

# WORLD CONFERENCE ON STDs, STIs & HIV/AIDS

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## Patricia Miller

Mount Royal University, Canada

### Generative dialogues regarding the couples experience of living with HIV

The research project is grounded in post-modern feminist theory in order to rigorously investigate the politics of interpretation, representation and language that has given meaning to the social-relational experiences of couples living with HIV.

It was completed through qualitative research, specifically a participatory action research methodology. As per a PAR methodology, a series of initial gatherings did focus on inviting diverse couples that have identified themselves as living with HIV and wanting to create a new understanding of the needs of the HIV couples community. These initial gathering did allow couples to dialectically develop their agenda and story for further action. These dialogues were documented in field notes and facilitated through a semi-structured group format.

The second phase will consist of constructing and developing a community of support while engaging actions, agreed upon by the couples themselves for the worthwhile purpose of empowerment of the persons and community itself.

The final phase of the research project is an on going action component that allows for full immersion and engagement in action research that has significant heuristic value as it formats a diverse and concise process for a couple peer

support model of engagement and community building. This validates the initial needs of the couples that sought to identify issues of concern and develop practice solutions from within their community.

**Methods:** It will be completed through qualitative research, specifically a participatory action research methodology. As per a PAR methodology, a series of initial gatherings will focus on inviting diverse couples that have identified themselves as living with HIV and wanting to create a new understanding of the needs of the HIV couples community.

**Results:** A thorough discussion of the emerging themes for couples living with HIV, will be presented and discussed regarding living well with the HIV virus. The results will bring forth a better understanding of a peer support model of support for the HIV community.

#### Speaker Biography

Patricia Miller is an Assistant Professor at Mount Royal University, within the faculty of Child & Youth Studies and Social Work. She continues to consult and research within the larger HIV community, within the province of Alberta. She is dually registered as a Social Worker and Psychologist, while running a private practice within the city of Calgary, Alberta.

e: pmiller@mtroyal.ca

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