

## **Standing in Solidarity with Our Asian American Communities**

Dear WAMFT Community,

On behalf of the board of directors, I want to directly express anger and grief regarding the acts of anti-Asian violence that has been happening at increased rates throughout the country. Racism against members of Asian communities is not new in this country from racist immigration policies that explicitly excluded Asians for decades, to the internment of Japanese Americans, to 9/11-fueled hatred to name a few periods of endemic racism and violence towards Asians. For too long, Asian communities have dealt with stereotypes, discrimination, and violence that has often been overlooked and minimized. This past year anti-Asian racism and violence is on the rise once again fueled by misinformation surrounding COVID-19 that pervades various levels of society including at the highest level from the racist messages about Asians from former president Trump. These recent attacks against members of the Asian community have escalated, leaving these communities to live in fear for their physical safety and enacting immense psychological turmoil.

We stand in solidarity with our Asian communities, and we vehemently condemn the acts of violence and hatred that have been perpetrated. We also condemn the oppressive systems in this nation both public and private that have animated and enabled these attacks and the larger climate of discrimination and racism that have been endured in this country since its inception.

As MFTs, it is our responsibility to use our skills and tools for healing and to be change agents to combat racism and oppression. Our work as systemic therapists uniquely positions us to inspire healing and change at smaller systemic levels that can reverberate to the larger systems that either ensnare or serve us. To be anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and liberatory, we must confront these reprehensible racist actions and beliefs with our words and actions. During these times, it is especially important that our therapeutic spaces actively support and help to dismantle racism and oppression for communities that have become targets of hatred and discrimination, and this includes Asian communities.

In an effort to support our WAMFT community, we have provided links for some resources and organizations that combat anti-Asian racism and that advocate for Asian American communities:

- [Stop AAPI Hate](#) tracks and responds to incidents of hate, violence, harassment, discrimination, shunning, and child bullying against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.
- The [Asian Counseling and Referral Service](#) promotes social justice and the well-being and empowerment of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other underserved communities -- including immigrants, refugees, and American-born -- by developing,

providing, and advocating for innovative, effective and efficient community-based multilingual and multicultural services.

- Multicultural Counselors serves an array of ethnic clients needing counseling and therapy from providers who understand the specific needs of people of color and various cultures. These licensed therapists and counselors have a variety of backgrounds, experiences, ethnicities and language skills needed to assist many ethnicities in Washington including Asian communities.
- WA State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs is a state agency with an advisory board of 12 commissioners who are appointed by the governor to be a voice for Washington's diverse Asian Pacific American communities.
- King County Coalition Against Hate and Bias is a community-led initiative to address hate and bias incidents by strengthening and networking communities who experience racist and bigoted treatment and all forms of oppression.
- Asian Americans Advancing Justice's mission is to advance civil and human rights for Asian Americans and to build and promote a fair and equitable society for all.
- The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) issued a Statement about Rise in Hate Crimes Against Asian Americans where you can also access more resources for combating racism and anti-Asian racism specifically.

In solidarity,

WAMFT Board of Directors