

July is Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) Mental Health Awareness Month

Jennifer Stafford, a Psychotherapist in New York City Creates a Positive Space for BIPOC Men to Speak Their Minds

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, July 5, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The US House of Representatives in 2008 declared July National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month today known as BIPOC Mental Health Month. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) reports that “racial and ethnic minority groups in the U.S. are less likely to have access to mental health services. To open up about struggles with mental health is considered a weakness or taboo in many BIPOC communities who have traditionally struggled with the concept of 'receiving help'.

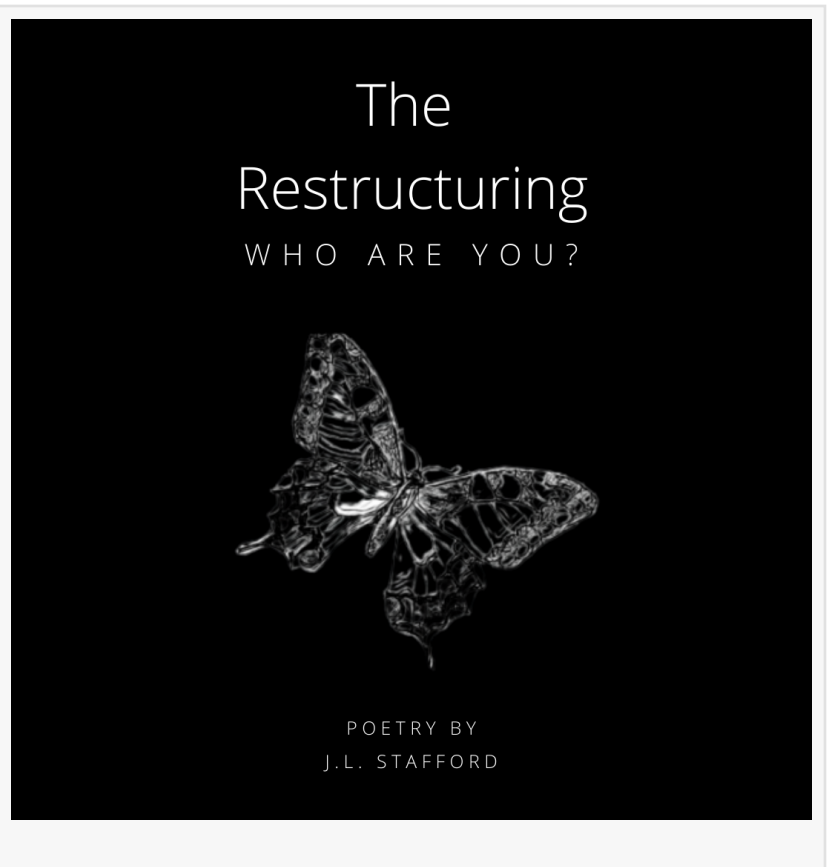


Jennifer Stafford, LMHC, Ed.M is a licensed psychotherapist and founder of [Ivy Relationship Consultants, Inc.](#)

“As a clinician and a human being I understand the challenge of tapping into the vulnerability required to receive and/or ask for help, especially when someone comes from a culture where seeking mental health help is seen as a weakness,” says Psychotherapist [Jennifer Stafford](#) of [Ivy Relationship Consultants, Inc.](#)

Judgment from within the community and from the self are major factors that contribute to the omnipresent and rising levels of mental health issues in the community. Men aged 18–44 who had daily feelings of anxiety or depression, non-Hispanic black and Hispanic men (26.4%), were deemed less likely than non-Hispanic white men (45.4%) to have used mental health treatments. These statistics implore us to take a hard look at why mental health awareness is critical among the BIPOC community. During the 2020 pandemic, any person of color who navigated through the events of the year understands that getting emotional help and support is no longer a privilege-- it's a priority.

To understand the gravity of the situation, Stafford reveals that she saw a significant surge in business due to the social and political unrest presented in 2020. Surprisingly, with an increased male clientele--more specifically men of color. When more men started reaching out, she ensured that she held the space for them to feel emotionally safe and seen. Societal and cultural views of masculinity impact BIPOC men as they are historically seen as heads of families. Being seen as the leader of the family leaves little room for emotional expression when emotionally impacted. "Invalidating emotional experiences of men is how psychological trauma is compiled and normalized," she further adds. Her approach is open, understanding, and compassionate.



Additionally, Stafford suggests that men of color should validate themselves and their humanity; if they experience hurt and pain, they should honor it. They don't have to swim and dance in it; give it the respect they deserve and then continue their pursuits. Men should also pay attention to their inner voice and ask themselves if they want their coach, friend, or employer to talk to them how they talk to themselves? If not, say something rooted in love towards yourself.

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I am trying to address the invalidation of our own humanity and highlight how that impacts how we relate to and interact with ourselves and one another.”

Jennifer Stafford

About Jennifer Stafford

Jennifer Stafford, LMHC, Ed.M is a licensed psychotherapist and founder of Ivy Relationship

Consultants, Inc. She holds a Master's Degree in Psychological Counseling from Columbia University and a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from San Diego State University. Stafford published [The Restructuring](#), a collection of poetry that inspires you to look upon your innermost self and truly see who is there. Her book invites users on a journey to free themselves from emotional wounds and provides tools to authentically see within. The Restructuring is available as an audiobook, ebook and paperback.

For more on Jennifer Stafford visit: <https://www.ivyrelationships.com/>

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