

The 29th Annual Canadian Conference on HIV/AIDS Research Le 29e Congrès annuel canadien de recherche sur le VIH/sida

Session: **KP1**: Saturday May 2 – 11:00:12:30 – African, Caribbean and Black people

Track: Social Sciences
Subject: Arts-Based Approaches to HIV Research
Presentation Type: Oral
Title of Abstract: **Celebrate: Love, Laugh & Live Together (Celebrate: 3LT). an Inter-generational Exploration of Grief and Loss Through Story-making**
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Abstract

Background

Racialized immigrant living with or affected by HIV, consistently experience loss, either in Canada or their country of origin. In 2018, community members expressed interest in an arts-based intervention focused on grief and loss. The Committee for Accessible AIDS Treatment (CAAT), in collaboration with 7.10 Stories, initiated a storytelling initiative to facilitate intergenerational dialogue around grief and loss through story-making. This presentation will showcase this intervention: Celebrate: Love, Laugh & Live Together (Celebrate 3LT).

Method

Storytelling is an arts-based approach that is grounded in everyday practices of remembering, relaying, and sharing personal and collective experiences and events. Participants worked together to draft and visualize a series of picture books that convey their collective perspectives on grief, death and loss. Through a series of narrative exercises, participants reflected and co-developed picture books responding to three themes, (1) Letters to a loved one; (2) Designing the afterlife; and (3) Celebrating Life. Facilitated sessions offered participants suggested prompts under each theme that were then used to populate and design six (6) picture books.

Results:

Seventeen racialized immigrants living with or affected by HIV participated in Celebrate 3LT: nine (9) in the adult group and eight (8) in the youth group. Program evaluation feedback indicated that Celebrate: 3LT was effective in promoting self-compassion and collective resilience. Using art and story-making as a medium for co-creation engaged participants in meaningful group reflection and sharing. Insights and learning from participant narratives will be shared along with the co-created picture books.

Conclusion:

Celebrate: 3LT program represents a holistic arts-based intervention centered on the experiences of people living with and affected by HIV. This storytelling model shows promise in processing emotions, fostering reflection, and exchanging intergenerational knowledge. Story-making allows participants to contribute their wisdom and for audiences to listen, learn and share it amongst others.