

MIND, BODY & SOUL Mini-Conference:
Exploring the Mental, Physical, and Spiritual Health of LGBT People of Color



Hosted By
Simmons Institute for Leadership and Change:
Connecting Simmons to the Community and
the Community to Simmons

Co-sponsored by:
The Network/La Red and Fenway Women's
Health

The Kotzen Room
LeFavour Building (1st Floor)
300 The Fenway Boston MA 02110

Saturday July 31st 2010

11:00AM - 5:00PM

About the Mini-Conference

The Mind, Body, & Soul Mini-Conference is yet another event that Queer Women of Color and Friends (QWOC+ Boston) has created to respond to a specific, voiced need of the local LGBT People of Color Community to participate in more frequent, crucial, round-table discussions – real talk – about health issues affecting marginalized groups within the mainstream queer community.

The organizers of the mini-conference believe that social networking and/or community-building are necessary primary steps to take towards addressing key socio-political health problems affecting LGBT people of color; breast cancer, HIV/AIDS, suicide prevention, and domestic violence awareness, to name a few; you cannot heal a community that doesn't exist. As such, the MIND, BODY, and SOUL Mini-Conference will seek to bring people together to create a community discussion around three core aspects of health – the mental, the physical, and the spiritual.

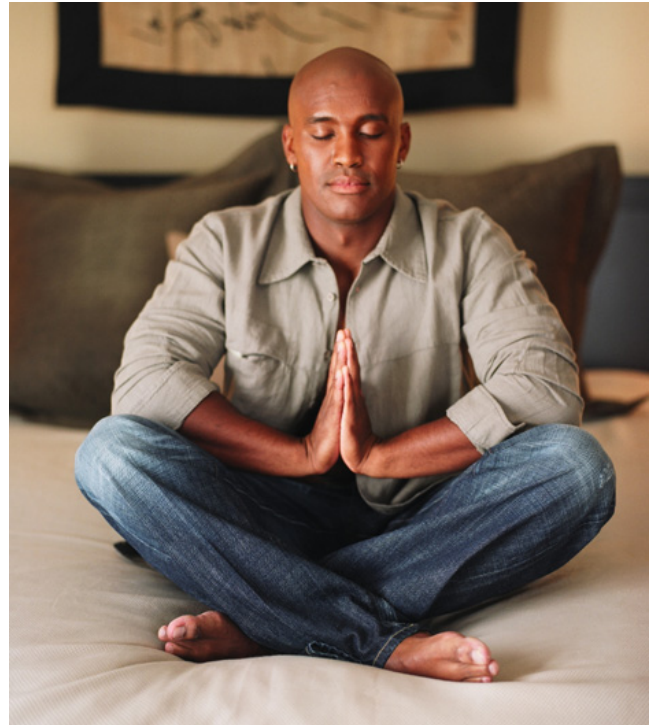
Via a series of concurrent panel sessions presented by experienced community organizers, non-profit organizations, and health practitioners, we hope to continue the work that's already being done to address health issues within our intersecting communities. By promoting healthy living to individuals, we can achieve this, too, at the macro community level.

Thanks to the generosity of the [Simmons Institute for Leadership and Change](#), [The Network/La Red](#) (Platinum Sponsors of QWOC Week) and [Fenway Health](#) (Gold Sponsor), the MBS mini-conference will be held at Simmons College's Kotzen Room (first floor of the library), and lunch/refreshments will be provided to attendees.

*The Mind, Body & Soul Mini-Conference is OPEN TO ALL. Advanced registration/ticketing required. Please visit www.qwocboston.org for the most up to date conference information.

IMPORTANT REGISTRATION INFORMATION

- Pre-registration is encouraged as there is limited capacity per session
- Register at <http://qwocweek2010.eventbrite.com/>
- We are offering fully subsidized tickets for interested youth, undergrad, graduate students; please email mbs@qwocboston.org for more details
- The first session commences at 11:00AM prompt, so we encourage people to arrive no later than 10:30AM
- Breakfast/refreshments will be available at the conference (and included in registration fee/donation) for your convenience



MINI-CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Subject to Change, Please Check Schedule Upon Registration

Session A (11:00AM-12:00PM)

- Intro to the Benefits of Meditation (Including a Live Meditation Session) Led by People of Color Meditation Sitting Group (Workshop)
- Introduction to Early Morning Yoga (Stretching, Breathing, Centering for Beginners) Led by Mary Thomas and Abby Coakley (Workshop)

Session B (12:15PM-1:30PM)

- Heal Yourself at Home: Natural Home Remedies 101 presented by Dillon DiGiovanni, Holistic Health Counselor of SavorYourExistence.com (Workshop)
- "The Upside of Going Down": The Ins and Outs of Sex Toys, Safe Sex, and More! (Workshop)

-- 30 Minute Break – Food, Refreshments, and Socializing in the KOTZEN ROOM (1:30PM-2PM)

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Session C (2:00PM-3:30PM)

- How to Build Healthy Communities: Bridging the Gender and Intergenerational Gaps within the LGBT People of Color Community presented by Justice Williams (Workshop)
- How to Maintain Healthy Relationships within the QPOC Community presented by the Network/La Red (Workshop)

Session D (3:45PM-5 PM)

- The Elephant in the Room: How Can We Talk about Mental Health in Communities of Color? presented by the MOCA Program and QWOC+ Boston (Community Discussion)

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

An Introduction to the Benefits of Meditation

Presenters: People of Color Meditation Sitting Group

Summary: We will begin by introducing ourselves and describing our personal paths to the practice of meditation and its benefits. Participants will be asked to share their experiences and/or interest in the practice of meditation as well. With guided instruction we will center the group around a Vipassana meditation of approximately 25 to 30 minutes. The actual length of the sit will depend on participants' experience and comfort level. In Vipassana meditation, we use the breath as a point of entrance and guide through the course of the meditation. We will close the workshop by offering participants time to reflect on the sit and offer tips on ways to build a daily practice. Our hope is to provide an opportunity for participants with some or no experience to practice gently exploring the mind/body benefit and, hopefully, use meditation as a tool of observation, reflection and centering through the remainder of the conference.

Duration: 1 HR

Notes to Attendees: Wear comfortable clothing and be ready to take off your shoes!

An Introduction to Early Morning Stretch and Relaxation Yoga

Presenters: Mary Thomas and Abby Coakley, Yoga Instructors

Summary: A perfect way to start your day! Join this session to participate in a qwoc-ful circle of light stretch and relaxation yoga poses, guaranteed to get you loosened up and centered to get the most out of your day. Mary Thomas is a graduate of the Open Doors 200hr Teacher Training Program and is Reiki I attuned. Mary is honored and humbled by adding teaching to her practice and hopes to bring her personal vigor for the practice of asana, meditation, and its benefits to each of her classes. Committed to community and a firm believer in the branch of Karma Yoga, Mary wants to use her teaching as a vehicle for change by offering free classes and workshops to minority and disenfranchised populations. Abby Coakley has been practicing Yoga for 7 years. She completed a Yoga teacher training at South Boston Yoga this past year where she focussed on finding her true path through the experience of Yoga.

Duration: 1 HR

Notes to Attendees: Wear comfortable clothing and be ready to take off your shoes!

Heal Yourself at Home: Natural Home Remedies 101

Presenters: Dillan DiGiovanni, Holistic Health Counselor from SavorYourExistence.com

Summary: Headaches? Bellyaches? Poor sleep and concentration? Come join this workshop presented by Dillan DiGiovanni, Certified Wellness Coach, to learn more about natural and preventative ways to cut off these symptoms of imbalance and get on track. OTC (over-the-counter) "remedies" often do more harm than good. Get simple, basic health and wellness. Get savvy about health on the cheap and feel better faster!

Duration: 1 HR

The Upside of Going Down: Sex Toys, Safe Sex, and More!

Presenters: Erica Pollock, Minority Outreach Coordinator (and QWOC!) at Fenway Women's Health

Summary: Foreplay, Lube, Strap-On Harnesses, and a conference room full of "intrigued" attendees is sure to spice things up at the MBS conference this year. Join this session to engage in some humorous, yet informative, group activities (not the naked kind) around the art of giving and receiving pleasure, why caring for and protecting our bodies. And if that doesn't get you interested, rumor has it that we'll be playing the "I've never..." game. Game?

Duration: 1 HR 15 MIN

The Art of Balance: How to Build Emotionally Healthy Relationships within the QPOC Community

Presenters: The Network/La Red

Summary: Healthy relationships are characterized by respect, sharing and trust. They are based on the belief that both partners are equal, that the power and control in the relationship are equally shared. Healthy Relationships: The Art of Balance will provide you with an understanding of what constitutes a healthy relationship for you, how you can communicate with your loved one in a more meaningful,

respectful way, and how to identify when a relationship is no longer healthy for you or for those whom you love.

Duration: 1 HR 30 MINS

Intra-Community Organizing in LGBTQ Communities of Color: How to Build Healthy Communities

Presenters: Justice Williams, Social Justice Institute

Summary: SJI's "Building Healthy Communities" begins the conversation about diversity, equity, multicultural education and what it means to develop healthy relationships. SJI begins the groundwork with early level diversity activities that help set in motion a more forward-thinking vision of diversity and equity. In these workshops concepts such as the complexity of diversity and community development for equity and social justice are introduced. Participants are engaged in exercises and dialogues to develop a deeper understanding of their own views and how these impact their work and relationships with colleagues, students, parents, and others.

Duration: 1 HR 30 MINS

The Elephant in the Room: How Can We Talk about Mental Health in Communities of Color?

Facilitators: MOCA Program and QWOC+ Boston

Summary: The Mind, Body, Soul Health Conference for LGBT/Queer People of Color and Allies ultimately seeks to address this question. How do each of us approach mental health on a day-to-day basis (if at all)? How can we side-step cultural stigmas and/or problems with cultural competency from mainstream health practitioners, in order to promote a positive outlook on mental health within our communities? How can our current networks of support encourage us to be more proactive about maintaining our mental health? We invite you to join our discussion and share your perceptions, perspectives and resources on mental health within the context of QPOC Communities. When all is said and done, we intend for everyone to leave the conference rejuvenated and re-centered. So don't miss what we're hoping will be a very frank, insightful, and positive closeout session.