

**RAHIM THAWER** 1.416.904.9721 | [rahim@thepoliticizedpractitioner.com](mailto:rahim@thepoliticizedpractitioner.com) | [rthawer@ua.edu](mailto:rthawer@ua.edu)

LMSW (ALABAMA), RSW (ONTARIO), CERTIFIED SUPERVISOR (CANADA)

## summary of qualifications

15 years of clinical experience supporting mental health, trauma, and complex presentations across LGBTQ+, newcomer, racialized, and HIV-affected communities.

DEI–Wellness organization consultant and public speaker, integrating anti-oppressive, Gestalt, and psychoanalytic approaches; delivered 200+ workshops and presentations since 2011.

Experienced educator and facilitator with a strong track record in teaching, curriculum development, and professional training in academic and practice settings.

Writer and contributor to social work and psychotherapy, with forthcoming books on queer and trans mental health and four self-published clinical guides on assessment, treatment planning, documentation, and countertransference.

Certified Clinical Supervisor (CCPA); provided 400+ hours of clinical supervision to therapists, case managers, and graduate students (2020–2025).

Canadian citizen eligible to work in the United States under a **TN Professional Visa** with a letter provided by the employer [[See Template](#)]

## education

### DOCTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

**The University of Alabama, 2024-2027**

Organizational Leadership Specialization

Capstone: *A Feasibility and Acceptability Study for a Psychodynamic Intervention to Mitigate Resistance-to-Change in Non-profit & Healthcare Settings*

### MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

**University of Toronto, 2009-2011**

Mental Health & Health Specialization;  
Collaborative Program in Addiction Studies

*International MSW Placement*  
University of Melbourne 2010

### BACHELOR OF ARTS

**University of Waterloo, 2003-2008**

Honours Psychology  
Double Minor in English Language & Literature  
and Political Science

*Student Exchange Program,*  
National University of Singapore 2006-2007

## awards

Gina Ogden Curatorial Scholarship for Integrative Approaches to Sex Research and Therapy  
*Kinsey Institute at Indiana University 2025*

AASECT Humanitarian Award  
*American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counsellors, and Therapists 2025*

Mary Smith Arnold Anti-Oppression Award  
*Counsellors for Social Justice (CSJ)—American Counselling Association (ACA) 2025*

Honorary Award in Education  
*South Asian Americans for Change (SAAFC) 2025*

DSW Award for Writing to Advance Social Work and Social Justice, *The University of Alabama 2025*

Distinguished Leader Award: Toronto Area  
*Ontario Association of Social Workers (OASW) 2024*

Champion Award  
*25 Champions/25 Years—Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention (ASAAP) 2020*

Proud to Shine Toronto Community Award  
*Canadian Broadcast Corporation (CBC) 2018*

Shortlisted—Any Other Way: How Toronto Got Queer (Co-editor, Contributor)  
*Toronto Book Awards 2017*

## strategic leadership & supervision

**More than a decade of progressive leadership** in mental health, equity, and organizational consulting. Demonstrated ability to guide diverse teams, lead clinical innovation, and implement trauma-informed, anti-oppressive service models across complex systems.

**Organizational leadership grounded in systems thinking and relational awareness**, integrating doctoral research in psychoanalytic leadership, executive certification in nonprofit strategy (NYU, 2023), and applied training in Satir-informed communication and change management (Satir Center, 2025).

**Clinical supervision rooted in advanced theoretical training**, including Balint group leadership, Gestalt-informed supervision, and the Four-Dimensional Model (developmental, role, competency, process). Certified Clinical Supervisor (CCS) with over **400 hours of individual and group supervision** delivered to clinicians, caseworkers, and graduate students (2020–2025).

**Strategic Consultant for Clinical Operations**, Victoria Wellness (2024–Present). Lead supervision systems, reflective practice structures, and trauma-informed clinical training across multidisciplinary teams. Guide organizational change initiatives and promote emotional congruence in high-stakes team dynamics.

## program & resource development

**Developed a facilitator's guide and curriculum** for *Love and Sex in the Age of Apps*, a manualized group for older gay and bisexual men seeking connection (2023–2024, funded by the Ontario HIV Treatment Network)

**Led development of reflective supervision** processes, trauma-informed professional development days, and programmatic standards for multidisciplinary teams at Victoria Wellness (April 2024–Present).

**Developed sexual health and wellness information resources** for international students exploring their sexual and gender identities and the service providers that support them (2023, funded by the Ontario HIV Treatment Network):  
<https://hqtoronto.ca/international-student-resources/>

**Promoted to Clinical Coordinator** at Sherbourne Health (2018–2020), overseeing mental health group programs, supervising graduate trainees, standardizing client intake pathways, and advancing equity-focused care for LGBTQ+, newcomer, and urban health populations.

**External Clinical Supervisor** to diverse agencies including North York Women's Shelter, Ernestine's, UBC SASC, Salal, Parkdale CHC, and ACT. Provide trauma-informed, psychodynamic, and anti-oppressive supervision addressing burnout, vicarious trauma, and complex client care.

**Faculty Educator at UBC's Centre for Equitable Systems Design** (2023–Present), facilitating online courses on intersectionality, organizational inclusion, and unconscious bias. Contribute to curriculum development and support adult learners in driving equity-centered change through systems-based leadership tools.

**Leadership style defined by clarity, emotional presence, and systems attunement**, with a strong record of shaping clinical culture and growing capacity through supervision, mentorship, and strategic engagement

**Developed a facilitator's guide and curriculum** for *Crescent Moon: Supporting Family Members of LGBTQ Muslims* (2022, SSHRC-funded grant):  
<https://tinyurl.com/queercrescentmoon>

**Developed a facilitator's guide and curriculum for *Do You Mind?*** a community mental health leadership program for gender and sexual minority youth (2020, funded by the Community-Based Research Centre):  
[https://www.cbrc.net/do\\_you\\_mind](https://www.cbrc.net/do_you_mind)

**Coordinated practicum placement program** with graduate program liaisons, interviewed shortlisted candidates, provided orientation training, facilitated group supervision & student learning days (2017–2020)

**Coordinated first phase of an agency's strategic plan** toward becoming trauma-informed at all levels of the

organization (Melbourne, 2010). Conducted a literature review, co-developed survey tools, interviewed internal mental health workers and presented findings and recommendations in a town hall meeting of employees and managers across the agency's multiple sites.

**Co-authored *The Guide (2010)***, a multi-lingual print and online resource intended to help members of the gay, bisexual and trans newcomer community mitigate psychosocial vulnerabilities associated with immigration stress and navigating new spaces. Project included conducting an academic literature review and co-facilitating focus groups with the target community.

## community development & engagement

Designed and delivered ongoing, culturally-specific peer facilitator trainings for South Asian families with LGBTQ+ loved ones (via *Desi Rainbow Parents & Allies*)—blending cultural humility and sex-positive frameworks to build affirming, skills-based volunteer capacity and deepen community support networks across North America (quarterly, since March 2021).

Community organizing, regional group mobilization and fundraising as Core Team Lead with *Salaam Canada*, a national LGBTQ Muslim organization (2012–2022).

Planning Committee Member for the annual Guelph Sexuality Conference (2016-2019).

Engagement in queer arts as yearly host of *brOWN/OUT* program at Pride (2014–2019)

Co-founded *Ismaili Queers: Advocates for Pluralism* and coordinated initiatives (2008-2015).

Developed community outreach strategies, built relationships for streamlined referral processes, and participated in inter-agency collaborations, including evaluation projects, joint outreach events targeting gay/bisexual men of colour, and resource dissemination as a member of the M2Men Network, comprised of City of Toronto-funded AIDS Prevention Community Investment Programs (2009-2012).

Active strategist and community convener as part of the Crystal Meth Coalition, HIV and Mental Health Network (2011-2013) and World Pride Human Rights Subcommittee (2013-2014).

## teaching & curriculum development

### THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA, SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

**Courses taught 2024—Present**

- Forensic Social Work Practice (x3)
- Anti-Oppression and Social Justice (x3)
- Chemical Dependency (x3)
- Social Welfare in the United States (x3)
- Professional Writing in Social Work (x1)
- Social Work Practice with Children and Adol (x2)
- Advanced Clinical Social Work Practice (x2)
- Psychopathology (x1)

**Course development 2025-2026**

- Advanced Practice: Mental Health Across the Lifespan
- Reform & Resistance: Development of Social Welfare
- Substance Use & Social Work Practice

### UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

**Program:** Extended Learning, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Certificate

**Courses facilitated 2023—Present**

- Understanding Intersectionality and Identity (x4)
- Dismantling Barriers to Inclusion in Organizations (x5)
- Countering Biases and Microaggressions (x5)
- Engaging Diversity & Incl in Organizations (x1)

### WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY, CONTINUING ED.

**Courses taught**

*December 2024 & February 2026*

- Foundations of Sex Therapy Practice, 14 hours

**FACTOR-INWENTASH FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**

**Program:** Master of Social Work, 2020-2023

**Courses taught:**

- Foundations of Social Work Practice (1x)
- CBT and Social Work Practice (1x)

**Courses developed and taught:**

- Cybercounselling and Social Work Practice (2x)

**GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE**

**Program:** Social Service Worker

**Courses taught:**

- Substance Use (3x) Fall 2015
- Concurrent Disorders (2x) Winter 2016

**CENTENNIAL COLLEGE**

**Programs:** Community Dev'l, Social Service Worker

**Courses taught, 2014-2016**

- Communication Fundamentals (2x)
- Power, Privilege, & Oppression (1x)

**professional development**

Satir Growth Summer Intensive, *Virginia Satir Center, University of North Carolina* 40.5 CEU **2025**

Psychodrama Intensive,  
*Psychodrama New Jersey* 25 CEU **2025**

Professional Certificate in Psychosexual Therapy,  
*Contemporary Institute of Clinical Sexology* 204 CE **2024**

Intensive Balint Leadership Training,  
*American Balint Society* 19.25 CEU **2023**

Executive Leadership in the Not-for-Profit Sector,  
*NYU Silver School of Social Work* 20 CEU **2023**

The Supervisory Relationship,  
*Gestalt Institute of Toronto* 30 CEU **2022-2023**

Clinical Supervision,  
*Institute for Self-in-Relationship Psychotherapy* **2021**

Advanced Assessment & Diagnosis,  
*NYU Silver School of Social Work* 14 CEU **2020**

**ST. JEROME'S AT UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO**

**Program:** Sexuality, Marriage, & Family Studies

**Courses developed and taught, 2021-2022**

- Introduction to Systemic Therapies & Anti-Oppressive Practices (2x)
- Sex Therapy (1x)

**TORONTO METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**

**Program:** Bachelor of Social Work

**Courses taught, 2018-2019**

- Transformative Social Work Practice (2x)

**CENTENNIAL COLLEGE**

**Program:** Addiction & Mental Health Worker

**Courses developed, 2015-2016**

- Integrated Approaches to Addiction & M. Health
- Stigma in Addictions & Mental Health
- Prev, M. Health Promotion, & Harm Reduction
- Special Issues in Addictions & M. Health

Interpersonal Psychotherapy Training Certificate,  
*Institute of Interpersonal Psychotherapy* **2019**

Practical Psychodynamics,  
*Mount Sinai Psychotherapy Institute* **2017**

Clinical Social Work Supervision,  
*University of Calgary* **2016**

Gestalt Theory & Practice One-Year Professional's  
Program, *Gestalt Institute of Toronto* **2015-2016**

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy: Complex Disorders,  
*Ontario Institute for Studies in Education* **2015**

Training Enhancement in Applied (Smoking) Cessation  
& Health (TEACH) Certificate, *CAMH* **2015**

Fundamental Perspectives in Psychoanalysis,  
*Toronto Psychoanalytic Society & Institute* **2014-2015**

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy: Foundations,  
*Ontario Institute for Studies in Education* **2014**

Narrative Therapy Certificate,  
*Hinks-Dellcrest Centre, Gail Appel Institute* **2012-2013**

## positions held

Instructor, *School of Social Work*  
*University of Alabama* **2024-Present**

Course Facilitator & Curriculum Consultant,  
*University of British Columbia EDI Cert.* **2023-Present**

Owner/Consultant & Psychotherapist,  
*The Politicized Practitioner™ Consulting* **2014-Present**

Strategic Consultant, Clinical Operations,  
*Victoria Wellness Mental Health Centre* **2024-2026**

Gay Men's Group Facilitator,  
*WellSpring Cancer Support* **2024-2025**

Lecturer, *Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work*,  
*University of Toronto* **2020-2023**

International Visiting Scholar,  
*South African College of Applied Psychology* **2021-2022**

Lecturer, *Sexuality, Marriage & Family Studies*,  
*SJU/University of Waterloo* **2020-2022**

Mental Health Clinical Coordinator/Counsellor,  
*Sherbourne Health* **2014-2020**

Lecturer, *Faculty of Community Services, School of Social Work*,  
*Toronto Met University* **2018-2019**

Curriculum Developer, Addiction & Mental Health  
Worker Program, *Centennial College* **2015-2016**

Professor & Field Placement Supervisor,  
*Centennial College & George Brown College* **2014-2016**

Family & Youth Counsellor,  
*Turning Point Youth Services* **2013-2014**

Bathhouse Counsellor, Towel Talk,  
*AIDS Committee of Toronto* **2010-2014**

Community Counsellor,  
*519 Church Street Community Centre* **2012-2013**

Project Coordinator, Counsellor & Tester,  
*Making the Links, Hassle Free Clinic* **2011-2013**

Newcomer Gay/Bi/MSM Resource Dev. Assistant, *Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention* **2009-2010**

## internships & practicum

Addictions Counsellor *MSW Practicum*  
*Centre for Addiction and Mental Health* **2010-2011**

Trauma Project Coordinator *Summer Internship*  
*Inner South Health Service (Melbourne, VIC)* **2010**

Episodic Disabilities Initiatives *MSW Practicum 1*  
*Can. Working Group on HIV & Rehabilitation* **2010**

Emotion Management *School Groups Facilitator*  
*Honours Psychology 4<sup>th</sup> Year Internship*  
*Kitchener-Waterloo Counselling Services* **2008**

## affiliations

Board Member, Gestalt Institute of Toronto  
(2023-*present*)

Steering Committee, The Sexploration Project, funded  
by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
(Fall 2023-*present*)

Faculty & Consultant, Queer & Trans Affirming  
Professional (QTAP) Certificate Program  
(2022-*present*)

Fellow, Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity  
Studies *University of Toronto* **2021**

Peer Support Trainer, Desi Rainbow Parents and Allies  
(2020-*present*)

Certified Supervisor, Canadian Counselling &  
Psychotherapy Association # 11252765

Member, Ontario Association of Social Workers #12156

Member, Ontario College of Social Workers and Social  
Service Workers, Registration # 819571

Member, American Association for Psychoanalysis in  
Clinical Social Work

Member, American Association of Sexuality Educators,  
Counsellors, and Therapists (AASECT)

## published books and edited volumes

Thawer, R. & Khan, M.-Co-editors (2026). *Queer and Muslim: On Faith, Family and Healing*. University of Regina Press.

Thawer, R. (2025). Vol1. Practice and Politics. *The Politicized Practitioner™ Series*. Blue Cactus Press.

## forthcoming books

Thawer, R. (In Press). Vol 2. Practice and Pitfalls. *The Politicized Practitioner™ Series*. Blue Cactus Press.

Thawer, R. (In Press). Vol 3. Practice and Paradigms. *The Politicized Practitioner™ Series*. Blue Cactus Press.

Thawer, R. (in Progress) *Sexualized Substance Use: A Guide for Mental Health Practitioners*. Taylor & Francis.

## invited forewords

Thawer, R. (2026). Foreword to *Brotherhood is a Constant Possibility: Asian Masculinity in a World Made for Whiteness*, by Ryan Cho. Thornapple Press.

## academic papers

Thawer, R. (2026). *Political content as clinical process: Holding psychoanalytic and anti-oppressive tensions in contemporary social work practice* [Manuscript accepted for publication].

Thawer, R., & James, D. (2025). *How to use psychoanalytic theory to understand and overcome disparity: The case of social work licensure exams* [Unpublished manuscript].

Thawer, R. (2025). *The Mental Health Guide for Cis and Trans Queer Guys: Skills to Cope and Thrive as Your Authentic Self*. New Harbinger Publications.

Chambers, S., Farrow, J., FitzGerald, M., Jackson, E., Lorinc, J., McCaskell, T., Sheffield, R., Taylor, T., & Thawer, R. (Eds.). (2017). *Any other way: How Toronto got queer*. Coach House Books.

Thawer, R. (in Progress). *Beyond Existence: The Mental Health Guide for LGBTQ Muslims*. Thornapple Press.

Thawer, R. (in Progress). *Unconditional Love: A Guide for Muslim Families with LGBTQ+ Loved Ones*. Thornapple Press.

Thawer, R. (2026). Foreword to *Kinky Minds: Navigating BDSM, Mental Health, and Neurodivergence*, by Rebecca E. Blanton. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Thawer, R., Kattari, S. K., & Coston, E. B. (n.d.). *Practicing trans-aware sex therapy: A practice-oriented framework for sexual wellbeing of transgender and gender-diverse people* [Manuscript in Progress].

Thawer, R., De Santis, C., & Posadas, M. (n.d.). *Interwoven frames, interwoven ethics: A reflexive decision tool for overlapping individual and couple therapy* [Manuscript in Progress].

## self-published guidebooks

### The Politicized Classroom Series (2026)

Undeserving: Myths That Distort Social Welfare

Transcripts, Notes, and Reflections from 'The CBT Dive'  
Video Podcast

### The Logic of Personality Series (2026)

When Connection Feels Dangerous:  
Exploring Cluster A Traits

When Big Emotions Become Survival:  
Exploring Cluster B Traits

When Fear and Exhaustion Shape Personality:  
Exploring Cluster C Traits

## selected essays + public scholarship

Thawer, R. (2026, April 22). [Between The Prayer Rug and The Afterparty](#). Gaysi Family.

Thawer, R. (2026, March 23). [When politics enters the therapy room](#). The British Psychological Society.

Thawer, R. (2025, October 24). [How Our Hidden Beliefs Shape the Way We Love: Introducing the Commitment–Sacrifice Matrix](#).

Thawer, R. (2025, August 18) [Reading Between the Diagnoses: A Social Worker’s Guide to Psychiatry’s Past and Present](#).

Thawer, R. (2025, August 13). [Disgust, Desire, and the Revolting Self: Addressing Internalized Oppression in Psychotherapy with Gay Men](#).

Thawer, R. (2025, July 5). [Our therapeutic tools must be queered-not discarded, but reclaimed and repurposed](#). The British Psychological Society.

***Additional essays available on Medium.***

### The Eclectic Clinician Toolkit (2024)

Treatment Planning Reference Guide for CBT Clinicians  
Individual Psychotherapy Assessment and History-Taking  
with Adult Clients

Documenting Psychotherapy Interventions: A Guide for  
Eclectic Therapists

Reflexivity and Countertransference: The Supervision  
Companion Guide

Thawer, R. (with J. Arseneault). (2025, March 16). [Working effectively with people living with, and affected by, HIV](#). Medium.

Thawer, R. (2024, September 27). [Applying the four statuses of identity formation theory to queer Muslims](#). Medium.

Thawer, R. (2024, March 4). [A case for developing emotional hygiene practices with dating and hook-up apps](#). Medium.

Thawer, R. (2023, February 6). [Cultural safety & countertransference: Working in communities you belong to](#). Medium.

Thawer, R. (2022, June 9). [The matrix of envy in our social and sexual lives](#). Medium.

Thawer, R. (2022, January 28). [Processing shame: What queer guys \(and their therapists\) need to know — Part 3/3](#). Medium.

Thawer, R. (2022). [How to be culturally competent when supporting LGBTQ Muslims](#). Medium.

## selected keynotes & presentations

### Academic & Conference Presentations

Mikulka, J. and Thawer, R. (2026, May). *Working in the Erotic Field: Desire, Containment, and Development Across Queer Therapist–Client Dyads*. Conference on Contemporary Relationships, Monmouth University.

Thawer, R. (2026, January). *A Determinants-Based Approach to Addressing the Mental Health ofGBTQ Men in Social Work Practice*. Society of Social Work Research.

Thawer, R. (2025, September). *Unconscious Oppression in Nonprofits: A Psychoanalytic and Critical Race Approach*. 53rd Annual Alabama-Mississippi Social Work Education Conference.

Thawer, R. (2025, March). *Mental health outcomes forGBTQ guys*. Alabama Conference on Social Work.

### Invited Talks & Professional Trainings

Thawer, R. (2025, March). *Shame, envy, guilt and anger in organizational life*. AIDS Bereavement Program of Ontario.

Thawer, R. (2024, May). *The matrix of envy in our social and sexual lives*. Contemporary Relationships Conference.

Thawer, R. (2024, May). *I'm more than one thing*. YANA Conference, Peel District School Board.

Thawer, R. (2024, April). *Putting anti-oppression into sex therapy practice* [Pre-conference workshop]. Society for Sex Therapy and Research (SSTAR).

Thawer, R. (2024, February). *Connection seeking and mental health: A webinar for service providers who supportGBT2SQ guys* [Video]. Community-Based Research Centre.

Thawer, R. (2023, December). *2SLGBTQIA+ Muslims and mental health* [Video]. Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants.

Thawer, R. (2023, October). *Good self-care for the good fight!* PFLAG National Convention, Washington, DC.

Thawer, R. (2023, July). *Crescent Moon: Supporting family members ofLGBTQ Muslims*. Sexuality & Social Work Conference, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland.

Thawer, R. (2023, May). *LGBTQIA mental health: Same labels, different determinants* [Video]. Pennsylvania LGBTQIA Health Summit, Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center.

Thawer, R. (2022, February-May). *The Practice Dialogue Series with Rahim Thawer* [Playlist]. South African College of Applied Psychology.

Thawer, R. (2018, November). *Sexuality and the imprint of shame* [Video]. Community-Based Resource Centre, Vancouver, BC.

*More talks can be found on <https://mediacollection.softtr.app>*