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## **The de-stigmatization of Mental Illness has exacerbated the crisis in accessibility to Mental Health treatment**

The de-stigmatization of mental illness has created a crisis in accessibility to mental health treatment. This keynote speech will explore the evolution in cultural attitudes and stigmas regarding psychotherapy and mental health treatment from Generation X to Generation Z. The intersection between de-stigmatization, barriers to care and the post-pandemic surge in demand for psychotherapy will also be explored. While reducing the stigma surrounding mental illness has been a crucial step towards promoting mental health, it has also created a new challenge. Many more people who historically would have shunned treatment due to the stigma now feel comfortable seeking out mental health treatment. This surge in demand has far outstripped the ability to train new therapists, fund treatment programs, and adjust social & public policy. This keynote will explore ways to increase access to mental health treatment with an emphasis on solutions that are empirically validated and readily available.

### **References**

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### **Biography**

Andrew Sofin is a licensed Psychotherapist and Couples & Family Therapist with a private practice in Montréal, Canada. His clinical focus is on Couples & Family Therapy, Eating Disorders, Depression, and Anxiety. He is a registered Marriage & Family Therapist of the Canadian Association for Marriage & Family Therapy, a Clinical Fellow of the American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy, a member of the Eating Disorders Association of Canada, and the Chapter Chair for Canada for the International Association for Eating Disorders Professionals. Additionally, he is the current President of the Canadian Association for Marriage & Family Therapy, the Founder of Couples Retreat at Ocean Coral, and the Co-founder of the Brief Crisis Therapy Institute. He is also a visiting Professor at the University of Guelph and holds an Advanced Certificate in Couple & Family Therapy Studies. With over twenty-five years of experience in private practice, residential treatment programs, and hospital settings in Boston and Montréal, he is an experienced and respected professional in his field.

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