

Dealing with Dysregulation in Families impacted by Grief and Trauma

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The Resume

- Earned a scholarship to a Private HS
- Earned a scholarship to a small college in upstate NY-Vassar College
 - Graduated from law school 2004
- Graduated with a Doctorate in Education in 2021

The Anti-Resume



Parent's Divorce

Date Rape

Turning to boys for validation

Single Motherhood

Sex at 13 years old

Molested at 4 years old

Mother's Depression

Teen Pregnancy

Abortion

TODAY'S AGENDA

Why Adverse Childhood Experiences?

- To better understand the bigger picture of how trauma experienced in childhood can be informing clients behavior
- To understand cultural implications of adverse childhood experiences and how certain groups
- To understand how personal trauma can impact working with clients.



POSITIVE

Brief increases in heart rate,
mild elevations in stress hormone levels.

TOLERABLE

Serious, temporary stress responses,
buffered by supportive relationships.

TOXIC

Prolonged activation of stress
response systems in the absence
of protective relationships.



Fight

- Anger outburst
- Controlling
- "The bully"
- Narcissistic
- Explosive behaviour

Flight

- Workaholic
- Overthinker
- Anxiety, panic, OCD
- Difficulty sitting still
- Perfectionist

Freeze

- Difficulty making decisions
- Stuck
- Dissociation
- Isolating
- Numb

Fawn

- People pleaser
- Lack of identity
- No boundaries
- Overwhelmed
- Codependent

Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Questionnaire

Finding your ACE Score ra hbr 10 24 06

While you were growing up, during your first 18 years of life:

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household **often** ...
Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you?
or
Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
2. Did a parent or other adult in the household **often** ...
Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you?
or
Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you **ever** ...
Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way?
or
Try to or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal sex with you?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
4. Did you **often** feel that ...
No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special?
or
Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
5. Did you **often** feel that ...
You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you?
or
Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
6. Were your parents **ever** separated or divorced?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
7. Was your mother or stepmother:
Often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her?
or
Sometimes or often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard?
or
Ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic or who used street drugs?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill or did a household member attempt suicide?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
10. Did a household member go to prison?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____

Now add up your "Yes" answers: _____ This is your ACE Score

ACE Questionnaire

- Measures traumatizing experiences
- 0-18 years of age
- Score of 4 or more
 - Associated with adverse mental and physical health consequences (Felitti et al., 1998; Larkin et al., 2012).

ABUSE



Physical



Emotional



Sexual

NEGLECT



Physical



Emotional

HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION



Mental Illness



Incarcerated Relative



Mother treated violently



Substance Abuse



Divorce

Effects of Trauma

Trauma

- Evokes the feeling of helplessness and fear (Brunzell, Stokes, & Waters, 2016).
- Two people having the same experience can process differently
 - Agency vs. Helplessness

Researchers linked trauma to various problems in adulthood, including poor health outcomes, **mental health** problems, **homelessness**, and **crime** (Kalmakis & Chandler, 2013).

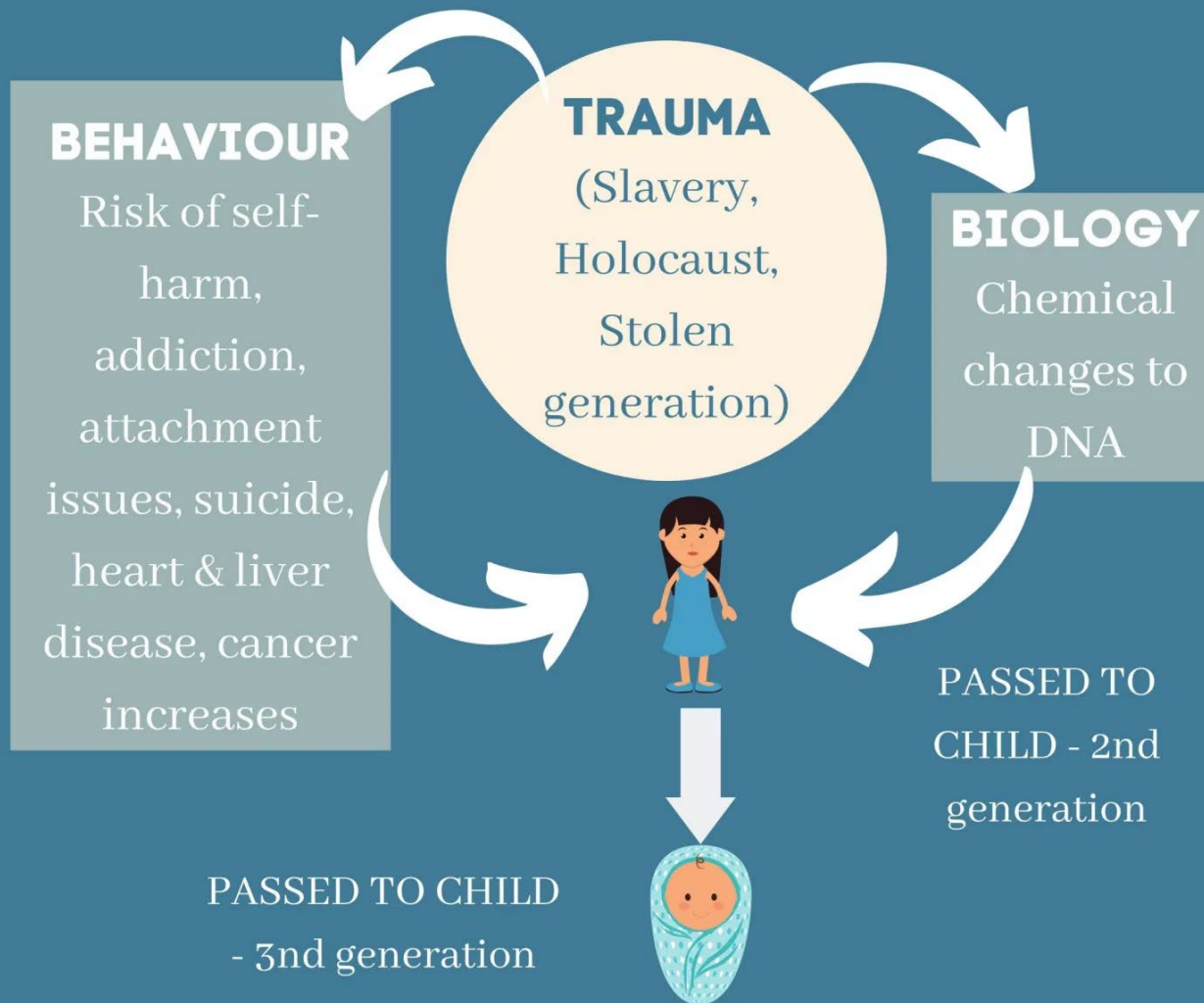




Trauma and the Future

- Why does our brain take a panoramic picture when we are exposed to a traumatic situation?
- [Epigenetic transmission of Holocaust trauma: can nightmares be inherited? - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)

INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA



@PSYCHOTHERAPY.CENTRAL

ACEs pass from one Generation to another

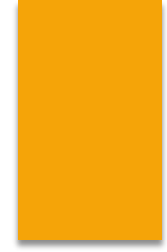
Having high ACE scores makes it more likely that you will experience an unplanned pregnancy, teen pregnancy and experience poverty, thereby raising children in a situation where they are more likely to experience ACEs.

ACEs Lead to Negative Coping Skills

To Deal with the high levels of cortisol released and the constant fight, flight or freeze, we may pick up coping skills to make us feel regulated.

- Smoking
- Drinking alcohol
- Drugs
- Sex
- Shopping
- Gambling

Adverse childhood experiences and adult inflammation: Findings from the 1958 British birth cohort



Mingyi Chen, Rebecca E. Lacey  

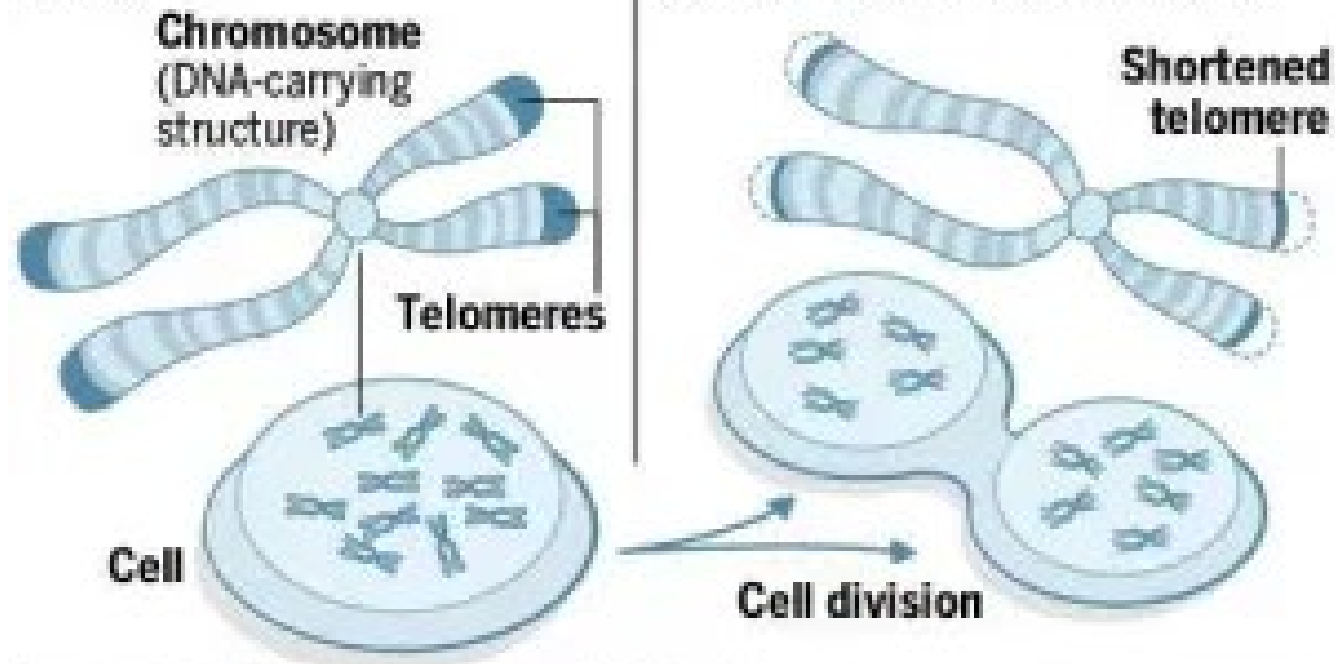
In conclusion, experiencing ACE is associated with higher adult inflammation, which might have consequences for chronic diseases, such as ischemic heart diseases and cancer. Therefore, more effort is required to support children who experience care placements, physical neglect, parental separation, domestic conflict and family member with alcohol misuse problem, psychiatric problem and offending history (Bentley et al., 2016). Furthermore, findings from this study also suggest that socioeconomic and health behavioral factors might explain associations between ACE and adult inflammation. Therefore, interventions which aim to modify better support children through the education system and in finding high quality, secure jobs, as well as targeting the uptake of risky health behaviors might help to ameliorate associations with later poor health.

Telomeres

Clue to longevity

Telomeres are caplike features at the ends of chromosomes that help protect them when cells divide.

Over time, due to ongoing cell division, telomeres become shorter. Telomere length appears to be an indication of age and the general health of an individual.



Source: The Nobel Committee for Physiology

ASSOCIATED PRESS



Connecting biological aging to health disparities

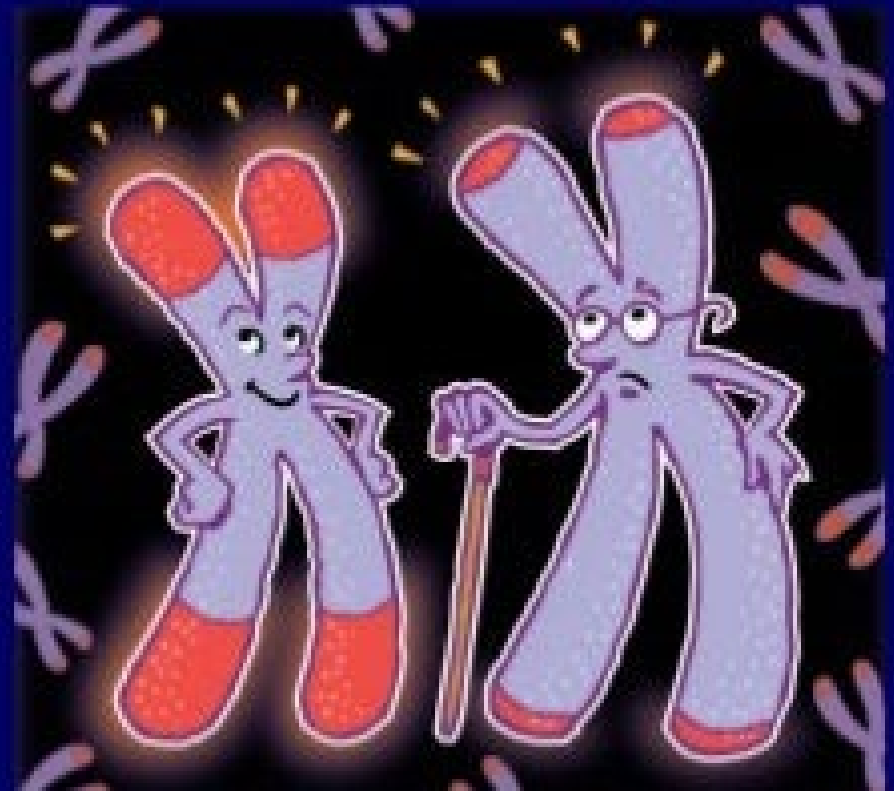
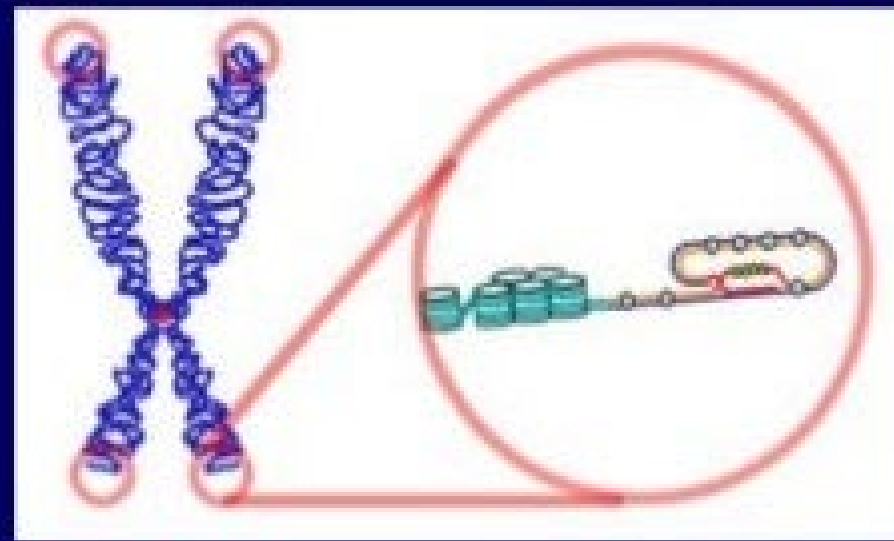
One recent NIA-funded investigation illustrates how basic studies can inform what we know about health disparities. In a study of 92 African-American men aged 30-50, **those who demonstrated a stronger implicit anti-black bias and reported higher levels of racial discrimination** had the **shortest leukocyte telomere length (LTL)**. Led by Dr. David H. Chae at the University of Maryland, the report, “[Discrimination, Racial Bias, and Telomere Length in African-American Men](#),” was published February 2014 in the *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*.

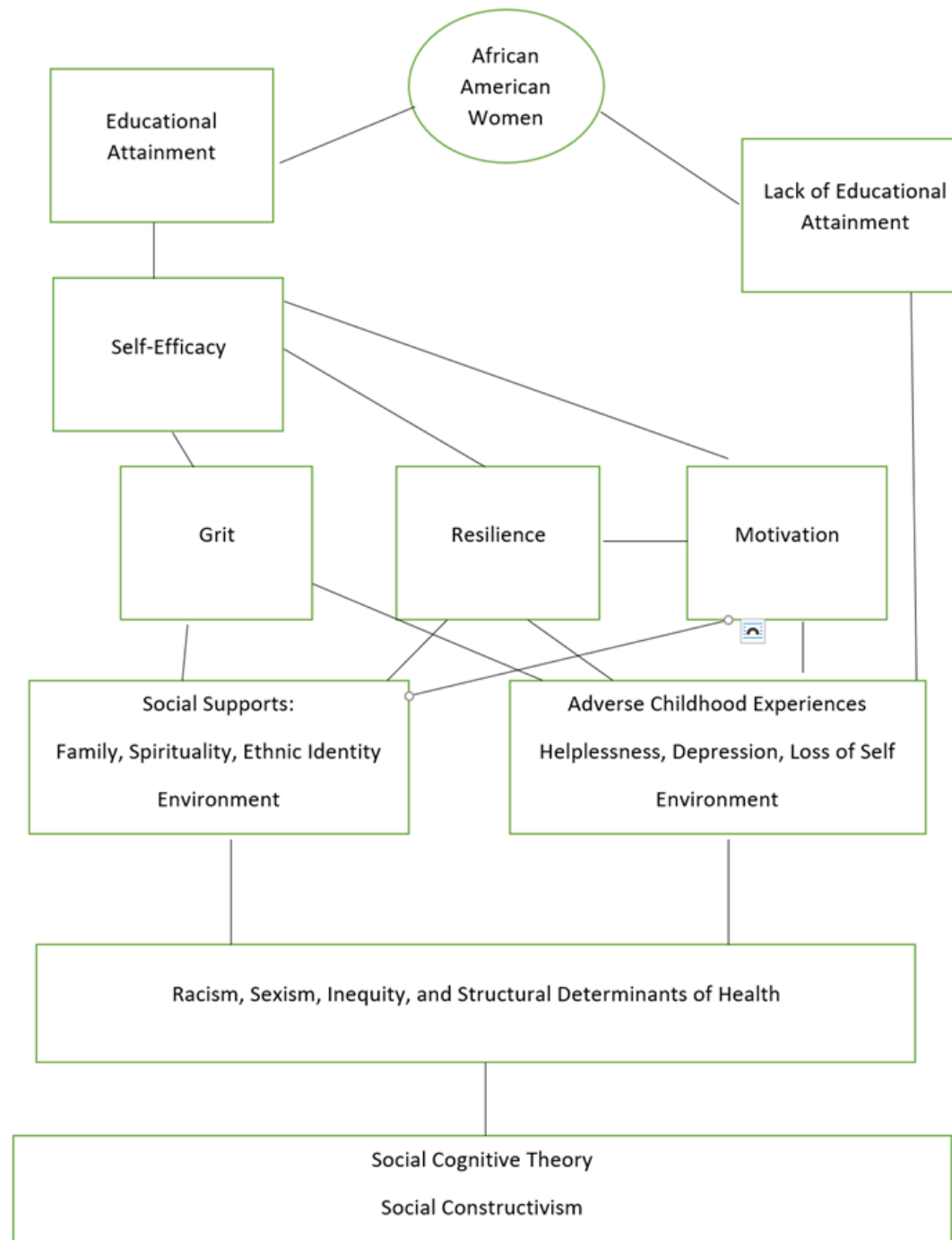
Telomeres are a stretch of DNA at each end of a chromosome that protects the protein-encoding part of the DNA. They become shorter each time a cell divides. When a telomere becomes too short, it can no longer protect the cell’s DNA, leaving the cell at risk for serious damage. Telomere length is an indicator of biological aging; shorter LTL is associated with earlier mortality. It also has been tied to many age-related health issues, such as heart disease, diabetes, dementia, Alzheimer’s disease, and arthritis.

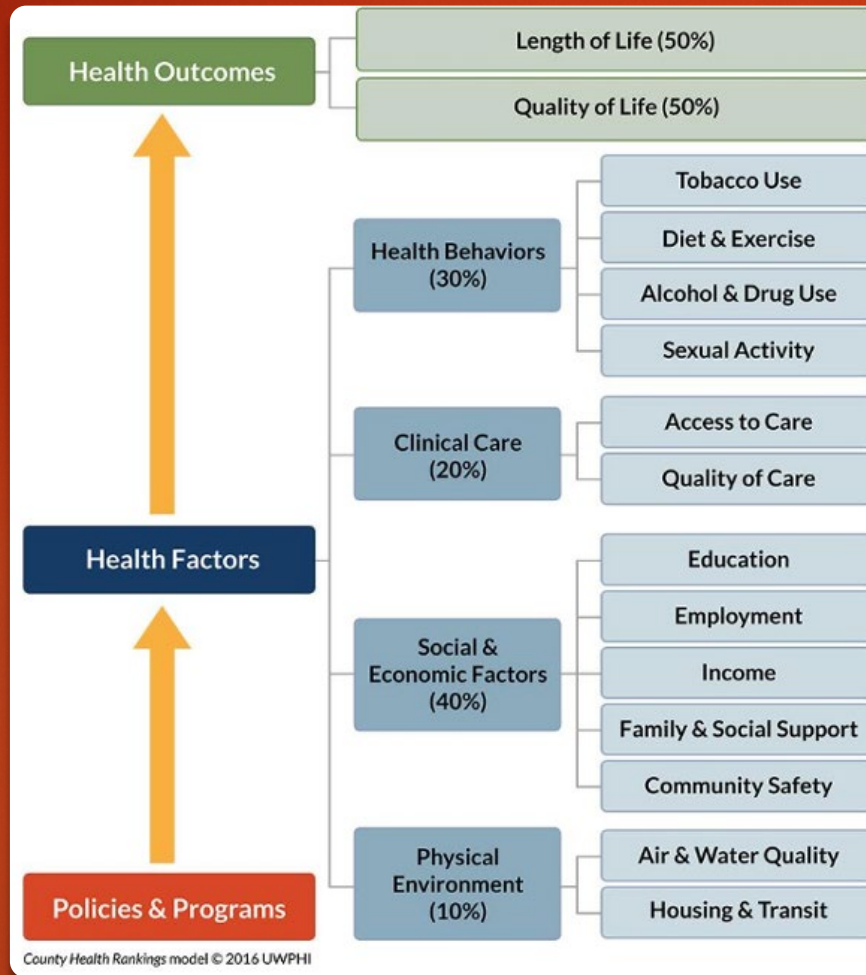
“Shorter telomeres also have been associated with experiences of heightened psychosocial stress and exposure to adverse social conditions,” said Dr. Lis Nielsen, chief of the Individual Behavioral Processes Branch in NIA’s [Division of Behavioral and Social Research](#), and program officer for this research. “Dr. Chae’s co-author, Dr. Elissa Epel, has proposed LTL as a ‘psychobiomarker’ of aging, a link between psychological stress and health.”

The association between LTL and anti-black bias and racial discrimination identified in this study was found after controlling for chronological age and socioeconomic and health-related characteristics, including 22 common diseases, smoking status, and waist-hip ratio.

- Telomeres are sequences of DNA at end of chromosome. Telomere length is viewed as an overall marker of biological aging
- Study found that Black women had shorter telomeres than White women
- At same chronological age, black women had accelerated biological aging of about 7.5 years







Social Drivers of Health are impacted by ACEs and Structural Racism

Structural Discrimination
(racism, sexism, ableism,
classism)

Law (political
process,
statutes, cases,
budgetary
decisions,
regulation,
enforcement)

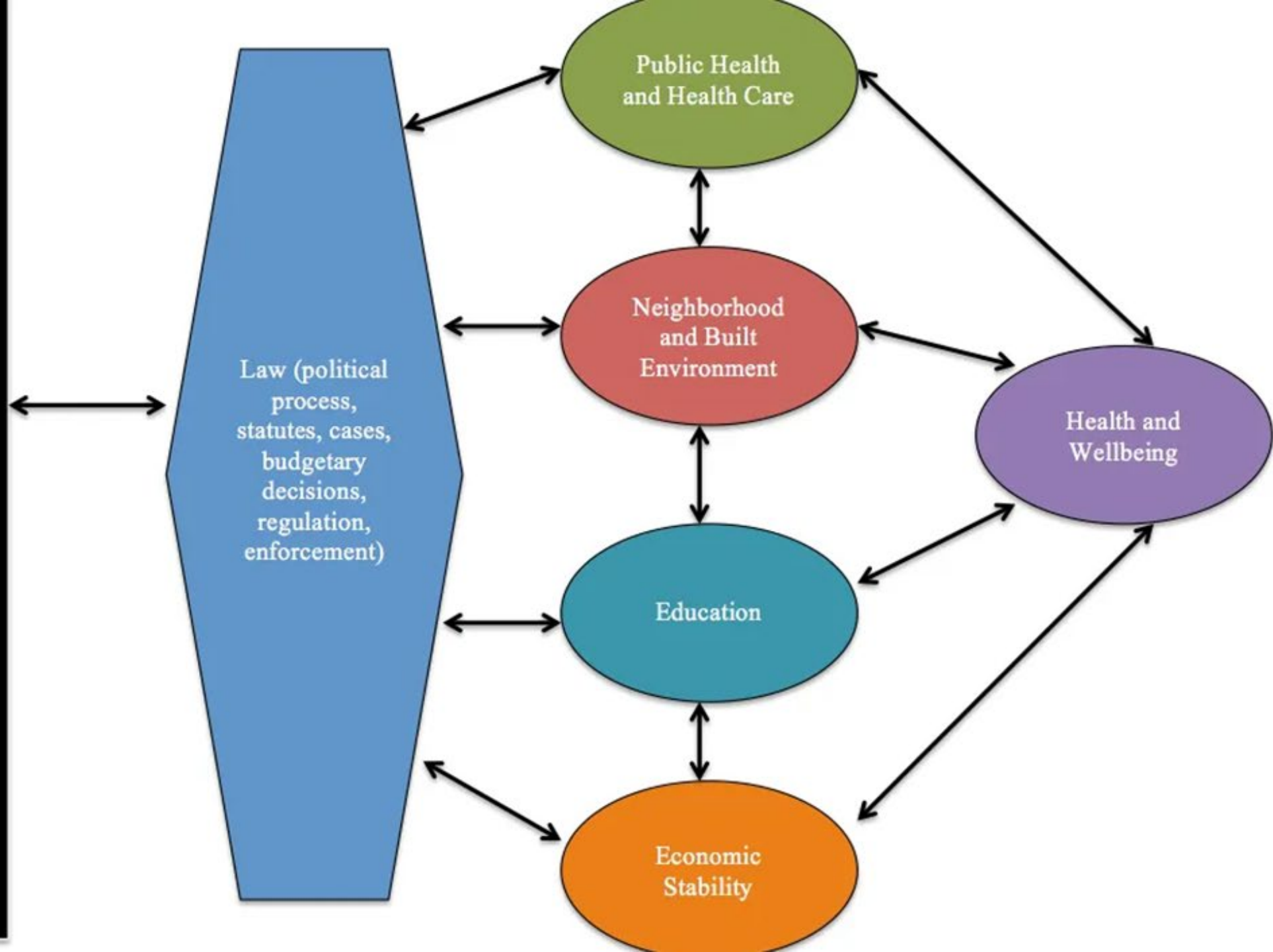
Public Health
and Health Care

Neighborhood
and Built
Environment

Education

Economic
Stability

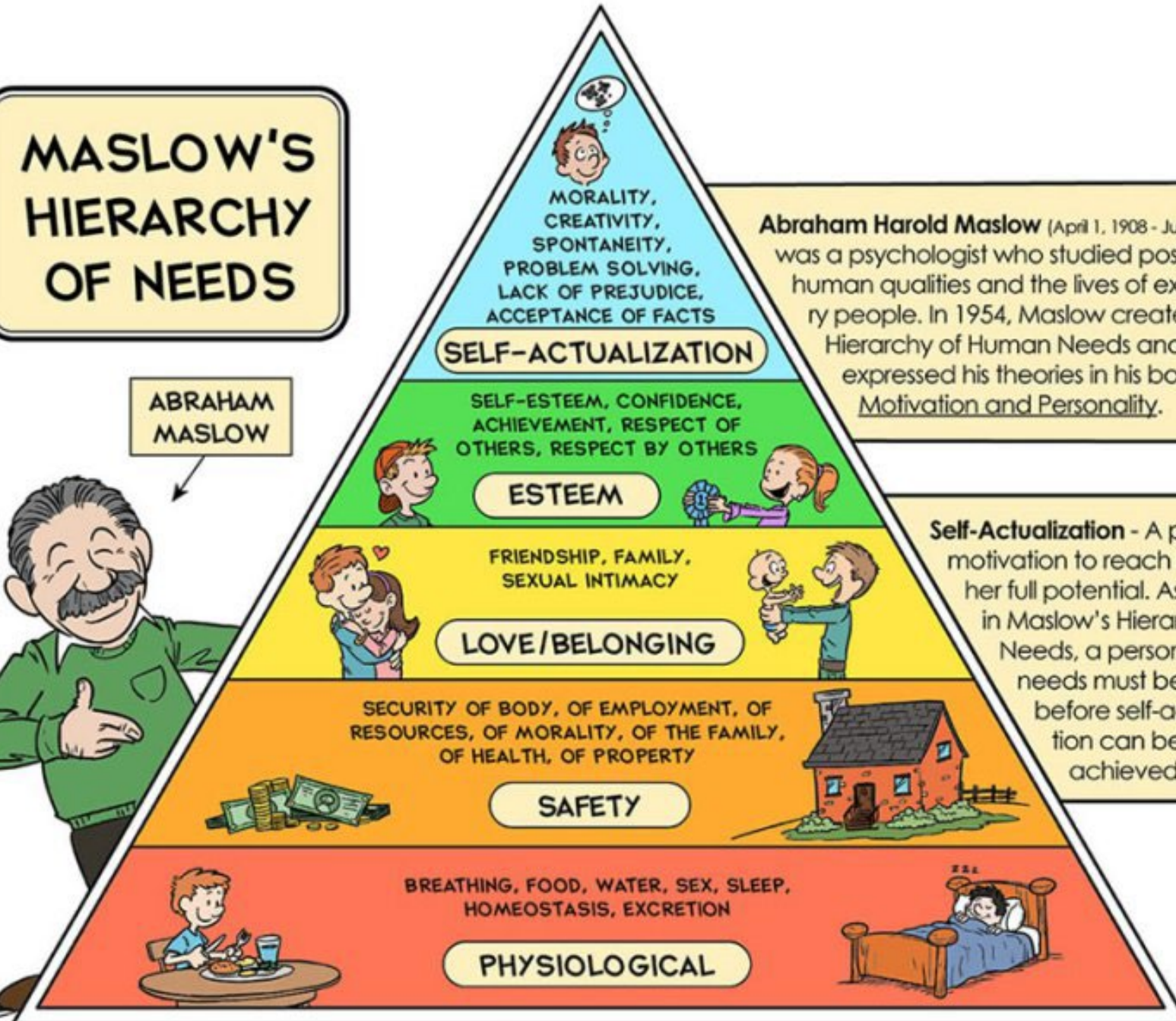
Health and
Wellbeing





MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

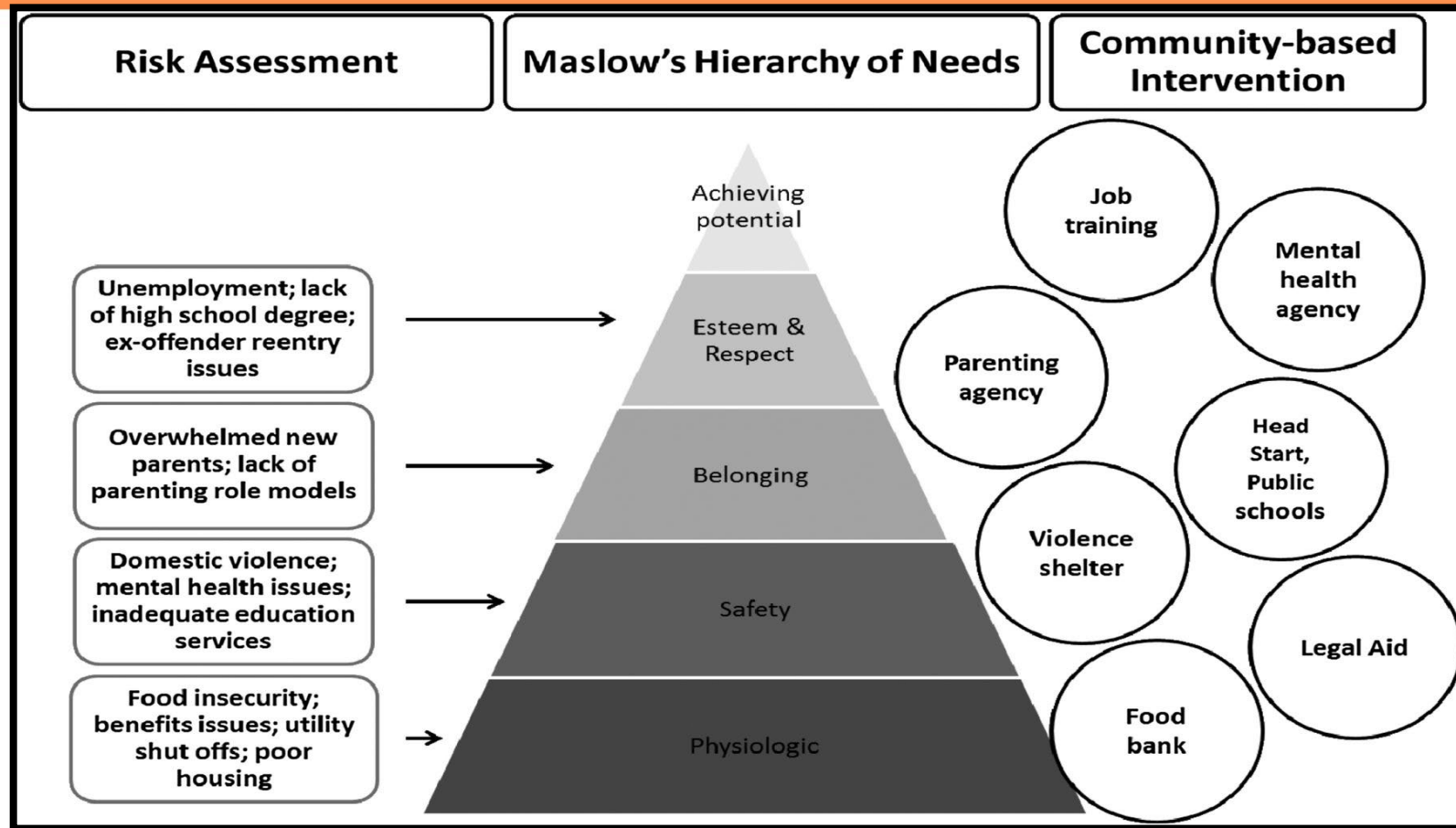
ABRAHAM MASLOW



Abraham Harold Maslow (April 1, 1908 - June 8, 1970) was a psychologist who studied positive human qualities and the lives of exemplary people. In 1954, Maslow created the Hierarchy of Human Needs and expressed his theories in his book, Motivation and Personality.

Self-Actualization - A person's motivation to reach his or her full potential. As shown in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, a person's basic needs must be met before self-actualization can be achieved.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



| Economic Stability | Neighborhood and Physical Environment | Education | Food | Community and Social Context | Health Care System |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Employment | Housing | Literacy | Hunger | Social integration | Health coverage |
| Income | Transportation | Language | Access to healthy options | Support systems | Provider availability |
| Expenses | Safety | Early childhood education | | Community engagement | Provider linguistic and cultural competency |
| Debt | Parks | Vocational training | | Discrimination | Quality of care |
| Medical bills | Playgrounds | Higher education | | Stress | |
| Support | Walkability | | | | |
| | Zip code / geography | | | | |

Health Outcomes

Mortality, Morbidity, Life Expectancy, Health Care Expenditures, Health Status, Functional Limitations

APPLYING THIS TO OUR WORK

Goals: To identify the need for resources in our client.

Reviewing the ways that Social Determinants of Life impact the ability of clients to access resources...

3. **Maslov's Hierarchy:** How does Maslov's Hierarchy affect client's ability to move through the Social Determinants of Health?

APPLYING THIS TO OUR WORK

Goals: To identify the need for resources in our client.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does the history of racism affect client's hesitancy to follow through with suggestions for resources?
-

APPLYING THIS TO OUR WORK

Goals: To identify the need for resources in our client.

Discussion Questions:

1. When suggesting resources, are you aware that clients are more likely to follow through when the resource referral looks like them and speaks their language?
-

APPLYING THIS TO OUR WORK AS A CHW

Goals: To identify the need for resources in our client.

Discussion Questions:

3. How does your lived experience play into your expectations for your clients? Think particularly about what schools you expect your clients to choose, what “family” looks like to you and how you expect your clients to show up.

CONCLUSION



- Thank you so much for your time and attention.
- Do you have any questions?

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Thank you for
your time
and
attention!