Warning This document may contain information that is triggering.

Why is it difficult to ask for help?

Mental health experiences, especially help-seeking behaviors, are often influenced by historical and cultural factors.

Inappropriate imprisonment of individuals with mental illnesses for the past two centuries 6

Belief that mental illness is best treated within the family 1,5 Lack of culturally competent care in many mental health care delivery systems 9

Perception that family would disapprove of help-seeking for mental health treatment 7

Historical and current prejudice and discrimination against underrepresented populations in the United States 3,6

C O N T E X T M A T T E R S

Classification of homosexuality as a mental illness until 1973, degrading LGB identities and leading to continued marginalization 4,8

Collusion between healthcare professionals and the federal government to perpetuate harm on African Americans for the advancement of science (Tuskegee Syphilis Study) 6

Unequal and inadequate access to high-quality health care, particularly for low-income individuals and families, leading to health disparities ^{2,10}

Inclusion of
Gender Dysphoria
in the DSM-V
(Diagnostic and
Statistical Manual
of Mental
Disorders 2013),
pathologizing
trans identities ³

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