



MENTAL HEALTH LIBERATION

IMPACT

REPORT

2023

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Mental Health
Liberation

COMMUNITY CARE

liberate - heal - thrive

\$123,636.70

TOTAL DONATIONS IN 2023



We are excited to update you on the progress and achievements of our organization over the past year, while recognizing your contribution to help fuel the work! Together, our individual, corporate, and non-profit donors gave \$ 123,636.70 to Mental Health Liberation in 2023.

Without you, we never would have been able to accomplish all the amazing things outlined in this report. We have deep gratitude for the contribution each and every one of our donors make, because everyday we get to see the impact it has on our community.

THANK YOU!

OUR STORY SO FAR



OUR HISTORY

Mental Health Liberation (MHL) was born out of Inclusive Therapists: a mental health directory, resource hub, and community that centers on people with intersecting marginalized identities.

Clinicians came to us seeking a way to extend *pro bono* services in response to various crises occurring among our BIPOC communities. We knew that for our movement to be sustainable we needed to be able to lean on each other. When one part is in pain, the others lift it up. This is our ecological model, built on shared liberatory values and practices.

We built MHL differently from traditional charities within the nonprofit industrial complex. We rejected the top-down approaches which masquerade as "help," but harm Black, Indigenous, and Communities of Color.

We committed to being attuned to the needs of the community; moving toward collective liberation with collective interdependence. We are nurturing the future generation of BIPOC clinicians, fostering growth in mental health advocates and activists who will continue the transformative work ahead.

OUR MISSION & VISION

Mental Health Liberation (MHL) is a movement advocating for mental health justice through education and activism. More specifically, we aim to accomplish this by advancing mental health education for people with marginalized identities; reducing prejudice and discrimination in the mental health care field; and redistributing funding toward higher education and mental health therapy for people with marginalized identities.

2022

**MENTAL HEALTH LIBERATION
BEGAN EXTENDING
CARE FROM BIPOC PROVIDERS
TO BIPOC COMMUNITIES**

PROGRAM GOALS



At Mental Health Liberation we streamline our work through three categories of community initiatives: Therapy Funds, Liberatory Student Support, and Advocacy & Activism. The goals of each category are described below.

1

Therapy Funds

Providing free, quality therapy services for Black, Indigenous and Communities of Color. The BIPOC Therapy Fund Service-Providers are social justice-oriented, professionally licensed, BI&POC community members who are intentionally compensated for their valuable work.

2

Liberatory Student Support

Facilitating mentorship & peer support for Students of Color pursuing mental health careers. Investing in emerging clinicians to help establish much needed equity in the field of mental health, so that marginalized therapists have fewer barriers to achieving success and fulfilling our purpose, on our terms.

3

Mental Health Justice Policy Advocacy & Activism

We are a mental health liberation movement actively shifting the field by: dismantling unjust or harmful practices, investing into future generations of minoritized clinicians, and co-creating radical, anti-oppressive models of practice.

We create training opportunities from a decolonial perspective as well as engagement in advocacy efforts that deconstruct and reimagine beyond our current system. Mental Health Liberation seeks to have a lasting change on how therapists practice into the future.

IMPLEMENTATION



Mental Health Liberation

COMMUNITY CARE

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Therapy Funds

BIPOC Therapy Fund

Black Mental Health Fund

Therapy Fund for People Impacted by the Crisis in Palestine

The BIPOC Therapy fund is open to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color adult (18+) applicants living in the 50 states/DC in the "United States" that are in need of financial support for mental health therapy. One subsection, The Black Mental Health Fund, is generated in collaboration with Easy Activism, a collective of activists committed to sustaining the Black Lives Matter movement.

The BIPOC Therapy Fund and the Black Mental Health Fund operate with seasonal "application cycles". Each cycle has a limited number of spots to ensure high-quality personalized care throughout the application and onboarding process. Typically, we offer 30 spots per cycle, with 25% reserved for Disabled and/or Neurodivergent service-users.

If there is an overwhelming, time specific need, we may mobilize and open a responsive application cycle to meet the needs of our community members. For example: in response to the escalating genocide, in 2023 Mental Health Liberation created the Therapy Fund for People Impacted by the Crisis in Palestine.

When an application cycle opens, we notify our communities via social media and newsletter. Application/onboarding assistance is available for Disabled, Neurodivergent, Deaf, Blind, and Novice-Computer User applicants. Once potential service users have submitted their applications, our team reviews them and assists Fund recipients with completing the necessary paperwork.

Our team matches Fund recipients up with a service provider based on fit, according to service-user needs, location, and preferences. Our community of BIPOC service providers are licensed in good standing with their regulatory bodies, and committed to providing identity-affirming therapy services.

Fund recipients do not have to pay out of pocket for any services they receive through MHL. In 2023 we paid service-providers \$100/ therapy session, up to 12 sessions per recipient. In order to keep track of our impacts and potential areas for improvement, both service-users and -providers complete pre- and post-service surveys to provide feedback on their experience and level of satisfaction.



IMPLEMENTATION

2 Liberatory Student Support Circle

The Liberatory Student Support program operates as a peer support group and mentorship circle. Participants are BIPOC mental health, social work, psychology, or counseling students.

Once a student’s application has been approved and they join the circle, they receive access to:



INITIATIVE	DETAILS
Our private Slack channel for discussions.	A liberation-oriented space to process and affirm student experiences, share resources, uplift one another, critique institutional barriers, and reimagine education that equips and liberates.
The student-led book club.	The winter ‘24 semester book is ‘Decolonizing Therapy’, by Dr. Jennifer Mullan. Students meet virtually on a monthly basis for in-depth discussions. Those with financial barriers receive sponsored books & related discussion materials.
Seasonal gatherings for mutual support, resource sharing, advocacy planning & mobilization.	This aspect has become especially important as students face silencing and suppression on campus regarding the genocide in Palestine. Our last gathering of 2023 held space for BI&POC student members to: process, grieve, extend and receive collective care, and mobilize.



IMPLEMENTATION

3 Mental Health Justice Policy Advocacy & Activism

At Mental Health Liberation we are committed to equitable, social justice-oriented professional trainings & advocacy that prioritizes the needs of marginalized communities.

Through the online shop of our sibling organization, Inclusive Therapists, **we offer liberatory trainings for all mental health professionals.** While earning Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are mandatory, they can also be expensive, and a financial burden on already marginalized service providers. As part of our dedication to equity, **we offer fully sponsored CEU trainings for Black and Indigenous providers, as well as BIPOC students.**

2023 also saw the escalation of military activity in Palestine and genocidal acts against its people. As a community built on decolonial theory, praxis is just as necessary for us at MHL. We have been intentional about **tending to Palestinian, Jewish, Muslim, Arab, SWANA, BI&POC clinicians and students silenced or targeted for their advocacy for a free Palestine.** We also moved to mobilize our community towards ending complicity to genocide in the mental health field.

To that end, **we published an open letter**, with Decolonizing Therapy, demanding immediate action and accountability from schools, professional associations, licensing boards, and organizations in the mental health field who have been silent about, or openly complicit in supporting, the genocide. Alongside the open letter, **we published a robust compilation of resources and calls to action for those wishing to do more for change.** To date, our open letter has received 6,566 signatures.

In December 2023, the Institute for the Development of Human Arts (IDHA), Network to Advance Abolitionist Social Work (NAASW), and USA-Palestine Mental Health Network (USA-PMHN) hosted a virtual **panel conversation with mental health providers who are creating opportunities for solidarity with Palestinian liberation** through their roles. Our founder, Melody Li, was invited to be involved, and participated as one of the featured panelists.

Importantly, advocating for just policies is not just something we do externally. At MHL we are also proud to create an equitable, power-sharing workplace for our team. Every team member is part of marginalized communities and we celebrate our intersectional identities! Our leadership is dedicated to prioritizing the team's wellbeing above all else (e.g. production), and offers thriving wages, work flexibility, and autonomy. We understand that to accomplish the important work that we do, we need to sustain ourselves as well.



PROGRAM RESULTS

| Therapy Funds

“I don't know that I would've found my therapist if I were conducting a search on my own and I'm glad we were introduced through this program... Our sessions became a **grounding space** that was needed for untangling a lot of stuff. **Thanks** for creating such a generous offering. I am in a **much better place** for it and I'm hoping to re-energize my spirit soon enough **to help others.**”

~ Fund recipient

“I just want to say **thank you** for providing funds to help clients access therapy while also ensuring therapists get paid a **fair wage**. This means a lot and I am **very grateful**. The process and communication was great, billing was easy to understand, I have **no complaints**.

~ Therapy service provider

53

Therapy service providers

60

BIPOC Therapy Fund recipients

458

Sessions completed in 2023



PROGRAM RESULTS

2 Liberatory Student Support Circle

"The sense of community I felt was hopeful and healing."

"...it was so encouraging and inspiring to know all you lovely liberation oriented folks exist within this field!"

"I found it very validating."

"I already feel closer to y'all than most of my classmates in the program I currently attend."

87

Students receiving mentorship & peer support

"I had this fantasy that we would all be in classes together taking up space and advocating for one another... or even a whole program of BIPOC peeps!"

"...so refreshing and it reminds me that the field will be in good hands when liberation is involved. It brings hope to our future!"

"Yesss to our sacred rage and leaning into it!"



PROGRAM RESULTS

3 Mental Health Justice Policy Advocacy & Activism



6,566

Signatures

on our open letter to end the mental health field's complicity to genocide.
CLICK THE PEN TO ADD YOURS!

12

Liberatory CEU trainings offered

4

New training topics added in 2023

384

Sponsored CEUs disbursed

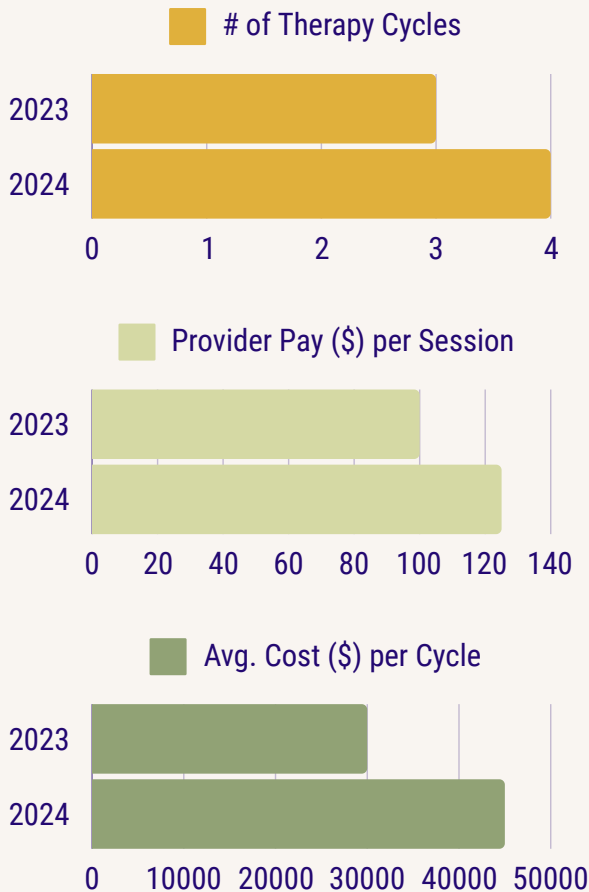
WHAT'S NEXT

\$200,000

FUNDRAISING GOAL FOR 2024

Therapy Funds

Thus far in 2024, our therapy funds have already expanded to prioritize people impacted by the crises in Congo, Sudan, Ethiopia, and other resource-rich/exploited nations. Applications are scheduled to reopen April 2024.



Why are we increasing provider pay rates?

Marginalized practitioners deserve fair compensation for their work, even when they are offering community care as a part of their activism. We support the well-being of both BIPOC recipients *and* service-providers. Instead of accepting pro bono work, we fundraise to cover sliding scale rates, ensuring equitable pay for their valuable services.

Our service providers have received compensation of \$100/session throughout our first 5 therapy cycles. Beginning with cycle 6, we are increasing that rate to \$125/session.

This change is being made to reflect: the rising cost of living & inflation, the skills and experience our BIPOC providers are bringing, and the high-quality care they are providing to the service-users.

WHAT'S NEXT

\$200,000

FUNDRAISING GOAL FOR 2024

2 Liberatory Student Support Circle

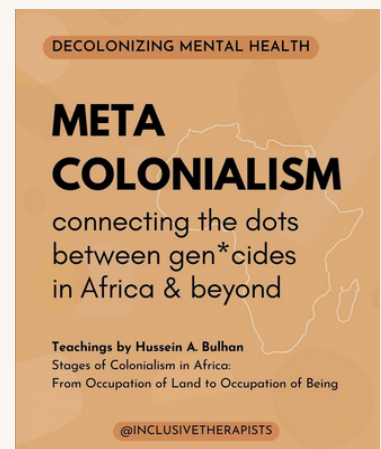
Office Hours.

For students interested in learning about or consulting on specific Mental Health related topics. To do so, the students would receive dedicated 1-hour meetings with BI&POC mental health clinicians.

Supervision Circle.

An equitable network to provide sponsored clinical supervision for emerging BIPOC therapists/clinicians with liberation-oriented BIPOC supervisors.

3 Mental Health Justice Policy Advocacy & Activism



We continue to amplify, mobilize, learn, teach, protest, boycott, divest, advocate!

CONTINUED SUPPORT

\$200,000

FUNDRAISING GOAL FOR 2024

DONATE ONLINE
OR VIA CHECK

START A
FUNDRAISER

Mental Health Liberation is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit charitable organization.
EIN: 86-3382951

AMPLIFY OUR
INITIATIVES

SHOP AND
SUPPORT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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There are so many people who have made the projects mentioned within this report possible. Thank-you to our **teammates and board members** who help turn ideas into realities: Dr. Ebony Butler, Dr. Lauren Harper, Céshaun Hankins, Amanda Huynh, Joyce Kabwe, Ling Cheun Bianca Lee, Melody Li, Lanise Lywood, and Soumayah Nanji.

Thank-you to our collaborators from **partner organizations**. Your commitment to your purpose is inspiring. Huge gratitude to everyone in the **MHL online community**. Your participation, encouragement, mobilization, and hope energizes us all to keep pushing forward. We are beyond grateful for the growing list of amazing BIPOC Therapy Fund **service-providers**. Your dedication and skill are invaluable.

Appreciation to each and every past donor and future donor. Your contributions fuel this important work and bring us closer to our mission every day.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are located on various stolen Lands that are sacred to a number of Indigenous Peoples. We thank the Indigenous Peoples for stewarding these Lands for generations. We pay respect to the Elders, past, present, and future.

For settlers on our team, we acknowledge we occupy and participate in exploitation of Land that is not native to us. As an organization, we advocate for Land Back and Indigenous Sovereignty.

May we as a community consider our roles in the liberation, and restoration of Land, language, and culture for Indigenous Peoples on Turtle Island and globally.

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT IN OUR PROGRAMS