The Connection Between Quality of Life and Mental Health in the Black Community

Cynthia Turner-Graham, MD, DLFAPA
ForSoundMind Enterprises, Inc.

January 18, 2024

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Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

MHTTC
Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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The purpose of the MHTTC Network is technology transfer - disseminating and implementing evidence-based practices for mental disorders into the field.

Funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the MHTTC Network includes 10 Regional Centers and a Network Coordinating Office.

Our collaborative network supports resource development and dissemination, training and technical assistance, and workforce development for the mental health field. We work with systems, organizations, and treatment practitioners involved in the delivery of mental health services to strengthen their capacity to deliver effective evidence-based practices to individuals.
Our services cover the full continuum spanning mental illness prevention, treatment, and recovery support.

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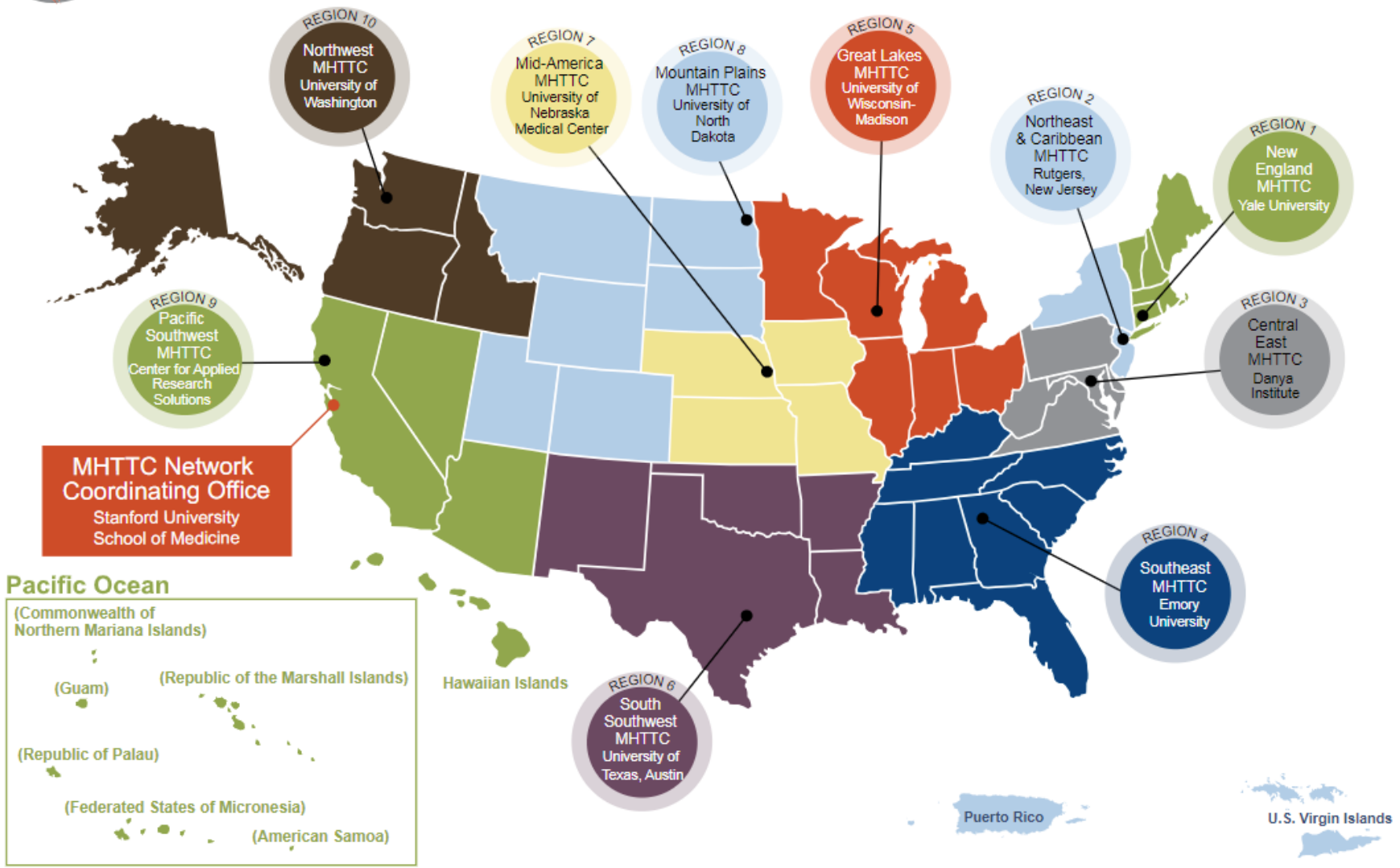
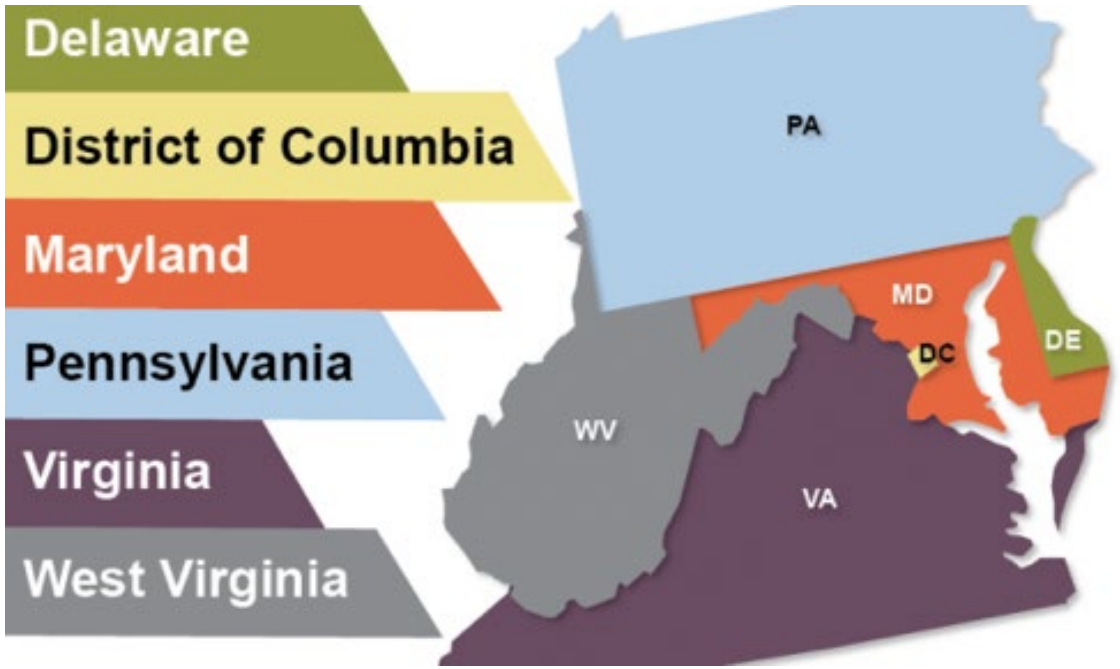
MHTTC Network



Central East Region 3



Central East (HHS Region 3)

MHTTC Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

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The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

- Strengths-based and hopeful
- Inviting to individuals participating in their own journeys
- Person-first and free of labels
- Inclusive and accepting of diverse cultures, genders, perspectives, and experiences
- Non-judgmental and avoiding assumptions
- Respectful, clear and understandable
- Healing-centered and trauma-responsive
- Consistent with our actions, policies, and products

Adapted from: https://mhcc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Recovery-Oriented-Language-Guide_2019ed_v1_20190809-Web.pdf

Acknowledgment

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At the time of this publication, Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D., served as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

The opinions expressed herein are the views of the authors and do not reflect the official position of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), SAMHSA. No official support or endorsement of DHHS, SAMHSA, for the opinions described in this document is intended or should be inferred.

This work is supported by grant SM081785 from the Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Presented 2024

The Connection Between Quality of Life and Mental Health in the Black Community

Presenter: Cynthia Turner-Graham, MD
Immediate Past President, Black Psychiatrists of America

BPA Health Equity Webinar Series

Moderator: Annelle Primm, MD, MPH
Black Psychiatrists of America, Council of Elders

January 18, 2024

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Today's Webinar

- January is National Quality of Life Month, a month in which many people decide to make changes in their lives to improve health and well-being
- Today's presentation will describe the underpinnings of quality of life and how they relate to mental health in the context of the lived experience of Black people
- We thank the SAMHSA CE-MHTTC for its partnership on the BPA Health Equity Webinar series
- Content has both Central East region and national relevance
- Our featured speaker is Cynthia Turner-Graham, MD

The Connection Between Quality of Life and Mental Health in the Black Community

OBJECTIVES

- **Understand historical underpinnings of mental illness among Black people in the United States**
- **Correlate "weathering" experiences with social and political determinants of health**
- **Review the science that connects quality of life to mental health status**
- **Provide tools and resources for assessment that can aid in the evaluation and treatment planning for Black Americans with mental health concerns**

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PART 1

Historical underpinnings of mental illness among Black people in the United States

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!!!Zero references to Black, African American, Negro or racism in this!!! treatise

JOHNS HOPKINS
BLOOMBERG SCHOOL
of PUBLIC HEALTH

Johns Hopkins Department of Mental Health, Origins of Mental Health
Dr. Wallace Mandell wrote this article in 1995 during his tenure as department chair (1993 - 1997)

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

Origins of Mental Health

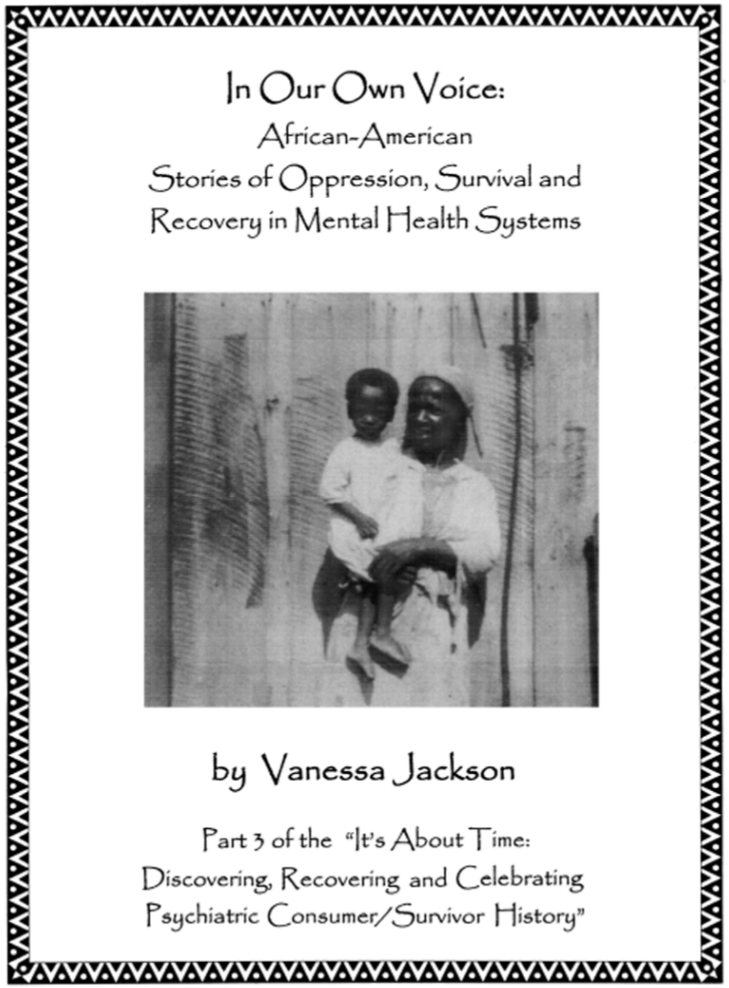
"The term mental hygiene has a long history in the United States, having first been used by William Sweetzer in 1843. After the Civil War, which increased concern about the effects of unsanitary conditions, Dr. J. B. Gray, an eminent psychiatrist, envisioned a community-based mental hygiene that would operate through education, social culture, religion and involvement in national life."

"In the 1908 prospectus of the Connecticut Society for Mental Hygiene, the first in the nation, an article was included that committed it to "war against the prevailing ignorance regarding conditions and modes of living which tend to produce mental disorders." For this purpose the society set about to secure state legislation and appropriations, **develop coordinated local programs to impregnate the schools and courts with the preventive view, and disseminate sound attitudes toward mental and emotional problems."**

Black Mental Health: A Story of Resistance

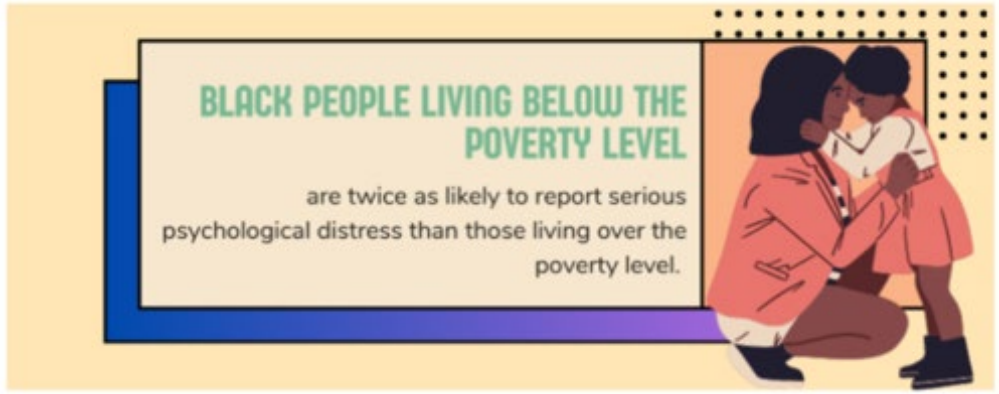
"History tells a bleak story of mental healthcare for Black Americans, dating back to the African diaspora. Much of the systemic racism that enslaved Black Americans faced can explain mental health disparities seen in this population today. . .most damaging were the **eugenics** movement and the **psychosurgical** movement. Eugenicists largely promoted the idea of White supremacy by using sterilization to limit births of specific populations. Black people experiencing mental illness and Black women were among the many identities that medical professionals sought to eliminate."
~Jasmine Padgett
RTI Health Advance, Black Mental Health: A Story Of Resistance

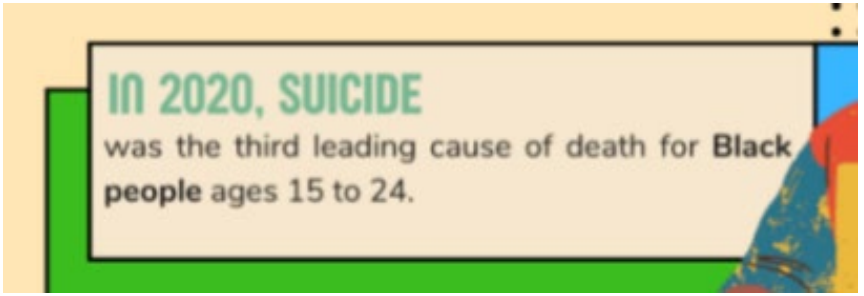
"In 1848 John Galt, a physician and medical director of the Eastern Lunatic Asylum in Williamsburg, Virginia, offered that "blacks are immune to mental illness." Galt hypothesized that enslaved Africans could not develop mental illness because as enslaved people, they did not own property, engage in commerce, or participate in civic affairs such as voting or holding office. . . Just as Black Americans overcame the oppressive mental health systems of the 18th century, this community will continue to make strides toward equitable mental healthcare." ~Dr. Euchenna Umeh
Blackpast Store, Mental Illness in Black Community, 1700-2019: A Short History



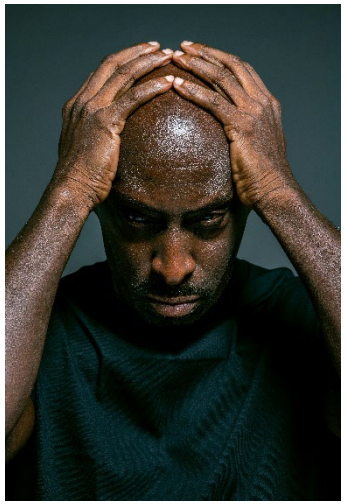
Power 2 U document titled "In our Own Voice: African-American Stories of Oppression, Survival and Recovery in Mental Health Systems"

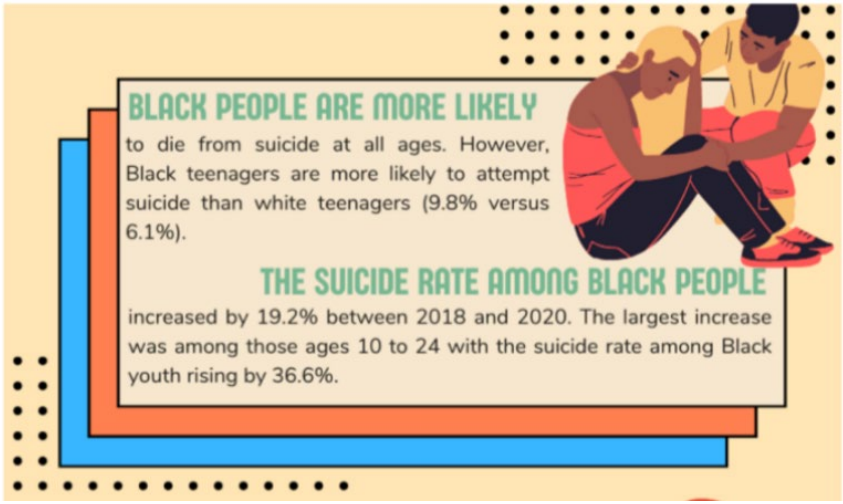
Ark Republic, Aug 8, 2023





Ark Republic, Aug 8, 2023, Sources: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health; Psychology Today; NAMI; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)





WHO QUALITY OF LIFE (QoL)

(World Health Organization, WHOQOL: Measuring Quality of Life)

As Defined by the World Health Organization

"an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns."

Standard indicators include:

1. Wealth
2. Employment
3. Environment
4. Physical health
5. Mental health
6. Education
7. Recreation
8. Leisure time
9. Social belonging
10. Religious beliefs
11. Safety
12. Security
13. Freedom

Vecteezy.com

Healthline, Black Health Matters: Safe Neighborhoods Save Lives

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PART 2

Correlate “weathering” experiences with social and political determinants of health

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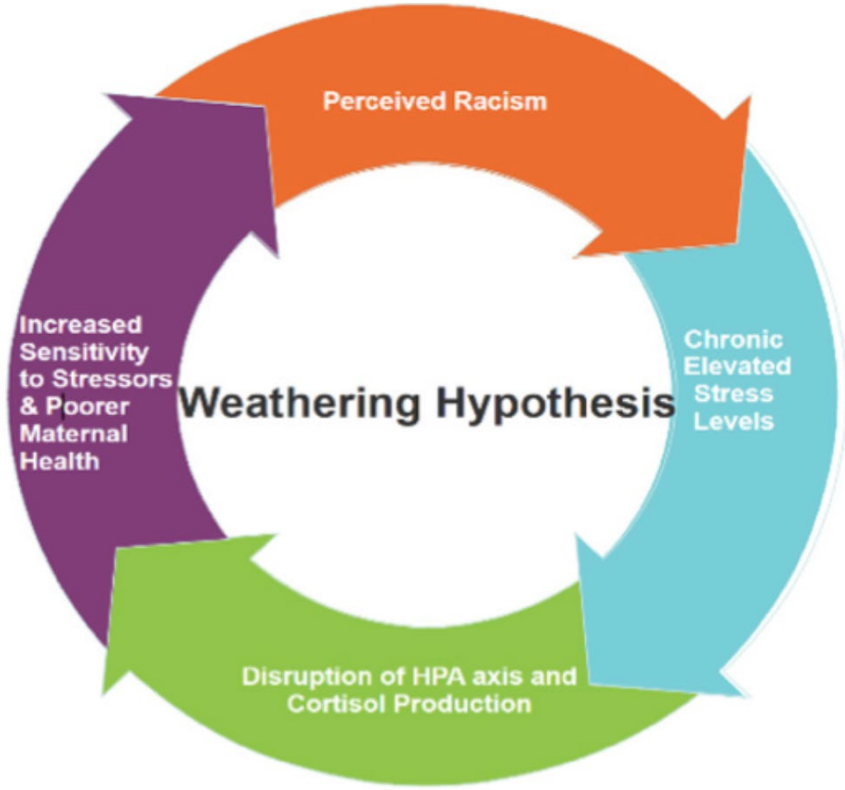
ALLOSTASIS

Explains how chronic stress can cause wear and tear on the body, increasing your risk of hypertension, depression, diabetes, and more.

WEATHERING

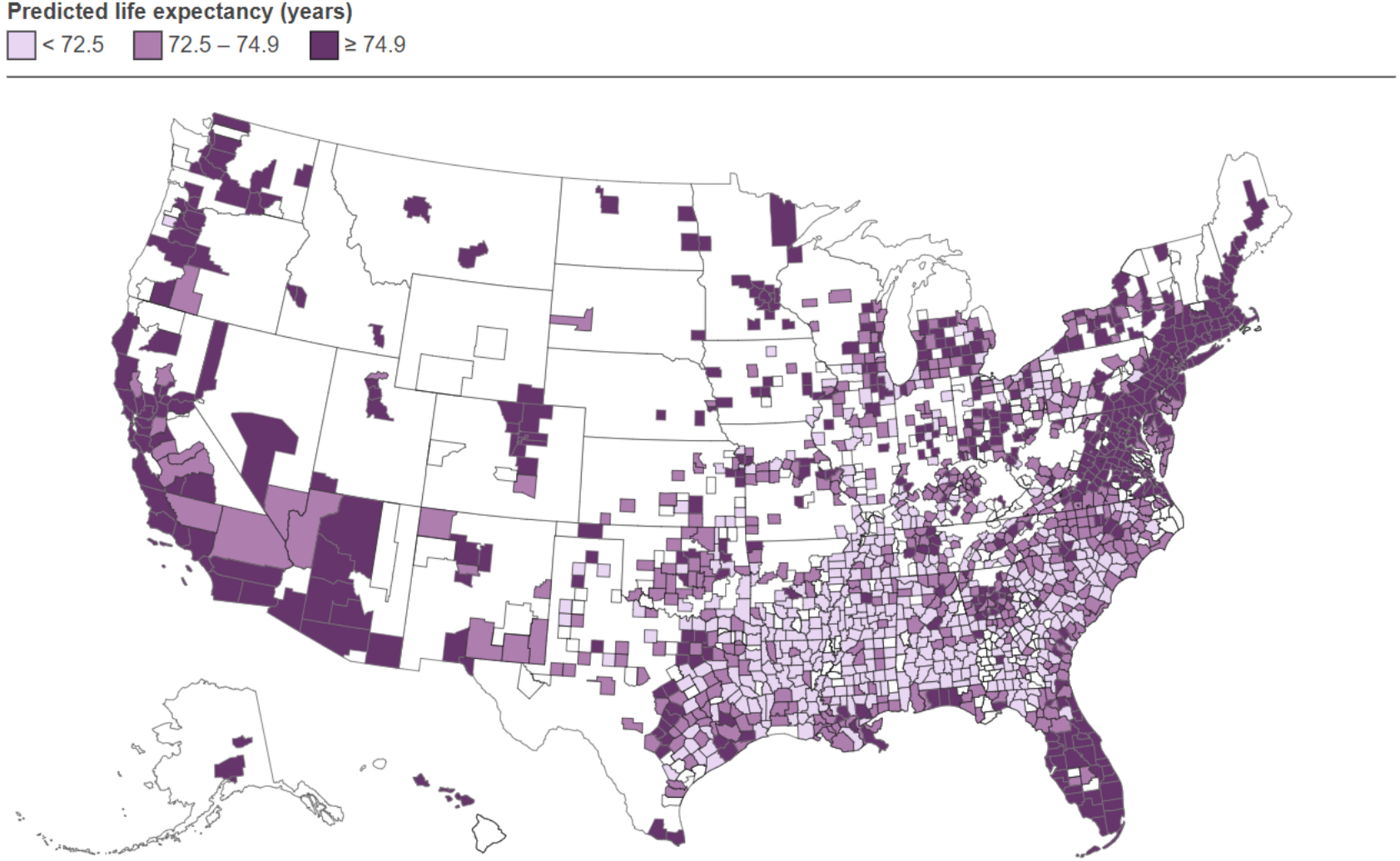
"The health of African American women may begin to deteriorate in early adulthood as a physical consequence of cumulative socioeconomic disadvantage."

Dr. Arline Geronimus, 1992



McGill Global Health Journal, September, 2020 McGill Journal of Global Health, Vol IX: Black Mothers in America: Why Racial Discrimination in the American Healthcare System is Disproportionately Killing Black Women

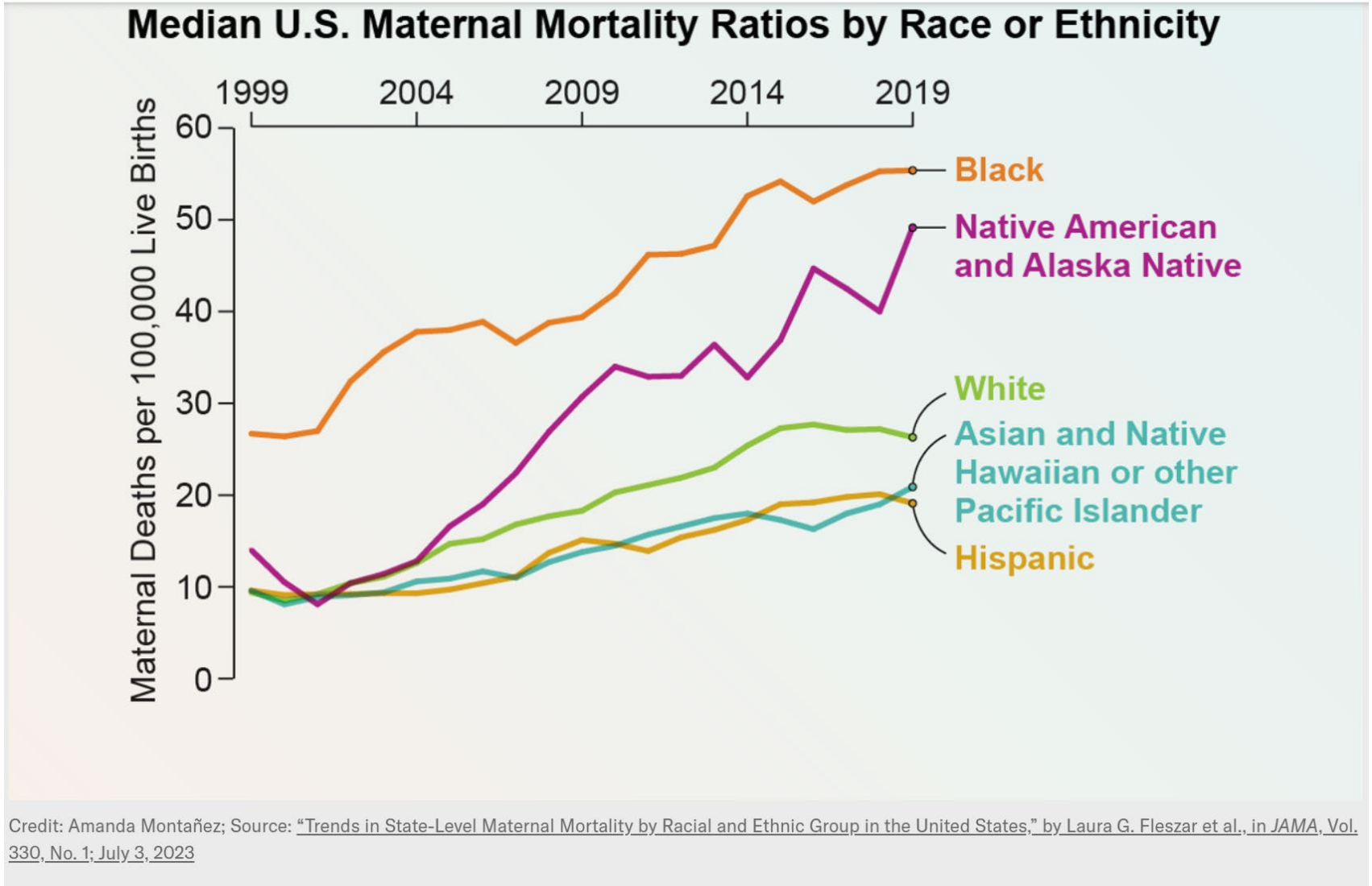
Black Progress Index by County



[Brookings, The Black Progress Index: Examining the social factors that influence Black well-being]

“No Woman Should Die while Giving Life”

United Nations Secretary-General



Credit: Amanda Montañez; Source: “Trends in State-Level Maternal Mortality by Racial and Ethnic Group in the United States,” by Laura G. Fleszar et al., in *JAMA*, Vol. 330, No. 1; July 3, 2023

Black women have the highest maternal mortality rate in the United States — 69.9 per 100,000 live births for 2021, almost three times the rate for white women”

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. May 2023

JAMA. 2023;330(1):52-61. doi:10.1001/jama.2023.9043

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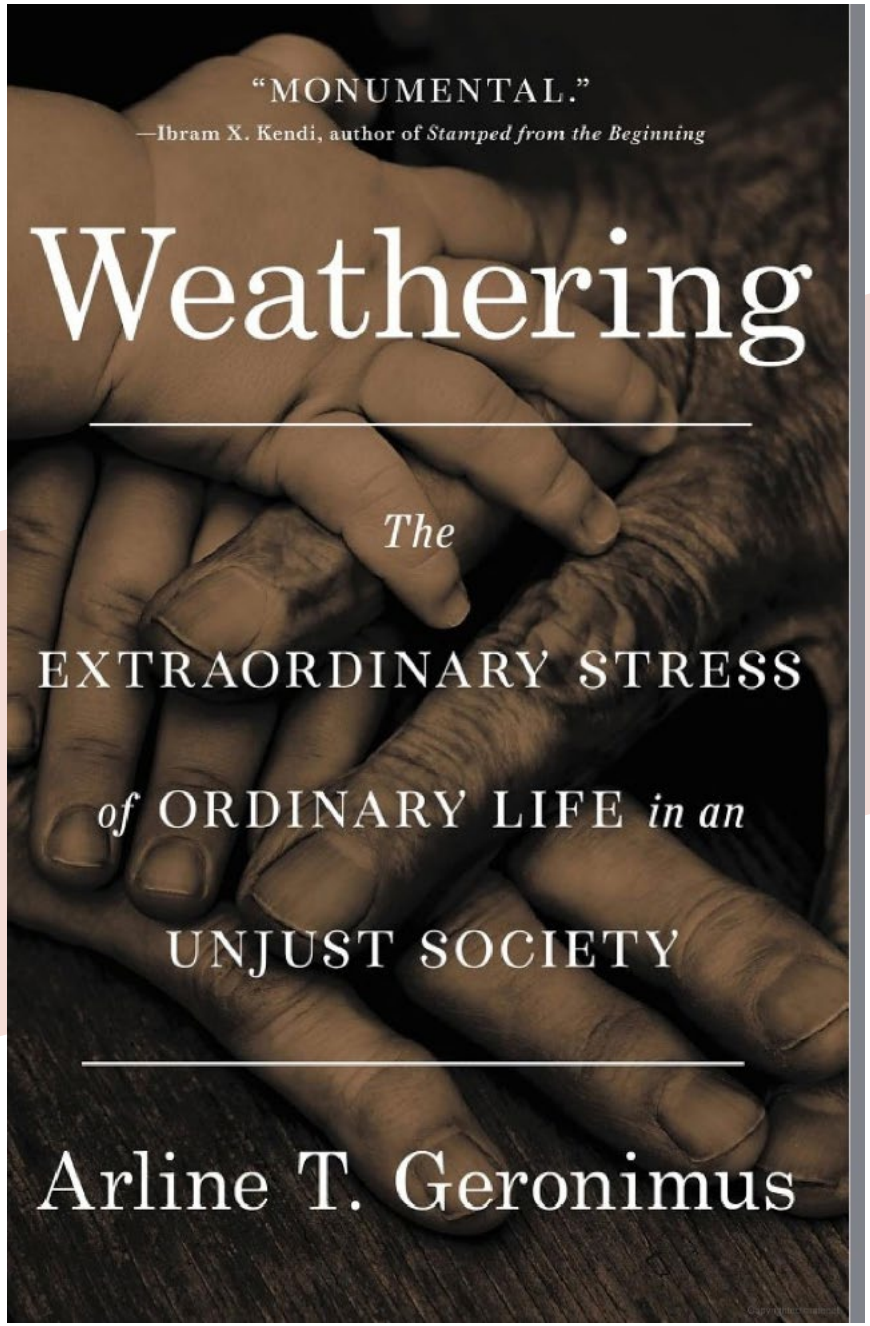
The CONNECTION Between Quality of Life and Mental Health . . .



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PART 3

Review the science that connects quality of life to mental health status

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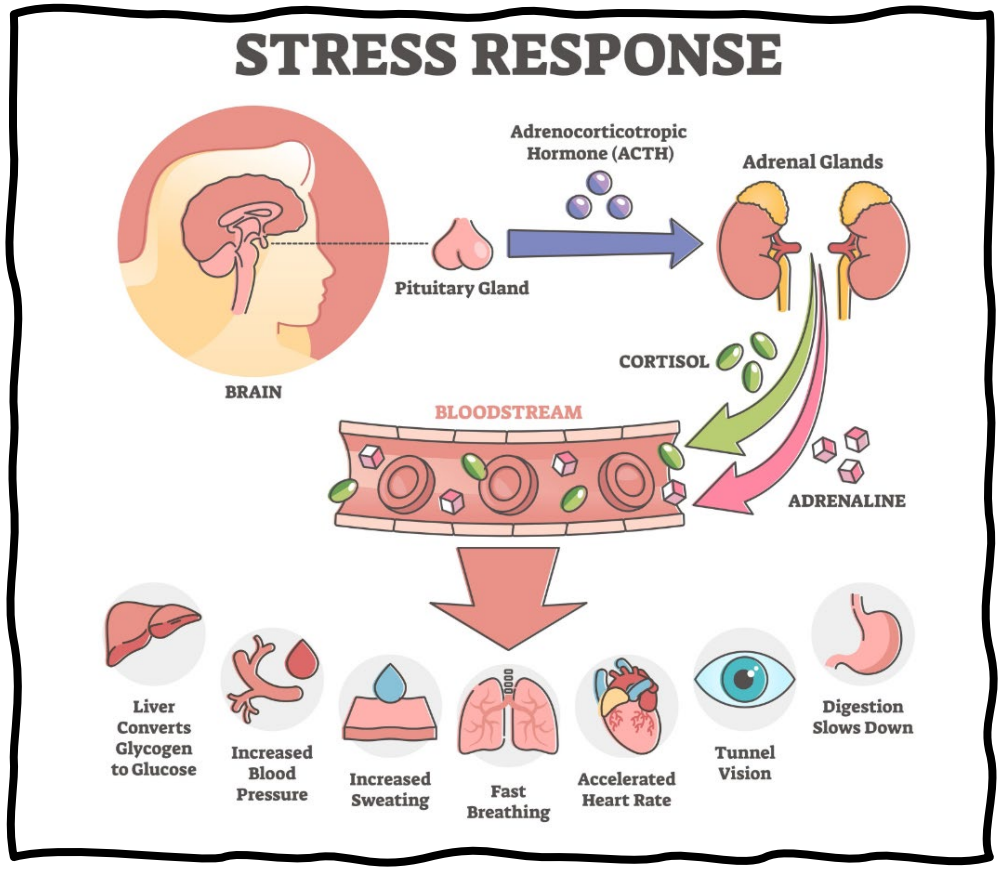
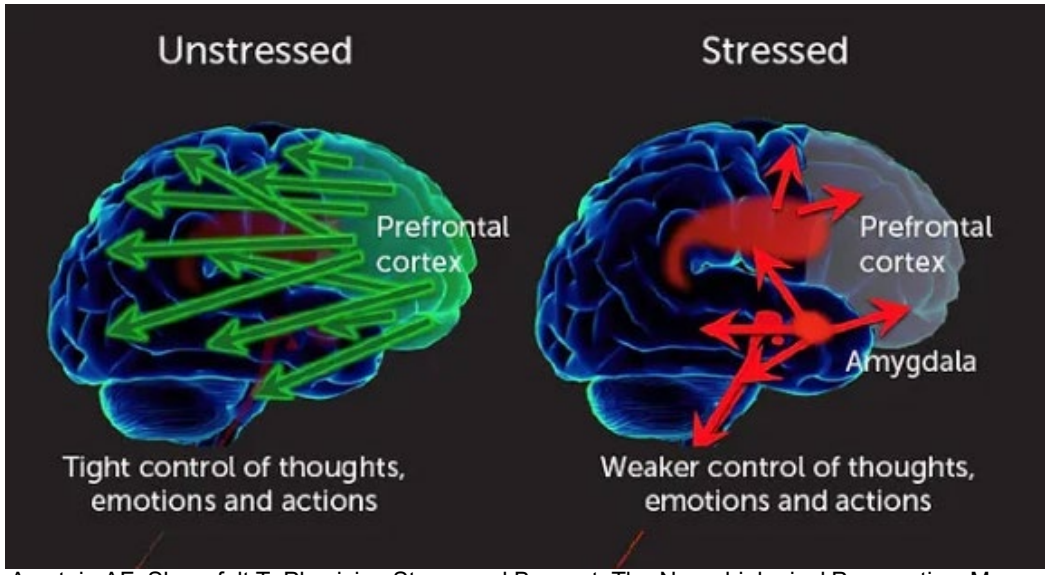
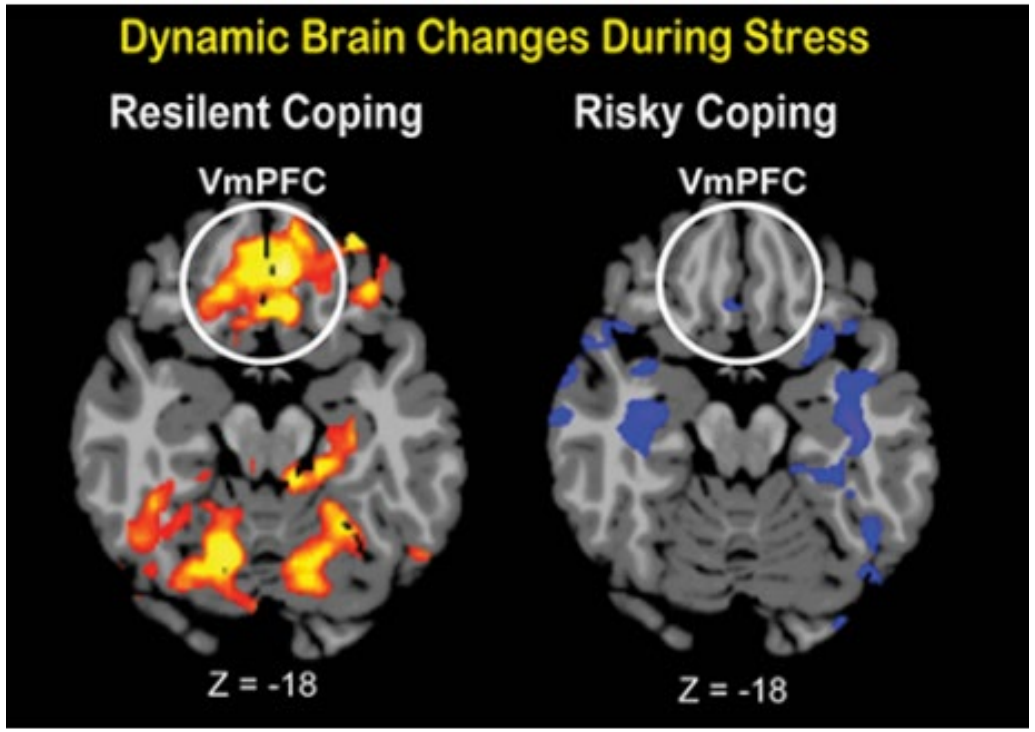


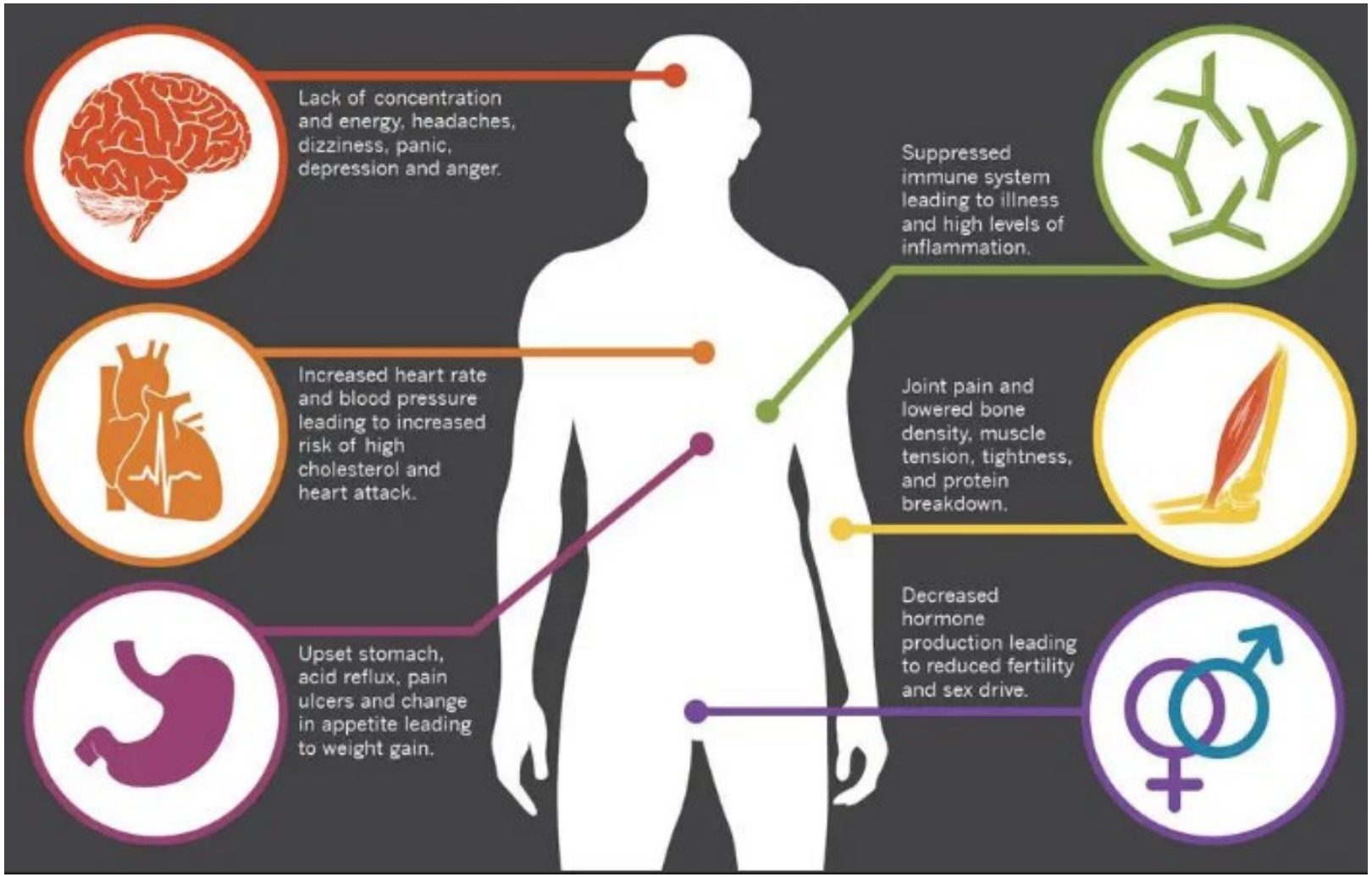


Amstein AF, Shanafelt T. Physician Stress and Burnout, The Neurobiological Perspective. Mayo Clinic Proceedings, Vol 96, Issue 3, p. 763-769, March, 2021



Dynamicneuralactivityduringstresssignals resilientcoping, RajitaSinhaa,b,c,d,1,CherylM.Lacadiee,R.ToddConstablee,andDongjuSeo

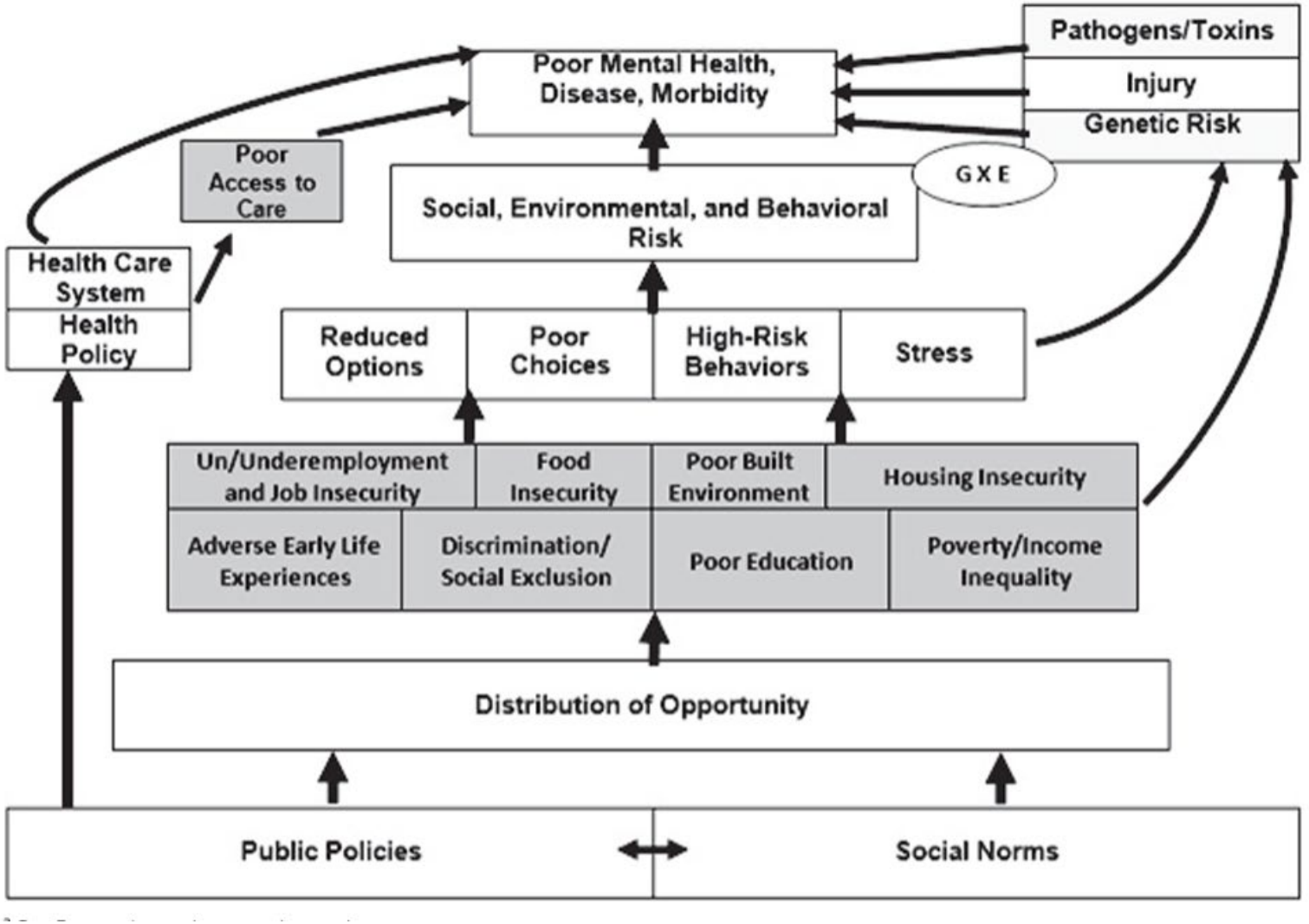
ALLOSTATIC LOAD AND WEATHERING



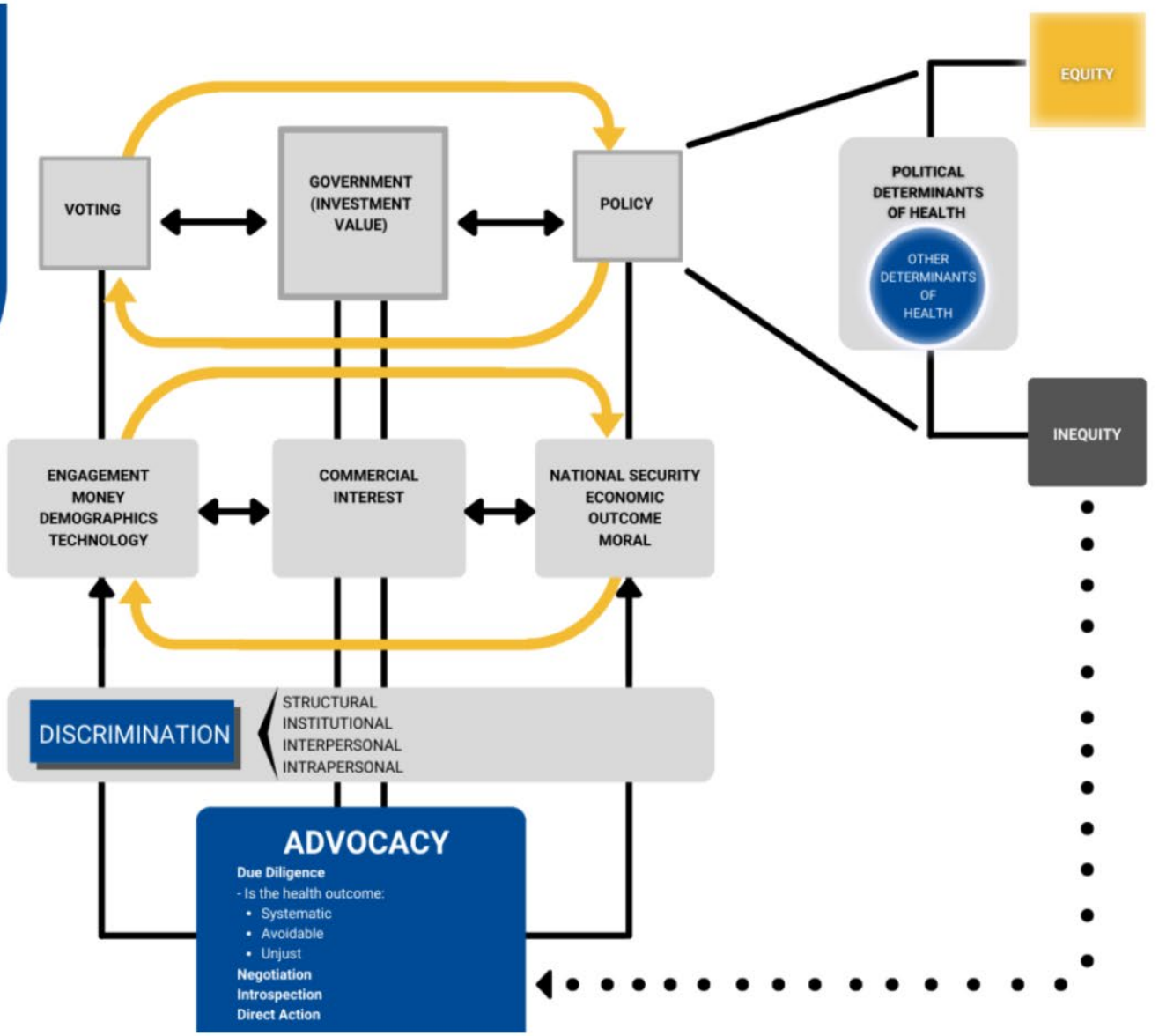
Mayo Clinic, 2018

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF MENTAL HEALTH

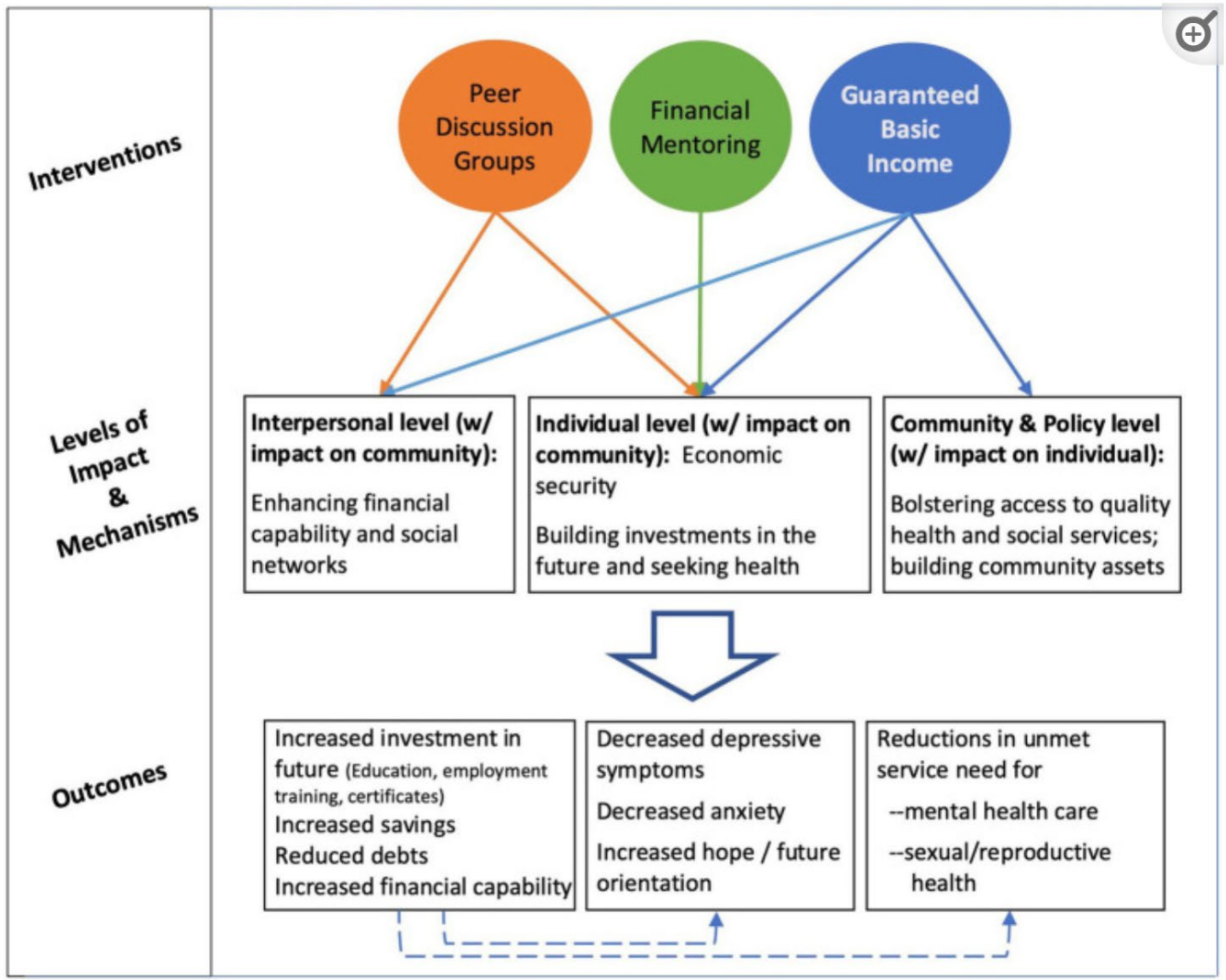
Compton M, Shim R. The Social Determinants of Mental Health. Focus Psychiatry Vol.13, No.4, Fall 2015, 419-425. [doi] 10.1176/appi.focus.20150017



POLITICAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH MODEL



Daniel E. Dawes (2020), The Political Determinants of Health, Johns Hopkins University Press



Lippman SA, Libby MK, Nakphong MK, Arons A, Balanoff M, Mocello AR, Arnold EA, Shade SB, Qurashi F, Downing A, Moore A, Dow WH, Lightfoot MA. A guaranteed income intervention to improve the health and financial well-being of low-income black emerging adults: study protocol for the Black Economic Equity Movement randomized controlled crossover trial. Front Public Health. 2023 Nov 3;11:1271194. doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2023.1271194. PMID: 38026401; PMCID: PMC10658785.

The San Diego Voice and Viewpoint, California Cities are Pilot Testing Guaranteed Basic Income Programs
California Cities are Pilot Testing Guaranteed Basic Income Programs, by **Manny Otiko, *California Black Media***

A guaranteed income intervention to improve the health and financial well-being of low-income black emerging adults: study protocol for the Black Economic Equity Movement randomized controlled crossover trial, Nov 2023

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PART 4

Provide tools and resources for assessment that can aid in the evaluation and treatment planning for Black Americans with mental health concerns

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Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

CLINICAL ASSESSMENT TOOLS

- **Social Needs Screening Toolkit** is a well researched, clinically-validated guidelines from sector authorities like the Institute of Medicine, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
- **The WHOQOL-BREF** assesses quality of life within the context of an individual's culture, value systems, personal goals, standards and concerns.
- **Perceived Discrimination Scale**
- **Measuring Discrimination Resource**

CLINICAL INTERVENTION TOOLS

THE LANCET
Psychiatry

Black mental health in the USA: Nothing for us without us

Published December 13, 2023

Fullilove MT, Dix E, Hankerson SH, Lassiter J, Jordan A. Systems that promote mental health in the teeth of oppression. Lancet Psychiatry. 2024 Jan;11(1):65-74. doi: 10.1016/S2215-0366(23)00344-9. PMID: 38101874.
The Lancet Psychiatry, Black mental health in the USA: Nothing for us without us

Series

The impact of racism on Black American mental health

Courtney D Cogburn, Samuel K Roberts, Yusuf Ransome, Nii Addy, Helena Hansen, Ayana Jordan
The Lancet Psychiatry, Vol. 11, No. 1
Published: January, 2024
Full-Text HTML | PDF

Systems that promote mental health in the teeth of oppression

Mindy Thompson Fullilove, Ebony Dix, Sidney H Hankerson, Jonathan Lassiter, Ayana Jordan
The Lancet Psychiatry, Vol. 11, No. 1
Published: January, 2024
Full-Text HTML | PDF

Community-based participatory research with Black people and Black scientists: the power and the promise

Alfiee Breland-Noble, Frederick J Streets, Ayana Jordan
The Lancet Psychiatry, Vol. 11, No. 1
Published: January, 2024
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Essay

Reimagining holistic care for Black people: Black Americans with lived experience reflect

Kimberly Guy, Richard Youins, Chyrell D Bellamy
The Lancet Psychiatry, Vol. 11, No. 1
Published: January, 2024
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MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION **IS** MENTAL ILLNESS PREVENTION

PRIMARY PREVENTION

Primary prevention focuses on the prevention of mental health disorders in the community before they occur. This level of prevention aims to decrease risk factors and increase protective factors in order to prevent a mental health disorder from occurring in the first place.

SECONDARY PREVENTION

Secondary prevention focuses on the early detection and prompt intervention of mental health disorders. At this level of prevention, a patient already has a mental health disorder, and secondary prevention is aimed at detecting the disorder early in order to intervene promptly.

TERTIARY PREVENTION

Tertiary prevention focuses on the period after a mental health disorder or crisis has already occurred. The focus at this point is to help promote the patient's recovery as well as to prevent further complications.

Level Up RN, Psychiatric Mental Health, part 12: Primary, Secondary, Tertiary Prevention of Mental Health Disorders

Health Day, Two-Thirds of Americans Report Daily Discrimination in Poll

MENTAL ILLNESS PREVENTION IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY

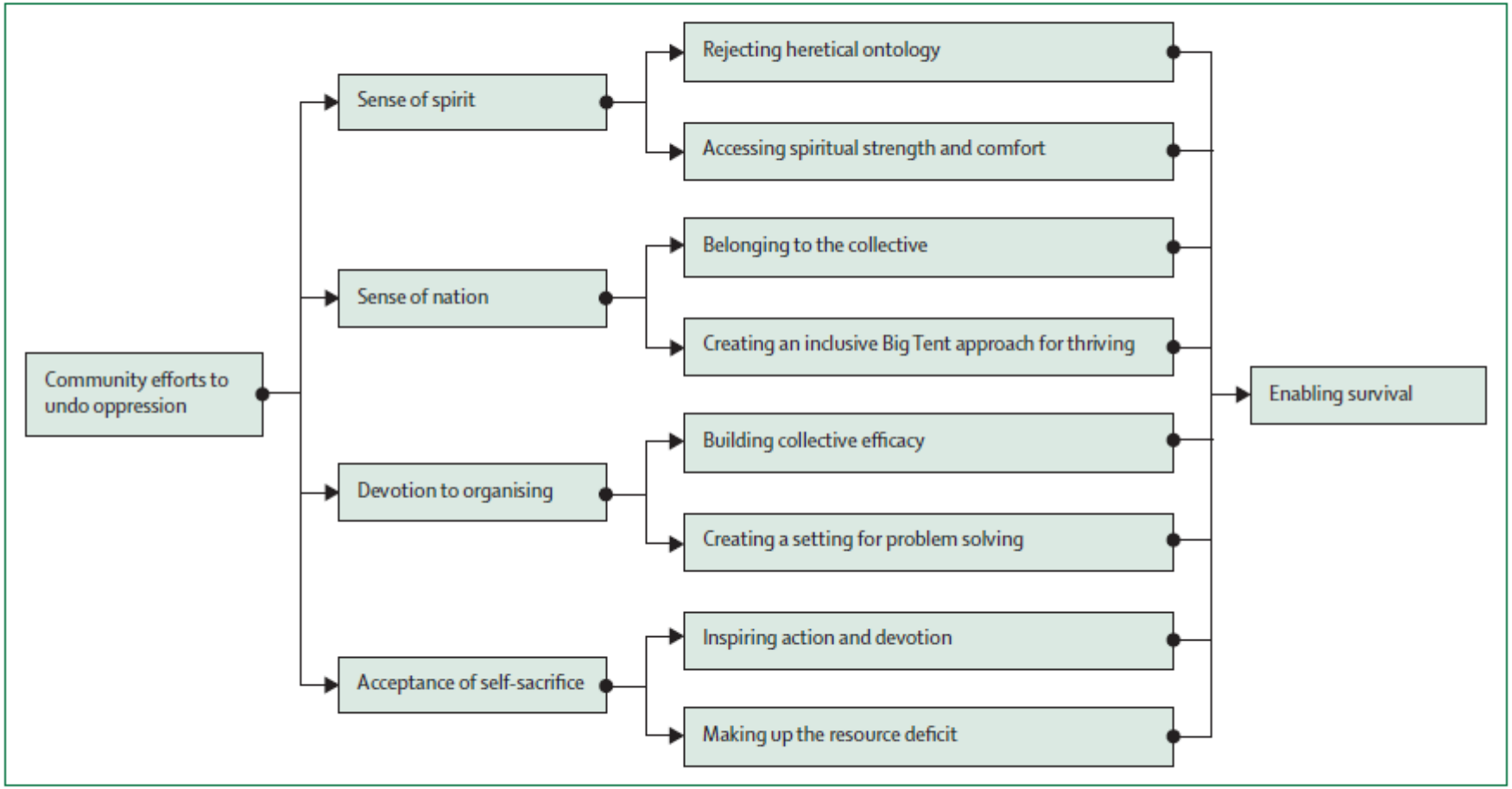

Figure: **Logic model of efforts that enable survival**

Pathway from community efforts to undo oppression to effective actions of collective resistance.

Fullilove MT, Dix E, Hankerson SH, Lassiter J, Jordan A. Systems that promote mental health in the teeth of oppression. Lancet Psychiatry. 2024 Jan;11(1):65-74. doi: 10.1016/S2215-0366(23)00344-9. PMID: 38101874.

The Lancet Psychiatry, Black mental health in the USA: Nothing for us without us

https://www.quora.com/profile/Knowledge-Goals

Panel: Factors to support a thriving mental health state for Black Amerians

Addressing systemic racism
Challenging and dismantling systemic racism in institutions and policies is crucial, including advocating for equitable education, employment opportunities, and criminal justice reforms.

Economic empowerment
Promoting economic opportunities and wealth-building initiatives for Black communities can create a stronger foundation for advancement.

Cultural recognition
Celebrating Black culture, history, and achievements, and ensuring proper representation in media, arts, and public spaces, can foster a sense of pride and empowerment.

Mental health and wellbeing support
Providing access to mental health resources that acknowledge and address the impact of racism on mental wellbeing is essential.

Community support and activities
Creating and fostering supportive networks and community initiatives that uplift and empower Black individuals can be instrumental in fostering thriving.

Education and awareness
Raising awareness about racial injustices, historical contexts, and the importance of allyship can help create a more inclusive and empathetic society.

MENTAL ILLNESS PREVENTION IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY (CONT.D)

Source: Shutterstock

Fullilove MT, ET AL.. Systems that promote mental health in the teeth of oppression. Lancet Psychiatry. 2024 Jan;11(1):65-74. doi: 10.1016/S2215-0366(23)00344-9. PMID: 38101874.
The Lancet Psychiatry, Black mental health in the USA: Nothing for us without us

IN CONCLUSION:

1. **Only within a historical context can issues of mental health and illness of Black people in America be understood**

2. **There is a well-established direct, correlation between poor quality of life and poor mental health; when mental health worsens, so does quality of life, the converse also being true**

3. **Many resources go untapped that could be used to build community, bolster emotional literacy and mental health**

Contact Information:

Cynthia Turner-Graham, MD, DLFAPA

Questions

Appreciation

Contact Us

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MHTTC Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
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a program managed by

THE DANYA INSTITUTE

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Danya Institute website

Email

240-645-1145

Let's connect: