Melancholia and Social Transitioning in Trans-Masc Individuals

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01

Introduction

Social Transitioning

- Being comfortable with and being perceived and conversed with as a member of another gender.

- When changes are unexpected, it can take a toll on someone's mental health, especially if they are adjusting to other things like hormone levels adjusting.

- Hearing about this experience led me to connect it to the psychoanalytical idea of Melancholia.

We Are Man Enough [@wearemanenough]. (2023, June 8).
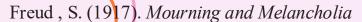
What is Melancholia?

Historical Definitions:

- First coined by Freud. A deeply painful sense of self-rejection and loathing after a loss of something important.
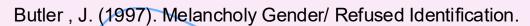
- Different than grief

- Why?

Modern Definitions:

- Judith Butler coined "Gender Melancholia" specifically

- Loss of "what could have been" due to a comp het society.

- But what about those who transition and still feel isolated?

Freud , S. (1917). *Mourning and Melancholia*

Butler , J. (1997). Melancholy Gender/ Refused Identification.

Why Talk About This?

- Wanted an updated, more encompassing version of gender melancholia to better encompass the experiences Trans folks may have.

- NOT pathology, simply a description of an experience.

- Social isolation results in increased risk for early mortality.

Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015

02 Gender and Societal Expectation

Gender and Childhood

Larger group,
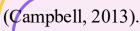less intense and
interpersonal

Intimate,
closeknit,
didactic

(Campbell, 2013).

Stigma/Stereotypes that Impact Gender and Friendship

"Different Genders Cannot be Just Friends"

Different Genders are taught to value different types of interaction

Men and boys face social risk when expressing vulnerability

Women report they feel able to express vulnerability

"Men shouldn't compliment each other"
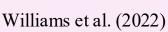
Gaia (2013)

Further Research

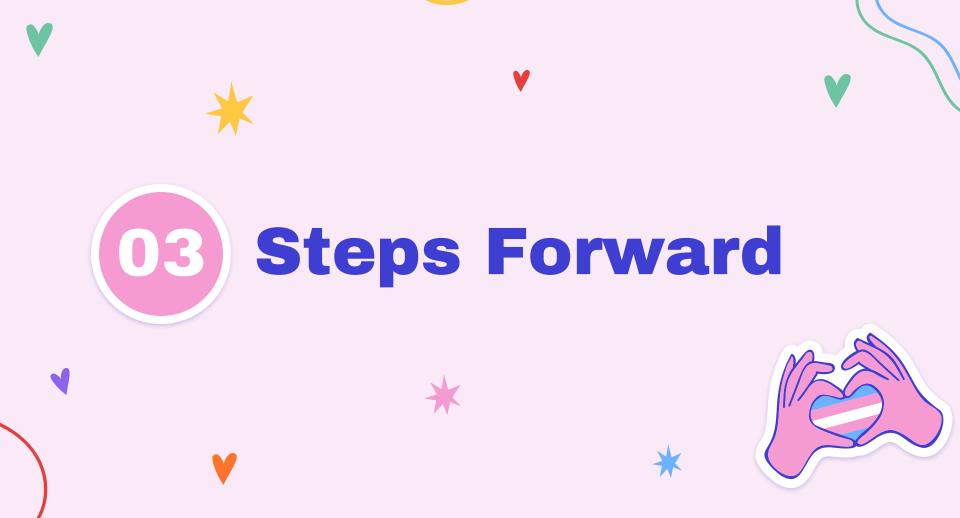Men look for physical strength, wealth, and ins for potential romantic relationships in friends

Women look for emotional support, intimacy, and access to social news

Williams et al. (2022)

03 Steps Forward

Three Ideas

Study male connection and loneliness, and how it relates to gender diverse experiences

Education and support for transmasc folks during social transition

Help your loved ones advocate for themselves and their needs

Way (2013)

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THANKS!

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?
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