

Declaration 1st of March 2018 (UN day of Zero Discrimination)

Conversion therapy has no place in the modern medical and spiritual world

Part A: 'Statement against conversion therapy'

1. We wish to state that the practice of conversion therapy has no place in the modern world. It is unethical and harmful and not supported by evidence.
2. Conversion therapy is the term for therapy that assumes certain sexual orientations or gender identities are inferior to others, and seeks to change or suppress them on that basis.
3. Sexual orientations and gender identities are not mental health disorders, although exclusion, stigma and prejudice may precipitate mental health issues for any person subjected to these abuses.
4. Anyone accessing therapeutic help should be able to do so without fear of judgement or the threat of being pressured to change a fundamental aspect of who they are.

Part B: 'Conversion therapy has no place in the modern spiritual world'

5. If someone seeking spiritual help is in need of therapy, they should be referred free from pressure, well informed and only to confidential, safe and appropriately trained therapists.
6. The pathologising by conversion therapy of certain sexual orientations or gender identities has no medical justification and is therefore sometimes referred to as 'a cure for an illness that does not exist'. Medical diagnosing should never be misused to justify personal and/or religious moral judgment.
7. Conversion therapy often takes place in a context of violence, such as humiliating and dehumanising language, hate speech or exposure to physical violence. Such forms of violence can never be justified, whether it is in a medical or a spiritual context or both.
8. Engaging with conversion therapy, directly or indirectly, is a failure to fulfil one of the core responsibilities medical and spiritual professionals have in common: to protect those who are vulnerable and seek our help. They need to be supported in safe and confidential ways that respect their identity and human dignity.