MAD COMMUNITY WISDOM*

**THE IMPORTANCE OF MAD STUDIES + MAD ACTIVISM**

Mad studies and Mad activism are not taking away madness, nor are they about us (mental health/health practitioners) vs. them (clients). It is about recognizing the ways that people who have been excluded, harmed, or incarcerated in the systems meant to support them. To move forward - together - we need to hear the voices of those who receive our services.

Adams, 2011; LeFrançois et al., 2013

**HONOURING COLLECTIVE AND COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE**

- Honoring the relationship with Mad folks by recognizing their humanity and capacity to know and experience in their care and "treatment" plans.
- Envision community and collective approaches to healing and care.
  - Placing care in the hands of people who experience this rather than the hands of the state and institutions that inflict further control.
- Adopting community-oriented principles of mutual aid.
- Anti-Carceral and Non-Punitve Social Work
  - Reconsidering social work approaches rooted in "law and order," including police responses to mental distress, child welfare, gender-based violence, and immigration.
  - Reimagining a world without policing while building alternatives with those with lived experience.
- Adopting harm-reduction strategies over that of punishing "bad" behaviour.
- Working towards collective approaches to healing when possible.

Bergen & Abj, 2020; Jacob, et al., 2021

@ProjectLETs, @Criminalizedmentality, @dandereknit, sarah madoka currie, TinyLambNet

**WHAT HAVE "WE" LEARNED FROM THIS MAD JOURNEY?**

We have a responsibility to ensure that we are upholding our values as social workers in the pursuit of social justice, in our respect for the inherent dignity and worth of all persons, and in our service to humanity. In our personal and professional ethics, we must attend to the ways that power, oppression, coercion, violence, and incarceration operate within our role in order to truly practice competency.

Especially as we look around us at the consequences of social inequality, violence, oppression, individualizing, and the maintenance of a carceral state, we must find the ways to come together, collectivize, and be in community with one another. This means we must listen to the voices of those who would call themselves Mad and those who would access our services as social workers.

CASW, 2005; Chapman & Wilners, 2019; LeFrançois et al., 2013; MacDonald et al., 2018

**REFERENCES**