

## summary of skills and qualifications

- Registered Social Worker with diverse clinical experience with individuals, families and groups
- Consulting, training, and clinical supervision experience
- Demonstrated leadership skills on an integrated family health team and in community organizing
- Experience in delivering population-based care in HIV service settings; for people with problem substance use; and LGBTQ, newcomer, and racialized communities
- Comprehensive understanding of the socio-political context and psychosocial impact of HIV/AIDS
- Well-developed mental health intervention skills and approaches to brief and longer-term therapy
- Interest in social work & counselling education demonstrated through post-secondary teaching, curriculum development, and field placement supervision roles
- Strong community presence developed through public speaking, interviews, and written works

## education

- **Masters of Social Work** University of Toronto 2009 – 2011  
Mental Health & Health Specialization; Collaborative Program in Addiction Studies
- **Bachelor of Arts , Honours Psychology** University of Waterloo 2003 – 2008  
Double Minor in English Language & Literature and Political Science  
Student Exchange Program, *National University of Singapore 2006 – 2007*

## teaching & curriculum development

- Experience teaching in the following programs:

Master of Social Work (MSW)  
Bachelor of Social Work (BSW)  
Sexuality, Marriage, & Family Studies (SMF)

Community Development Worker (CDev)  
Social Service Worker (SSW)

- Courses taught:

**FIFSW/University of Toronto - MSW**  
Foundations of Social Work Practice (x1)  
Cybercounselling and Social Work Practice (x1)

**Ryerson University - BSW**  
Transformative Social Work Practice (x2)

**SJU/University of Waterloo - SMF**  
Introduction to Systemic Therapies and  
Anti-Oppressive Practices (x1)

**George Brown College - SSW**  
Substance Use (3x)  
Concurrent Disorders (2x)

**Centennial College – CDev, SSW**  
Communication Fundamentals in  
Community Development (2x)

Power, Privilege, & Oppression (1x)

- Developed curriculum for the **Addiction & Mental Health Worker** diploma program (2016) at Centennial College in consultation with community subject matter experts.

Courses developed:

Integrated Approaches to Addiction & Mental Health  
 Stigma in Addictions Mental Health  
 Prevention, Mental Health Promotion, & Harm Reduction  
 Special Issues in Addictions & Mental Health

## professional development

- Advanced Assessment & Diagnosis, *New York University Silver School of Social Work* 2020
- Interpersonal Psychotherapy Training Certificate, *Institute of Interpersonal Psychotherapy* 2019
- Practical Psychodynamics, *Mount Sinai Psychotherapy Institute* 2017
- Clinical Social Work Supervision, *University of Calgary* 2016
- Gestalt Theory & Practice One-Year Professional's Program, *Gestalt Institute of Toronto* 2015 - 2016
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy: Complex Disorders, *Ontario Institute for Studies in Education* 2015
- Training Enhancement in Applied (Smoking) Cessation & Health (TEACH) Certificate, *CAMH* 2015
- Fundamental Perspectives in Psychoanalysis, *Toronto Psychoanalytic Society & Institute* 2014 - 2015
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy: Foundations, *Ontario Institute for Studies in Education* 2014
- Narrative Therapy Certificate, *Hinks-Dellcrest Centre, Gail Appel Institute* 2012 – 2013

## positions held

- Lecturer, *Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto* 2020 - Present
- Lecturer, *Sexuality, Marriage & Family Studies, SJU/University of Waterloo* 2020 – Present
- Lead Consultant & Psychotherapist, *Affective Consulting & Psychotherapy Services* 2014 – Present
- Mental Health Clinical Coordinator/Counsellor, *Sherbourne Health* 2014 – 2020
- Lecturer, *Faculty of Community Services, School of Social Work, Ryerson University* 2018 – 2019
- Curriculum Developer, *Addiction & Mental Health Worker Program, Centennial College* 2015 – 2016
- Professor & Field Placement Supervisor, *Centennial College & George Brown College* 2014 – 2016
- Family & Youth Counsellor, *Turning Point Youth Services* 2013 – 2014
- Bathhouse Counsellor, *Towel Talk, AIDS Committee of Toronto* 2010 – 2014
- Community Counsellor, *519 Church Street Community Centre* 2012 – 2013
- Project Coordinator, Counsellor & Tester, *Making the Links, Hassle Free Clinic* 2011 – 2013
- Newcomer Gay/Bi/MSM Resource Dev. Assistant, *Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention* 2009 – 2010
- MSM Outreach Coordinator, *Desi Men's Program, Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention* 2009 – 2009
- Peer Outreach Worker, *AIDS Committee of Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo & Area* 2008 – 2009

## internships & practicum

- Addictions Counsellor 2010 – 2011  
*MSW Practicum 2 | Centre for Addiction and Mental Health*
- Trauma Project Coordinator 2010  
*Graduate Summer Internship | Inner South Community Health Service (Melbourne, VIC)*
- Episodic Disabilities Initiatives 2010  
*MSW Practicum 1 | Canadian Working Group on HIV & Rehabilitation*
- STEAM (Emotion & Anger Management) School Groups Facilitator 2008  
*Honours Psychology 4<sup>th</sup> Year Internship | Kitchener-Waterloo Counselling Services*

## clinical social work practice

- **Population-based experience working with:**
  - Children, adolescents, adults, and older adults
  - Gay/queer men living with and affected by HIV
  - Queer and trans community mental health; problem substance use, body image, dysphoria
  - Newcomers navigating settlement issues including trauma, grief, and loss
  - Racialized queer/trans communities
  - Youth and families engaged in the child welfare system
  - People managing problem substance use issues who are also affected by poverty
  - People with chronic/progressive health diagnoses
  - People with complex presentations and trauma histories
- **Practice-based experience with the following models of care:**
  - Individual psychotherapy – both short (1-12 sessions) and longer-term (up to 3 years)
  - Group work – both skills-based and therapeutic
  - Home-based counselling for mandated families
  - Interprofessional collaboration in primary, mental, and sexual health care settings
- **Demonstrated competency with the following clinical intervention skills:**
  - Biopsychosocial therapeutic assessments
  - Case formulations and case reports for strengths-based goal directed work
  - Relapse prevention skills training and harm reduction psychotherapy
  - Longer term psychodynamic, cognitive behavioural, interpersonal and Gestalt therapy
  - Individual and group clinical supervision for graduate students
  - Sexual health counselling, medical note-taking, venipuncture, and point-of-care HIV testing

## program & resource development

- Coordinated practicum placement opportunities with graduate program liaisons, interviewed shortlisted candidates, provided orientation training, facilitated group supervision & student learning days (2017-2020)
- Served on the Scientific & Community Advisory Committee for a web-based resource for guys into guys aimed at increasing mental health literacy and support for navigating complex systems: <http://goodhead.ca> (2019-2020)

- Coordinated first phase of an agency's strategic plan toward becoming trauma-informed at all levels of the organization (Melbourne, 2010). Conducted a literature review, co-developed survey tools, interviewed internal mental health workers and presented findings and recommendations in a town hall meeting of employees and managers across the agency's multiple sites.
- Co-authored *The Guide* (2010), a multi-lingual print and online resource intended to help members of the gay, bisexual and trans newcomer community mitigate psychosocial vulnerabilities associated with immigration stress and navigating new spaces. Project included conducting an academic literature review and co-facilitating focus groups with the target community.
- Coordinated "Dosti" (2009), a social and support program for queer South Asian men, within a larger Desi Men's Program, which included maintaining an online website, managing 4-6 program volunteers, directing the documentary Brown Like Me (2009) and monthly discussion group recruitment, planning, and facilitation.

## community development & engagement

- Community organizing, regional group mobilization and fundraising as Core Team Lead with Salaam Canada, a national LGBTQ Muslim organization (2014 – present).
- Planning Committee Member for the annual Guelph Sexuality Conference (2016-2019).
- Engagement in queer arts as yearly host of *brOWN/OUT* program at Pride (2014 – present); community talk-back speaker for *Acha Bacha* (2018) and *5 Guys Chillin'* (2017) productions
- Co-founded Ismaili Queers: Advocates for Pluralism and coordinated initiatives (2008 - 2015).
- Developed community outreach strategies, built relationships for streamlined referral processes, and participated in inter-agency collaborations, including evaluation projects, joint outreach events targeting gay/bisexual men of colour, and resource dissemination as a member of the M2Men Network, comprised of City of Toronto-funded AIDS Prevention Community Investment Programs (2009-2012).
- Active strategist and community convener as part of the Crystal Meth Coalition, HIV and Mental Health Network (2011-2013) and World Pride Human Rights Subcommittee (2013-2014).
- Extensive community outreach experience (2007-2009) including resource dissemination, referrals, and conversation engagement around issues of stigma, homophobia, and sexual health in bars, bathhouses, ethnospecific community events, and high schools of priority neighbourhoods.

## publications

Thawer, R. (2020). Fear & Fluidity **Part 3: Confronting Our Fears**. *Spectrum Journal*. Retrieved from: <https://journal.spectrumboutique.com/article/fear-fluidity-part-iii-confronting-our-fears/>

Thawer, R. (2020). Fear & Fluidity **Part 2: Gender Fluidity**. *Spectrum Journal*. Retrieved from: <https://journal.spectrumboutique.com/article/fear-fluidity-part-ii-gender-fluidity/>

Thawer, R. (2020). Fear & Fluidity **Part 1: Bodily Fluids**. *Spectrum Journal*. Retrieved from: <https://journal.spectrumboutique.com/article/fear-fluidity-part-i-bodily-fluids/>

Thawer, R. (2017). **Defending Uncritical Art Has Consequences.** *Marvellous Grounds: Bodies as Archives: QTBIPOC Art and Performance in Toronto*, (Issue 2). Retrieved from <http://marvellousgrounds.com/blog/defending-uncritical-art-has-consequences>

Thawer, R. (2017). **Cardio-Highs: Winning and Running Away All at Once.** In Chambers, S., FitzGerald, M., Jackson, E., Lorinc, J., McCaskell, T., Taylor, T., & Thawer, R. (Eds.), *Any Other Way: How Toronto Got Queer* (pp. 76-77). Toronto, ON: Coach House Books.

Taylor, T. & Thawer, R. (2017). **Did Toronto Get Queer?** In Chambers, S., FitzGerald, M., Jackson, E., Lorinc, J., McCaskell, T., Taylor, T., & Thawer, R. (Eds.), *Any Other Way: How Toronto Got Queer* (pp. 76-77). Toronto, ON: Coach House Books.

Thawer, R. (2016). **Phobias, Mental Health and Pride: a QPOC Perspective.** *Rabble.ca*. Retrieved from <http://rabble.ca/news/2016/06/phobias-mental-health-and-pride-qpoc-perspective>

## keynotes & panels

Feelin' My Feelings. Free To Be Me 2020 Virtual Forum, Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLESD) and the Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity (CCGSD). June 2020.

“When Curiosity Sends the Wrong Message: Anti-Oppressive Sex Therapy Practice” AGM/Training Day: Board of Examiners of Sex Therapists & Counsellors in Ontario. Nov 2019. Toronto, ON.

“Fear & Fluid(ity)” Sex Down South. Sept 2019, Atlanta, GA.

“Supporting Dialogue When Someone Comes Out” Réseau ACCESS Network: Pride Community Breakfast. July 2019, Sudbury, ON.

“Improving Mental Health for All Canadians: Why Equity Matters.” Ontario Association of Social Workers Conference. Nov 2018, Toronto, ON.

“Sexuality and the Imprint of Shame.” Community-Based Resource Centre. Nov 2018, Vancouver, BC.

“Casual sex vs Long Term Relationships” Gay Men’s Mental Health Summit, March 2018, Toronto, ON.

“Did Toronto Get Queer?” Toronto Book Awards at *The Word on The Street Festival*, Sep 2017, Toronto, ON.

“Shame and Sexuality: The Imprint of Psychological Pain.” Guelph Sexuality Conference, Jun 2017, Toronto, ON.

“Brown and Queer: Are We Safe at School?” Rick Hansen Secondary School, May 2017, Mississauga, ON.

“Harm Reduction and LGBTQ Communities.” Ontario Harm Reduction Distribution Program Conference, Ontario Harm Reduction Distribution Program, Oct. 2015, Toronto, ON.

“Vicarious/Secondary Trauma in an HIV Service Setting.” Central Opening Doors Conference, AIDS Committee of Peel/York Region, Oct. 2015, Vaughan, ON.

“Communicating Sexual Risk to People Living with HIV and People at Risk.” CATIE Forum 2013: New Science, New Directions in HIV & HCV. Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE), Sep. 2013. Toronto, ON.

“Barebacking: Risk, Connection, & Vulnerability.” Gay Men’s Sexual Health (GMSH) Summit, AIDS Bureau of Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care, May 2013. Toronto, ON.

## presentation highlights

“We’re in This Together But I Feel Alone: Collective Grief for G2G During a Pandemic” Max Ottawa. May 2020. Virtual, ON: <https://tinyurl.com/may10collectivegrief>

“Sex Positivity: Definitions, Declarations & Applications.” LGBTQ2S+ Service Providers’ Summit, Canadian Centre for Gender & Sexual Diversity, Jan 2019. Ottawa, ON.

“LGBTQ Muslim Mental Health.” Rainbow Health Ontario Conference, March 2018, Sudbury, ON.

“Body Image: Context & Counselling Approaches” Gay Men’s Mental Health Summit, March 2018, Toronto, ON.

“Examining the Experiences & Needs of LGBTIA\* Newcomers & Muslims.” Salaam Canada and Rainbow Resource Centre – Learning Day, Jan 2018, Winnipeg, MB.

“Motivational Interviewing & CBT Counselling Skills.” YWCA Toronto, Nov 2017, Toronto, ON.

“Casual Sex vs. Long Term Relationships: Where Are The Reconciled Scripts for Gay Men?” CBRC Gay Men’s Summit, Nov 2017, Vancouver, BC.

“Introduction to Transition-Related Surgery: Assessment & Referral in Primary Care.” Association of Family Health Teams of Ontario (AFTHO) Conference, Oct 2017, Toronto, ON.

“Envisioning Trans Inclusion at Assaulted Women’s Helpline.” Assaulted Women’s Helpline (AWHL) – Board Planning Day, Sep 2017, Toronto, ON.

“Becoming Trauma-Informed: Considerations for All Levels of and Organization.” Blue Door Shelters, Nov 2016, Holland Landing, ON.

“Challenging Cis-centrism: Toward Inclusive Sexual Health Counselling & HIV/STI Testing for Trans and Genderqueer Clients.” Guelph Sexuality Conference, Jun. 2015, Guelph, ON.

“How to Deepen Our Skill, Compassion and Understanding When Working with Gay/Bi/Trans Men.” Guelph Sexuality Conference: Fostering Sexual Health, University of Guelph, Jun. 2013. Guelph, ON.

“Counselling Guidelines for High HIV Anxiety and No/Low Risk (HHANLR).” HIV Testing Conference, AIDS Bureau of Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care, May 2012. Toronto, ON.