



# MENTAL HEALTH




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Nisnis - A quarterly magazine  
published by Queer Ethiopia  
focusing on LBQ issues

# QUEER ETHIOPIA

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“Queer Ethiopia” is an alternative space created by a group of queer Ethiopian women. It is designed to be a space for a diverse group of Ethiopian queer women whose sexual and gender identifications vary. It includes cis and trans women who may be lesbian, bisexual or asexual. This is a space where the experiences of queer people takes center stage. We hope to include personal experiences from our daily lives as queer people, various stories, interviews, original artwork and poetry. We hope it will also serve as a place where Ethiopians in Ethiopia and Ethiopians in the diaspora come as themselves to explore and create an online community.

 [queerethiopia.com](http://queerethiopia.com)

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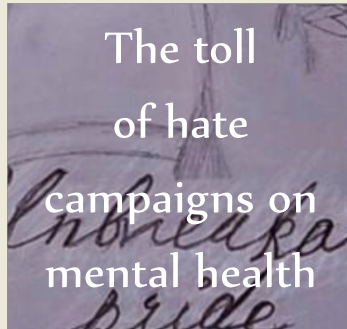
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# Contents



03



04-08



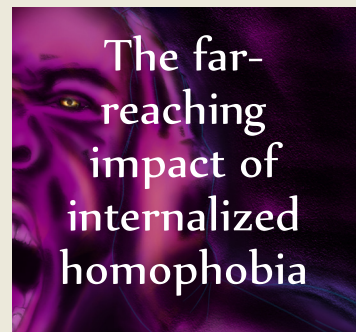
09-17



18-23



24-27



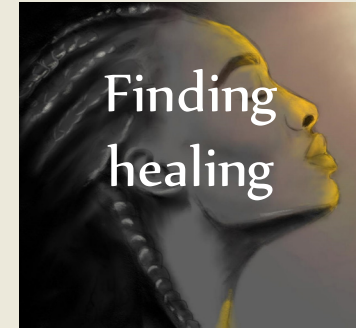
28-31



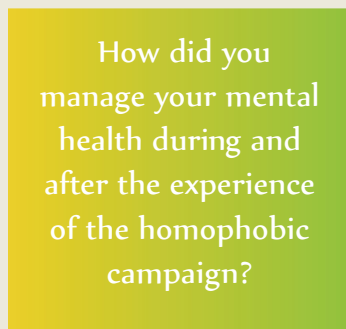
32-35



36-39



40-43



44-00

# From the Editors

This issue of Nisnis could not have come at a better time. For almost two months, our community was battered by a vicious attack from homophobes who openly called for our torture and death. The debate was not if we needed to die but the manner in which we should be killed: burnings, stonings, or hangings.

In the words of Lexi, one of the people interviewed to understand the impact of homophobia on our mental health, “we had never experienced homophobia like this. It was so targeted at individuals as opposed to general homophobia, so it was just a very, very stressful time”.

This issue of Nisnis thus focuses on the recent wave of homophobia and its impacts on the mental health of the LBQ community in Ethiopia. It was undoubtedly a time of trial and tribulation for our communities. So many were scared watching people being “outed” on videos and were, to use Betselot’s words, “waiting for [our] turn because [we] felt like they knew about us and would post about us.” This sense of fear led many of us to hide and isolate.

So many spoke of the effects of the hate campaign and how it adversely impacted their mental health. Loneliness, depression, substance abuse, fear, a lack of trust, and isolation were just a few of the ways that people experienced mental health issues.

We also address uncomfortable issues. We deal with internalized homophobia and how that adds fuel to the fire. In fact, some of our contributors and those we interviewed, like Kidan, argue that some “of the information was being released by people you thought were like you”. We have explored deeply what role internalized homophobia played and how to deal with this as a community.

While most spoke about the challenges, others spoke about the triumphs that we as a community were able to achieve. One of our contributors argues that it has “created the opportunity to create awareness about our community” among the larger Ethiopian community. Another argues that “our biggest triumph is the support system we created”. The sense of unity that was created was also cited as one effective way of taking care of our mental health.

Yet another contributor directly talks to homophobes in an open letter that can inspire all of us. Another maps her journey to healing and reminds us of a better tomorrow: “My journey to heal from this hate campaign began by getting closer to my queer friends, at least those I trusted”.

An interview with a queer psychologist helps us understand the effects of hate campaigns and offers guidance for restoring our mental health. This is particularly crucial at this time since homophobia in our society makes it almost impossible to access professional help.

As to how we proceed from here to deal with being overwhelmed or hopeless in the face of so much hate, the psychologist’s words of wisdom say it all: “It’s a cliché, but I really want you to know you’re not alone. There are a lot of people rooting for your existence, your survival, and more than that, but for you to be able to thrive”. We have each other. We have our community. And we shall survive.

We hope this issue of Nisnis will enable all of us to reflect on our mental health. We also hope it will inspire us to seek help when we need it.

As always, thank you to everyone involved in the production of this issue of Nisnis. Thank you to those who shared their stories and artwork and to all those who are reading us.

# Impact of hate campaigns on mental health



*Betselot started drawing as a way of taking care of her mental health. She was an active participant in the Unbreakable Pride campaign that was started to provide the queer community with a way to show its pride, its resilience, and to offer community members an avenue to provide support for each other.*

“I was just waiting for my turn because I felt like they knew that I was a lesbian and would post about me.” That was the primary thought that Betselot constantly had on her mind. “I was preparing myself. People come not only to advise you, but to destroy and kill you. I was very depressed.”

Almost each video that was released on TikTok and Telegram came with the warning that they still had more videos of queer Ethiopians. And the message on each video was accompanied by a request for action: Take violent action so that it can serve as a deterrent for other queer people.

Kidan is another queer Ethiopian who was also waiting for her turn to be outed. With each passing day, she was certain that a video would be posted on TikTok that would identify her as a queer woman. She was so certain that she had, in fact, started preparing for the inevitable outing.

Betselot and Kidan are just two examples that illustrate the fear that the LGBTQ+ community experienced during an orchestrated hate campaign that was led by the Ethiopian diaspora in early August on TikTok.

The campaign urged Ethiopians to take action before Ethiopian conservative culture was destroyed. Ethiopian-based influencers soon joined the campaign, and expanded to long TikTok live sessions of up to 12 hours a day, spreading hateful messages.

The content also encouraged violence by advocating for the torture and murder of individuals who identified as queer, with the intention of setting an example. Telegram channels gained thousands of followers that actively shared videos and hateful messages, while Facebook and Instagram were also utilized to do the same.

People suspected of being queer were being outed, and their pictures, names, and addresses were being shared. Other graphic videos of violations against LGBTQ+ people were being shared. The Addis Ababa Police and the Addis Ababa Culture and Tourism Office released statements condemning any hotels and restaurants that they suspected of encouraging same-sex relations and queerness as against Ethiopian culture and urging the Ethiopian population to stay vigilant and to report anything they see through a toll free hotline they created.

These videos were shared widely. A demonstration against the spread of homosexuality was planned for August 6 in Meskel Square. However, a state of emergency was declared in the Amhara Region, and thus the demonstration was disrupted and dispersed by the police. This frustrated the individuals creating content, and they started urging people to take matters into their own hands. This was essentially calling for people to “hunt the homosexuals”.

The climate for LGBTQ+ people was becoming increasingly worrying. The campaign was causing adverse mental health outcomes for the LGBTQ+ community, as most feared being outed and subjected to both verbal and physical violence. Anxiety, fear, depression, isolation, and many other mental health concerns were surfacing.

In the words of Betselot, “I don’t think there was a person in the entirety of LGBTQ community whose entire mental health hasn’t been affected by the hate speech.”

Rebecca, a queer Ethiopian woman who does not frequent community gatherings, describes being deeply concerned during the campaign.

“The way that fear can affect you shouldn’t be taken lightly. You also know the psychological impact; it creates strong tensions within you. You’re paranoid that everyone who’s looking at you, knows about

your identity. It’s like trying to run from your shadow. I used to be so terrified. That’s how I got through the week”, she said.

Rebecca says that even the way that she related to people in the LGBTQ+ community was shaped by the homophobic campaign. Fear was the main emotion that guided her actions during the campaign. She was scared of giving her women friends hugs in public because she was concerned it would be taken as more than a friendly gesture.

This need to pay attention to every detail of her interaction with women induced anxiety and an over-consciousness that affected her life in negative ways. “It made me a little depressed. My decision not to meet with people like me by itself made me feel isolated and exacerbated my depression”, she said.

Rebecca managed her stress and depression by keeping in touch with her friends via phone conversations. Being able to joke and have light conversations with friends with whom she could be herself was essential to restoring her mental health.

Lexi, a member of the queer community, was on the verge of making changes when the hate campaign started.

“I had actually cut my smoking down to one or two cigarettes a day before the campaign, but during the campaign I was back to smoking a pack or two every day,” she said. “I just didn’t feel safe, and that’s what I could do to stabilize myself. I had never experienced homophobia like this. It was so targeted at individuals as opposed to general homophobia, so it was just a very, very stressful time. I drank and I smoked more to cope.” She also spoke of feeling isolated, overwhelmed, irritable, and bitter.

For Kidan, loss of trust was one of the major emotions she experienced. She lost interest in talking to people, in sharing her feelings, and in making space for others in her life. Her faith in the LGBTQ+ community was eroded because she felt it was those in the community who were outing people.

“Some of the information was being released by people you thought were like you. And in that

way, I wondered how I can be sure if people like that were not around me. So I had a hard time with trust, except for the people I knew closely”, she said.

Internalized homophobia played a large role in the fear and anxiety that those in the community felt, Kidan said. In her eyes, the hate campaign would not have been possible without people’s internalized homophobia. Some within the LGBTQ+ community used the hate campaign as a way of absolving themselves of queerness and the sense of shame that comes from it when living in a conservative country like Ethiopia.

“Either because they used it as an out, or because they haven’t accepted themselves, there were people who accused and exposed others thinking they did their religion and conscience a favor”, Kidan said.

Kidan’s experiences were further complicated by her gender presentation. As a masculine-presenting woman, she was a visible personification of “homosexuality,” as narrated by those participating in the hate campaign, and she feared that she could have easily been harassed and assaulted on the streets.

This meant that she was stuck at home for long stretches of time. While she was not assaulted and people did not stop her on the streets, the online rhetoric had forced her to be more cautious. Friends would also call



**“It was very  
depressing. ... It was  
hard to see them  
condemn others as if  
they were perfect.”  
Mahlet**

to remind her to be careful and to relate stories of what happened to other masculine-presenting women.

“If that’s what people think when they look at me, considering the current hate campaign, I was scared it might grow into something bigger, so to reduce my problems, I stopped going out a lot and freely moving around”, Kidan said.

Fear and a sense of being powerless were factors in her not leaving her home and choosing to avoid others in the LGBTQ+ community. She was, however, able to find solace in joining the online campaign to have videos of the hate campaigns taken down. Reporting these videos as something that violated the standards of the social media platforms was something that kept her busy and gave her a sense of purpose and direction.

She believes that the LGBTQ+ community’s campaign to remove and offer support for each other was stronger and more impactful than the hate campaign. She started feeling stronger as the videos began being taken down.

She was able to find strength and some peace of mind from seeing how those in the LGBTQ+ community were able to support each other. That sense of having a support system was key to her mental health, as it showed her that the hate campaign would eventually subside.

“I prayed saying ‘Lord, I trust you’ll keep me safe’”, Kidan said in articulating how prayer also played a crucial role in offering comfort and strength.

Mahlet, a queer Ethiopian woman who lives in Addis, felt a huge sense of loneliness. She didn’t know who to trust and initially chose to stay away from the community. She was also very angry at those preaching hate, and that initially impacted her ability to take action.

“It was very depressing”, she said. “When people are this cruel on one another, they don’t realize that it could come out of their homes too. It was hard to see them condemn others as if they were perfect.”

She said that after the initial shock, people in the queer community stepped up and were able to offer each other support. Queer people would write to her to make her aware of any content on her real social media account that would draw attention. This made her feel closer to the community, and it gave her a sense of empowerment.

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Our unity  
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stop now.  
Kidan

In response to the hate, she encouraged the community. “Don’t be scared. Our mental health becomes impacted when we are filled with fear. We have got this.”

Some of the ways of ‘getting through it’ for Betselot were through drawing and reading. She actively read about the experiences of other people in India, other African countries, and people who came out to their conservative family and used that to prepare herself for when she got outed. She was only leaving her house for essential purposes and thus had a lot of free time on hand. Drawing and reading eased her mind and helped with the depression that she was experiencing.

“I started producing artwork under the theme of ‘Unbreakable Pride,’” she said. “Although it was a time of struggle, we also used it to build community”.

Betselot was an active participant in the Unbreakable Pride campaign that was started to provide the queer community with a way to show its pride, its resilience, and to offer community members an avenue to provide support for each other.

The mental health challenges brought by the hate campaign were many, and the lack of professional support made things worse since people impacted by mental health issues were not able to seek help.

However, and albeit slowly, the LGBTQ+ community came together to support its members and their mental health.

“Unity is power. Unity is good. Unity is strength. Our unity shouldn’t stop now.” Kidan said. Reminding us all that we, as long as we live in a society that is unable to recognize our humanity, are each other’s keeper.

# Understanding homophobia, developing coping strategies

**Recently, Ethiopia witnessed a surge in both online and offline instances of homophobic rhetoric and actions. In light of these distressing developments, we had an interview with a queer psychologist to help us understand the profound impact that such hatred can have on the mental well-being of the already marginalized and underground queer community. We also explored how the community can recover from these incidents, fortify their resilience and support each other in the face of adversity. The following interview has been slightly edited for length and clarity.**

**QE: What are the implications of living in a homophobic society on the mental health of queer people?**

There are things that we kind of expect: self-doubt, low self-esteem, and lack of self-confidence are some of the more anticipated results of living in a place where you are being hyper-criticized, rejected, or scapegoated. I think what is more concerning for me is the ways in which these experiences mimic trauma exposure symptoms, meaning living under constant threat, living with this very heightened sense of unease, this inability to be relaxed and to feel safe generally for a prolonged period of time, and that traumatic stress that is chronic. So, it's not acute in the sense that we have a singular incident, but more of a constant fear for your livelihood, your physical and emotional safety, and the safety of your friends or family. So that fear of well-being, whether that's your life in the present sense—in your physical safety or your life in the future—and your ability to have a family, have a job, and be safe, move around freely, and be free from detention and targeting

What we see then is that because of this constant heightened state of stress or heightened state of fear or concern around what could be coming next and what kind of targeting could be happening next, you do have this constant flow of stress hormones in the system. And the stress hormones, cortisol, adrenaline, and others are supporting us in the moment to escape a threat. But what happens when there is no actual threat that we can respond to because it's just this constant state of threat? Our body never comes back down to a baseline. That has some real implications for our physical health as well as our mental health overall. That's where we see some of that constant anxiety, depression, and fatigue. We get exhausted and irritable from being constantly on edge and on guard, which then impacts our relationships and our ability to form a community.

Also on the cellular level, having stress hormones pumping through our body for that long has implications for heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, deteriorating muscle fibers, etc. So the implications of this are really holistic in the way they impact our mental and physical health.

There's a wonderful author, activist, and trauma therapist named Resmaa Menakem, and

he does a lot of work on racial trauma and racial healing, and he talks a lot about how over time, these trauma responses, that tension, that constant fear, that irritability, or that anxiety, or distrust, or even distancing yourself to prevent yourself from being exposed. All of that, over time, is a trauma response to a threat, and it can start to look like a person's personality or like a person's culture, even over many generations.

There are a lot of different ways in which living in such a homophobic society and living under that constant state of insecurity impacts not only our day-to-day but also the way that we function, the way that we relate to each other, as well as our physical and physiological selves. And so there is a lot of risk. Just beyond that acute sense of insecurity or that acute safety concern, there are all of these implications and consequences that come from that as well.

**QE: Although we are fairly familiar with the general homophobia in Ethiopia, how does the increase in hate campaigns and targeted homophobic efforts affect queer individuals?**

Similarly, when we're thinking about upticks in homophobia, they are tools. We know that this targeted approach is meant to increase anxiety, push people to their breaking points, and heighten people's constant state of fear so that they can scare them into fleeing or outing other people out of self-preservation, or even just renouncing their so-called sexuality or gender identities. Their assumption is that we can just get 'rid of it' to blend in and conform. And so, people may then feel pressured to perform a gender or a sexual identity that is not their own in order to survive.

Their goal is to create homogeneity/sameness and to 'eliminate' these other types of identities or different ways of being. And the effect on queer people is that they are pushed back into the closet. They're pushed back into a state of conformity, something that doesn't align with who they are. We can see people, out of self-preservation and fear, resorting to outing each other or trying to sacrifice members of their communities to save themselves and their families.

It really does erode that community connection as well. You know, community is everything. At its core, your community reminds you of who you are, grounds you and your identity, and provides



“At its core, your community reminds you of who you are, grounds you and your identity, and provides a social safety net.”

a social safety net. It also just helps you remember your value and that you are not alone. And so, those upticks and that targeted approach really eat away at that, which creates a heightened sense of insecurity and really makes people even more vulnerable.

From that state of vulnerability and fear, people can be much easier to control and push into conformity, which is the ultimate goal of some of these types of repressive tactics—to be able to essentially break the will. This is where we start to see people develop even stronger levels of dissociation—people who have created various versions of themselves and various forms of reality to be able to survive harm, chronic stress, or constant interference in security. And all that can really destabilize your sense of security and sense of self—that is where we can even see increased community tensions as well.

**QE: Incidents like these often lead to heightened senses of internalized homophobia. In what ways can queer people combat these feelings?**

Internalized hatred and depression can be lifelong struggles, especially when they intersect with other marginalized identities such as race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. They can create a significant challenge in being able to recognize your value, your honor, and the space that you take up, as well as how you add to society.

What I do for myself and recommend to my clients is really to help people identify their greatest gifts. The greatest values rely on community and connection to be able to affirm each other and provide that support. It is just a reflection of “I see beauty in this person I care about, and if we share similarities and are part of the community, then they can also see beauty in me”.

Of course, internalized homophobia can then create divisions, hatred, and this really strong rejection in order to move towards what is perceived to be the norm and to conform out of a desire for safety. At the core of all this, our bodies and nervous systems constantly seek to regulate, feel safe, and find ease, driving us to do whatever is necessary to get better. The solution is to work on your personal regulation and tolerance to distress.

Not to say that this should be solely your responsibility. The people who are leveraging

hatred and employing these hateful tactics and violence are responsible for their own actions. But the thing that we can try to control is how it impacts us. So, focus on how to bring your energy down or back up, because some of us will get hyped up when we're in a heightened state of fear, while others freeze, isolate, and retreat from ourselves.

The process of feeling secure can take many different forms. It can be exercise, deep breathing, makeup, fashion, spirituality, social connection, learning, hobbies, or any and all of these things that can affirm our gender and sexual identities. But the point is to really think about how you can regulate and even co-regulate with somebody you care about or with your community and your peers. It's a really powerful way of keeping yourself in a state of stability, which will help you think more clearly and help you make decisions, so you're not seeing every little thing as a threat.

Day-to-day practices that help you remember who you are and remember your value and



contribution are also important. All of the different ways that you can really highlight the gift of what it means to be queer and non-conforming in any way. What we can hold space for each other in our community is creativity, flexibility, and this beautiful existence of multiple possibilities all at once. Being able to see a picture and then see so many different things behind that image or person is a huge gift and is really what's necessary for building the world that we want. Moving towards the ability to be imaginative, creative, and push boundaries while challenging larger systems is incredibly important.

That can be in the form of community, healing circles, and intentional check-ins with your friends. We do this with my group of friends. We have established a common practice of doing group check-ins every couple of weeks. How's everybody doing? Are you OK? What do you need? How can we support you? What's going well for you? What are you struggling with? How do we build you up? How do we hold space for you in difficult moments? And so I think that's really important as well, so you don't feel isolated, alone, and unworthy of people, which can be really easy to feel. To feel that way or to be untrustworthy of other people.

**QE: Are there any strategies or interventions that have been effective in helping queer individuals recover from the psychological impact of hate?**

There is interesting research being done now around the type of stress that comes from living in a homophobic society and constantly being scapegoated by the government for your sexuality, your race, your ethnicity, and things like that. I think it's really similar to managing internalized homophobia in that finding your roots, identity, pride, community, and connection are some of the most important interventions.

And then exploring some of the other more trauma-focused interventions, which are focused on seeing how your worldview has been shaped by this experience and what is actually true for you and what isn't. So, if you believe that everything around you is unsafe, how can we work through that? Seeing a therapist who can provide EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing) is a great example. EMDR just looks at how we've stored traumatic

“Their goal is to create homogeneity/sameness and to ‘eliminate’ these other types of identities or different ways of being.”



memories in our brain and moves them to a place that helps us not have such a strong reaction to them.

These are more clinical interventions, but from a nonclinical, peer support method: being able to identify your value, create connections in the community, challenge those messages, help yourself and each other to evaluate those messages that you've been told and how you've internalized them, and then what is the result of that belief.

We can recognize when a friend says something that shocks us. You have a queer friend that says something lowkey homophobic and you're like "What the hell?", work back from that and engage your friend in a loving and respectful discussion, asking, "Where do you think that's coming from? What does that mean for you? What is it bringing up for you when I say that?" As peers and as community members, we can help each other to work through those internalized messages that then dictate our behaviors and then change how we move through space and the world.

**QE: In what ways should queer people support each other during these times to help lessen feelings of doom, loneliness, and reliance on unhealthy coping mechanisms?**

I'm really redundant and repetitive in this, but community, community, community! I'm hesitant to list out things because individual needs and community needs are different, but for me, I think helping people be able to focus on their basic needs is foundational. We see people pushed into precarity or poor coping mechanisms, and one of the main ways can be from a lack of basic needs. So we can support each other with bills and mutual aid.

Safety, trust, and security are so important, and a lack of safety at its core is what creates trauma or a feeling of being unsafe. And so basic needs being met are really important to create the opposite effect. To create that buffer, it's a really solid place to start. In some of those check-ins, as well as creating intentional space, whether through our projects, poetry, or discussions, we use stories or any other means to remind each other of the value and importance we hold in each other's lives.

It's not only within our community but also

“Moving towards the ability to be imaginative, creative, and push boundaries while challenging larger systems is incredibly important.”



in the larger ecosystem of the world. Queer individuals contribute greatly to the world, offering creativity, innovation, and much more.

And then the other thing is really having grace with each other, giving each other the benefit of the doubt, because when people's nervous systems are unsafe and unregulated, there is tension and anxiety, emotions can feel uncontrolled, and actions can feel confusing because they are coming from this space that's really primal. It's very animalistic. It's not this rational, beautiful, "I can hold many truths at once" space that is accessible when we feel safe. It's coming from this idea that everything is scary and a threat. Everything can harm me, and that is a really hard place to be all the time. So you can be angry or irritable. And that's why I said they can become what people see as your personality. But really, it's the best way that we've learned to feel safe—by pleasing or manipulating.

Trauma and chronic stress really impact the way we see the world and how we respond to it to stay safe, and then they can create these personality shifts or even these heightened levels of stress. And so having a lot of grace with each other, not to say that we should excuse people that just are doing bad things or harmful things, but it's always an encouragement for all of us to be able to see things with a bit more nuance and to say, "OK, this was really harmful, and this is something that we don't want to be continued, and this behavior is unacceptable. And I'm curious where that's coming from." Because we really want that behavior to stop, then consequences must happen, but also change has to happen, and we can't make changes when we don't have understanding. So yeah, I think creating connections and supporting each other comes from constantly seeking and understanding and then trying to move from that place as well.

**QE: How can allies and supporters contribute to promoting resilience and well-being within the queer community?**

As a queer mental health service provider, it helps to understand some things, but there are also areas and corners of the queer community that I also don't understand. And that's fine, as long as you do the work and have the education to understand. Getting constant feedback and support from peers, mentors, and supervisors is important to make sure the work you're doing is not harmful and is more than just inclusive; it's transformative. So what are you doing to push back on the larger systems that are creating barriers for people to access quality services?

Holding this lens of how that constant fear and rejection impacts people and their behaviors. Is a person

really not participating, not being supportive, or not engaged? Or are they worried, afraid, or distracted because of something else? It's really important.

And then I would say resources. It's our responsibility if we have the means and the ability to contribute financially to somebody's access to healing or to provide pro bono slots or sliding-scale slots. I'm thinking again from this very specific mental health service provider space, but just generally, I think intentionally closing those gaps, whether that's through donations of time, money, resources, or materials, is really important because if we're going to have true transformative change, then we have to understand the reason why some people have been systematically included or burdened differently than others.

The last thing I would say is self-education. Figure it out. Address your own internalized biases. Get clear on your self-reflection and notice. What's your gut telling you? It doesn't make you a bad person if you are responding to something that you see or if you've been taught that a certain type of person is unacceptable or unsafe. But once you notice that thought or that response, what are you doing to change it? That is where the responsibility comes in.

So I think being really self-aware and just being honest with ourselves around what is coming up for us when we encounter certain types of people that might be different from us and how are we challenging those assumptions and responses to retrain our body and our nervous systems to see those things differently

**QE: What message or advice would you give to queer individuals who may be feeling overwhelmed or hopeless in the face of ongoing discrimination and hatred?**

It's a cliché, but I really want you to know you're not alone. There are a lot of people rooting for your existence, your survival, and more than that, but for you to be able to thrive. I always tell clients or friends, "I'm sorry that we even have to be having these conversations. I'm sorry that these risks exist in the first place and have to be navigated, but the reminder of not needing to go through them alone and the ways in which you may have been forced to adapt or cope aren't your fault. We have all been

pushed into places and to do things that we want to forget, avoid, or not deal with because they are difficult and hard. And that's OK. There's nothing wrong with you for doing that. And the shame, guilt, frustration, and anger are all normal. And it's OK that your response could have been less than healthy or perfect in a lot of different ways. You're not alone.

Building a strong connection. Having a solid safety plan—who can you trust? How do you respond? How do you get out if you need to? Do you have a safe place to stay if necessary? Do you have some money saved? Put aside some if you can. And also, just have somebody to rely on. You know, I think about a plan from a few different perspectives, and one of them is that physical safety piece. It is just like logical safety. Who do you call to motivate you? Who do you call to encourage you?

And prioritizing your health, wellness, and stability above all else is not only a way to be part of a community but also a way to survive and thrive so that you can be a good and supportive part of that community, especially when times are difficult for others.

**“I really want you to know you're not alone.”**



# Voices of triumph

**- Lexi -**

I am in awe of the triumph we have achieved amidst this wave of homophobic campaign. Initially, fear and the temptation to remain silent gripped us, but we refused to stay down. Instead, we rose together, supporting one another in every way we could.

Some among us took up the pen, using their words to reflect and express our truth. Others engaged in fierce debates with the homophobes, countering their misinformation and spreading awareness. There were those who tirelessly monitored social media, identifying harmful videos and accounts to be reported. And then, there were the individuals who shared these videos within their circles, amplifying our impact even further.

We rallied around those who were outed, offering unwavering support and a shoulder to lean on. The bonds we forged during this challenging time ensured that we weren't alone. Despite the homophobes' relentless attempts to make this campaign personal and to silence our community, we held our heads high and fought back with unyielding determination.

In these acts of resilience and defiance, we have shown true strength. Our collective efforts have proven that we will not be silenced or diminished. Together, we have created a force that cannot be easily extinguished.

Stay strong and keep fighting.

**- Bisrat -**

As a masculine-presenting woman, my being targeted by the homophobes was a forgone conclusion. I was aware that my presence on the streets of Addis Ababa was enough to get me killed, beaten up, and used as an example for other people who read me as queer.

My triumph? I kept living. The safer option would have been to stay home to avoid the homophobes who were policing their neighborhoods from the gays, and they had clear instructions to beat up or kill anyone that they suspected was gay. I caught some people giving me odd looks and knew what they were thinking.

I am not saying that I was not scared. I am not saying that I was not tempted to stay home. Rather, I braved the hate and chose to face my haters. I knew the price of walking on the streets of Addis Ababa during the hate campaign. The TikTok videos had clearly shown me that being a masculine presenting woman could very well bring me death. But I knew that hiding would have been its own sort of death. I would have found it hard to forgive my hiding. I knew that hiding would have taken its own mental toll. I chose life with my head held high.

Despite their policing of my gender expression and the multiple ways that I occupy spaces, I ignored their taunting and continued without editing a single part of my life. I survived their verbal assault and refused to hide. And I like to think that I brought comfort to other masculine-presenting women, straight or queer. I hope I gave them a license to be who they are, in the same way that they gave me a license to be who I am.

**- Rahwa -**

One of the reasons why I think the hate campaign has been a good opportunity for us is because I believe that it has become a way to show Ethiopians and people living here who think that we don't exist, that we do exist and we are not small in number.

Additionally, there are those who used this situation to properly explain the "Why?" and "How?" of their identities. So, it has created the opportunity to create awareness about our community to people who unknowingly or ignorantly blame us when people get sexually assaulted or they assume that we become queer by choice.

**- Mahlet -**

I think the fact that we're not afraid is a victory. Most of us were scared inside, but determination was within us. We were supporting each other. We knew who was coming to attack us. We were saying that this is who this person is, so be careful. Everyone was talking with each other through accounts that were created. This was the good part. We were posting, reporting the hate speech, and everything else that was not just. We were scared, but we also learned so much from it.

**- Meraf -**

What I consider a triumph in this campaign is our unity. The way we helped each other and the support system we had created was special. There was a very strong response movement. The campaign of hate had the capacity to mess up the mental well being of a lot of people, but our united response was exceptional. I said, “Aha! When we stand together, we are remarkable!”

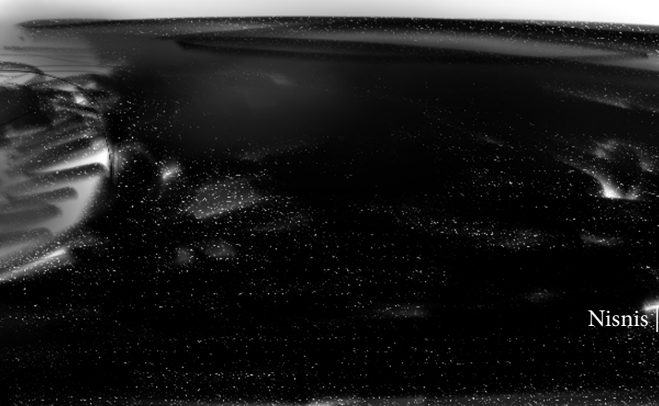
I think our biggest triumph is the support system we created. Because the hate campaign was on social media, our unity was also strongest on social media. We have gotten through by doing the work of immediately reporting hateful content, by protesting online, and by comforting each other. Many people would call me and ask, “Are you okay? Are you being safe?”. Even though I am a social media user, as soon as a new hateful content was posted, even before I was able to see it, I would immediately get messages from someone in our community letting me know that this content exists, asking me to report it and reminding me to stay vigilant. We would discuss how to respond to each account.

This was the way we were able to get past these hard times. The situation was enough to create a whole lot of mental instability. But because we were responding quickly and having these contents removed fast, we were able to overcome them without things getting too bad through the system we created.



# The triumph hate birthed

They wanted to destroy us, maim us, and kill us. On the contrary, they helped us create a stronger connection with other people in the community.



The hate campaign was a stressful time, but there were also many happy victories. We were able to form an alliance, which I see as a major win. Amazingly enough, those of us who have accepted ourselves have acted like one person. This is a great and very adequate victory. I feel like I would feel when I had done something 100 percent well. All over Ethiopia, people are caught up in fights over race, land, and power. We are living in a time when people are fighting for a lot of reasons. But our community was united like one, and we were deeply committed to each other, so that is a big deal in this country. We are not a small number of people who live just in a small rural district. LGBTQ+ people live all over Ethiopia, and the entire community acted in unison. We banded together to get hateful content removed as soon as it was posted. We were able to make sure that violators received warnings about their content, and then we made sure their accounts got closed if they did not heed the warning. This shows the strong unity we created. So far, and more importantly, that unity has continued.

When it was announced on Zega Police that content that violated community standards was posted, we were all very quick to report it. We listened to each other with intention and came together. Those of us who knew each other in person would call each other to make sure we were safe and to offer solace. We would ask each other, “How are you? How is your mental health?” We were wondering what happened when someone disappeared from the world of Facebook, Instagram, and Telegram, and we would ask what happened to them and if they were OK. The hate campaign has given us an opportunity to empathize with others in the community. They wanted to destroy us, maim us, and kill us. On the contrary, they helped us create a stronger connection with other people in the community, which would not have been possible without the hate campaign. They helped me see that I have met thousands of brothers and sisters. That’s a big triumph.

Another triumph is the opportunity they created for us to introduce our community. Those who were spreading hate on LGBTQ+ people were the ones who were saying that gebersedomawi people (to use the term they call us) are everywhere. They were telling people to ask where their siblings hang out and what activities they are involved in. They started their hateful speech because they wanted to receive likes, shares, and followers. They wanted to be famous. They have already done most of the work for us. They have told everyone that we exist in Ethiopia, and no one can now deny our existence. What we need to do now is actually fight for our rights. So, they have inadvertently reported a lot about Ethiopia’s LGBTQ community. Because of them, the media were reporting that we were mistreated and that we are placed in a precarious situation by Ethiopian society.

Another success is the fact that they gave us the opportunity to start a civil movement without us actually thinking about it. In the United States, for example, there was a time when the LGBTQ community, which now lives in peace and freedom, was killed, burned, and destroyed.

In Ethiopia, this struggle is also mandatory. Those of us who are fighting this struggle today and seeing adversity will make things easier for tomorrow’s

generation. We are making our mark. I didn't post myself on TikTok or Facebook alone, but now that they've come to destroy me, it has been helpful to show me that I have the right to live. They made us understand that what we deserve is more than just hiding. Not only did they help us realize the possibilities, but they also made us realize that we could actually start a social movement. Our efforts to erase their hateful videos were one way to introduce ourselves and show them our numbers. We were defending ourselves. Now the time has come to claim our rights.

Today, everyone knows that we exist. This is a victory. We don't know where we'll be next year. It can be a country where our rights are respected and we are able to legally marry. Where we can live openly with even our families knowing who we are.

Now is the time to create change.

They have told everyone that we exist in Ethiopia, and no one can now deny our existence. What we need to do now is actually fight for our rights.



# The far-reaching impact of internalized homophobia



Let's call him Mr. X. Long before he came out as a gay man, he was a religious zealot who had difficulties talking to people he thought were gay. The two of us worked together and were on opposite extremes when it came to our politics, and this manifested itself in so many ways, but particularly in discussions around the rights of LGBTQ+ people.

Mr. X would regularly initiate discussions on the issue and would spend huge amounts of time airing his disagreements. "Gays will not inherit heaven; they became gay due to being sexually abused; they would ruin the sanctity of marriage; they..." It was an endless list of claims without any factual basis. Regardless of the evidence I presented, Mr. X was never willing to reconsider his stance. His inability to change his mind did not surprise me since most of us would find changing our cherished opinions difficult. What confused me, though, was how it was always him who started the conversation about queer people and queer rights

When I expressed this confusion while we were all gathered at work, a colleague who was not just gay, but a staunch gay rights activist said, "Mr. X just has a lot of internalized homophobia". Mr. X became angry and stormed out of the office. We scolded our gay rights activist colleague about the inappropriateness of his comments and the need for sensitivity and compassion for Mr. X. While our coworker agreed about being compassionate, he maintained his viewpoint that Mr. X was, in fact, queer.

Imagine my surprise when we all ended up running into Mr. X a few years later at a gay pride parade. He couldn't look us in the eye and mumbled something about being in the neighborhood. My colleague had learned better decorum at that point, but I know it took everything in him not to say, "So, you accidentally found yourself marching at a gay pride parade?!"

I admit that I thought a lot about Mr. X throughout the most recent wave of homophobic hate campaigns. I can sympathize with how difficult the self-acceptance process can be, especially when raised amongst the ultra-religious and conservative. We grew up with "god's plan" being drilled in us – finish school, find a job, marry someone of the "opposite" sex, and start a family. Anything outside of this compulsory heterosexuality and cisnormativity is considered a deviance. The only instances in which queerness was mentioned were in religious teachings and social conversations where the attitudes are negative. Even when we came across queer movie scenes, our families would sternly remind us that these were "immoral" people who had strayed away from the path of God. So, it seems almost natural that our immediate reaction to the idea that we might be queer is disgust and shame. It takes a long and personal process of unlearning to look back on our lives to understand why we may have these emotions and make the choice to rewrite our stories.

Yet, for some individuals, this process of self-acceptance hasn't happened. We all know someone who has queer sex only when they are drunk, but never recognizes their queerness, or others who have queer sex but aspire to "leave the lifestyle" once they hit a certain age, or people in established heterosexual relationships/marriages that step out on their partners in secret to have queer sex, or some who hate on others for being "too queer". Internalized homophobia manifests in so many ways, leading queer individuals to hide or deny their sexual orientation, hold homophobic beliefs, or discriminate against others for not conforming to their idea of the "right" kind of queer. By constructing these narratives that make them feel better they can then create a distance between their sense of self and queerness. Like when Mr. X claimed that people only become gay after being sexually assaulted. In his mind, he has just removed himself from the gay equation because he likely has never been subjected to such an experience. He convinces himself that he cannot be gay because he identifies as a devout Christian who will inherit heaven while perceiving homosexuality as a sin that will inevitably lead to damnation

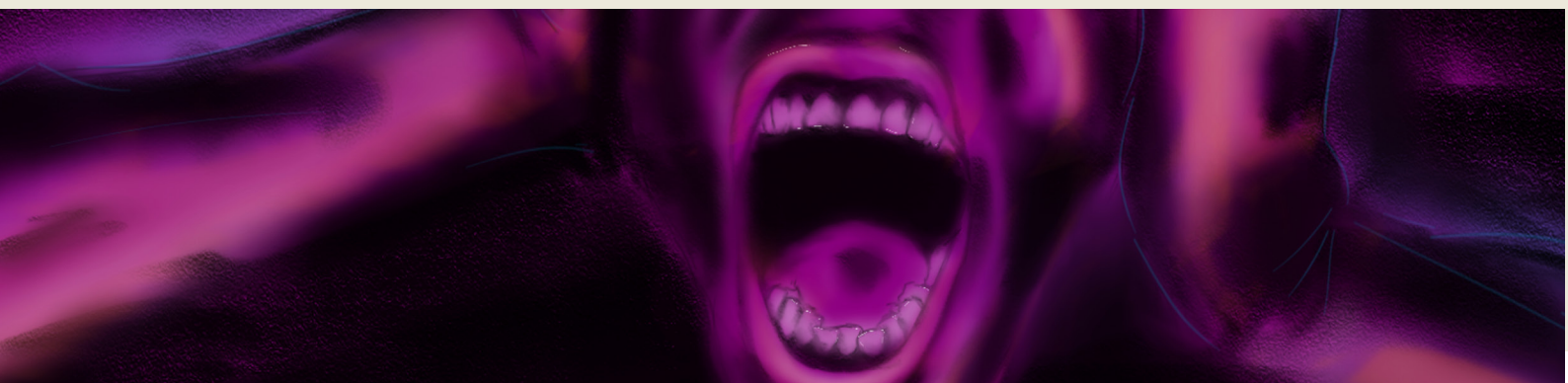
Similarly, we saw queer people bashing other queer people because they couldn't accept

their own queerness. It was disheartening to watch queer individuals themselves producing and sharing anti-LGBTQIA+ content on their social media accounts. Or when videos surfaced where people felt comfortable enough to dance and express their true selves in front of a camera, believing that the person behind the camera was trustworthy. And pictures, as well as personal information, like the names, neighborhoods, and work/school addresses of people suspected of being queer, were being publicly posted even when it was clear that this would endanger the lives of the people being outed. From the details of the information being published, it's not a leap to imagine that the input was coming from people who were once considered near and dear to the individuals who were outed. I wonder how far this campaign would have progressed without the assistance of queer individuals and so-called "allies" who willingly added fuel to the fire.

In societies like Ethiopia where prejudice and discrimination are woven into the fabric of daily life, and homophobia is endorsed by both religion and state, it's common for us queers to live in isolation, fear and shame. There's an undeniable need for community, as it can be a life line, offering understanding, acceptance, validation and support. As evidenced by the most recent wave of hate campaigns we've experienced, it's only through the collective efforts of the community that we are able to confront systemic homophobia, advocate for our rights and sew the seeds of social change. But, a house divided against itself can not stand. When the sense of safety within our community is challenged by individuals with internalized homophobia outing people from within the community, it creates a devastating sense of betrayal and instills a deep sense of fear. Our space becomes riddled with anxiety and suspicion, eroding the sense of safety and support that is essential for the collective's cohesion and resilience.

Mr. X's inability to name himself even as I run into him marching at a gay pride parade is telling. Yes, accepting ourselves is hard. Yes, undoing a lifetime of shame is difficult. But the least we can do is to refuse to participate in the victimization of others.

... it seems almost natural  
that our immediate reaction  
to the idea that we might be  
queer is disgust and shame.






# Fighting back with self-acceptance

... if we try to fight to not be an  
LGBTQ, the only result is getting lost  
in the chaos or, worse, drowning in  
the hater's cause.

Well, the fact that the situation at that time was very scary is something we all cannot deny. It was a stressful time, especially for women like me and my friends who attended the program that had all of those videos circulating at the time. However, I felt that we could only get through the tragedy if we could calm down, so I believed that I had to calm down my friends who were more freaked out than me. I focused on that so that nothing worse would happen. Personally, I didn't behave any differently on the ground than I did before. Life had continued the same as before for me. To counter the hate campaign on social media, I joined the movement to report and shut down these accounts and respond to the homophobes anonymously without giving away my identity, much like others in the community were doing.

All I could do for my community was give words of encouragement. I am not sure whether it is a wrong assumption or not, but I mainly tried to calm them down by asserting that the outcry is temporary and remembering previous experiences. Even though it is "prohibited" in legal documents, the government is usually lenient in this matter. As saying "stay strong" by itself may not be encouraging, considering the seriousness of the situation, and since the government is more frightening than individuals, I have tried to explain the government's position on the matter as I understand it and to remind others that the violence will last for a short period of time and that nothing worse will happen if we are cautious.

I was also involved in the reporting campaign. I used to find these videos and accounts through other friends who sent me private messages telling me that "these are videos to report" and through chance encounters with these videos, which I then sent to my friends to do the same. I was not surprised by the hateful videos that we were coming across,



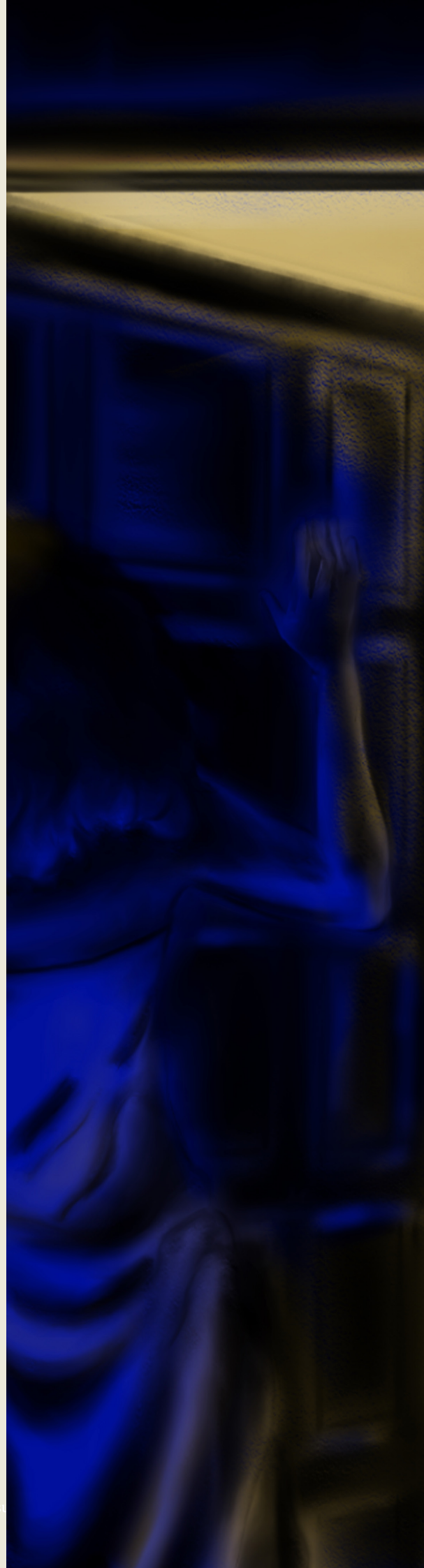
**I don't mean to  
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where I went into  
depression.**

as I am a part of this society and I have learned to expect such things. However, as a person who believes in individual rights and as a woman in this lifestyle, it made me angry. Although I am not one to believe that it is right to return hate with hate, it created a feeling of hatred and contempt that I could not and was not able to hide.

Being gay, lesbian or queer is not something we choose, so every time “chaos” arises, if we try to fight to not be an LGBTQ, the only result is getting lost in the chaos or, worse, drowning in the hater’s cause. I, on the other hand, love myself. I am not one to give a chance to something that might make me lose myself! And so, we should march forward, living as our true selves, and show them that we have always existed, that we currently exist, and that we will continue to exist until they learn to accept this fact.

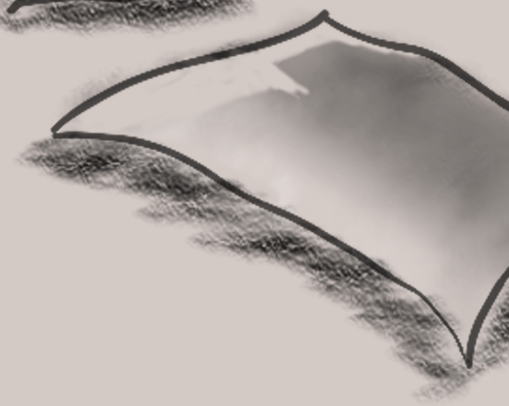
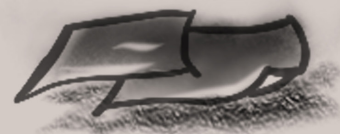
As I said, even though their hatred erupts periodically like a volcano, my mind was ready for it because I personally believed that in a society that lives with a narrow definition of tradition, culture, and religion, the hatred is shrouded and to be expected. I don’t mean to suggest that the homophobic campaign didn’t shock me, but it didn’t affect me to the point where I went into depression. What led me to respond to the hateful campaign by reporting and encouraging people was not the desire to urgently respond to something different that happened out of the blue, but, as I said before, mainly because I felt that my rights and those of others had been affected. However, I also believe that it would be useful for many to understand and know that we are here, we are not only a handful, and that we did not choose but were chosen into this lifestyle.

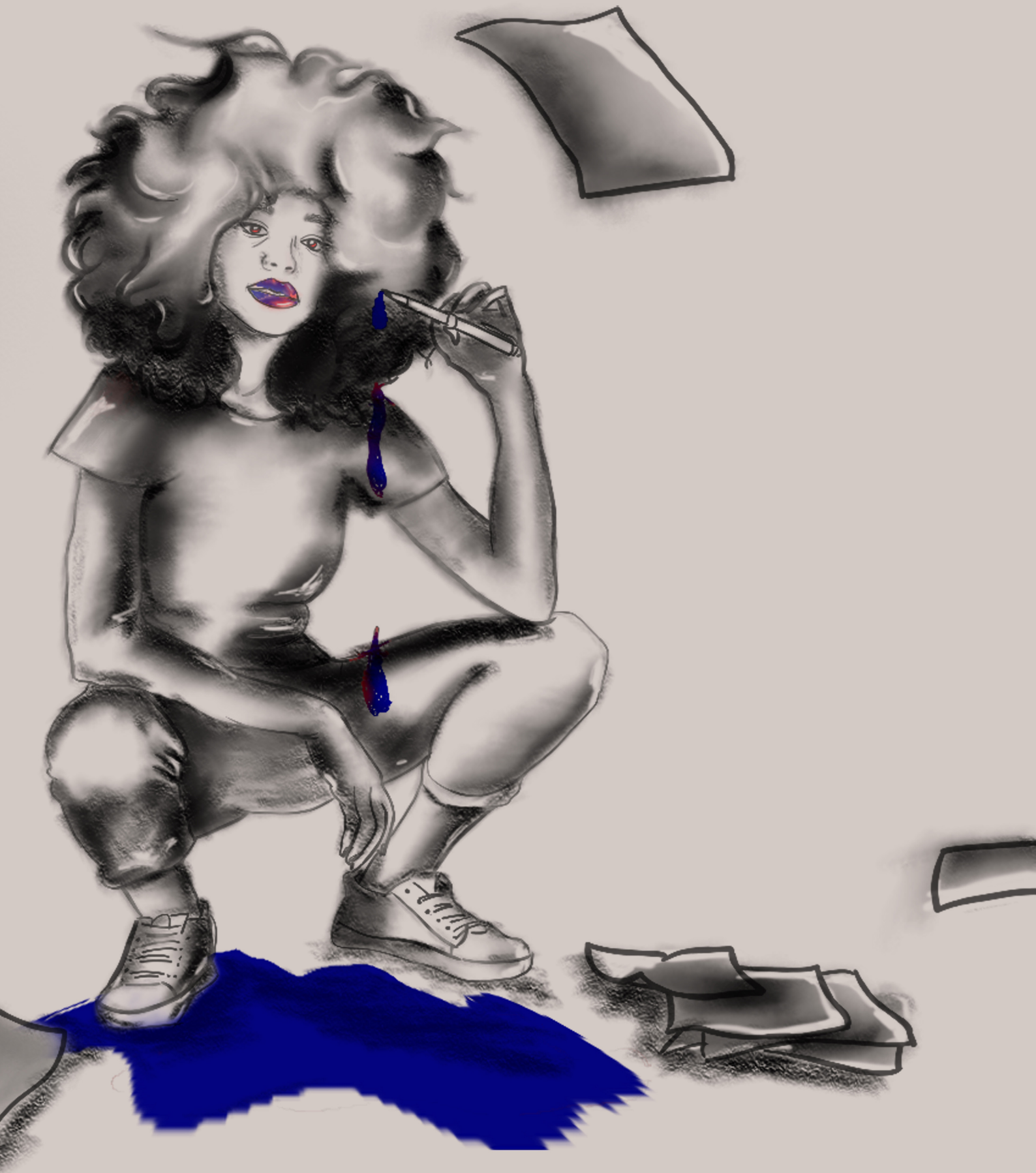
When such things happen, the first thing I can and should do for people who I think are going to panic is to calm them down. I think that should come first for the sake of many, because a person who is shocked or acting out of fear affects others. There is one truth that I personally believe. I believe that most of the people who go to the point of having a mental breakdown often do not really accept themselves. Therefore, what should follow after calming someone is to remind them to stop and take time to think about accepting themselves. Then the loss is minimal. Although I believe that attacks on identity are painful, I don’t think they are bad enough to cause serious damage, let alone losing yourself and ending your life. When I say this, let it be underlined that I have taken into consideration the possibility that there may be attacks sufficient to get someone to the point of sacrificing their life. However, it is because I do not believe that there is a greater death than not living true to yourself. All in all, all I can advise my peers is to ask ourselves, “Who am I?” before anything else.



# Open letter to the homophobes

*I know that you feel united with other Ethiopians when you direct your hate on me, and it gives you a momentary respite from dealing with our real problems.*





Dear Homophobes,

I debated writing this open letter. My hesitancy in part comes from my thinking that you may not really be open to hearing me. I worry that all you will see is a queer person, and thus someone who should be killed, not one who has a right to even speak to you as one human to another. I guess I am persevering because I am hopeful, and I believe that making even one homophobe reconsider their position is a worthwhile cause.

Please forgive my starting this letter without a proper greeting. How un-Ethiopian of me. Perhaps this is in line with my queerness, which you repeatedly tell me is un-Ethiopian? What are the qualifications needed to be an Ethiopian, and who gets to decide who meets those standards?

Apparently, you, as a homophobe, do. You act as if you are the ministry that issues a license for Ethiopianness. And, in your eyes, I don't meet that standard just because I am queer.

I have tried for days now to understand what it is about me that offends you so deeply that you want to take away my life and my right to live in my homeland. To be honest, you all don't make following your logic easy. Your sessions are long rants that are so redundant that you risk alienating even your base audience. After days of following your discussions, and I think my fellow queers and I deserve a reward for sitting through them, I think your main opposition to my being queer (or gebersedomawi to use your terminology) seems to be that my being queer soils Ethiopia because it is a sin, that it is contrary to Ethiopian culture and tradition, and that it is an import of Western values.

To hear you argue, one would think that Ethiopia is a country that only has one culture, one religion, one people, and one tradition. Even I was confused by your assertions and arguments and had to actively remind myself that we are a nation with about 80 different languages, where a multitude of cultures, traditions, and religions are practiced. And I can already hear you say, "but none of them support your queerness".

The issue, I think, is that you forget that I am also a part of this culture. You want to deny me my right to be an Ethiopian because you oppose my sexuality and my gender expression or identity as something that is inconsistent with your understanding of Ethiopian culture. Female genital mutilation has been a part of our culture for years. Do you want to mutilate Ethiopian girls and women because you want to remain true to your culture? You can choose to stick to an understanding of culture as something static and as something that is used to exclude people. In reality, culture



is expansive; it evolves and is able to make space for all of us. I won't allow your attempts to preserve your supposed Ethiopian traditions at my expense. In fact, it might just be best for you to stop weaponizing culture to serve your needs.

Another argument that closely aligns with your seeing me as un-Ethiopian is your view that my being queer is due to a Western influence. I was queer before I met my first ferenj. I was queer before I knew what queer was. I was queer before I knew what Western influence was. I was queer before I knew what homophobia was. I am still queer now that I know ferenjoch, and fully understand your homophobia, which extends to your desire to kill me. My queerness is not something that can be influenced or changed at will. Perhaps you could benefit from learning about human sexuality, gender identity, and the spectrum that we all exist on. I would be happy to suggest reading material.

You also argue that I am a sinner and that my queerness will invite God's wrath on the "chosen" people of Ethiopia. I would have been hollering with laughter if this assertion had not been used so often to kill and maim so many. How many wars have we, the chosen people, experienced in just the past four or five years alone? We have now exchanged a war in the Amhara region for the war on Tigray. We have had priests who have called an entire ethnic group "cancer on Ethiopia" while waving their crosses and wearing full religious regalia. We, as a collective, applauded them.

Yet you are worried about my queer self-exposing Ethiopia to God's wrath? Honestly, half of Ethiopia's problems would be solved if you stopped thinking of Ethiopians as a chosen people. We are no more or no less chosen than people in Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Guatemala, or Nepal. Your sense that the Creator has a special place for Ethiopians is an illusion that prevents you from dealing with our multiple problems. And it is yet another weapon that you use on those you don't like. I am not special. You are not special. And you don't get to use your sense of specialness to take away my rights or to make yourself feel better about yourself and Ethiopia.

I know you want someone to blame for all the problems that Ethiopia is experiencing – war, inflation, ethnocentrism, and a real sense of fragmentation. I know you are fed up with a government that is not able to hear you. I know that you are frustrated by a government that has you in a choke hold. I know that you feel united with other Ethiopians when you direct your hate on me, and it gives you a momentary respite from dealing with our real problems. But please know that beating up on me and my fellow queers is not a solution. Know that I am not your enemy and killing me will not solve Ethiopia's problems.

Allow me to leave you with a few thoughts. You can spend days and hours on TikTok threatening to kill me. You can publish and distribute my address on Telegram and then send your fellow homophobes to maim me. You can out me. You can use the government to further brutalize the already brutal laws against me. But I will always be queer. I may have to hide, I may have to pretend to not be killed, and I may choose to flee my country.

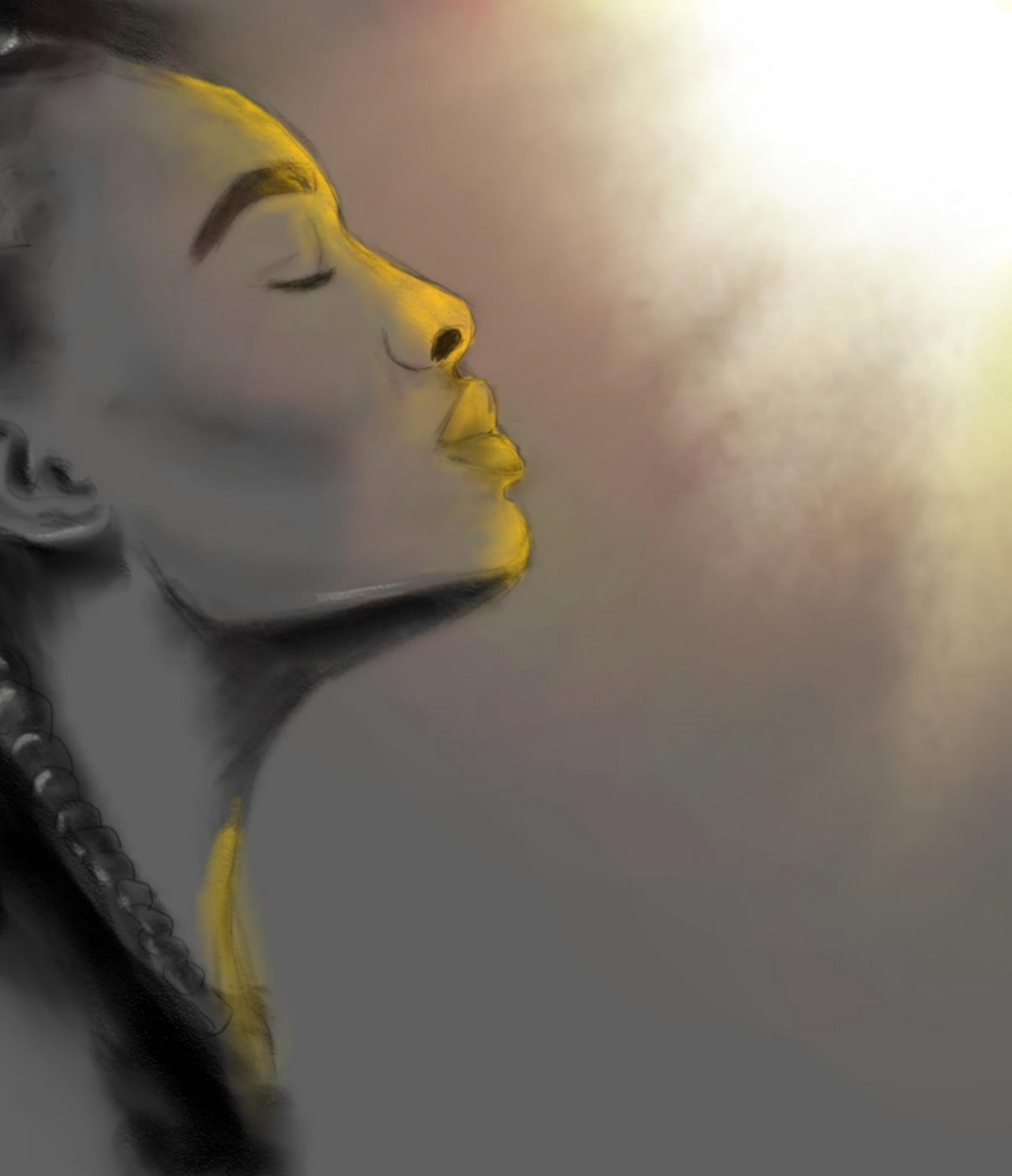
But I will always remain queer. A bushti. A lootii.

Peace,  
A Queer Ethiopia

I was queer  
before I  
knew what  
queer was.



# Finding healing





# My journey after the hate campaign

Over the course of the past two months, our community has endured a distressing hate campaign, both online and offline, that has left lasting emotional scars on each of us. The immense pressure we faced during this period resulted in significant mental health struggles. We found ourselves consumed by fear, not only of those around us, including our close friends and fellow members of the queer community but also of the hate speech directed at us. The extent of their animosity towards the queer community became a cause for concern, as their aggression and willingness to inflict physical harm or even take lives to “exterminate” us became obvious.

The first major impact of the hate campaign was the loss of trust. We couldn't even trust our queer friends anymore, fearing they might betray us to protect themselves. It wasn't just my closest friends I worried about, but also my family, including my sister's husband. I was worried about anyone I had previously come out to including my old university friends, and my coworker, whom I had come out to the day before the hate campaign started. I even had concerns that the girls I had dated might expose me out of revenge. Sadly, a few of our friends actually experienced this. One of them had to deal with constant threats from her ex-girlfriend, who kept saying things like, “I'll turn you over to the police, I'll tell your parents...” and so on.

We existed in a perpetual state of fear. Each time my phone rang, I felt a rush of panic. The mere act of receiving phone calls filled me with terror. I became hesitant to answer calls from unfamiliar numbers. Every notification scared me. I was constantly anxious, dreading the possibility of becoming the next target of their hateful campaign, or that one of my friends would be targeted instead.

I also started having questions about my sexuality. Am I truly flawed? Do I genuinely deserve this mistreatment and animosity simply because I differ from them? Am I truly sinful? Does my sexual identity inflict harm? It's probably true that almost all of us have gone through these phases of questioning while embracing our sexual identity, but this campaign made these questions resurface within us.

I also isolated myself from the people around me, cutting off

contact with my family and abruptly moving away from home. I stayed away from them for three weeks. I lost my desire to be around them because I didn't want to hear their incessant discussions filled with hatred. Unfortunately, I couldn't escape similar conversations at work. Overall, the campaign had a significant impact on our mental well-being, leading to a lot of insecurities.

My journey to heal from this hate campaign began by getting closer to my queer friends, at least those I trusted. I would reach out to them, asking how they were doing and if they were being safe. Even though I'm not really great at giving advice, I started giving advice to them, and other allies. But I would first look through their accounts, searching for any posts that indicated their support for our community. My goal was to make sure everyone was okay. Being close to my queer friends has been incredibly beneficial for me. We've been able to uplift and support each other in the face of hatred. I'll always be grateful for the unwavering support and encouragement I received from them too.

I used to spend most of my time reporting any videos or content that incited hatred against us. Facebook and TikTok became my main focus, and I was always online, ready to respond to my friends' messages. I knew they were the only ones who truly cared about my safety.

This hate campaign has taught me so much. First, it showed me the importance of breaking free from my feelings of loneliness and distancing myself from negative influences, including some of my friends. Taking that step has positively affected my well-being, helping me significantly in overcoming my depression. During these challenging times, I've been fortunate to find myself surrounded by truly amazing people too.

This experience has also made me much more cautious and vigilant. It has taught me to be mindful of my actions and choices, as well as to prioritize my own well-being and safety. I've taken the step of deleting several accounts that appeared suspicious to me. I've also become much more mindful about how I speak to and share personal information with others. Even with my old friends, I've started choosing my words more carefully and prioritizing safety in our conversations.

I've reached a point where I no longer fear speaking about my sexual identity. Even though I've gained a newfound confidence, I'm also mindful of the importance of prioritizing my safety. I'm not willing to risk my life for the sake of people who hold narrow-minded beliefs. It's crucial for me to stay alive and continue fighting for myself and my community. Now, I have no hesitation in expressing that I gravitate towards emotional and physical connections with people of the same gender. I've truly embraced and accepted my sexual identity more than ever before. It's been a journey of self-discovery and self-acceptance that has brought me a sense of peace and authenticity.

**My journey to heal from  
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trusted.**

# How did you manage your mental health during and after the experience of the homophobic campaign?

These are selected responses from a questionnaire that was posted on a Facebook page ...



በተስፋ ፍቅር ያሸንጋል

እኔ በግሌ ሁሌም ቢሆን ለነገሮቹ ሰፊ አድርጎ መመልከት ያስደስተኛል እናም ማንም ሰው ምንም አይነት ነገር ቢናገር እኔ የቆምኩበት እና ያመንኩበት ነገር ላይ ምንም አይምሮኔ ላይ ለውጥ አያመጣም ነገር ግን በዛገ ደረጃ ሰው ጥላቻ ሲዘራ ሳይ ግን በቃ ሁሌም ከፈጣሪዬ ጋር ነው ንግግራ ሲከፋኝ ሲጨነቀኝ አሱ ነው የኔ ብርታት እና መንገድ በየትኛውም የህይወት ጫና ውስጥ ብትሆኑ በምታምኑት ነገር ላይ ሃላፊነታቸውን ሙሉ በሙሉ ለሱ ስጡት ፀልዩ ዘምሩ ይህ የኔ የቸግር የፈተና እና የጭንቀት ማለፊያዬ መንገድ ነው።

Betesfa fekir yashenefal

Personally, I always like to take a broader view when I examine something, and regardless of what someone says, no one will make me change my stance. However, watching people spread such hatred... I always turn to God when I am worried or sad. He gives me strength and guidance. So whenever you feel stressed, give Him the responsibility. Pray and sing. This is one of my methods to overcome stress.

ለዚህ ያበቃን አግዚአብሔር አምላክ ይመስገን ያልፋል ያልተባለ ማዕበል አለፈ አርሱን እንወዳለን ያሉ ውሸታዎቹ አራሳችንን እንዳንሆን የሚያስፈራሩን አስመሳዮቹ ከሸፉ አርሱ ከተበዳዮቹ ጋር ነው አግዚአብሔር አለ በዙፋኑ ይህንን አውቃለሁ አምናለሁም ሁሉን ሲፈጥር በምክንያት ነው የአጆቹ ስራዎቹ ድንቅ ነን ሁሉን በጊዜው ውብ አድርጎ ስራው እንዲተባለው በጊዜ ራሴን ተቀብያለሁ ጎዶሎዬን የሚሞላው አምላኬ ነው ያመነ የልቡን መሻት እንደሚያገኝ ከልብ ማመን በጎ ማድረግ እንደሚያድን አውቃለሁ በፈጠረኝ ማመንን ማንም የሚሰጠኝ እና የሚከለክለኝ አይደለም ከ10ቱ ተዕዛዛት አንዱ አትገደል ነው አንጂ አትውደዱ አታፍቅሩ አይደለም ይህን ያላከበረ ይገደሉ ያለ ማህበረሰብ አምወደውን አይነግረኝም ከመፈጠሪ በፊት የሚያውቀኝ ፈጣሪዬ ከራሴ በላይ ያስብልኛል መንገዴን ይመራኛል

5:53 PM

Thanks to God, the storm that we thought would consume us has passed. Those liars who claim to love Him and who threaten us for being ourselves have failed. We love God. He always sides with the victims. There is a God; I truly believe that. He created all of us for a reason. We are his masterpiece, and we are great. It is said that He made everything beautiful in his time. In the same way, I too have accepted myself in time. God fills whatever is missing in me. I know that whoever believes will find the desires of their heart, and sincerely believing and doing good deeds will save you. No one can give me the right or take away my right to believe in my Creator. One of the 10 commandments is don't kill; it isn't don't love. A society that has not respected this rule and has instead said to kill them cannot tell me whom to love. My Creator, who has known about me before I was even created, cares more about me than I do, and he guides me on my path.