

Joe Kort Teams up with Modern Sex Therapy Institutes to Offer LGBTQ-Affirmative Therapy Certification Program

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Royal Oak psychotherapist Joe Kort has teamed up with the Modern Sex Therapy Institutes to begin offering an LGBT-affirmative therapy certification program. Designed for those in the mental health and medical fields, the 50-hour online certification program comes with 20 hours of case consultation with Kort, Rachel Needle and Ricky Siegel who are MSTI's co-founders and co-directors, and others. Licensed clinicians can receive continuing education credits for these classes; and attendees can go to a single class or complete the entire course.



"Sexuality education of any kind, no less sex therapy training, is woefully lacking among the vast majority of therapists and mental health and medical professionals," Needle said. "When working with different populations, specialized training ensures that therapists have the comfort and competence to be effective and truly comprehensive in their work with couples and individuals."

The LGBTQ-affirmative certification training is a new addition to the certification programs offered by MSTI.

"MSTI is dedicated to training professionals to be LGBT competent and affirmative," said Needle. "Many therapists express concern about their lack of education and understanding of working with individuals who identify as LGBT, as well as concern about being up-to-date with the latest terminology to avoid offending their clients with outdated terms. And most LGBT clients report leaving their therapist due to experiencing a lack of sexual knowledge and training when they want to have sexual health conversations. "LGBT youth are in constant transition and coming out at younger ages," Needle continued. "Sexual fluidity is something being explored in both youth and adulthood. Most clinicians are not competent in working with these issues."

Needle said that while the course is currently only being offered to mental health and medical professionals now, she hopes to open up the class to others in the future.

"We will be adapting it to be applicable to all individuals and hope to have organizations incorporate our education to train staff to be knowledgeable, tolerant and aware," she

said.

For his part, Kort, who has written books on the subject including “Gay Affirmative Therapy for the Straight Clinician: The Essential Guide” and the soon-to-be-released “LGBTQ Clients in Therapy: Clinical Issues and Treatment Strategies,” said he has known and worked with Needle and Siegel for years.

“I know Rachel and Ricky through a sex therapy organization we have belonged to for many years,” said Kort. “It’s the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors and Therapists, which is the main association for sex therapists. They invited me to create an LGBT online training program because I do so many trainings on that topic.”

Kort said he is pleased with how the certification program has shaped up.

“I am helping to pick faculty as well as topics I feel are important for helping professionals to understand,” he said. “I will also be providing 20 hours of group supervision for those who register for the entire online certification. I have guided the development of this program to be current and cutting edge of what is happening now in the LGBT community — especially the changes that are coming from the younger generation.”

The entire certification program is designed to be diverse and all-inclusive.

“We have chosen faculty from all generations and all races,” Kort said. “I am also teaching a course as well on the trauma of growing up as children repressing our LGBT identities, mixed orientation marriages and relationships and doing an overview of LGBT affirmative therapy.”

Those who take the course should be prepared to have their minds opened, Kort said.

“I want people to challenge their beliefs of what they think gender and sex is and should be. Most people have their own ideas of what they think for themselves and don’t recognize that everyone has a boutique identity these days and are picking and choosing from all the different ways to identify and express themselves and coming up with their very own,” he said. “No longer can we assume we know what labels mean . We need to ask what it means to them.”

For more information on the LGBT Affirmative Therapy Certification Program visit modernsextherapyinstitutes.com/certification-programs/.