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SPEAKERS

Kay Harper, Harvey Milk



00:02

The following program contains language or images of a frank or sensitive nature that may be considered objectionable by some listener Discretion is Advised



00:13

I am what I am I am session creation so come to give me the all the Ovation It's my little pride and it's not a place to hide lies not worth a damn to you can say hi you've discovered after hours continuing tradition on KPFT I don't want praise I don't want to bang my own drum or something it's pretty bang things from a different angle Dawn live to you and shout out I am what I need no excuse to steal my own deck sometimes he says no no deposit not till you can shout out



Harvey Milk 02:30

we must destroy the Mistresses Roy shatter them we must continue to speak out and most importantly most importantly every gay person you must tell your immediate family you must tell your relatives you must tell your friends if indeed they are your friends, you must tell your neighbors you must tell the people your work you must tell the people in the stories you shop they realize that we are indeed the children and we are indeed everywhere. Every every lie every innuendo will be destroyed and you will feel so much better do my own deck sometimes the child will stand up you may come out. Where will you be when they come?



Kay Harper 05:38

Good morning. This is after hours. And I'm Kay Harper and my co host today is Jeff Mackay. Hi. And our wonderful engineers, Jim, and we are here. And we are clear, or do we not say that anymore? Since we've changed shows?



05:55

President were homosexual? How about that?



Kay Harper 05:57

Okay, did doesn't rhyme quite as much, but that'll work. Yes, I'm being reminded that this is a continuing tradition, things are a little different these days, if you've been paying attention, I don't sound much like buddy. And he doesn't sound like much like Betty either.



06:13

Not much at all.



Kay Harper 06:16

Well, we have a interesting show for you tonight. We've got Tom strain at the Montrose Counseling Center, who's going to talk about the worried well support group and the other support groups that are available at the counseling center. This way out, we'll be at 130 As always, and between two and three, we'll be talking or hearing from Tori Williams, about Sweet Charity, which is chocolate,



06:37

yay, my favorite subject? Well, one of them.



Kay Harper 06:42

Well, you can combine it with your favorite subject, I'm sure. And we will be hearing from Michael Crawford about racism. He was on the front page, below the fold, but front page of the new voice this week talking about racism in the in the community here. And then between three and four, we'll be hearing from a presentation called vinegar and lace, which is an interview with a Philadelphia activist who's now picked up and moved to California or something, he's up to all sorts of interesting things. So let's start with music. Now Good morning, this is after hours a Canadian continuing tradition. And I am Kay Harper and I now have a new title. I'm no longer a co host or host or whatever the heck I've been pretending to be I'm an anchor, I want to I want a funny little tie with you know, like the station logo on it. I'm not sure they have that for KPFT. But it would be interesting. And my co host my co anchor or my person to my left. I like



07:57

the anchor thing it makes makes me feel very solid for some reason not that not that I've not



08:04

makes you think you're much is what



08:07

insubstantial ability has never been my major I'm never mind



Kay Harper 08:13

that you were an English major speech, something like that. Okay. The music we just heard was all by black artists, which is not unusual in and of itself. But I was supposed to mention that it was black history month. So I'm mentioning that it's Black History Month. And so you'll be hearing a lot of music on this show that's talking about either by black artists or talking about black, significant black figures in history. However, the next song is dedicated to the Olympus 22 of the crew of Olympus and this was a special request from Bruce who hangs out here on other Saturday nights Sunday mornings. Hi there, we're back. And we are talking are going to be talking with Tom strain, who's come to talk about counseling center support groups. The Montrose counseling center support groups. So welcome, Tom.



09:18

Thank you. Okay.



09:20

So, support groups, what kind of support groups?



09:24

Well, there really are several with with kind of unique focuses the the, we have a group for people with AIDS. We also have a support group for people. It's called the worried well group and it's kind of evolved into a group for people who are HIV positive and asymptomatic, but that certainly isn't a requirement to participate in the group but anybody really who has concerns about HIV and their life and there's also a support group there for families, friends and significant others of people with with a PT IV.



Kay Harper 10:00

Okay, the are they gender segregated? I mean, are they mostly guys are they do they have like moms and lesbian friends and stuff.



10:12

They're not technically gender separated. But because the HIV the group for people with AIDS and that word while group tend to be mostly male. We have had women in both of those groups, the families, friends and significant other groups Group does tend to run mostly mostly male. But there have been times when we've had mothers and sisters and other women that have been proactive in that group.



Kay Harper 10:44

Okay, so when When did these meet? You asked the hard guy as third question, well, I can help you out on one having been to the family, friends and significant others I know they meet on Tuesdays,



10:56

they meet Tuesdays 730 to nine and that is also the same time as the group for



Kay Harper 11:02

people with AIDS. So you can just take one car carpool,



11:05

right, and we do have families that carpool. There have been several families that have done that come in and one member of the family downstairs and one upstairs the the PWA group, or is downstairs and I think it's sweet. What a three. Thank you. And the upstairs, the Sikh families friends and significant others as in sweet is upstairs in suite 203. In the round room,



Kay Harper 11:36

the round room. Yes, that infamous round room just have spent a few hours in that room. hasn't anybody has done any kind of training or or big group things at the counseling center?



11:47

Right? We also forgot I forgot to mention the word well group, which is Thursdays from six to 730.



Kay Harper 11:54

They get to meet early huh, right. Okay. So which which group? Is it that you're involved with?

Now,



12:00

I'm involved with the word well group, right now, in a in the sub been about a month since I've left the families, for instance, significant others, I've had to do that. Because of a conflict with my full time employment, not because I wanted to leave it. It was a group that I looked forward to a lot. And really, it was a hard decision to leave that I tried to manipulate everything else in the world not to do but it just didn't work. So



Kay Harper 12:27

yeah. So one of the things that we wanted to talk about was one of the we talk about groups and support groups a lot on the show. But nobody really talks about what it's like to be in a group. I know you're, you're the one who sits in the chair and plays therapist, but what is it like? You know, what, what do people get out of going to a group?



12:51

I think that, you know, there's a lot of different answers for that. And I can talk also from being involved in a support group as a as someone being supported when I volunteered with the AIDS Foundation. And what I found there, for me personally, is that it really enabled me to do what I was doing, I have absolutely no doubt in my mind, I volunteered as a buddy through the AIDS Foundation for a year and a half. And I have no doubt in my mind that that without that support, I would not have been able to do what I did. There were at least two occasions that I went with the full intention of leaving that that particular commitment because it was extremely stressful. And I didn't, I wasn't getting very frustrated with that. And by getting support from people, I was really able to continue doing what what I what felt right for me to do. There was one time in particular that I that I really could feel the support of people. And it helped me It strengthened me to get to get be able to be there and the way that I was I had personally experienced that at a time when my buddy was very ill and in the hospital. I would come home from the hospital at night and there'd be five or six messages on my answering machine and people calling in saying Call me if you need me, you know, taking me to dinner and really supporting me. And that's a lot of what happens with the families friends and significant others you know, we we have in the community I think a lot more resources for people with HIV and sometimes we forget that it's extremely stressful for family members and caregivers and and the having to watch people that you love, be in pain or be ill or gradually little by little lose parts of what made them special to you. Right. And it's very stressful and and it's real important for family members and caregivers to get some support and some help.



Kay Harper 14:59

Yeah So I've have gone to that group in the past, and it's really just an incredible group of people. You know, and people who, whose part and a lot of the people who were there when I was there had partners who were were PWA s or HIV positive. And I mean, the whole spectrum

of, you know, people who were pretty asymptomatic, or people who were, you know, in hospitals in and out and that kind of stuff. Right. So that was, that was neat.



15:30

One of the things that that's really fulfilling for me to watch, and I hear over and over from the people that are involved, is that what, what people get a lot is that listening to other people talk about what they're going through, prepares them. And I've heard people in the families group say, you know, I knew what to do, because so and so talked about it in group and it and I knew exactly how to handle it, I knew what to do. And in in the worried well, group. I've had situations where people even make decisions to, to drop the big news to family members and share with them their status, their serostatus, because they heard other people talking about it, and and and heard how important it was, and fortunately, sometimes real healing for families to share that information and made decisions to do that based on listening to other group members. And I think that's really the important thing that happens in a in a support group is that people learn from each other. They learned, they helps them anticipate and helps them be prepared. And and in addition to having that support.



Kay Harper 16:50

So you get support by going to a support group. That makes sense,



16:54

right. But you also get a lot of information, at least in these groups.



Kay Harper 16:58

Yeah. Well, just as a quick overview, what other kinds of groups does a counseling center have?



17:06

Well, they have. I'm not really not real up on that, sorry, real current on that. But I know that they have, you know, they have an outpatient chemical dependency treatment program. And those groups are partly support partly educational and partly therapeutic. There's really a difference between a therapy group and a support group. And I guess that's maybe an important distinction to make, because the three groups we're talking about with the HIV program are support groups, and they're different. They're they're not meant to be groups where people work on on family of origin issues, or real heavy duty, interpersonal relationships, kinds of things. That's not the purpose of them.



Kay Harper 17:54

Yeah. Because people drop in and out of those groups, right? Because I know that the little

while I was going to one, yeah, there were some people who'd been coming for months and months on end. And some people who came like every third or fourth week, just sort of when things needed to be talked about.



18:13

And we have people that have been coming to those groups for years, literally. There's also the other program there is they have a women's program and they have what's called The Life Program, which is just kind of general Counseling Services. I'm not really sure what groups are meeting



Kay Harper 18:36

in those Yeah, I know that there's a men's network that meets on the first and third Wednesday's of the month and Women's Network meets on the second and fourth Wednesdays, right. There's also on I think Thursdays of support group for women with chronic illnesses



18:55

with with healthcare issues. Yeah.



Kay Harper 19:00

Chronic fatigue and and lupus and I don't know what else right, but that kind of stuff, right? I read my things. As I as I sit in the counseling center waiting for my appointments. I will read all their little brochures,



19:16

obviously you study.



Kay Harper 19:19

I have to come here and talk about it on the radio once a month.



19:22

Yes. Well, I will point out as you were talking to Jeff one thing you that you need to bone up on your right from your left.



Kay Harper 19:31



Kay Harper 19:31

They don't know they can't see that's the joy of radio is they don't know that. I can't tell my right from my left.



19:38

I noticed you know my job



Kay Harper 19:40

you're in. Okay. It's probably indicative of some deep psychological wrongness about me, right?



19:47

I don't have any clue. For notice



Kay Harper 19:52

to notice. Okay. So school you did you have specialized training, you're not just somebody they picked up off The Street to do this.



20:01

Right? Right. It's, they don't really just pick people off the street to do that. At the Counseling Center, there's a lot of people in my particular discipline, which happens to be clinical social work. There's also some of the therapist training is, is in psychology as opposed to social work. And I'm not really I'm not really calling to mind exact credentials, but typically in the alcohol and drug program, they have people that are certified alcohol and drug abuse counselors, which is their background.



Kay Harper 20:36

So there's, there's all sorts of different ways you can, can grow up to lead a support group,



20:43

right? And they're, you know, but they are all licensed and or certified people.



Kay Harper 20:49

Okay. Well, we have music here for a little break in between. And I'm supposed to dedicate this to Richard from Jeff. And now it couldn't remember which CD player I put it on. Okay. And we're

here with Tom strain at the Montrose Counseling Center talking about support groups, most specifically the worried well group and the parents, family, friends and lovers and significant others, and however many more people you can string into the name groups. One of the things that that I, you've told me that that's different about the Counseling Center is that they separate out the family, friends, and etceteras, from the actual PWA groups,



21:40

right, we have a separate group, as opposed to some of the other places in town where families and friends can come in, and they're, they're a part of the same discussions in the same groups as the people with AIDS. What that does is it gives us a chance to take a little unique focus and talk more specific about caregiver issues, you know, we talk a lot in there about the the extreme need to take some time for yourself, you know, to take to take an hour if that's all you can get to go sit in a bubble bath or get out of the house or, or anything, you know, so many of the people that I work with, especially toward the more critical stages of the disease, the acute stages are literally getting up in the morning and taking care doing physical care and hands on care and going to work and running home at lunch to do IVs and feed their their significant others running back to work coming home and and you know, doing more care and IVs and feeding and cleaning and you know, and it's it gets extremely taxing and sometimes even to be able to have someone come in and sit if if the person you're caring for can't be left alone, even to come and sit for an hour and get out and go do nothing for an hour just to get away get some space, it's real important. And we talk about that kind of stuff and and sometimes maybe even negotiating health care delivery systems and and the people share with each other how important it is sometimes to go with your significant other to the doctor because the caregivers have questions they need answered. And sometimes the people who are your your significant others may not ask questions you want or may not get the answer back translated or instructions aren't understood or whatever. And, and and it's those are the kinds of issues that we can do in that group. They can do I'm no longer there. As much as I hate to say that, those are the kinds of issues that that group that they can focus on specifically. And and because it is strictly families and friends and significant others.



Kay Harper 24:07

Yeah, and you can also I would think that would be a safe place to talk about how you feel like you're at the end of your rope and how tired you are doing all of this because that's not something that as a caregiver, I wouldn't be comfortable saying that in front of the person I was giving care to, or even in front of another PWA



24:28

or didn't even come in and talk about how angry you are that your life's being taken away with this. You know that all your free time. It's also been a group that that very interesting ly that people who have been coming for a while in the in the event that there is a death of the person they've been taken care of comes they they generally stay in that group for a while and kind of get some support. Because it's a big transition when every waking hour is spent thinking about and caring for and worrying about Wondering about and suddenly that's all gone. Yeah,

K

Kay Harper 25:03

that that was one of the people that actually I knew him and his his lover who had died, or who were involved in the group, when I started coming. It was, it was neat seeing the way that the survivor could give his experience to, to the people who are just starting the process.



25:26

Right. And there's, there's whole issues around that too, you know? Do you stay in that place that you're living? You know, there's, and that's one of the neat things about support groups is that everybody does it differently, and everybody's wants and needs are different. And, and I've had people that say, that have said, when someone dies, I gotta move tomorrow, and other people that get a lot of comfort from being in a home that they shared, and, and, you know, other people that like, immediately got all of this stuff out, you know, and maybe taking all the medications on the IV poles and the, you know, the chucks and attends and all that stuff, it's like get it out immediately. And other people that just can't let go of it right away, you know, so there's every different answer. Yeah. And that's one of the neat things about a support group is you get you hear people talking about their experience, and it's all real different. Yeah.

K

Kay Harper 26:29

So we've talked a lot about the kind of of negative, not negative, but but the the downside of emotions that that come out in specifically at this point that the family friends group, is it? I mean, is it ever a fun group to go to? Are we all talking these real serious issues the entire time? Well, it



26:53

tends to be pretty serious. But it's also there are times when group has not had a lot of issues going on that it's more support, and, you know, talking about learning to make the adjustments, and it can be pretty uplifting, it can be you know, that sometimes a lot of humor comes into the group, you know, that people are able to share the funny stuff that happens. And and, you know, I'm thinking about people that talk about the coincidences, and one person that talked about having he had his significant other with somebody who had lost his sight, and, and had a great sense of humor, and he was always talking his significant other into putting things up in front of his face. And he would say, can you see it? And? And the PWI would say, No, I can't, I'm blind, you know, it's gotten his lover to stick it out in front of his face. And you know, and we, we talked about that and stuff, and humor does come into it, and sometimes it's alive. Yeah.

K

Kay Harper 28:02

So the worried well group, the other group that you have been involved with, and are still currently involved with, does that like doom and gloom? And oh, my God, I've tested positive, what do I do now?



28:16

Almost never, almost never as a doom and gloom group. And I think one of the things that I hear from the people that come to that group is that something they really appreciate about it, and sometimes new people come in with the, with an expectation that it's going to be that way. And their fear is that they don't want to come in to some place where people are going, Oh, my God, I've got HIV, what am I going to do? You know, and and that didn't happen there. You know, it's, it's mostly a very uplifting group. It's a group where the, the, the common bond is, is fear of, or fear of HIV or being HIV positive. But it's a lot about reducing stress. It's a lot about disclosing HIV status to families, friends, to people that you date or people that you less than date, we'll just tastefully drop it at that. disclosing that, you know, of negotiating with employers, you know, when when is the time to tell your boss or the people that, you know, that take care of the benefits and file insurance claims and when is the right time to, you know, to file a claim with the insurance you know, and they talk about a lot of those kinds of issues.