# Being Seen and Receiving Care: Essential Mental Health Considerations for Supporting LGBTQIA2S+ People

Presented by

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Pronouns: he/ him/ his

THANK YOU

*I am here with deep gratitude to the elders and ancestors that had the courage and foresight to pave a way for us to exist and to even begin to imagine our own freedom.*

*I am here on behalf of the trans kids that are fighting with adults for the right to exist.*

*Also … I am here as a former trans kid that survived long enough to become a trans adult who is privileged enough to be invited into this shared space.*

PROTECT
TRANS
YOU-
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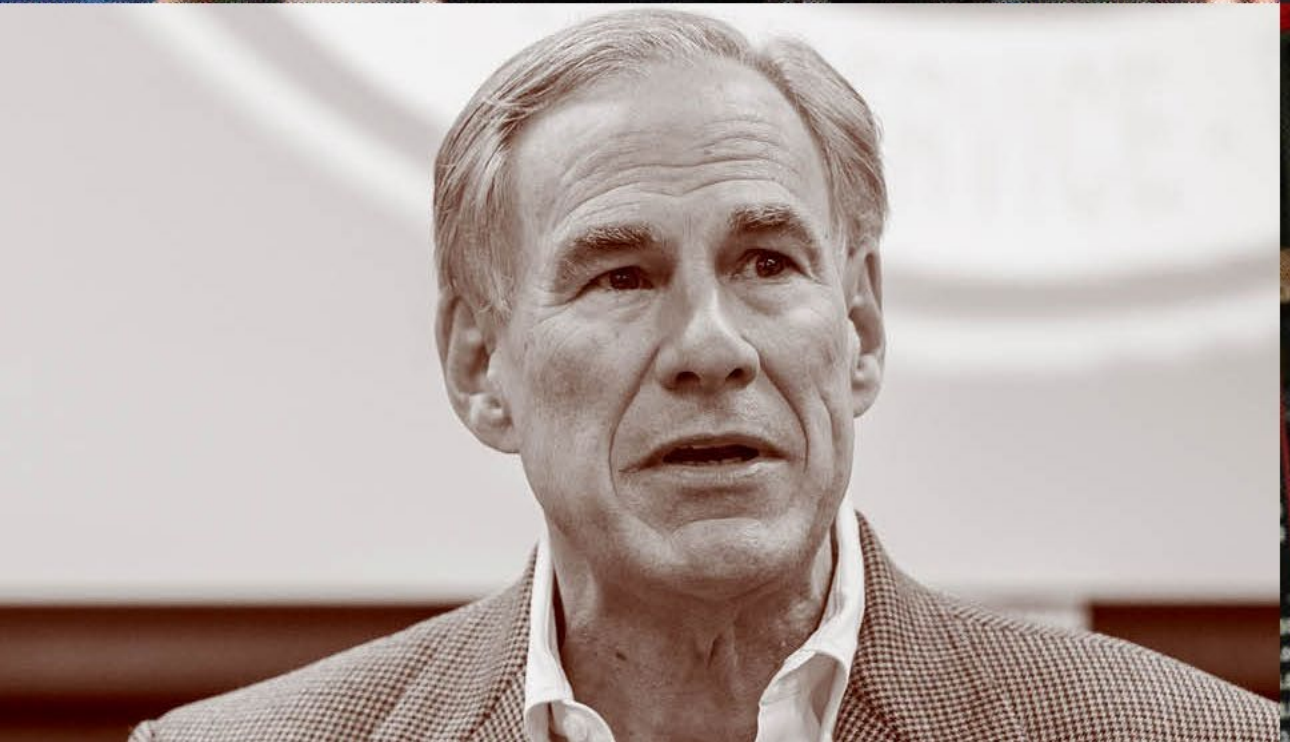

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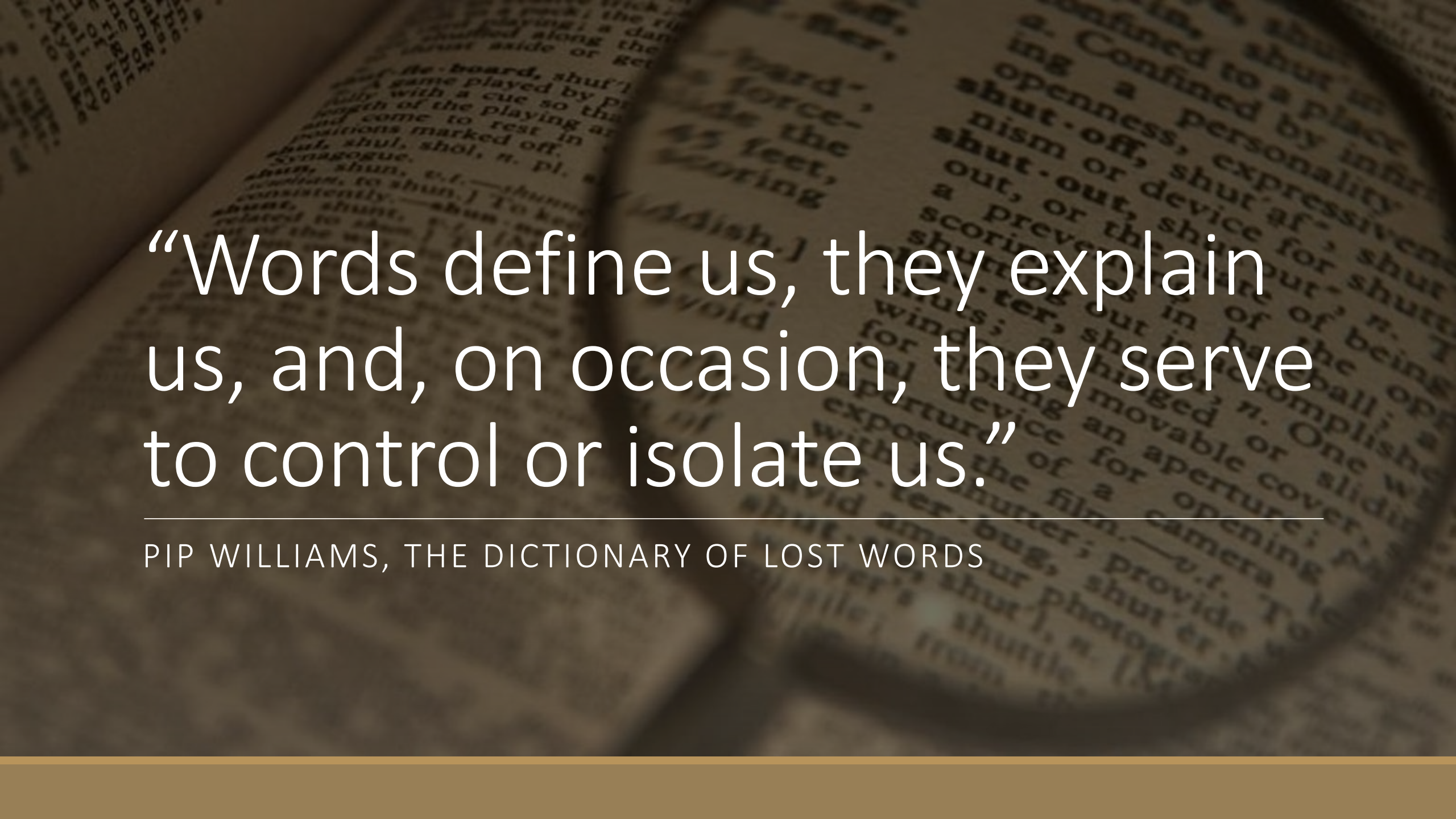


# “Words define us, they explain us, and, on occasion, they serve to control or isolate us.”

PIP WILLIAMS, THE DICTIONARY OF LOST WORDS

# Essential Mental Health Considerations

It is critical that providers and advocates be aware of the continued exponential rise of anti-LGBTQIA+ policies because such policies result in:

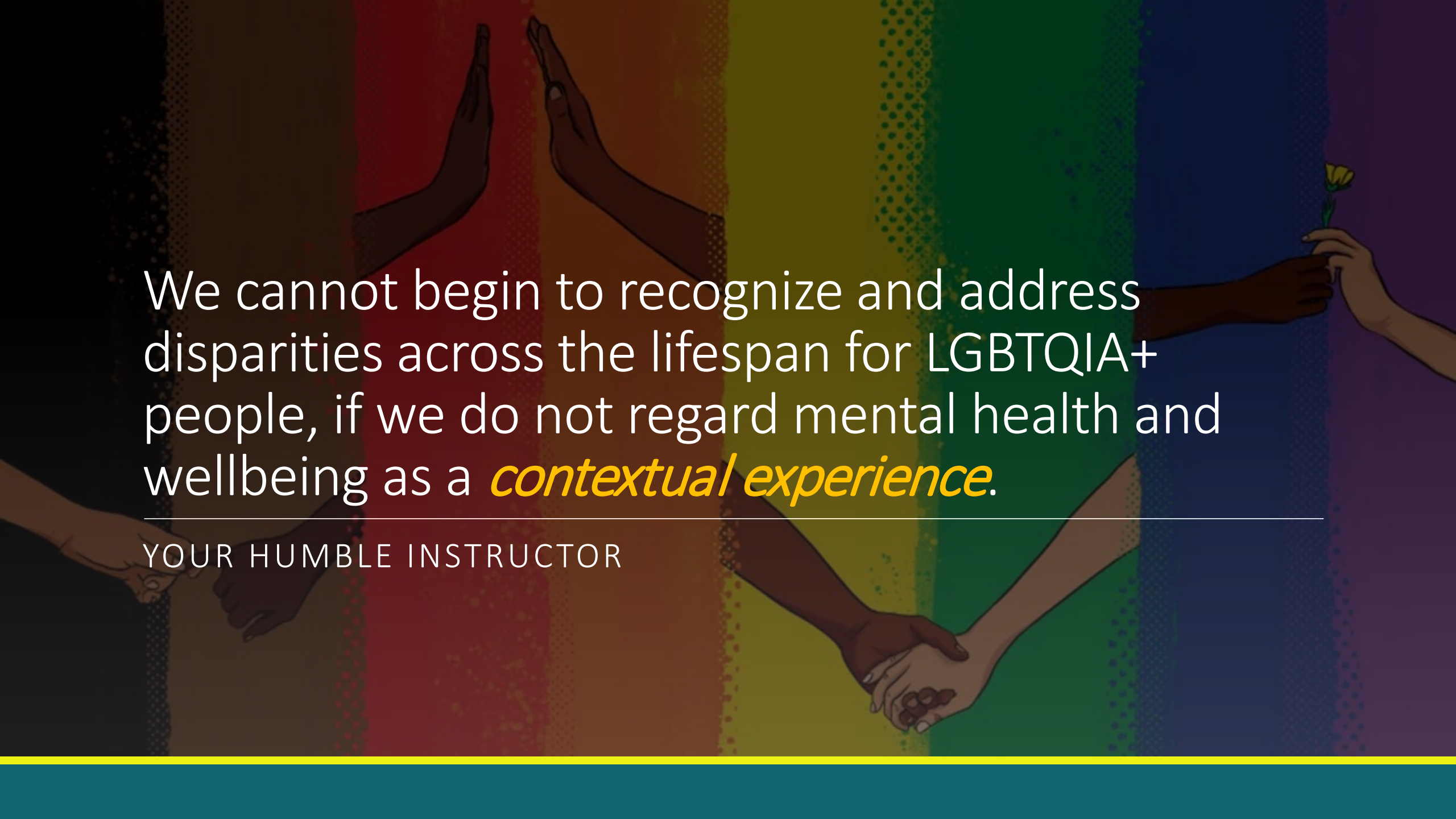
- Increased psychological stress, trauma, and risk of suicide
- Estrangement from families of origin
- Increased bullying of LGBTQIA+ children
- Lack of access to affirming medical and behavioral health providers
- Increased violence enacted toward LGBTQIA+ people and communities
- Unstable housing, force relocations, and epidemic levels of homelessness
- Discontinuity of essential behavioral and medical health care

***Such policies focus on the intentional erasure of LGBTQIA+ people, and pose a direct threat to our communities mental health and well-being.***

# Essential Mental Health Considerations

In the 2024 U.S. National Survey on the Mental Health of LGBTQ+ Young People, published by the **Trevor Project**, 2 glaring themes emerge from the 18,000 LGBTQ+ young people ages 13 to 24 who were surveyed across the United States:

- The risk of suicide and other adverse mental health outcomes have increased as evidenced by the 39% of LGBTQ+ young people [that] seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year — including 46% of transgender and nonbinary young people.
- There is a significant association between anti-LGBTQ+ victimization and disproportionately high rates of suicide risk — and that far too many young people struggle to access the mental health care they need.

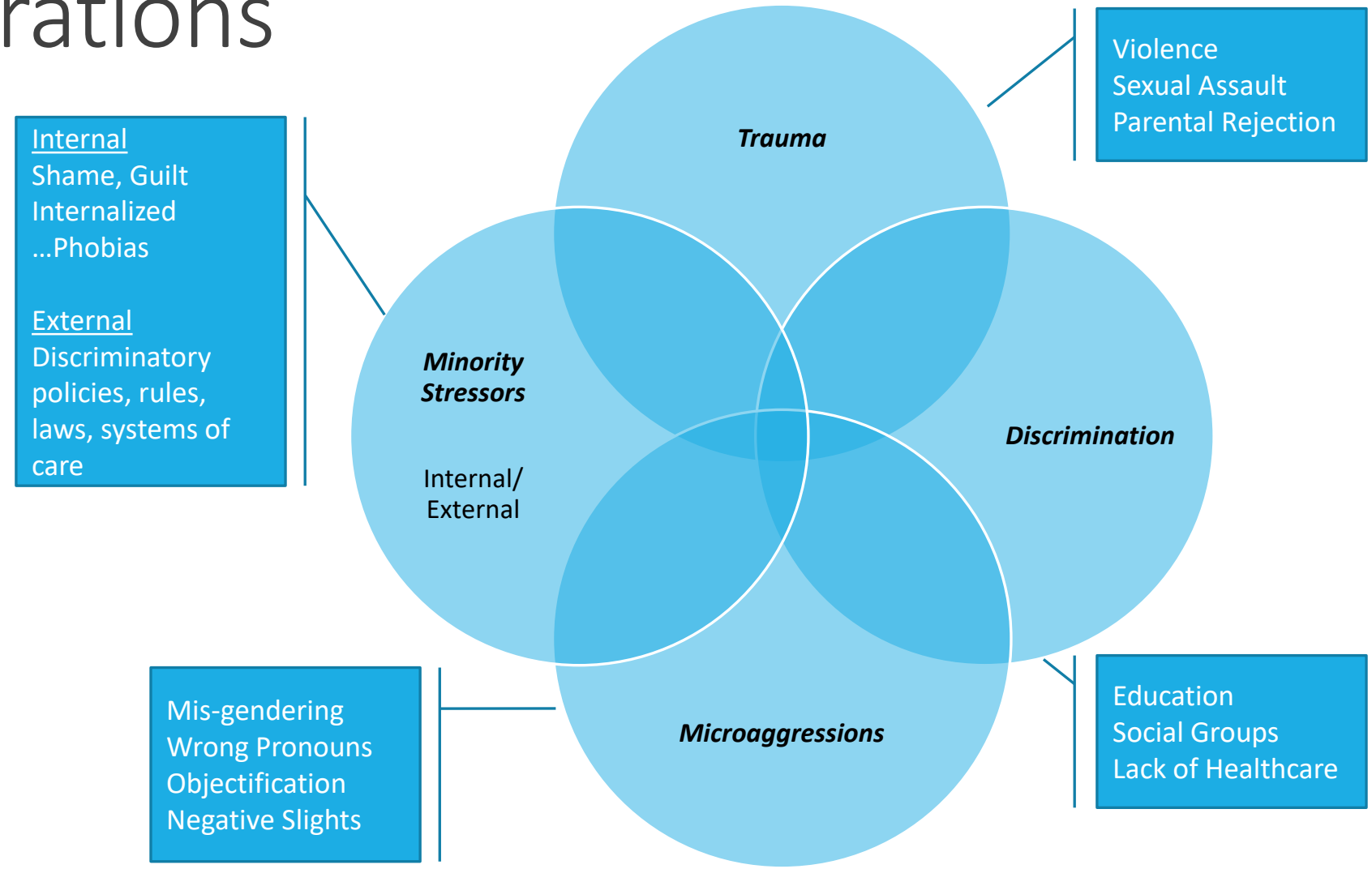


We cannot begin to recognize and address disparities across the lifespan for LGBTQIA+ people, if we do not regard mental health and wellbeing as a *contextual experience*.

YOUR HUMBLE INSTRUCTOR

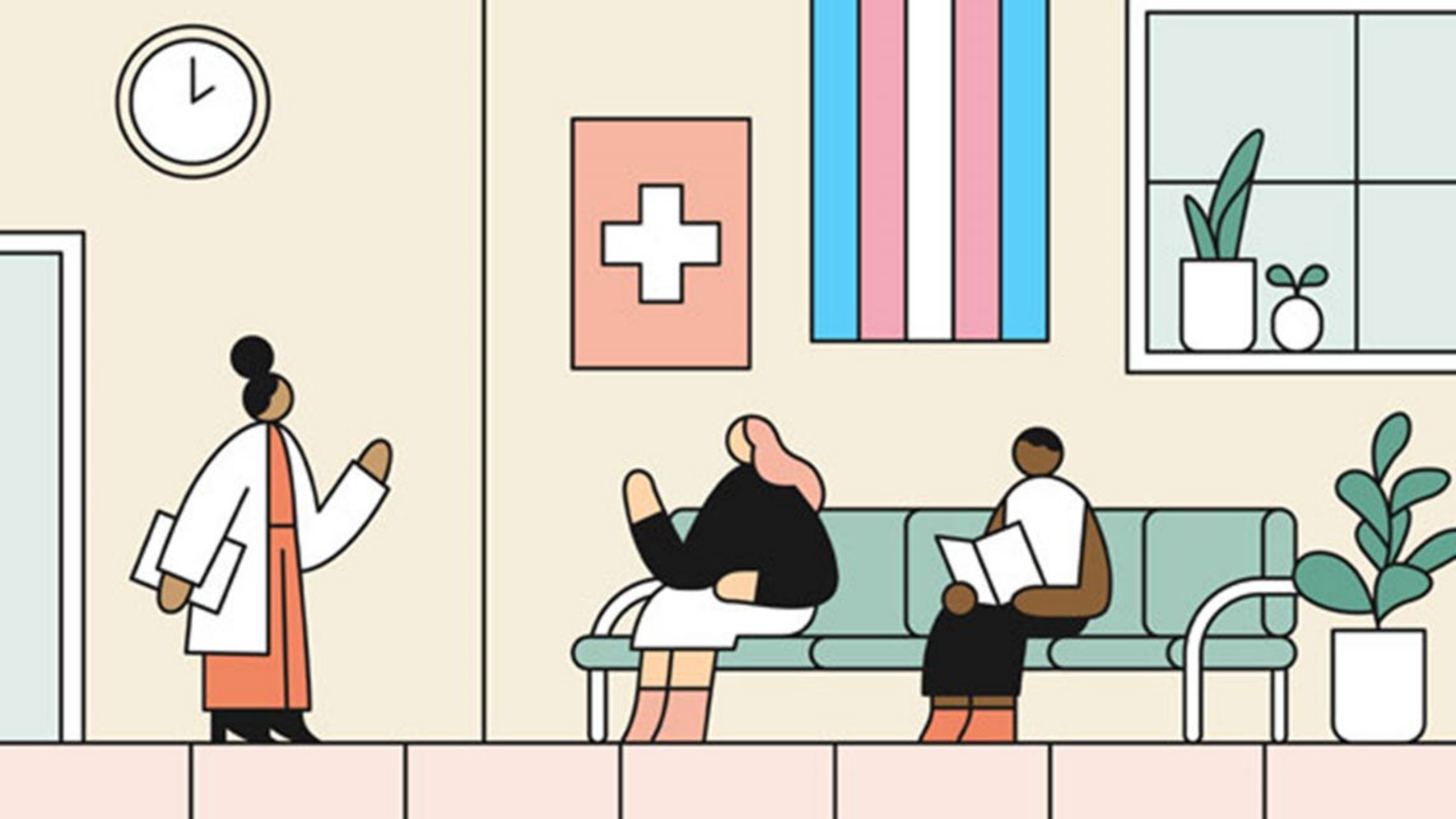
# Essential Mental Health Considerations

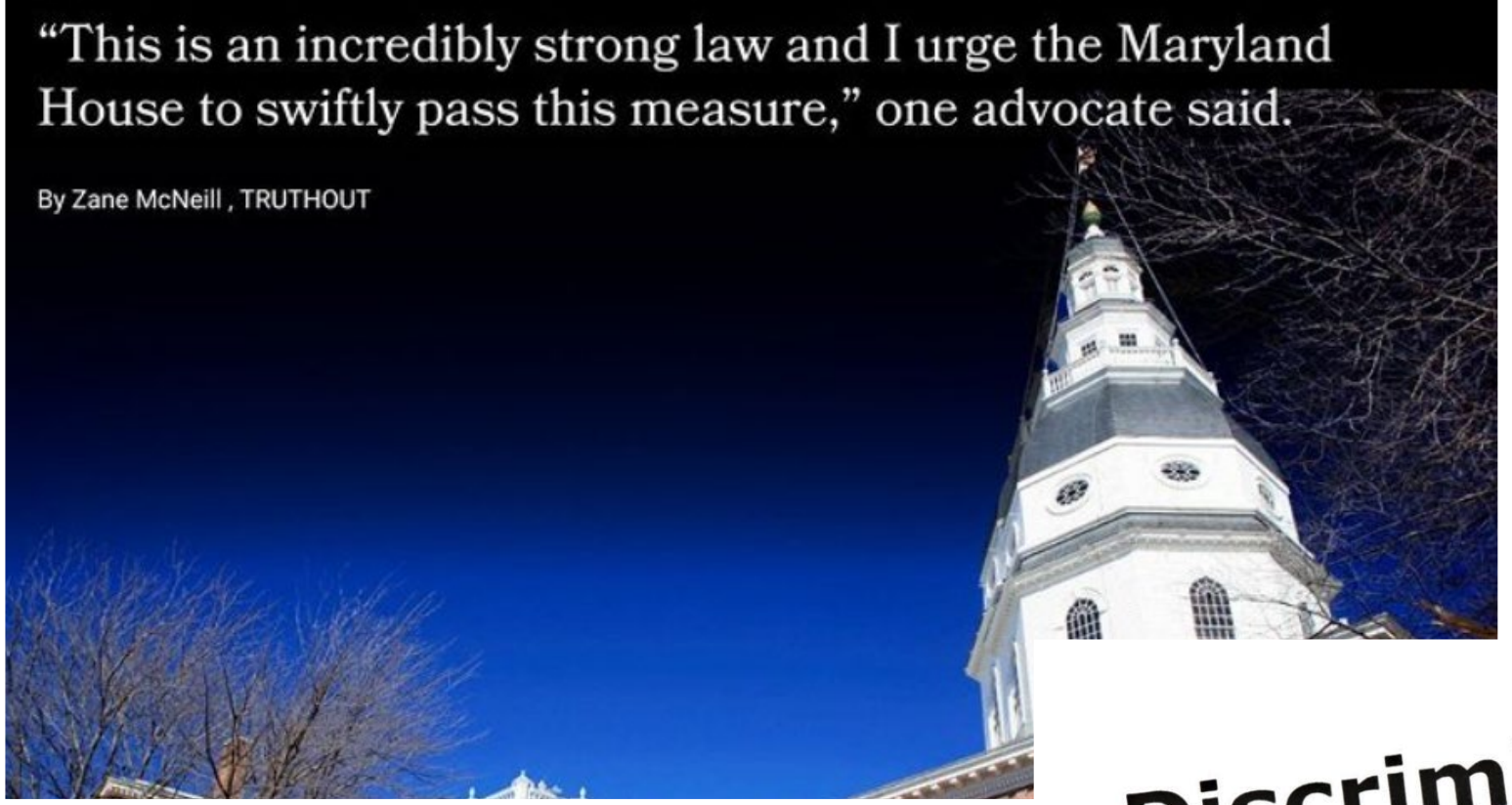
The culmination of these baseline adversities faced by LGBTQIA+ youth are further compounded by the general lack of access to “adequate” let alone affirming healthcare to include mental health care.




*Model adapted from Shipherd et al (2019) Trauma and Minority Stress Exposure Model: Application to Transgender and Gender Diverse People*

You are NOT Alone!




“This is an incredibly strong law and I urge the Maryland House to swiftly pass this measure,” one advocate said.
By Zane McNeill , TRUTHOUT

Discrimination
The prejudicial treatment or
of a person, racial group, minority,
based on category rather than
excluding or restricting members
grounds of race, sex, or

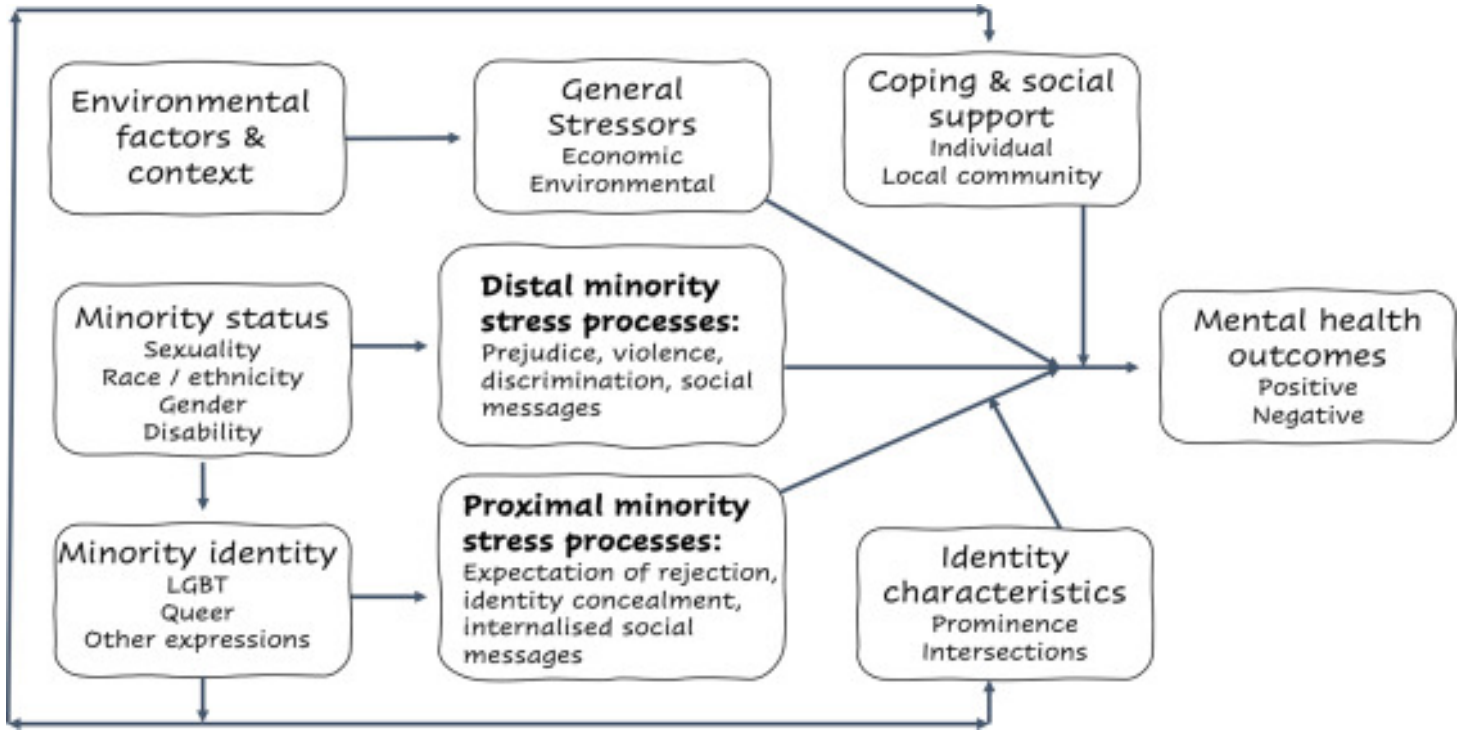
# Essential Mental Health Considerations

- It is well-established that childhood trauma can have a cascading effect on an individual's health and mental health over the totality of their life.
- What is less recognized is how such experiences result ***Minority Stress*** for LGBTQIA+ people.

## What Is Minority Stress?

Minority stress is a term that encompasses the stressful situations and experiences someone encounters based on their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity. While minority stress can be situational, it tends to be perpetual or chronically stressful in nature, because it is centered on a facet of an individual's existence that does not change.

# Essential Mental Health Considerations




Adapted from Minority Stress Model. Meyer, I.H., 2003. Prejudice, social stress, and mental health in lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations: conceptual issues and research evidence. Psychol. Bull. 129(5), 674–697.)

The Minority Stress Model includes 2 categories of stressors that are extensions of a person's identity:

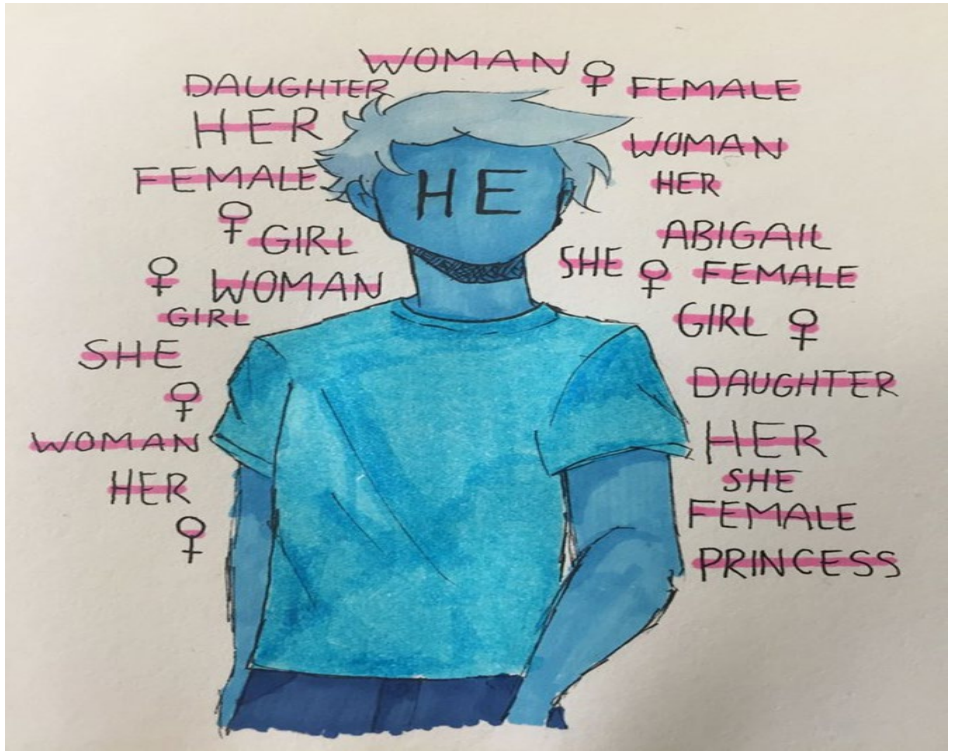
- ***Proximal stressors***
  - **Internal** – Identity formation and disclosure
- ***Distal stressors***
  - **External** – Interpersonal and structural stressors

***A definitive factor of an individual's overall wellbeing is the presence or absence of social support.***

# *A Story that is Subject to Revision*

SOCIAL JUSTICE IS AN INTERVENTION

*“I have always known who I was but was denied the language to describe my life. I grieve that I never got to be myself sooner. I grieve that it is still not really safe for me to be free.”*

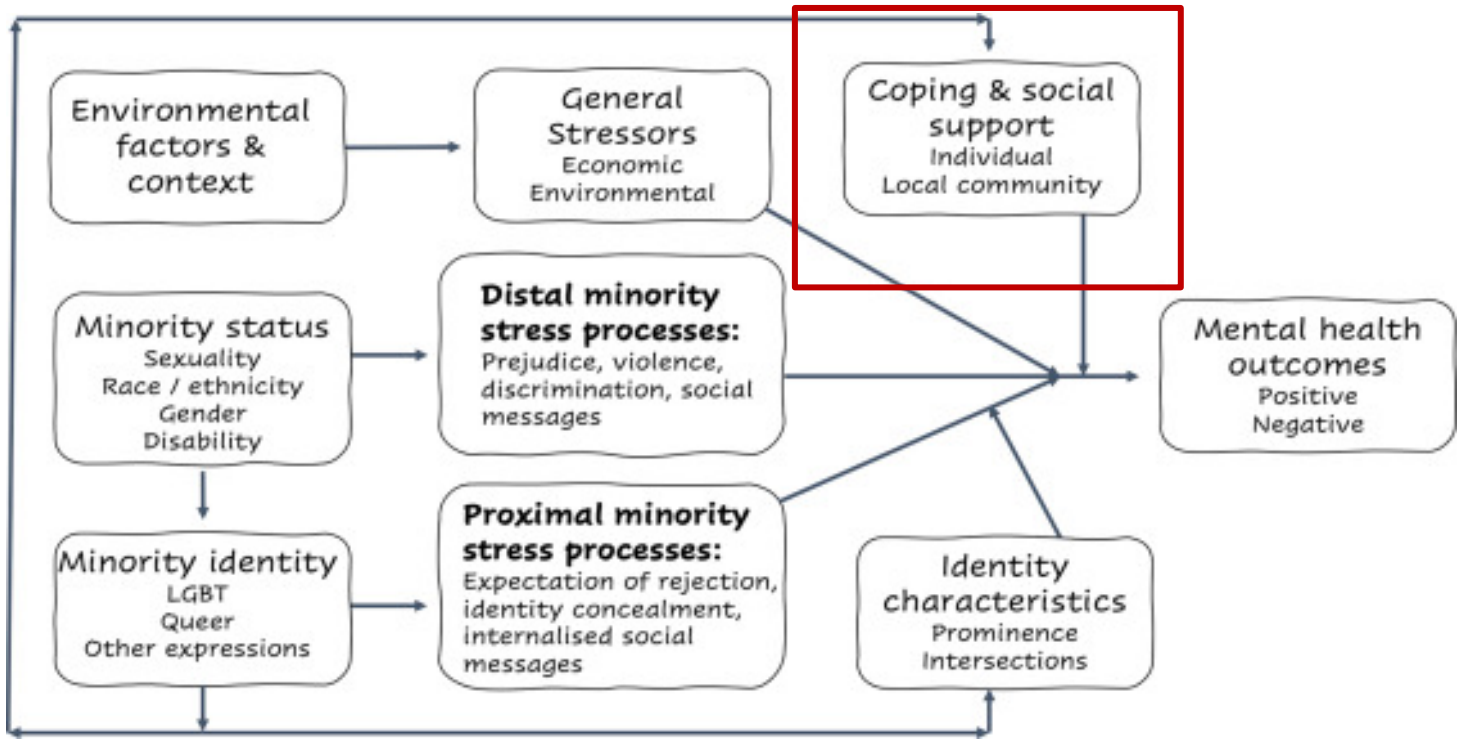



ANONYMOUS QUOTE ABOUT BEING TRANS

# Essential Mental Health Considerations

When you are queer, you can also be a repository for projection

# Essential Mental Health Considerations

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# Essential Mental Health Considerations

BE THE ONE SUPPORTIVE ADULT!

IT ONLY TAKES ONE SUPPORTIVE ADULT TO REDUCE THE RISK OF LGBTQIA+ YOUTH SUICIDE BY 40% (TREVOR PROJECT)

# Essential Mental Health Considerations

LISTEN AND BELIEVE WHAT LGBTQIA+ PEOPLE SAY – ESPECIALLY ABOUT THEMSELVES

A PERSON'S IDENTITY IS NOT A POINT OF NEGOTIATION, IT IS A DECLARATION OF TRUTH

“What happens when people open their hearts? They get better.”

HARUKI MURAKAMI

# Essential Mental Health Considerations

- ***Listen*** to the lived experiences of those that entrust you with their care
- ***Invite*** people to bring their whole selves to care
- ***Validate*** the experiences of others by believing and keeping safe the stories they share
- ***Empower*** others by building respectful relationships and by recognizing their enduring resiliency