

Welcome and Introduction

We want to acknowledge the hard work everyone has put into making the symposium happen. The pandemic has caused all of us to shift online, shift the structure of our lives. There have been so many issues - racial issues, trans issues. Transgender Day of Remembrance and trans awareness - that's every day of your life and I acknowledge that you bring a lot of those heavy feelings into the symposium. We are talking about violence and trauma and mental health, so we hope through the symposium that you take time to step away and take care of yourself. We encourage you to speak to community members as well.

About METRAC and the TransFormed Project

Laura Hartley (she/her) - Program Director at METRAC

METRAC was founded in 1984 and is a not-for-profit agency based in the Greater Toronto Area. METRAC has historically been devoted to advancing safety, justice and equity for women and youth. With the introduction and creation of the TransFormed Project, METRAC expanded its inclusivity efforts by putting time, energy and research into understanding the experiences of intimate partner violence within Two Spirit, nonbinary and trans communities. METRAC is committed to partnering with individuals, communities and institutions to change ideas, actions and policies towards ending gender-based violence.

The TransFormed project is a bilingual community-based research and action initiative led by METRAC in partnership with Centre Francophone du Grand Toronto. We are very grateful to our funders for their generous support - Public Health Agency of Canada, City of Toronto, Canada Department of Justice, Law Foundation of Ontario.

Thank you to the PLG, AC, Centre Francophone and our graphic designer Manar. Over the past three years, the Transformed Project has engaged in community-based, participatory research and education with the goal of addressing barriers and increasing access to health and social supports for Two Spirit, nonbinary and trans people affected by intimate partner violence. This collaborative project brings together community members affected by IPV, researchers, health and social sector professionals of multi-service agencies.

Land Acknowledgement

METRAC's Board of Directors and staff are committed to upholding the spirit and intent

of the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations, and call to action. To this end, at the beginning of all METRAC meetings, we make a statement through which we hope to raise awareness, understanding and respect for the traditional Indigenous territories of Ontario.

We recognize the traditional Indigenous territories on which our organization is located, and on which our programs and trainings take place. We recognize the failure of settlers to uphold Indigenous sovereignty of this land, and we commit to decolonize our organization and bring this history to light.

For thousands of years, this land has been the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, Haudenosaunee, and most recently, the territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit River. The territory was the subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. This territory is also covered by Upper Canada Treaties.

Today, the meeting place of Toronto (as in the Haudenosaunee word, "Tkaronto") is still home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island. We are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on this land. We wish to express gratitude to Mother Earth and for the resources we are using, and honour all the First Nation, Metis and Inuit who have been living on this land.

We are aware that our settler acknowledgement uses language which may differ from language used by First Nations, Metis and Inuit people. We understand that language is fluid and living and we respect this diversity. We are also aware that not all First Nation, Metis and Inuit refer to themselves in the same way. Some may refer to themselves in spiritual or religious contexts, while some use regional names.

Opening Words by Elder Blu

[Speaking in Cree]

I've introduced to you in the Cree language and told you that my name is Earth Song. My family is from the wolf clan. I am "aayahkwew", which means "neither man nor woman". It's important to understand the gender identity that we had prior to colonization. I encourage people to look up the words in their own languages for nonbinary or gender-diverse people.

I welcome you to the territories of Turtle Island and to bring awareness to our Two

Spirited and nonconforming members of community. We know that due to systemic racism indigenous people face higher amounts of violence, and those that are diverse report even higher. It's very important.

I ask the ancestors to be with us while we do this important work. It is hard work, talking about the ways that people violate us, and it's hard to find the words. To give encouragement and hope and support to those that experienced that violence and to help the presenters and panelists to say the important words that need to be said and heard. There may be some information that may be triggering and troublesome, please take a few moments to center yourself, smudge, offer tobacco outside, we ask that the ancestors and creator help comfort you in this time. As we speak today, open our minds to hear things that we have not heard before. Even though we're dealing with an aggressive subject, that doesn't mean we have to express ourselves in an aggressive way. And lastly that we open our hearts to be kind, compassionate people, to open our resources and help those in need. I offer these reminders as we deal with this important subject for those that are nonbinary, trans and Two Spirit.

I hold up my hand to those who brought us this symposium and to METRAC for bringing this forward to us, so that we have information and we can be wiser. Be well and be gentle with yourself. Miigwech, hai hai.

Zoom Tutorial

You will see some buttons across the bottom of your screen. We will be using two of them today.

Q&A box: you can enter a question for the panellists. We might answer in real-time, we might type an answer, we might bring it up verbally.

Chat box: you can chat amongst yourselves as attendees and with panellists, or if you have a technical issue.

You can control how big or small the presentation is versus the faces. You can drag to make one smaller and the other bigger. If you need any support, please use the chat.

TransFormed Project Webpage

To access the TransFormed Project webpage, go to metrac.org and click on the "What We Do" tab. Go down to "TransFormed Project" and click on it.

Scroll down to find the series of resources we just launched yesterday. Great resources for community members and service providers to support some of what we're talking about today. We have a glossary of terms, support services brochure, the healthy and unhealthy intimate relationships resource, the Preventing Intimate Partner Violence in Two Spirit, Nonbinary, and Trans Communities resource designed for service providers, legal resources on gender and name changes, and our research report. All available for free to download.

I encourage you to email us at transformedcoordinator2@metrac.org if you have any concerns.

Qualitative Data

The goal for this discussion is that in presenting our data, we're hoping to increase staff capacity by identifying community needs through their experiences to ensure more equitable access.

It will hopefully encourage community members to speak out more about their experiences, increase access to resources and to encourage open sharing within organizations and agencies to improve future projects and research.

Throughout the conversation we focused on 5 core areas: resources, impacts, health, recommendations.

We recognized it is important to have indigenous service providers and indigenous approaches of healing.

Someone gave a personal, vulnerable account of their experience with an indigenous service and with police. They did not recommend calling colonial police. They disclosed their domestic violence situation to a case manager who could not support them because she said she would be forced to call police. They are hoping for more culturally appropriate spaces. Ceremonies, talking circles, drumming, sweat lodges.

Another person said the Natie Women's Resource Centre was helpful, but at others there were so many barriers - transphobia, sanism, sexism, anti-indigenous, anti-pagan services. There was the subsidized housing issue in that it is owned by a private religious institution promoting transphobia, homophobia, anti-sex-work, anti-indigenous, racism.

Their experiences with police and social workers have so many barriers. Services meant to protect them have not. People often say we need more social workers. True, but social workers also partake in that system of violence, like police systems do. It must be critiqued to support people better.

What they said about their therapist was so positive and healing. That type of relationship is what we want to encourage all spaces and services to have. It sounds like this was the person who opened them up and helped them through it.

Quote: “Two Spirit people are known for being good with confidentiality. I trust my community and people. Thank God for my therapist. She said people need me here.” That therapist broke down those walls. So these relationships are so critical and make such a difference when it’s positive and healthy. On the other side, it can have such a negative impact when the space cannot support you because they have no cultural education, did not make time, or don’t have cultural sensitivity.

They talk about their family a lot. It’s hard especially near the holidays. These conversations took place around November last year. I’m thinking about the impact of the holidays again for people without family and friends. The relationship between their parents had violence, but they worked through it and found a healthy way through. That had an impact on their relationships.

A key quote: “My dad survived residential schools, he never talked about it and took it to his grave. But with my therapist, I say whatever is on my mind.” They are using that family as a resource, but want more resources.

They want to know what to do with unhealthy or violent feelings coming up. They want physical things, like boxing, but also want to learn healthy ways to deal with it. Yes, they want support and safety when they experience abuse, but people also will get unhealthy feelings and they don’t want to pass it on. There is so much complexity around that that isn’t fully addressed.

There is also that theme of traditional healing spaces and a diversity of healing spaces.

All participants were between 40-60 years of age. They are elders, in a later stage of life. The concept of eldership, how they are treated and supported in indigenous communities versus how they are supported in western communities and the impact that has. There is data around the range of ages and how to support people at different phases of their life.

Two spirit elders are being role models even though they didn't have any. They want to give back.

The concept of trans elder

Susan Gapka (she/her/elle)

When I was half my age, I never expected to live this long. The life expectancy in South America for trans people is 32. I'm trying to find my place in all of this. We live in a colonized society where you're either too young to make your own decisions, not experienced enough, or too old in society. I connect with the term elder, which is more common in indigenous communities. A year ago, I was asked to be on a Trans Elder panel in Victoria, BC. That conference will now be online in March. In 2004, I created that term as an umbrella term. Historically transgender and transexual were contested terms. Transexual comes from Dr. Cauldwell who tried to help people, but did not identify that way. Dr. Virginia Prince coined transgender, which is more common, but had an aversion to surgery and called it mutilation.

Identity is personal, it's intense. When you're trying to find your way in the world, it can be very important. Albert McLeod talked about how pre-contact there was no binary terms of men and women or male and female. Nonbinary wouldn't have existed without binaries. We used this term when I was coming out of gender queer. When we look at the TransFormed data, we see that queer and nonbinary identities are much more common than transwoman, as I identify as, backed to a colonized society that is binary.

To understand how patriarchy and colonizing works, how sexism operates, you have to have a dominant part of the population and a subservient part of the population - not a lot of room for youngsters and elders.

Role models and what does that mean for an elder? I grew up without role models, so who are my elder role models? We have to carve out our own path. But I also want to ask how someone like myself can be a more understanding, kinder role model for nonbinary, trans and youth.

LGBT Youth Line

Hayley Moody (she/her) - Manager, Provincial Programs

Hayley is a queer, Two Spirit mixed-race Anishinaabekwe with roots from along the shores of Georgian Bay, England and Germany, and currently lives in Gitche

Namewikwedong [Owen Sound] on Saugeen territory. Most of her work has centered around sexual violence advocacy, and working with youth in a counselling and support role, always prioritizing healing as an act of resistance. She spends a lot of her time being critical of the Canadian colonial state, and dreaming of land reclamation and youth-led revolutions. She can also be found watching ridiculous TV shows, putting maple syrup on all foods, and finding ways to connect to her traditional territory.

LGBT Youth Line is a provincial organization in Ontario. Hayley has been the Manager of Provincial Programs for 2 years. Before that, she was at a sexual assault centre for almost 5 years, working with young folks, predominantly BIPOC, in counselling, crisis, and advocacy.

<https://www.youthline.ca/publications/>

Last year, an amazing group of youth ambassadors developed this needs assessment for LGBTQ2S+ needs. There were surveys and sharing circles, online and in person (before COVID), and almost 1200 youth responded.

Based on that data, we had 5 snapshot reports and 1 summary report. We prioritized populations often not part of mainstream conversations and made snapshot reports that cover that specific population: 1) Indigenous youth, 2) trans, nonbinary, Two Spirit youth, 3) racialized youth, 4) Northern youth, and 5) youth under 18. You can access these on our website. The snapshots are one-page graphics.

This was about the needs of 2SLGBTQ youth, but because of the colonial society, where Indigenous folks are hated, and also T2SBQ, transphobia, homophobia and biphobia, combining those, Indigenous 2SLGBTQ experience violence daily just based on their existence. Sad, but also a shout-out to all the 2SLGBTQ Indigenous youth. Glad you're here. We had 144 Indigenous participants - First Nations, Metis, Inuit.

“How indigenous youth take care of their mental health”:

The top two were talking to friends and self-care. In a graph, those two bars were so long. Strong majority, like 80%, for the top two choices. There was a significant drop to other options. Accessing services and supports were 60% less likely. Most indigenous youth rely on each other and themselves.

There are numerous quotes throughout included from sharing circles and surveys.

“Changes Indigenous youth would make to their community”:

1) meeting spaces and events

- 2) specific programming
- 3) health resources
- 4) general education

58% of participants say they do not feel a sense of community. Very sad and alarming to hear. Community is so important, especially when experiencing IPV. What does this mean in terms of supports?

“What Indigenous youth would say to people making decisions”:

- 1) Listen to us. Youth know what they need. They don't need adults making decisions for them.
- 2) Real systemic change. Indigenous 2STQ youth are living in a violent colonial system. Harm reduction is needed of course, but the systems need to change. Our youth are dying and not okay.
- 3) Free, safe, sober Indigenous-only community spaces. Lots of 2SLGBT cases, especially in rural, remote, and Northern communities tend to be very white. They want a space for Indigenous folks.

IPV and gender-based violence:

There is a direct correlation between resource extraction and “land development” in relation to violence experienced by Indigenous folks. The missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and Two Spirit folks.

I suggest reading not those generated by the police, but by others. I suggest “Violence on the Land, Violence on Our Bodies”

(<http://landbodydefense.org/uploads/files/VLVBReportToolkit2016.pdf>).

The highest rates of missing and murdered women and Two Spirit folks is where there is mass resource extraction, e.g. the tar sands in Alberta is the highest. There is a direct correlation. Indigenous Two Spirit folks aren't just “more vulnerable”; it's more intentional, strategic by the state. They don't want us to survive and thrive and hold our sacred spots in our communities. Shout out to all the youth across Turtle Island holding down Land Back camps, on that front line, experiencing so much violence by politicians, police, military, local organizations including not-for-profits. That's also part of your responsibility in this field - learning, advocating, sending resources, supporting - because this is one way Indigenous folks are being targeted, including young 2STQ youth.

We need to get comfortable being uncomfortable. Key wording - it's intentional and strategic. For us to have focus groups and interviews where community members are

coming in and talking about their experiences, it's so hard for people to talk about that. We really hope that service providers are not just listening but also taking this back to their organizations and looking at their mandates. That will move us forward to see that change and see things differently. It's the hard work after the symposium that really matters.

2Spirits

Keith McCrady grew up in the community of Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging (BEAN JI Ti WAH Beck Za Geen) Anishinaabek, and relocated to the GTA over 13 years ago and now calls Scarborough home with his youngest of 4 children. Keith has dedicated his life to supporting the goals and dreams of Indigenous communities particularly in Toronto. Initially, he focused on children and youth programs, and eventually expanded into Indigenous education, employment, human trafficking, physical literacy and housing.

Keith McCrady's advocacy and leadership also come with his identity as a Two Spirited person. "It's not just a sexual orientation or a gender identity," he says, "it's also my role in my community and a place in our circle." As the executive director of 2 Spirited People of the 1st Nations, Keith's goal is to walk alongside the 2SLGBTQ communities and provide education and support to members of the 2Spirit community and reclaim our place in the circle.

I believe we all have the answers inside us to live our lives and walk our paths, and we have what we need to share with others to help them walk their paths. I believe that we are meant to be here. Many of us are frustrated with COVID and it's a great opportunity to sit back and think about what we're doing to the earth and with each other. I've been in what the western society calls leadership for 20 years. When I was working in early childhood, it was dominated by white middle class women. As someone who was younger and Indigenous, I had the brave voice. Then I moved into the field of HIV for 2Spirits. The way people see health and compartmentalize it needed to change. We need to look at health and families and communities holistically, and allow people to define who their family is and their community.

Throughout COVID we had to regroup and be nimble to ensure the community is serviced. So many people have unique needs. A lot of the leadership now is by older gay men. I'm usually the only Indigenous person there. I usually have a different perspective on how to service people with kindness and respect. What they focus on and highlight, it's exhausting to keep saying the same things that people like us are more open minded about. Sometimes there are ideas - like using a QR code to get into a health club - but who has a phone? A lot of people get uncomfortable around me. I

just think we need to start demanding people change what they're doing. Why do we focus on making everyone comfortable in this hub? Why don't we focus on who we are forgetting? I want us to be strong. I don't want to offend people who are white, because if you are white and trans, you have experiences that relate to people of colour or Two Spirit. I talk about what's in my heart, what's in the moment and what I feel.

I have a definition of what Two-Spirited is. This is only my teaching. Take what you want. Usually I give a definition of my life experience. I am a father of 4 children, 19 to 25. I broke the cycle, went to high school and then college, and my children as well. I was sexually abused. I think it's important to say that. Everyone treats me like a big butch man. I got away with a lot looking like this. I use the reality of who I am to influence people but also to change what people think about what we're doing.

Young people are a lot more brave. Because of social media, there's bullying online, but also positive things. We need to harness this.

I came out as a gay Indigenous man when 26. I already had 4 children. I wasn't confused, I didn't want to be gay because I felt men couldn't give me what a female could. Women have role modeled kindness to me. I came out all on the same day to my kid's mom (she was quite aware of some of these feelings I had), and then my mom, my family, my staff. I said that I'm not asking for your permission or input, just letting you know you're going to see things differently.

I was a young kid who knew I had to leave the reservation because there was a lot of harm there - a lot of pain, trauma. I went to high school, which no one else was doing. I took a bus two hours there and back. I didn't come out as a Two-Spirited man until about 39. I was fortunate because I was raised on a small reservation, about 150 people. There was a Two Spirit couple there, and Two Spirit men who were living with partners, and a trans aunt. I saw a glimpse of something that may be positive.

I wanted to work with young people so they didn't have the same experience as me being teased. It was common to tease people about sexuality. Thankfully I was witty and combative to make sure I was proud of who I am and didn't have to deny it. I learned that being Two Spirited was a role. I never really identified as Two-Spirited because I wasn't ready to take on that role. Working in the community, people would identify me as Two-Spirited and I would say no, I'm an Indigenous gay man. But when I was ready to take on the role, it took some more bravery to acknowledge this, and acknowledge my own gender. I didn't identify as a male, but I've been identified as a male my whole life. I didn't have any role models who looked like me. My uncle was feminine, people in the community, so I thought that's what Two-Spirited was. I describe

feminine in the way society uses it, not the way I do.

What changed for me was when someone asked what my pronoun was. I didn't know what that was. I talked to my mom; she is my elder, my heart, she always gives me the feedback I need. I was confident with what I knew, but wasn't sure about this. I have a given name and a self name, Mahogany. I didn't know why I wanted to be called that. Some people called me Mahogany. I carried that. It disappeared for awhile and then came back. As I talked to my mom, she said that people already know that you're a she and that you're also a male. So I decided that I don't have a preferred pronoun because I want people to see me how they see me. If people see me as a male, that's fine, you don't fully see me. If they see me as a she, I'm fine with that. This is what I've settled on, and if I change my mind it's okay. Right now, I want you to see me how you see me.

That's why being Two-Spirited has to do with our spirituality, our identity. It depends how we acknowledge the two spirits inside us. I'm not here to tell people what their choices are, I'm here to help them get the answers out. We have the answers, I believe this. I've always had a special place for people who work with the most vulnerable people who aren't given the same privileges and opportunities.

Who belongs to Two Spirit communities? That's anyone who says they belong to it. If you feel safe with us, then you belong. That's not everyone's definition, but that's mine. And I'm in a leadership position, so I'm going to spread that love. My mission is to make sure that we all have the same information about what Two-Spirited is, and maybe it won't be highlighted in the LGBTQ2S spectrum; it will start that way to remind us that we have always been here before. Someone told me that Two Spirits are special and we are, like everyone else. Don't take us out of the circle. Elders are also part of the circle. Let's not lift elders out of the circle, that's dangerous. We all have different understandings of the circle depending where we're at, we all have trauma. I focus on the Indigenous community so that we can be more cohesive in our understanding.

Comments from the chat:

"This talk is so passionate, moving, informative and hope giving! great! "

"I know you are not done sharing Keith but I am really enjoying your story. Thank you for sharing!"

I'm very accessible to the community. Facebook me. Text me. Do not voicemail or email. Personally is the easiest way; professionally not as easy. 2Spirits is branded so well we get messages all over the world, but we have to focus on servicing the GTA Indigenous community. Our reach has grown significantly. We're very busy growing and learning together. We have a very active Facebook. I'm responsive to that. It's how my

community connects. A lot of people don't have a phone, but they can log in to Facebook.

Question: I have always wondered which is the more accurate way to say the term.

Answer: Tell people, "this is my teaching". It's about sharing. This is what I learned, what did you learn? Someone told me "Two-Spirited", so that's what I use, but "Two Spirit" makes sense to me too. I'm not consistent with that.

I've had experience with some Two Spirit trans folk who said they don't appreciate my leadership because I service cis people. I said, "How do you know they're cis?" unless you know them and they identify. I want people to feel safe, and not forced to come out in any way just to make us comfortable. Many have come to our doors as straight-identifying, then walking with us, have identified as Two-Spirited. It's dangerous to assume, like others assume about us. That's something to reflect on.

Question: Is there a Two Spirit international community?

Answer: I was at the International Two Spirit Gathering. There's been international work, but it's focused on North America. Some have reached out to us internationally, mostly those who consider themselves Indigenous. Many write to us who are incarcerated, so we have a volunteer pen pal writing. There's a new organization called Two Spirit In Motion, just got funding a year and a half ago. Check out their website and Facebook.

If you want to know more about what we do, check out our Facebook page and website. It's <http://2spirits.org> (not .com). There are a lot of resources. We have 10 days of winter solstice coming up, 10 days of events facilitated by community members, ending with a concert.

Qualitative Data

Our goal for this - sharing data, experiences, information - we're hoping that service providers are taking this as a call to action to increase staff capacity, to support community members, to address IPV, to create a space to encourage community members to speak up. Hearing from community members is the only way we can create change, to know what's working and what isn't. That will lead to an increase of resources and better supports. We encourage open sharing amongst organizations. We're stronger and more solidified that way. It will impact future projects. Still so much research and work is missing we need to work hard towards. Take all this hard work back to yourselves and your organizations.

I want to thank Kylie Brooks, behind the Deaf community outreach, to get us to this place where we have these experiences from folks to share back with you.

We had core questions during the focus groups: What type of information are you looking for? Supports as a Deaf person. There is limited access to interpreters; more Deaf interpretation and ASL crisis lines. Having services in first language for Deaf people, having very visible supports. Individuals should be able to access crisis and counselling support online.

Cultural or intersectional insights:

There are not a lot of resources for Deaf people - interpreters, hotlines, places to escape from a domestic violence situation, to sit down with a counsellor or social worker. Their access needs have not been accommodated or met.

Quote: "I didn't call the police or social workers because I was afraid they don't know how to sign."

Plus all these barriers as an Indigenous person. Deaf and Indigenous with that trauma of police and social service systems, that keeps them from accessing support.

Peer Group Models

The accessibility conversation has to be big. Deafness: we didn't have interpreters available for the PLG meetings. How many Deaf people wanted to join but couldn't?

A lot of places say they offer accommodations if people flag it, but you have to disclose. A lot of people don't want to or don't have the language, especially without an academic background. And they view people differently. At one university conference, the moment I mentioned I was autistic or multiply disabled, because of internalized ableism, they thought, "What's wrong with you?"

There's a lot of questioning about trans bodies as well as disabled bodies and neurodiverse folks. Curiosity, but also entitlement that we feel we need to know everything about someone to serve them. You don't.

I would like more consultation with disabled folks, in a non-extractive way. A lot of information gathering in non-profits is extractive, exploitation. You question people on their lived experiences that intersect with trauma and marginalized identities. They get nothing out of it. Often disabled people will have to go through intellectual and emotional

labour of explaining, then those organizations portray those folks as reactionary, complainers. I think trans people have similar experiences, and women and people perceived as women - they're seen as just being hysterical, complaining. And organizations are seen as good for giving them crumbs. The marginalized people bringing this up get nothing - no recognition, no letters after their name. They're just "annoying" community members.

We have a lot of work to do, especially in social services and health, in serving disabled people. Beginning those conversations will be vital. Compensating them for their work is another issue.

Creating an environment where people feel safe enough to disclose. Also, list what a space has and ask what's missing. People are free to say what's missing without saying directly, "This is what I need."

By listing what you are doing to be accessible, it shows a willingness to engage, to try to do better. Many organizations, to appeal to funders, say, "We're thinking about accessibility, so we're good now." We're afraid to be wrong, #cancelled, so we deny it. "No, we've never been problematic." We have to put our ego aside and say, "How can we do better?"

Try to get rid of fluorescent lights. No one looks good, and it gives people headaches, but for those with migraines or who are autistic it's sensory hell. Offer deaf interpretation, have accessible fonts - Calibri or Arial, no serifs for those with dyslexia.

Listing what's available, people can see themselves represented or see where they're not. It's a conversation, so they might be more comfortable bringing it up. They see it will be received. That shows the organization is doing their end of the work.

Physical workshop spaces, sounds, these aren't considered as much. It's a deeper level of consideration. I think the need to deeply care, being uncomfortable, knowing you will mess up, but focusing on supporting the people you serve. Everything is a learning opportunity. To feel it's about you is taking away from the person you're supporting.

A lot of organizations, in so many different capacities, have taken the learning pat on the back, but the marginalized person still feels that they are being hurt or harmed. So the service providers prioritize themselves and their emotional experiences in those situations. When we cause harm, people are experiencing that harm and being emotionally impacted. They have that burden. Be conscious that when someone brings something to your attention, they are trusting your capacity to transform it. It's a gift

when someone calls you in.

Someone is supporting themselves by letting others know what isn't working for them. Having these conversations, we want to encourage people to speak up for what isn't working for them. That's the call to action, the more work that needs to be done, what we need to rethink. If a participant is scared to go somewhere because they don't know if someone will be there who can sign. They want the organization to consider all the intersections of their identities. This seems like so many things to consider, but that's the work that needs to take place.

People want feedback, but only if it's nice. A call in can include expletives. We have to be ready. People can be acting from their own place of trauma and pain, and we have to not punish them for it. Having accessibility is a privilege that many people don't have. By shaming people for not reacting in the way you want to, it poses a barrier. It's tone policing and respectability politics. People should be able to call you in in that capacity, and organizations and service providers should have structures in place to help people feel empowered. A lot of people will just ghost. Even METRAC PLG had a lot of disabled folks, and there will be that slow decline because it becomes too much. I would encourage organizations to examine who is showing up and who isn't. That doesn't mean to say that with those showing up it's because they are privileged specifically, because with those who are coercively feminized especially, they are showing up because they are fed up.

Targeted outreach to communities that aren't as represented as much or have a hard time being represented in these spaces. Having an ongoing orientation of how well they are doing. If one person is made to do the work, maybe a Two-Spirited or nonbinary or disabled person is having to do all that work, when they are burning out, what happens to all that information? Staff needs to be supported, they can't be doing it all by themselves.

Question: Can you recommend some resources that list some of these accommodations? I had never heard of the challenges with serif fonts.

Answer:

It's not entirely related to disability, but I was Coordinator for the Toronto Shelter Network diversity project, and the data is up on their website, which includes emergency shelters for people experiencing IPV. I recommend checking that out. It includes a restructured intake form which organizations can use. It has a section that you can tick off if you have autism, which can be important to flag. A lot of autistic people, out of stress, will not be able to communicate verbally. Is there somewhere they can write or

type? Is there something with larger fonts for those with vision problems? Especially if you're in crisis provision work and you're dealing with someone experiencing IPV. I know the fear of calling the police, or having the police called, is so real for disabled folks. Even with autistic folks, especially those who are racialized, there is the fear of being institutionalized, or even murdered by the police, which we've seen in the past year unfortunately. Really examine your policies around engaging with the police. There is an initiative to create alternatives to the police, or someone who can accompany the police to provide mental health services as well. I know the Gerstein Clinic does. The Toronto Shelter Network report is on their website, on the first page.

That qualitative report of METRAC will be soon shared to the website. It has direct quotes and recommendations. Please don't let these be the end of your work. Take time to look through the resources and take it back to your staff.

The City of Toronto did a bunch of focus groups about community feedback on community supports. That will have a lot of recommendations from participants with negative experiences because of disability. Look out for that.

One thing to add - when consulting gender-diverse and disabled people, I recommend hiring them on in a consulting capacity rather than giving \$10 honorariums, which can be insulting, takes up a lot of time, and is exploitation. I recommend empowering people by bringing these people onto your teams. If they're doing educational work, then pay them separately for it.

Evaluation

This feedback is key. A key component is evaluations, to ensure that participants and community have a voice in creating and shaping new programs and services. The evaluations go directly to the Public Health Agency of Canada, and help inform future programming.

You can use the link or QR code. It's a quick and short evaluation.

<https://forms.gle/FuCbAwjkGu7aPdLy9>

Closing

We hope you join us for the final day tomorrow. We hope you can take this back and have gotten a lot of good.