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IMPROVING LGBTQ+ MENTAL HEALTH

Fat Liberation is a Queer Issue

By Kindra Parimuha (she/they), Envision:You intern

Fat liberation is a call to dismantle systems of oppression that deny fat people equity in accessing healthcare, transportation, and diverse clothing choices that fit their bodies and accentuate their personal styles. Fat people experience prejudice and stigma widely in movies and television and from doctors, family and friends. **Fat liberation is not body positivity nor body neutrality**; fat liberation is a widespread movement that requires all of us to explore our biases and cultural ideas about our own bodies and our ideas of fat bodies. It's about deconstructing the systems of oppression that have worked so hard to deny basic rights and compassion to people that are not the straight-sized, cisgender, heteronormative "ideal." The **parallels that exist within queer liberation** are why fat liberation is inherently a queer issue.



Queer and transgender people face similar prejudice and stigma in many parts of the world. Queer and transgender people exist outside of the norm. Many times we do what we can to keep ourselves safe by blending in, which allows us to stay safe in a world that is violent towards people who are different. Queer and transgender people

may experience prejudice in medical establishments by doctors, nurses, and administrators. Discrimination in the medical setting causes many to avoid going to doctors for checkups and common ailments, even when those preventative measures are necessary for disease prevention and long-term health outcomes. Queer and transgender people experience discrimination for clothing which fits their queer or gender expansive identities. They may be stared at, denied entry to establishments, or given unsolicited opinions from a stranger when they are out in public.

The struggle for fat liberation and the struggle for queer liberation is radically aligned. These movements are engaged in the struggle to create a world that is more equitable for every kind of body that exists, including fat, transgender, and queer bodies. Fat folks may be queer, and queer transgender folks may be fat. The intersection of these identities should unite us in an interdependent purpose to co-create a world that humanizes each individual person regardless of size, shape, ability, skin color, gender expression, or sexuality.

Why Fat Liberation is Queer Liberation

1. Fat liberation calls for fat equity in social and political circles.
2. Queer liberation calls for queer equity in social and political circles.
3. Fat and queer people hold intersecting systematically oppressed identities.
4. There is no queer liberation without fat liberation.

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New Envision:You Staff Highlights

Leor Feldman (they/them/theirs), Program Coordinator

Leor is a Queer Jewish writer and passionate advocate. They serve as a program coordinator on Q is for



Questioning and the Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) initiative at Envision: You. As a Queer person with a long history of mental health struggles who has seen how alcoholism affected their family, Leor has an immense drive to create a positive difference within

the LGBTQ+ community through their role at Envision: You. Their work allows Leor to look inward on their own identities to create connection, community, and support outwardly with others in the LGBTQ+ community that need extra resources, or with those who want more information on how to best support the LGBTQ+ people they love.

Leor earned their BA in writing and literature from California College of the Arts and their MA in international and intercultural communication from The University of Denver. Leor loves to pet sit, is an avid reader, and enjoys visiting their parents and partner up in the beautiful Colorado mountains.

Mak Dawkins (he/him/his), Program Coordinator

Mak serves as a Program Coordinator for Envision:You, primarily supporting the LGBTQ+ Behavioral Health Provider Training Program. Before his work at Envision:You, Mak worked on hosting a LGBTQ+ club for middle and high schoolers and providing psychotherapy. He has also supported other nonprofits such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving and Protect Us Kids. Mak earned his BS in social work with a minor in history from Metropolitan State University of Denver and his Master's in social work with a focus on clinical social work from the University of Kentucky.

Mak's passion for Envision:You stems from observing the lack of LGBTQ+ affirming practices in mental health spaces through his education and direct practice experience. Mak believes that mental health equity is an important cause in the fight against injustice around the globe. Outside of work, Mak enjoys watching movies and documentaries, going for walks around Denver, and visiting museums.

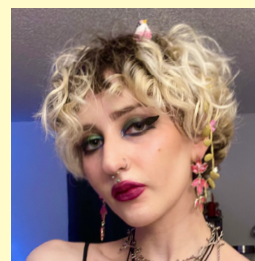


New Q is for Questioning Facilitator Highlight

Lila Kreis (they/them/theirs),
Licensed Clinician Facilitator

Hi – I'm Lila! I'm originally from Miami and now live in Denver. Q is for Questioning is a leap toward inclusive support for queer and gender expansive folks, as well as individual and community-based suicide prevention. I'm a facilitator because of the positive impact that trusted adults have on LGBTQ+ folks exploring their gender and/or sexuality. Moreover, this program would have been meaningful for me as a teen at the start of my personal journey.

Outside of Envision:You, I'm an outpatient trauma, dual-diagnosis, co-occurring substance use mental health therapist and a clinical social worker for teens and adults.



You can find me antiquing, crystal mining, community organizing, oil painting, pole dancing, watching live music, enjoying psychological thrillers, and, of course, applying hair bleach.

My main passion is aiding in the empowerment of all people.