Trans is Always the Problem

By Leonardo Menchaca

Today I am 11 months on hormones and have come full circle. My psychiatrist has given me the choice of finding someone to open up to about my issues or be pulled off testosterone. Personally I am terrified to have a therapist that has a direct connection to my doctors. I don't want someone that can make one phone call to take everything I have worked so hard to get away. Trans people are constantly forced into this lose-lose situation. Trans people are told to open up but the second we are seen as sad the whole town goes into a panic. Trans kids need therapists that can understand them, and they can relate to. Trans kids need therapists that aren't exclusively their trans therapist because these kids aren't exclusively trans kids. Trans kids need therapists that will help with their issues and not immediately fear for the worst and pull their meds. Trans kids need therapists that will allow them to vent and cry without the fear of the same judgement they receive everyday. Trans kids require real help.

Me being a trans male, one of the main reasons I was in therapy was to get the go ahead for testosterone. The system of forcing therapy before a medical transition(testosterone) is because of how the hormone can affect your mood. Giving testosterone to a highly depressed and suicidal person could greatly increase the chances of them committing suicide. The idea in itself makes sense but in practice it forces trans kids into this paranoid mindset. I went into therapy knowing prior if I wasn't the best and happiest patient I wouldn't be approved for testosterone. Months into therapy I continued to be silent about my problems. My therapist told me if I wasn't more open in therapy and kept hiding my issues then my medical transition would be greatly delayed. Now with a large motivation of being vulnerable with this near stranger I completely emptied myself emotionally to her. After a setting of complete silence, while I
sat there emotionally drained and scared out of my wits, my therapist simply replied by informing me she was going to recommend me to stay in a hospital and hold off on testosterone. I was devastated but quickly told my mother I was no longer comfortable with this therapist and started again. I made it through therapy lying about my mental state out of fear and thus being quickly recommended for medical transition.

Finding therapy that was actually helpful to me was where the real problems arose. Explaining myself has always been difficult and trying to explain it to a straight, cis, white woman was not an easy task. These women are the typical for the therapy scene, so trying to find someone I could more relate to was rather difficult. The problem with being trans in therapy is that now it is seen as the only problem. Going into therapy, whenever I try to bring up issues with my personal life or views on myself it’s always twisted back at me. The phrase “Do you think this is because your trans?” has been used in therapy sessions more times than I can count. Therapists might as well be a one-trick pony because even after an explanation of how my issues aren’t because I’m trans the thought that it is still remains. One of the biggest uphill battles with my therapist was explaining to her my fight with my body and my constant relapsing with bulimia. She constantly told me I hate my body because I’m trans which was not the reason for my eating disorder; I had my eating disorder years before I realized I was trans and it mainly has to do with gender neutral parts of my body. I still have this fight with her but it has been dwindle to an agree to disagree. This forcing of me categorizing my issues into trans or non-trans has caused me to dislike bringing up any issues. Even if we do agree on how I categorize the problem if it happens to be filed away as non-trans it is deemed unessential and thus not addressed. Though most of my problems root from my trans identification I can with 100% certainty say there is more to it than that.