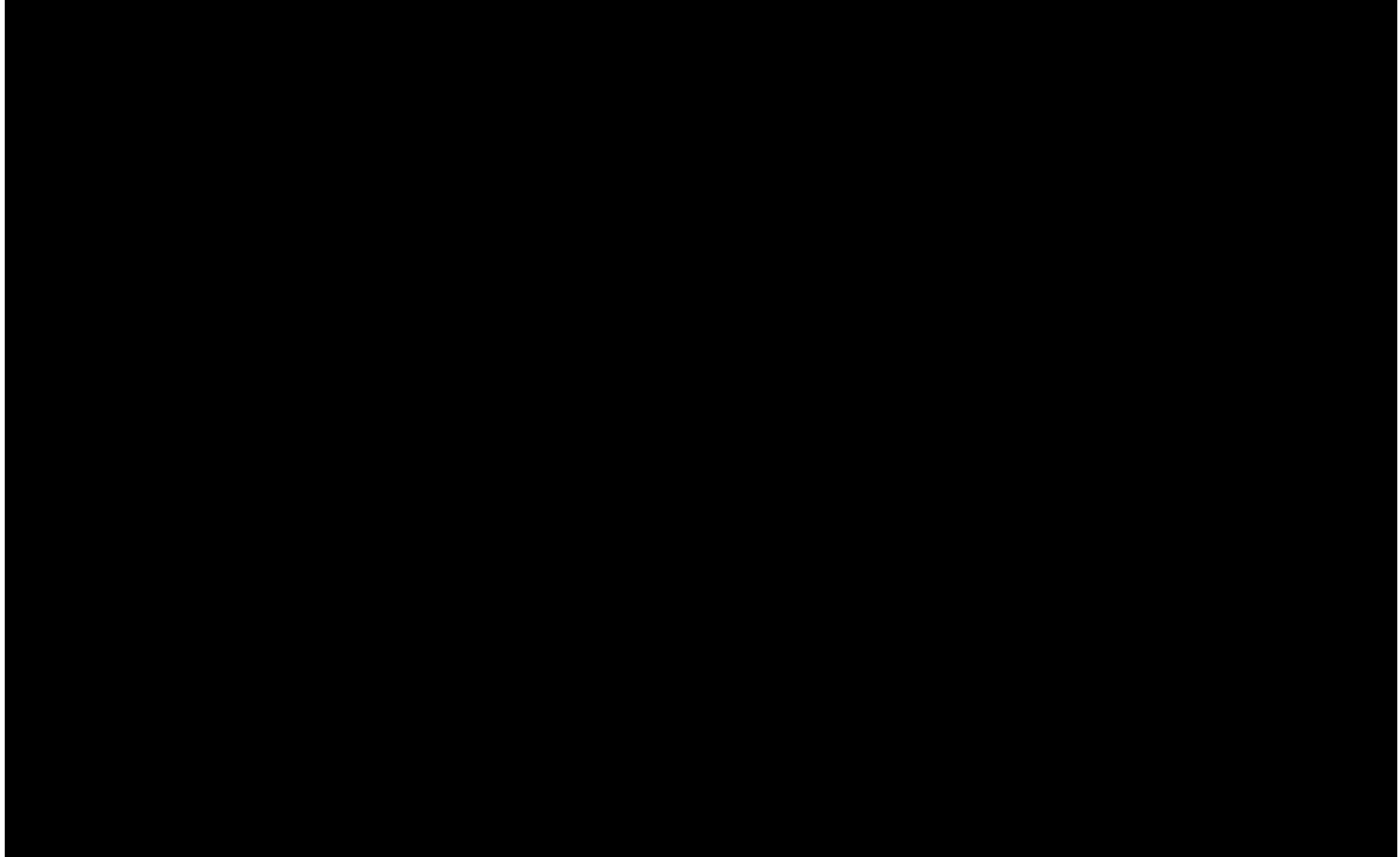


Some Factors Affecting Black Gay Men's Mental Health

- ❖ **Contracting HIV** and the readjusted lives that come with an infection, including the additional burden of secrecy, fear of judgement and further ostracism (being Black, gay, and HIV+), and the mental health effects of an HIV diagnosis, which wreaks havoc on the infected person's (undiagnosed and or diagnosed, but untreated) neurological system;
- ❖ **Effect of bullying**, including **Cyber-bullying**, which reinforces society's shame, stigma and discrimination
- ❖ **Growing old as a Black gay man** – twice victimized, returned to closets for survival in old age



From the documentary “You Are Not Alone”



Recognizing Culture's Role in Mental Health

- Mental Health professionals recognizing that the Western European Freudian psychoanalytic paradigm isn't a one-size-fits all to address mental health
 - Need to recognize and approach mental health from the perspective of the person's own culture and beliefs, for example, pibloktok – described by 19th century European Arctic explorers of the Inuit as "culture-bound psychoses" or "culture-bound syndromes", which the DSM-V classified as a dissociative trance disorder with a distinctive cultural expression, an involuntary state of disassociation that is found in several cultures around the world.
- Culture and social environment can shape, even predict, common mental disorders, such as depression and anxiety.
 - **W. E. I. R. D.** – Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic

RELATIONSHIPS?



Panda



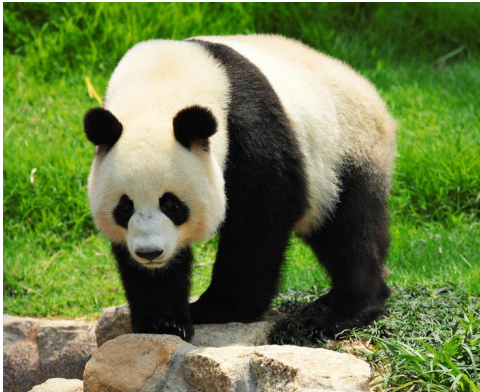
Monkey



Bananas

Treatment

- W.E.I.R.D – Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic.
- Embracing, undertaking and including one's culture/ethnic background into treatment/identification with the client



what's the deal with PRONOUNS?

Don't assume! Just ask "What are your pronouns?" when you meet someone and introduce your own.

They They walked the dog.	Them The dog licked them.	Their Their dog is so cute.	Theirs Is that dog theirs?	Themselves They went by themselves.
Ze/Zie Ze ate a cookie.	Hir Can I bake hir a treat?	Hir Hir favorite is funfetti.	Hirs The cookie is hers.	Hirself Hir made it himself!
She She likes to cut hair.	Her Ask her to cut yours!	Her Her hair is adorable.	Hers That comb is hers.	Herself Did she dye it herself?
Xe Xe loves to drink tea.	Xem Give xem a mug.	Xyr Xyr choice is mint.	Xyrs The kettle is xyrs.	Xemself Ow, xe burned xemself!
He He is a singer.	Him Invite him to the show!	His His songs are catchy.	His Is that one of his?	Himself He wrote it himself.
_____	_____	_____	_____s	_____self* * and many more!

“ But it's hard to remember and change what pronouns I use for you! ”

Everyone makes mistakes! Using the right pronouns for a person affirms their identity.

Continue to make an effort to change your behavior, and don't make a huge deal out of each slip-up.



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FOR MORE INFO ON THESE EVENTS, VISIT:
bit.ly/nyulgbtqcalendar



10 Things You're Actually Saying When You Ignore Someone's Gender Pronouns:

1. I know you better than you know yourself.
2. I would rather hurt you repeatedly than change the way I speak about you.
3. Your sense of safety is not important to me.
4. Your identity isn't real and shouldn't be acknowledged.
5. I want to teach everyone around me to disrespect you.
6. Offending you is fine if it makes me feel more comfortable.
7. I can hear you talking, but I'm not really listening.
8. Being who you truly are is an inconvenience to me.
9. I would prefer it if you stopped being honest with me.
10. I am not an ally, a friend, or someone you can trust.

Reference (resource materials)

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**IN MY MIND:
OVERCOMING BARRIERS;
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES**



**A PEOPLE OF COLOR
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**EN MI MENTE:
SUPERANDO BARRERAS;
CREANDO OPORTUNIDADES**



**UN CONFERENCIA DE
PERSONAS DE COLOR SOBRE LA SALUD MENTAL**

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Questions & Comments



Gratitude to Tom Hill and the team at the National Council for Behavioral Health.

THANK YOU for tuning in, listening, and for your questions and comments.

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