

## Transcript of Interview with Molly Adler by Kit Heintzman

**Interviewee:** Molly Adler

**Interviewer:** Kit Heintzman

**Date:** 07/05/2022

**Location (Interviewee):** Albuquerque, New Mexico On Twell Land

**Location (Interviewer):**

**Transcribed By:** Angelica S Ramos

### **Some of the things we discussed include:**

Working as a social worker and as a sex therapist serving LGBTQI2S+ and BIPOC people. Experiencing collective trauma while helping clients through it: 2016 election and the pandemic. Medical bureaucracy; lack of pricing transparency in healthcare. Being self-employed and thus not having employer based healthcare; shifting between being eligible for Medicaid and then ineligible; not being able to afford health insurance. Transitioning from working in an office space to providing Telehealth from home. Ergonomics in the home office, nerve pain. Ongoing routine healthcare needs during the pandemic. Clients having different access to the technology for Telehealth and different contact desires. Recognizing limitations of what one can do and not being able to fix things for others; being there for clients to share emotions. Having a backyard contrasted against cramped urban environments; making the home a more habitable environment. Going through a break up; challenges negotiating COVID boundaries with a partner. Having a live-in partner on unemployment and fronting costs before government subsidies. Discussions about boundaries, consent, and safety as a sex therapist. Government and the anti-science movement. Ableism and eugenics and the impact on immunocompromised people. The safety precautions people took at the beginning of the pandemic before risk was understood. Returning to outdoor events: first concert and an art show. White supremacy and professionalism.

**Molly Adler** 00:01

Yes. My full name is Molly Adler. The date is July 5 2022. And I am in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on Twell Land.

**Kit Heintzman** 00:16

And what time is it?

**Molly Adler** 00:20

It is about 9:33.

**Kit Heintzman** 00:22

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**Molly Adler** 00:33

Yes, I do.

**Kit Heintzman** 00:35

Would you please start by introducing yourself to anyone who might find themselves listening to this?

**Molly Adler** 00:41

Sure. Let's see. So my name is Molly Adler. I'm a social worker, clinical social worker, and therapist in Albuquerque, New Mexico, I am a trainer, I have a company called Sex Therapy in New Mexico. And it's a therapy, private practice focused on sex therapy, and working with LGBTQ, IA, two spirit folks, and, and do continuing ed trainings on topics related to anti oppression, therapy practices, and sexuality and gender, and relationships. And I previously co founded self serve sexuality Resource Center, foster choice, here in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in the sex ed world.

**Kit Heintzman** 01:39

Tell me a story about your life during the pandemic.

**Molly Adler** 01:44

Wow a story about my life during the pandemic. So open ended, let's see. I would say, I don't know if I have a great story. As a storyteller, I'm just gonna warn you that I don't feel like I'm not signing up for the maf or anything. You know, like, I'm not necessarily good at crafting great stories or anything. But I will say that, you know, it was it was a special phenomenon to be a therapist during the pandemic. I feel like there are certain times as a therapist where there's a particular experience of experiencing a collective trauma while supporting people through it. And I experienced that for sure, with a lot of queer and trans clients. And people of color moving through events from November 2016 and onward, where a lot of folks were scared and felt like life as we know, it was changing rapidly and not for the better politically, and then our country, in the US. And then I feel like there's been a similar phenomenon. With moving through the pandemic, alongside clients in a way that was definitely validating and affirming while being scary and obviously, just depressing and yeah, really tragic at the same time. So kind of connecting us in a way to realizing like, we're all moving through this unknown together, and then also feeling challenged by showing up for people. Yes, if that makes sense.

**Kit Heintzman** 04:07

It does. To the extent that you're comfortable sharing, would you say something about your experiences with health and healthcare infrastructure pre pandemic?

**Molly Adler** 04:19

And are you looking for experiences as a consumer like a person navigating it, or as a provider or both?

**Kit Heintzman** 04:29

As a as a person in a body.

**Molly Adler** 04:33

Right. Yes, we are. Yeah, I would say, you know, I have the experience. I've had the experience for a long time. I would say I think of the infrastructure and business of it, and the like logistics of bureaucracy of it. And then I think just like experiences of, you know, being in a body and seeking health care and what that's like, and I would say, I've been self employed for how long now? Probably 15 ish years. So I've had the experience that's unique to being an American without employer based self care, service, like access. And so I have gone through periods of time where I was, you know, within 300% of the poverty line and qualified for Medicaid. And there's, I think it's

like, I don't know, a third of our state or more, here in New Mexico is on Medicaid, because there's a lot of poverty and not a lot of access. But I'm really glad that there's Medicaid, and I'm grateful for the Affordable Care Act. And then, you know, like a lot of people, I've done better and made more money. So then I lose access to Medicaid. And then I've learned, some people call it the cliff effect, I've experienced that where the cost of accessing health care is so much more than the money that you make that disqualifies you from access to Medicaid. So, So I've definitely experienced that shift, where all of a sudden, I have to pay out of pocket for a plan. And so since there's been a marketplace here in New Mexico, since the Affordable Care Act, I've, you know, had to purchase health insurance, and then you know, and then experience the complete lack of transparency with what I'm going to get and how much it's going to cost. So I know that some of those laws are changing. So that like hospitals have to list how much things cost, but I have yet to figure out how to navigate that. I don't think they're trying to make it easy. So let's see. So I've experienced, like, paying hundreds of dollars for myself, and then a partner, paying hundreds of dollars a month for the, you know, privileges on access, just to have a plan, and then going to get a service and not knowing if it's covered or how much and and then I've also had the experience of since the pandemic, my partner was on unemployment. So we found out if someone in your household was on unemployment, then for I think it was 2020. Yeah, yeah, 20 or 2021, sorry, taxes. Then if you paid for your own health insurance, you got those costs refunded. So we had both a very tight, you know, expensive year with health care. And then we got a big tax refund, which we didn't know it was coming till it happened, which was like a big gift. And then we know, like, that isn't happening again, because that was related to pandemic benefits. And, of course, our country doesn't believe it's still happening, even though it is. So. Yeah, I would say I've pretty much dealt with, you know, the fear around costs, and paying out of pocket for a lot of things. And then and dental. I mean, it feels like a privilege to get your teeth taken care of in our country. And so we've paid out of pocket for dental care for the last few years. Because there's no insurance for that. So those are things I guess that are coming to mind. I've the main I've used like, basically GYN services lot and I've used PT, physical therapy services a lot. And while GYN services are covered, to some extent with co pays or coinsurance PT is not so I mean, I've had coverage where I had a \$50 copay for different services. And then some people who don't take insurance anyway. So I think I pretty much dealt with, you know, pursuing those services and the cost. So I don't know if that answers your question. Or if there's more, you're curious about.

**Kit Heintzman** 09:32

Yeah, it does answer it perfectly. Pre pandemic. What was your day to day life?

**Molly Adler** 09:41

Well, since 2018, I've had therapy private practice. So I had an office in Nob Hill, which is a neighborhood like five minutes from where I live and you know, works in an office building. sublet an office. From someone I knew, and other therapists, and there were, you know, a few mental health therapists in the building, there was massage therapist or to some other law offices and other services. And yeah, so you know, just would see clients there would say hello to other providers and kind of be friendly with neighbors. And sometimes, you know, walk to a park for lunch and, you know, go to the local Co Op and get lunch. And, you know, just a lot of hanging out with friends, going to concerts, seeing live music once a while. And then having the privilege of spending money on visiting family on the east coast on a regular basis. So I'm from the Northeast, and so you know, I, you know, like to visit with my family and two siblings and parents in the Northeast, and so without and visit, you know, I would say a few times a year, and then, of course, travel stops. So I wasn't able to do that when the pandemic started or hit our area. And yeah, and so I switched to telehealth when the pandemic started, that's going in my office. And then, of course, all the other changes that came with social isolation.

**Kit Heintzman** 11:44

What was the switch to telehealth like for you as a practitioner?

**Molly Adler** 11:51

Well, I would say, like, I knew that, technically and technologically it was, I know, I had an easier time than a lot of colleagues who are older or who have never done it before. I had actually already done telehealth because of travel. So in previous years, I had visited family, spent some time with family in the summer on the East Coast and realized, well, I can still see clients via telehealth. So I had already explored like, paperwork to explain it and do informed consent with clients. And I had already used a telehealth platform like I was familiar with one and already had it kind of set up. So I was kind of prepared in that way. And then I'm grateful to have a home that's big enough, like I had a room where I could close the door and make that my office. So kind of adapted the, you know, one of the rooms in our home to be a home office. Had a laptop, so I kind of had what I needed to just start. So that worked out. And then let's see. So I just have to share I know this is like, specific to the time that we're interviewing that I'm taking a walk and there's garbage from fireworks all over. So it's just interesting, the timing of talking on July 5, and having gone through a night of very loud fireworks throughout Albuquerque. Anyway. So yeah, and then the other big kind of difficult adjustment for me was that it didn't occur to me like to think about ergonomics, a whole lot. But, you know, I just had a desk chair and I used it and did telehealth and went from you know, seeing maybe I saw five or six clients a day in person. So just transition seeing those people online. And gratefully, most people were okay, doing that. A few clients didn't have private, like easy privacy and their home. They didn't have the technology for a good you know, zoom or video chat. Some people prefer phone. Some people really struggled and wanted to come in person, but we could not. So there was that piece. And then realizing, all of a sudden I was getting severe back pain and realized I was having nerve pain from probably sitting in that chair and by being still in a certain way, for my, you know, physical environment in the way that it was. And so yeah, so I ended up pursuing physical therapy, I realized, like I needed to change the chair that I was sitting in and spent money on kind of a push and made for wheelchairs like that for sitting all day. And that helps and once PP and learn some stretches, and did that by telehealth, and then months later felt comfortable seeing the person like in real life. So, yeah, so the the shift, like the body pain and the realizing like, physically, it's not the same to be sitting in a chair and like not leaving my house obviously, and not being as active was really not good for my body. So yeah, and realizing like, telehealth is physically totally different. Besides obviously, that therapeutic relationship and not seeing the person, in person, also for my own body, and, you know, not getting up from the chair or not adjusting as much or staring at a screen. So, kind of realized there were unfortunate side effects there.

**Kit Heintzman** 16:31

You mentioned, seeing patients during the pandemic as a part of collective trauma, but also that they're under the collective trauma of the election in November 2016. I'd like to just a few more about sort of what it's like to treat people in these moments of change. And what if any differences or similarities there are between the trauma of November 2016, and then 2020?

**Molly Adler** 17:06

Well, and there's overlap, of course, because 45 was president in 2020. So, you know, I think 2016 was, like, you know, having been connected to organizers and activists, for a long time. Not that I'm directly involved right now. You know, I think I've heard voices for a long time have skepticism about the Democratic Party, or the

government not being built for actual progress, and having some doubts about that, or knowing it's working as it was designed to, you know, in a oppressive, racist capitalist, you know, patriarchal, kind of way. So, you know, I think there were folks who weren't totally shocked that Hillary lost, but I think there were a whole lot of people that were shocked, including myself, and terrified, and seeing a major shift, a clear shift in the politics of our country, you know, kind of maybe showing what was covered before becoming overt terms of oppression and loss of human rights and going in a different direction. And so, you know, working with a lot of queer and trans people, kinky folks, and folks living outside the norm in some kind of way. I think most of my clients were really scared. There were folks who were undocumented, who were really scared. So it just was a new level of terror in terms of the unknown. And I feel like, you know, while a pandemic is a biological concern, the, I think the same kind of terror and unknown, came up for people in terms of not trusting the government. So I feel like, I mean, and I think it's, I'm sure specific to the population I work with, like, it really depends on who you work with, and what they're, you know, kind of positions of privilege and oppression might be where they, you know, seeing the world and how they, you know, sense of hope or sense of fear. And so, I think both those time periods have brought up so much fear for a lot of the folks that I've worked with. And and a piece of that, not just fear, like the pandemic is scary and people are dying, but a fear that's particular to a lack of faith in the government and feeling alone or not cared for.

**Kit Heintzman** 19:59

Yes, what does the word health mean to you?

**Molly Adler** 20:03

Health?

**Kit Heintzman** 20:04

Yes.

**Molly Adler** 20:08

I guess it can mean all kinds of things depending on context. Like, someone, or some system, offering assistance of some kind support for others, or another. So I think of that I think of community kind of, like, between two parties or more, whether that's like, on a big scale or a one to one.

**Kit Heintzman** 20:44

What are some of the approaches you've taken with your clients to address and acknowledge the fears they've been expressing?

**Molly Adler** 21:08

Well, I think, you know, as a therapist, I think, I've learned and practiced and tried to remember to validate and sit with and empathize with people and recognize that I, it's not my job, and I cannot fix it. I think that's a challenge we have when we hear, like I know, personally, that we often have, I have challenges, like hearing a friend or a loved one suffer, and not being able to just give them a solution or fix it. And, obviously, I certainly can't fix big problems, like a pandemic, and, but also, that's not my job as therapists. So trying to make room for all the feelings mean, feels like a huge part of my job is both helping people learn how to do that, when they have learned to compartmentalize or push through, or ignore all kinds of survival strategies, with uncomfortable feelings, and then try to help people learn how to sit with the uncomfortable feelings, the grief, the fear. So, and

also recognize that, like, anxiety and fear, are not the same as grief, or sadness, or hopelessness, or rage, you know, so wanting to help people not get stuck in anxiety or kind of fear place where they're just hyper aroused, and feel out of control. Like that's not helpful for us, and not really productive, but there's usually a lot of feelings that needs to be acknowledged and felt also.

**Kit Heintzman 23:12**

What were some of your own emotional reactions at the beginning of the pandemic?

**Molly Adler 23:16**

I mean, I think a lot of definitely, helplessness and grief. I mean, shock. I mean, I think of this, the tasks associated with Greece that people talk about, with like shock and bargaining and depression and rage and sadness, and all these different feelings and, you know, movements that people go through. You know, a lot of fear about my parents and my family members and vulnerable people I know. Certainly rage and frustration and shock at the government at the anti-science movement sentiments around us. Like, you know, I think some kind of longing and seeking of like, inspiration and leadership, like, you know, seeking out people I believe in, who have been through, you know, like, I think of, like I had plans to attend. Like it was planned before the pandemic, fundraiser and speaking engagement with Angela Davis speaking and, you know, the timing. I don't remember the exact timing but the timing as you know, the you know, the Black Lives Matter movement and the murder of George Floyd and Breanna Taylor and so many other black folks. And so, I think there was moments of really longing for and seeking out leaders and speakers and teachers who know things, seeing a talk from Mariam, Miriam Kaba, who talks about hope, as a discipline and a practice. So, so hearing from folks that, you know, have the long view, and, you know, has kind of known there to be, you know, these oppressive systems or violent systems for a long time, and still they work to make the world better. So, I think there have been, you know, times when, that felt really, really important to hold on to. And then also connections with people like, like a lot of people trying to do zoom holidays or gatherings with people. So trying to find connection and ways that we could, and I have a backyard. And I'm really grateful to have space, I felt very grateful to live where I live, like in Albuquerque, where we have space, and, you know, not in enough, like, tight urban environment where we're in an apartment building and sharing air with, like, all these neighbors. And so it felt safer in that regard. And I felt privileged to have this kind of space and be able to focus on time outside, so a lot of gardening, trying to remember to go outside and, you know, just look up and enjoy nature. So I feel like that was a focus for sure. Yeah, and it was an, you know, I attended my own therapy as grateful that I had already, you know, have that support system. So, I think of ring theory, where, you know, there's people being supported in these rings going out. And that, you know, I was a therapist, but I had a therapist, and I know, my therapist as a therapist, so you know, just these different forms of support.

**Kit Heintzman 27:38**

You mentioned earlier having a partner, what's partnership meant to you during this period of time?

**Molly Adler 27:47**

It's, again, felt like a privilege in terms of not being in it alone, like having someone to live with and our household has shifted dynamics as well, like, they had jobs, they had a few different jobs and had their own business. And they got laid off from one of their main gigs. And so they got unemployment, which was a huge help, which they were one of those people that the unemployment was more than their paycheck, when it got increased. And we shifted where I knew that I had to reduce my caseload a little bit, I had to work on my physical

health and my partner offered to like, be the household manager and be in charge of meals, and we had a dog at the time and take care of the dog. And so it was like, more explicit division of labor and felt really supportive. For me to be able to, like, get through the day and be a therapist, and, and then kind of my partner, you know, help make sure I ate food and stuff like that. I also was dating someone from 2018 through 2020. And I do feel like a relationship, that relationship not living with a person suffered, partly because of the pandemic, for sure. So we ended up breaking up at the end of 2020. And I strongly believe that the pandemic had a lot to do with making it really difficult to have that relationship continue.

**Kit Heintzman** 29:32

Are you willing to share more about that?

**Molly Adler** 29:36

Um, yeah, I mean, I want to be limited because I don't have consent from the other person. But I would just say, you know, we didn't live together. We weren't sharing germs all the time. And their household is immunocompromised more than mine, at least in a known way. You know, like, we have assumptions about our ability until it changes, but, but there was definitely a more conservative, you know, approach to COVID. And it felt like, really difficult to get to a place where we would share air inside. And we did not get there. During that time, so there was like, the end of our relationship there was, I would say, I don't know, if it was like six months of only seeing each other at a distance outside, and then or through, like, kind of plastic window film. You know, so not, not touching, not kissing, or anything like that, like for many months, and not being able to, like successfully navigate, changing that, at least long term. There were ideas about a temporary way of seeing each other and touching and going inside, but it felt like it would have to be temporary, because of the limitations to other people in our lives. For safety reasons. So sitting, there was definitely tension and conflict around how each of us would approach safety. And that was one element of, you know, big conflict in the relationship.

**Kit Heintzman** 31:25

What does the word safety mean to you?

**Molly Adler** 31:30

Um, I think it's a really complex concept. And again, like everything context dependent, you know, when I think of COVID, safety, I think, you know, safety is subjective for whoever's talking about it, you know, COVID safety might have to do with what the person needs to do, or the environment or the consent or the precautions needed to, to be in space together. And I think a big thing that has felt was present and talked about with friends. Throughout the pandemic has been the subjectivity of that question. So one person, like, especially with the lack of scientific, accurate, and obviously evolving new knowledge in terms of like scientific guidance from like the CDC, like, you know, a lot of people who increasingly don't trust the CDC now, but certainly didn't, and or didn't know who to trust, because of, again, lack of trust for the government's, to think, at least for where we live. So I think there's been a lot of doubt and speculation about like, how to be safe. And of course, that's been evolving with different versions, various of COVID, and are evolving knowledge about masking and when there weren't vaccines, and there were and now their effectiveness in question with different variants. So throughout the pandemic, I felt like, safety is I mean, it's, it always has been, but but I feel like that's been illuminating in terms of the subjectivity of what I what helps me feel safe, versus what helps you feel safe, and they're not being an objective. There's no objective comparison. All that matters is the truth for one person. And that can be real difficult, because if other people can't accommodate them, or won't accommodate them, then they can't have that

safety. In that regard. You know, and having been a sex educator and sex therapist, I felt like I've had lots and lots of conversations with folks about boundaries and consent and safety. And often talk to folks about like, especially in relationships, or a couple about, you know, like, just kind of having to go with the slowest role the pace car is the slow person. Because, you know, there's no question, there's no coercing, that's not okay, that's not consensual, that's not going to increase safety, that's gonna go the wrong way. So, you know, that's, you know, it's kind of like, on a big scale. Our society, you know, who's obviously being really ableist. And essentially, it's kind of belief in eugenics at this point of, if this public environments are not safe for a lot of people who are immunocompromised or higher risk for severe illness or death from COVID. Then People just have to stay home, they can't participate in life some extent. And I feel like there's that big scale way that that pans out. And then there's the one to one way that that pans out with any two individuals figuring out what they need for safety.

**Kit Heintzman** 35:17

What are some of the practices you've done to make yourself feel safer?

**Molly Adler** 35:23

Um, well, I've, you know, of course, gotten vaccinated and boosted whenever I could. I have been masking the whole time and evolving, which we're kind of aware, as we learn new things about what's effective. So, and then being outside a lot. So I've, last summer, I guess, the window before Delta, I, you know, there was hope I was vaccinated and traveled to see family and that there was like, a few weeks in the summer of 2021, that, like, went to a movie theater and ate in some restaurants and unmasked walking in and out of stores and just felt, you know, like, who, like my face is out. And that's the last time I've had that experience, I think I ate indoors one time, before the current different Omicron variant searches for a birthday in January. And then otherwise, I've just been outside. So I've still been doing things I my anxiety is way less than it was earlier in the pandemic. I think I've navigated going from like, probably an unrealistic kind of terror, but really not trying to blame myself, like we didn't know, to, like, you know, in hindsight, you know, we know that earlier versions of COVID were less contagious. But of course, we didn't know that. So I was like, you know, one of the people cleaning the groceries and wiping down surfaces constantly and like wearing gloves for certain things. And then, you know, we learned that fomites are less of a risk and like, stop doing that. And I, you know, really grateful that I haven't gotten COVID Like, I've been okay, and we've just I've done things outdoors, is trying to like talk to people explicitly about their risk factors who they're seeing, exposure, vaccination status. And so trying to make kind of informed decisions with any social hanging out. And like, I went to my first outdoor concerts recently. And I know that we're, you know, we're in a surge now in New Mexico. And obviously, a lot of places in the US. And so I like stayed away from people when I was at the venue. But then if I wanted to go closer to the stage, I put on a mask. And so I've been wearing N95 or 1095 five masks for several months, and just considering getting a respirator for upcoming travel. So, you know, constantly kind of trying to evaluate the precautions. We're taking them, improving them as they learn things.

**Kit Heintzman** 38:27

What did it feel like to be back at the concert?

**Molly Adler** 38:29

It was amazing. I think also, like, there was another experience, I went to an Artwalk event downtown. And I had no idea it would be such a big outdoor event like with so many people walking downtown, they close the area downtown on central to cars. So there were all these artists with tables out and live music, like all these different



events. And it's apparently I mean, it's a monthly event that's been happening. I just hadn't been. And I would not have sought that out. I actually went to pick up takeout food, you know, maybe a year ago and I knew these events were happening and we didn't know that Friday night we were getting takeout was one of these events and I was terrified. Like even getting out of the car. Like tracking my anxiety is another way to track stages of the pandemic but I remember from getting out of the car to walk a block to walk into the restaurant to pick up takeout with so many people walking the streets. And a lot of people unmasked like I was masking but but I my anxiety was really high. And then fast forward a year later. You know we we went to an art opening and didn't know it would be such a big event. But friends and I were like well why don't we get takeout and just sit on the corner and watch the crowd. And it was like watching a parade. It was like I hadn't seen that many people and so long. Like just being around so many people and I think the concerts were a similar experience of like Not being around with any people and like humanity. You know, people watch it. And it was really fun. It was like, you know, look at those dogs in a stroller and look at all these wild, different outfits and look at the young people and the old people and like, the different aesthetics or the guy on the skateboard, you know, it was just like, really entertaining to watch people. And similarly at the concert, like, the concerts were different experiences. One was Belle and Sebastian, and one was Ani DiFranco, and Belle and Sebastian was really fun. And it felt like nostalgic, and an older crowd. [inaudible] older crowd, depending on what you mean by that, I'm in my early 40s, and might not have been the oldest, you know, and then Ani DiFranco, Ani DiFranco felt like for sure, I grew up listening to her music, and it's political and depressingly like songs from 20 years ago are 100% relevant right now, again, be still. And so being at that concert also felt like being at like, a rally or a protest and being with people with similar values, and then or not, okay, with the politics, the government, the way the world is, right now, you know, climate crisis, so, so it felt like, you know, camaraderie, I guess, like to be there.

**Kit Heintzman** 41:23

What does self care look like for you?

**Molly Adler** 41:28

Um, a lot of things, I think, staying connected to friends. Being outside gardening. So, just enjoying that. Another big, exciting, you know, what felt like kind of radical thing, my partner and I bought a hot tub in 2020, while we purchased it, and ordered it in late 2020, and got it six months later, because of supply chain issues that are even worse, way worse now. So we had no idea it would be worse, but we put some money down and, and financed the rest. And that was one of the best decisions we've ever made. I think it felt very bougie and fancy. And like, you know, I think there were some stories in my head about like, who gets to have a hot tub like that, it's, it's like a luxury item. And like, we both have loved hot springs and visiting hot tubs before and, you know, it is it is an amazing resource. So both for the body pain stuff that I've gone through and for relaxing, and stopping and pausing. It's been a wonderful, wonderful you know, addition to my life, so, so having a hot tub is now part of that. It when it's hot in the summer, here in New Mexico, it's less appealing much of the day, but I went in this morning already. And you know, when it's cooler out, I'll go in twice a day sometimes. So it's, that's really wonderful. And then I'll be looking at the birds or the tree or the sky. So that's really lovely. And exercise is an ongoing challenge for me. So I'm working on that. I am trying to walk more pence walking on this call when I'm able to not be at my desk. And stretching, I mean, doing PT was big doing yoga, just trying to like stretch every day when I feel like it and also a big part of it is letting go of a kind of, like a version of professionalism or propriety that feels like connected to white supremacy culture, like we're supposed to be a certain way or behave a certain way. And so kind of just bringing more humanity and realness to, like throughout the day, if I need to stand up or sit down or you know, if a client's like I need to pee in the middle of a session like kind of

encouraging and allowing that for myself and others around me all the time like just adapting as we need to, to take care of our bodies.

**Kit Heintzman** 44:18

How are you feeling about the immediate future?

**Molly Adler** 44:25

Um, I would say on one hand, grateful for all the stability and resources that I have the people the home the work that I do like the income, family support, things like that, and my relationships and on the other hand, you know, my head definitely goes to anxious places on a frequent basis. You know, I, there's a lot of humor, a lot of I've always enjoyed humor as a therapeutic resource and coping strategy. And so, you know, enjoying humor, whether that's like memes on social media or camaraderie with other therapists. And like, I mean, last week, there was, you know, like, [inaudible] that we're just, what a week or two out from Roe being overturned. And, you know, I feel like existential dread was like the key words and therapy for the last couple of weeks. You know, I've increasingly clients to ask them thinking about leaving the United States, which I have mixed feelings about myself, because I'm a settler here, like, you know, I, my grandparents immigrated and to the country, and we're settlers on indigenous lands, and it's, it feels like, entitled to try and like go and be a squatter in Canada or Mexico. But obviously, a lot of people are questioning that. So, yeah, so it's, it's, it's a real mix of, of like, enjoying being able to grow food and have money to buy groceries and be comfortable in my house. And then also, really, I mean, question a lot of things, my two friends and I bought an office building last year. And obviously, that's a big investment in the future. And, you know, signing onto a long term mortgage, and part of me thinks like, that's a, you know, really says, That's a great investment. It's really safe. And we're trying to build a community for healers that serve LGBTQ and bipoc, folks, and, you know, hopefully, we'll, we'll be around to have that keep going, you know, 10-20-30 years from now. So we'll see.

**Kit Heintzman** 46:58

Relatedly what are some of your hopes for a longer term future?

**Molly Adler** 47:04

Well, I, you know, I think of, you know, teachers and leaders that I look up to, like I mentioned, Miriam Kaba, I think of Adrian Marie Brown, I think of Alok Vaid-Menonin writers like, oh, I can't remember the name, there were, I just saw folks speak on the book *Inflamed*. So folks who know, some scary things about the world, but still continue to build alternatives and talk about alternative ways of being. And that's what gives me hope. So, you know, for all that there's doubt, you know, working with these two friends, and now business partners to build this healing community. You know, I heard a friend call it world building. Like, despite, you know, the government, you know, maybe not recognizing rights or access to health care, and things like that, like we can, you know, think of mutual aid and mutual support and small scale community building. And so, having this office space where a lot of us are still doing telehealth, and we're not there every day, but when we are there days, when then I get to run into different colleagues and friends who are doing other different healing work. And you know, say hi, and smile at each other and chat about our day and, like, support each other if it's a hard day and support each other's work and, and share resources and you know, have a place to go and hang out and, and foster an environment that's, you know, safer and more welcoming and affirming. You know, that that fight of ableism and racism and Trans and Queer phobia. So, so creating those spaces and being part of those spaces feels really helpful for me.

**Kit Heintzman** 49:09

I want to thank you so very much for the generosity of your time. Those are all of the questions I know how to ask at this moment. So I just like to open some space. If there's anything you want to share that I haven't made room for. Please take a moment and share it.

**Molly Adler** 49:23

Um nothing that I can think of. I just I want to appreciate like the research project that you're doing and part of and inviting me to be part of it.