

Interdisciplinarity of dance/movement psychotherapy to foster queer affirmative practices

Sanjini Kedia

The two-hour workshop is informed by Sanjini's on-going PhD research findings – 'moving transmen in the patriarchy: a feminist practice-led interdisciplinary inquiry'. The PhD project challenges, integrates, and investigates how the interdisciplinarity of dance movement psychotherapy (DMP) supports transmen's lived experiences of their bodies, mental health, and emotional expression in India and the U.K. Owing to various systems of oppressions, mental health professionals (MHPs) and arts psychotherapists are often not equipped for embodied work with transmen or members from the LGBTQIA+ communities. The research intention is to create space for visibility and inclusion, and to explore the impact of being an ally as MHPs and therapists, especially in the arts therapies field.

There is an urgent and timely need to create queer affirmative therapeutic practices to resist the monotonous (sometimes harmful) traditional, patriarchal ways of therapeutic practices. This workshop intends to address this discomfort, along with the challenging theme of allyship, the handful of arts therapists working with queer communities, and the limited training offered within the arts therapies. It aims to explore experientially the therapist's positionality, how we locate ourselves, and the tension between the various structures and our willingness to work with clients from the queer community. In the workshop, we will work with our geo-political challenges individually, relationally, and as a group, to explore any potential resistance and, perhaps, the creation between the psychodynamic self of being a therapist and the social self of being an ally.

Addressing the conference theme, we will move, play with art, and sing through the discomfort; while creating a multi-modal, interdisciplinary practice, and offering a queer affirmative lens to DMP, to bridge the gap for the change in inclusivity and accountability that is much needed in our expressive field.

Biography

Sanjini Kedia (she/her) is a queer affirmative, dance movement psychotherapist, and a PhD candidate at the University of Roehampton, London. Sanjini works virtually as a dance/movement therapist with Dance for Mental Health (dMh) and Parivarthan Counselling Centre, India. Transmen's and cis men's mental health, along with allyship and advocacy in the arts therapies are Sanjini's primary research interests. She follows a feminist intersectional approach to her research practice and offers individual and group dance movement therapy to adults. Sanjini's professional experience ranges from working with children, adults with PMLD, adults from the LGBTQIA+ communities, in-patient and out-patient hospital settings, and older adults in retirement housing. Sanjini has presented her research at various global conferences, is a research committee member of the Indian Association of Dance Movement Therapy, and a member of the ethics committee of the Association of Dance Movement Psychotherapy U.K..

Recent publications and conference presentations

Trivedi, A., Avula, D. and Kedia, S. (2021). **Mental health care is incomplete without the body.** Reframe:Unpacking Structural Determinants: Mariwala Health Initiative Journal (4). Available at: https://mhi.org.in/media/insight_files/Reframe_webfinal3_38f49gj.pdf

Kedia, S. (2022). Presentation at Association of Dance Movement Psychotherapy UK, 40th year celebration conference.

Kedia, S. (2021). Presentation at Institute of Therapy through Arts Chicago, 5th Annual Conference.

Kedia, S. (2021). Presentation at American Dance Therapy Association, 55th Annual Conference.



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GENT, BELGIUM

Kedia, S. (2020). Presentation at American Dance Therapy Association, 54th Annual Conference.