Black Mental Health & HIV/AIDS - At the Intersections
About the Presenters:

Yolo Akili Robinson, RYT
Executive Director & Founder, BEAM
12 years experience in Healing Justice, Yoga, Feminist informed work with Black men and boys, Training & Organizational development, Social Justice Informed Mental Health Literacy, and HIV/AIDS

Isabel Shawel
BEAM Training Coordinator
5 years experience in mental health advocacy and health disparities research with African Americans and Black Immigrants/Refugees
BEAM is a national training and technical assistance institution. BEAM trains individuals, organizations and grassroot movements on how to implement and embody healing justice and social justice informed mental health strategies.

Twitter: @_beamorg
Website: www.Beam.community
Mental Health Literacy Trainings

Emotionally Intelligent Leadership Trainings

Unconscious Bias & Organizations Training

Southern Healing Support Fund

Conflict Resolution & Mediation Support

Staff Retreat & Planning Facilitation
Why This Webinar?

- Understand the intersection of mental health care and HIV care, specifically within Black communities
- Strategize ways to incorporate an understanding of mental health into your organizational practices, and learn how doing so contributes to dismantling harmful systems of oppression
**Emotional Justice:**
Acknowledgement and validation of the legacy of harm and untreated trauma.

**Reparative Justice:**
Policies, activities, and institutional practices that seek to repair harm that individual, societal and institutional injustices have created.

**Healing Justice:**
Creation of and restructuring of community traditions, spaces and neighborhoods into places that affirm, support, heal and sustain the emotional lives of community members based on the legacy of harm and untreated trauma.

**Transformative Justice**
Active processes, guidelines, policy and practices that transform the root cause of inequities within systems and recreate life affirming, healing and emotional justice centric conditions.

**Model Of Justice**

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Author: Yolo Akili Robinson
When someone says Mental health? What comes to mind?
Most people think

- Mental Illness
- Crazy
- Something is wrong
- Therapy
Like physical health, all people have mental health.

Mental health does not mean “mental illness.”

Mental health is a spectrum that fluctuates and is not always fixed.
Rethinking Mental Health

Clinical mental health work is ONE part of mental health work, but it is not the entirety. Decentralizing the western medical model is essential to Black liberation.
Depression, distress and other psychological issues is to be EXPECTED in a racist, sexist, homophobic world. The symptoms are adaptive, not abnormal.
Transphobia, Racism, Heterosexism, Ableism are mental health issues

- Create psychological distress and contribute to traumatic experiences
- Influence mental health outcomes
- Contribute to lessening other protective factors; education, income, accessibility.
- Male Privilege & Mental Health
HIV & Mental Health Statistics: Black Trans Women, Trans Men, and Gender Non Conforming Folks

● Even though Black people have lower suicide rates, 49% of TGNC people report a history of suicide attempts compared to 41% of all study respondents and 1.6 percent of the general population. ¹

● Of new HIV diagnoses from 2009-14, Black people were disproportionately impacted representing 51% of new HIV cases for trans women and 58% of new HIV cases for trans men. ²

¹ Grant et al., 2011
Among Black women living with HIV, 36% reported symptoms consistent with PTSD and 80% reported being hospitalized for a mental health problem in the last month with an average length of stay of 10 days. ³

Among Black MSM living with HIV, 50% screened positive for depression, 60% reported experiencing at least 1 interpersonal trauma, 45% experienced child sexual abuse, 8% adult sexual assault, and 36% physical assault. ⁴

³ (Brownley, Fallot, Berley, and Himelhoch, 2015)
⁴ (Fields et al., 2013)
Depressive symptoms have long been linked to poor medication adherence among HIV+ persons, and treatment with antidepressant medication appears to improve antiretroviral adherence among those with a current mental health problem, especially those with more complex medication regimens (Kumar & Encinosa, 2009).
HIV/AIDS As a Mental Health Issue

- Stigma
- Trauma of loss
- Ongoing shame and discrimination
- If we are not supporting our organizers and staff with mental health literacy- they are missing a large part of the work
Considerations: Misogynoir

Black women are unfairly expected to hold the emotional labor of our communities.

Black women who are in leadership taking directive with EI have to also navigate the misogynoir and uneven expectations put on them; in addition to often having their emotional needs/trauma erased or minimized.
The mental health message is a your mental health elevator speech. It’s a brief dialogue that communicates your organization's stance on mental health, and eases the pathway to the referral by providing genuine information on therapy and breaking up mental health stigma.
Example: So you are interested in seeing one of our therapists? That’s great. Our therapists here are so good I go and talk to them all the time to get support and they just help me clear my head chile.

So I am going to refer you to Kimberly. Now, let me just tell you a bit about how it works--as a therapist Kimberly will sit and listen to what you share and really serve as a guide to help you think of things differently, just listen, or even come up with strategies to process things. Give it time, but If for any reason you and Kimberly don’t gel---it’s ok cause we have other therapists here too. It’s all about finding the right fit and someone you can talk too that makes you feel comfortable. Do you have any questions?
MENTAL HEALTH MESSAGE

Things to Include:

● Why does Mental health matter to the work you do?
● What is the name of the therapist/psychiatrist you are referring to? (Add some attributes about her approach i.e; she’s funny, or something you learned from her.)
● How therapy works: (Say in your own words how therapy works)
● Affirm normalcy: Express how talking with someone about your feelings is normal.
● Affirm agency: remind them that they can always try different therapists, and if something doesn’t feel good to let the therapist know.
● Affirm confidentiality: Remind people about privacy.
What Is Our Work? What Can We Do?

- Get mental health literacy training
- Develop mental health messaging
- Don’t diagnose people if you are not a professional
- Seek out SAMHSA’s Trauma Informed Principles
- Learn the local mental health resources and state laws
- Do your own work!
Mental Health Literacy and HIV/AIDS 101

BEAM’s Mental Health Literacy 101 is designed to provide baseline information on mental health to staff, as well as provide strategies for non-mental health professionals to subvert mental health stigma and integrate mental health informed practices into their broader programs and service delivery models.

Currently, non-profit organizations residing in any of the nine (9) Deep South states (AL, FL, GA, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, TX) who have a focus on reducing new HIV infections and/or improving the health of people living with HIV are eligible to apply for trainings and technical assistance.
Resources

24 Hour Hotlines:

● National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255
● GLBT National Hotline: 888-843-4564
● Trevor Project: 866 488 7386 or text TREVOR to 1 (202) 304 1200
● Trans Lifeline: 877-565-8860

General Support (Not 24-hours)

● SAMHSA Treatment Referral Hotline 1-877-726-4727
● National Alliance on Mental Health Helpline : 1-800 950-NAMI
Interested in training or technical assistance?

Call us!

Website: http://Beam.Community

Twitter: @_Beamorg

Yoloakili@beam.community
Isabel.Shawel@beam.community