

Brian Norton Biography

As both a patient and student of psychotherapy I have been able to experience first-hand the benefits of talk therapy.

As a student, I found the subject matter and process to be intrinsically interesting and became fascinated by learning more about human behavior. I continued my studies in psychology as both an undergraduate and graduate student.

Upon graduation, I worked as a medical social worker, a counselor in a psychiatric treatment center and provided behavioral therapy to children on the autistic spectrum. My work with children and families continued for the next 9 years. I have worked with children and parents who have experienced a psychological trauma in a variety of capacities: as a clinician, a clinical supervisor, a psychometrician and an evaluator.

My work within the child welfare system has exposed me to a wide and varied array of complex psychological and emotional problems. It has afforded me training in a variety of treatment modalities, has cultivated a skillful diagnostician and prepared me well for my work in private practice.

Throughout my work with children and families, I have also been able to pursue my other area of interest; the unique challenges facing gay men. As a graduate student, I centered my research efforts and studies on therapy with the LGBT population. As a new therapist, I volunteered my time as a counselor to gay men struggling with a diagnosis of HIV.

In 2004, I earned my independent license and opened a limited, private practice in Montclair, NJ, focused on the challenges facing gay men. The experience of private work was both fulfilling for me and proved most beneficial to the clients in my care. This experience inspired me to move my practice into Manhattan and to focus my time working exclusively with this population.

Substance abuse, depression and suicide rates are disproportionately higher within the LGBT community. It is the goal of my practice to address these alarming rates and to assist my clients in developing relationships that are more fulfilling.

For many, being gay is not at the forefront of our therapy, rather, therapy is focused on universal life problems that are encountered regardless of sexual orientation. For them, identifying with a gay therapist is often more comfortable. For others, a lack of comfort with their gay identity may be a cause for depression, substance use and unfulfilling relationships.

During my tenure as a therapist to gay men, I found that many suffer from what is often referred to as "internalized homophobia." That is to say, the biased messages one has heard throughout one's life are internalized or, incorporated into their self-identity, often leading to a damaged ego, debilitating self-esteem, depression and self-medication. My work with gay men has led to a more accurate and highly developed self-identity.

As I pursue my work as a therapist to gay men in my practice, I am able to offer my skills and experience as a consultant to the child welfare system. My work with children and families has prepared me well to address the needs of the ever increasing number of gay men wanting to have children and the complexities involved around parenting within a non-traditional family.

My life experiences, coupled with my own experience in therapy and a rich history of both formal and informal training has afforded me the opportunity to practice as a confident and skillful clinician; well suited to partner with you through the process of psychotherapy.