COMMUNITY GRAND ROUNDS

SPEAKER SERIES

Moving Our Community Toward Health Equity:

Overcoming the Trauma of Racism

Tasha Turner, LLPC
Patricia Rush, MD MBA

Lakeland Health

Lakeland Health

The Context

- Population Health – Defined
- Health Equity – Defined
- CHNA: Key Findings
- Trauma and Toxic Stress: Impacts on Mental, Physical and Social Health

Lakeland Health

Introductions

Pat Rush, MD, MBA

Tasha Turner, MA, LLPC

Lakeland Health

The Foundation:

An Unexpected Relationship Between Psychological Trauma and Chronic Illness

Tasha Turner, MA, LLPC

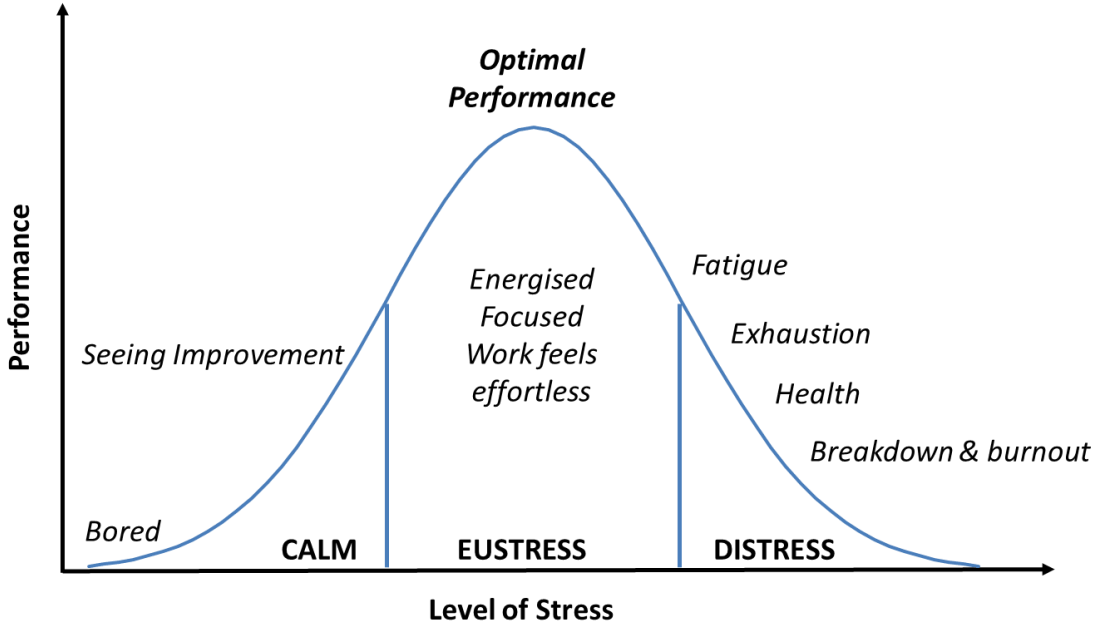
Lakeland Health

What Is Stress?

Stress has been defined as the change in one's physical or mental state in response to situations (stressors) that pose challenge or threat (Krantz et al., 1985; Zimbardo et al., 2003)

Lakeland Health

Two Main Types of Stress



EUSTRESS

and

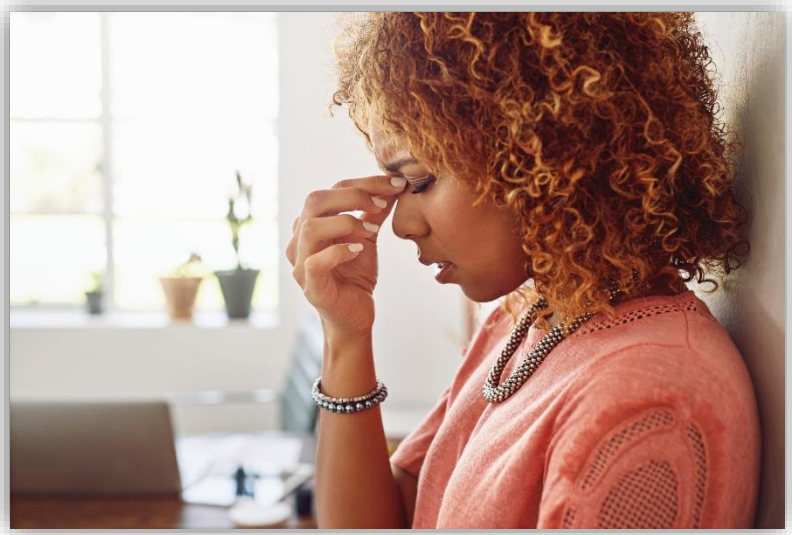
DISTRESS

Lakeland Health

Toxic Stress

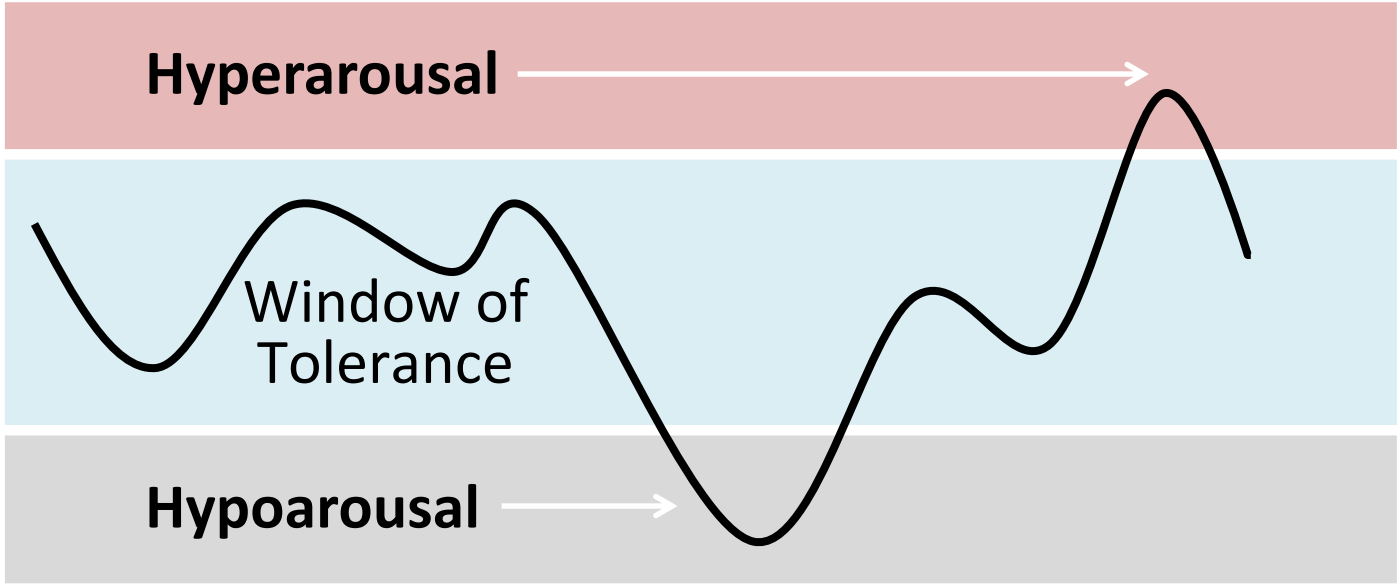
Toxic stress can result from strong, frequent, or prolonged activation of the body's stress response systems in the absence of adequate support.

(Shonkoff, et al., 2012)



Lakeland Health

Ability to Tolerate Stress



(Ogden, Pain &Fisher, 2006; Siegal, 1999)

Lakeland Health

What is Trauma?

An **EVENT**, series of events, or set of circumstances **EXPERIENCED** by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening with lasting adverse **EFFECTS** on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

(SAMHSA, 2014)

Lakeland Health

Trauma Types

- Acute
- Chronic
- Complex
- Systemic/Organizational

(Child Welfare Committee, National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2013)

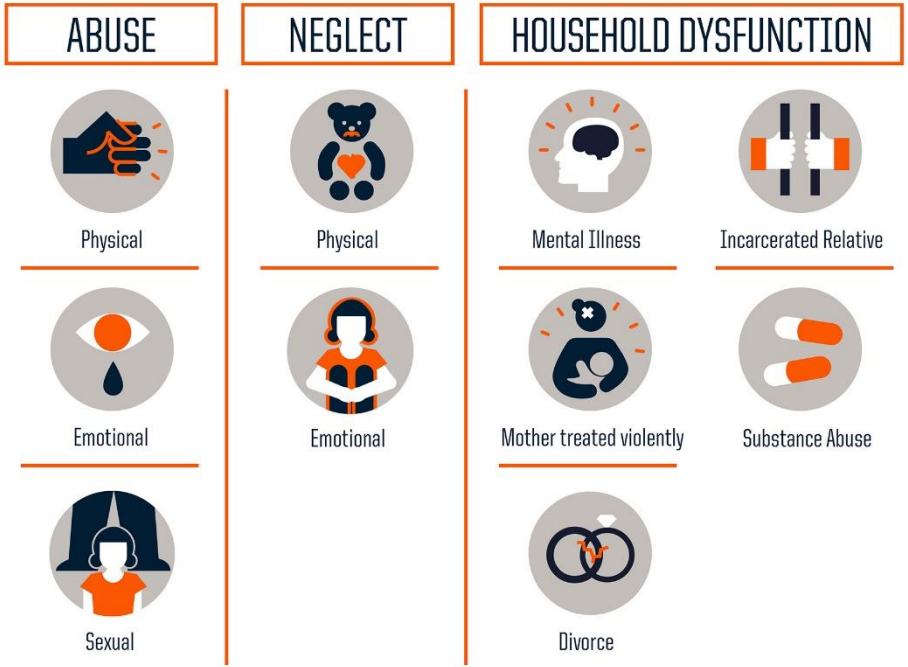
Lakeland Health

Common Forms of Toxic Stress And Trauma

Lakeland Health

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), are experiences in childhood that profoundly impact a developing child's brain and functioning. Though they do not have to be, they are often chronic leading to toxic stress.



(Felitti, V.J., et al, 1998)

Lakeland Health

Suggested Expanded ACEs

Experiencing Racism/Discrimination

Bullying

Living in Group or Foster Care

Unsafe Living Conditions

Experiencing/Witnessing Community Violence

Source: Wade

Lakeland Health

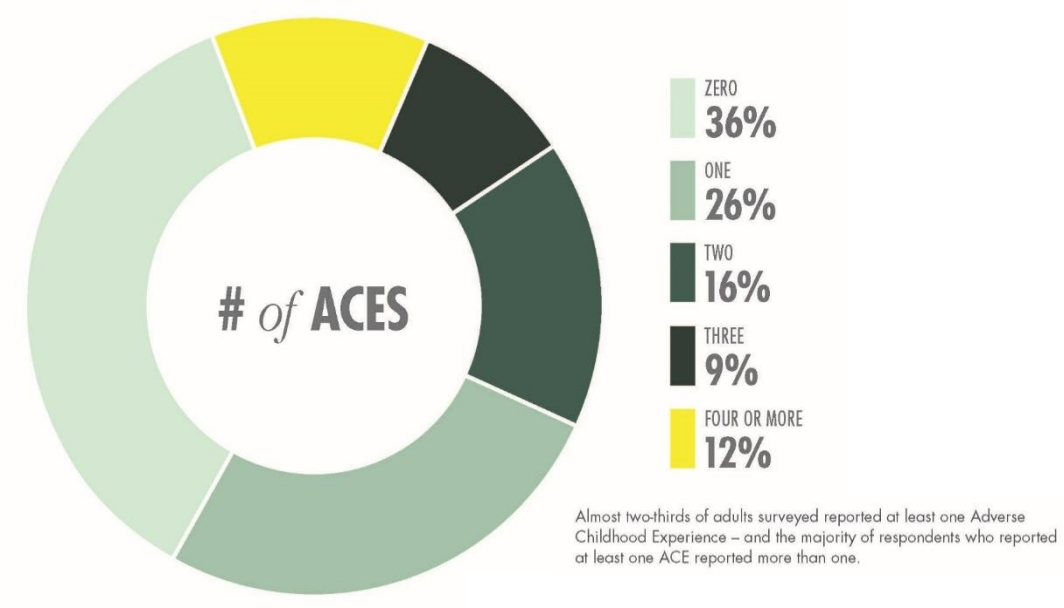
Considering the 10 ACEs listed below, how many of these do you believe you've experienced prior to your 18th birthday?

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Physical neglect
- Emotional neglect
- Mental illness of a household member
- Incarceration of a parent
- Domestic violence in the home
- Substance use in the home
- Divorce or separation of parents

Lakeland Health

ACEs: Frequency

How Common Are ACEs

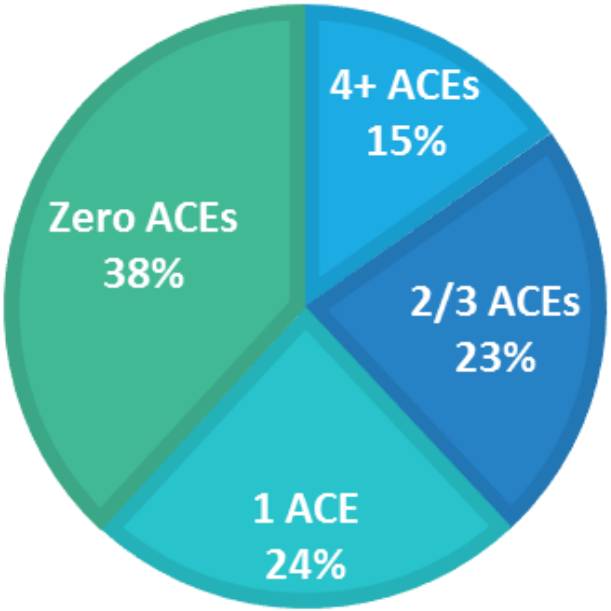


Almost two-thirds of adults surveyed reported at least one Adverse Childhood Experience – and the majority of respondents who reported at least one ACE reported more than one.

Lakeland Health

ACEs Prevalence:

Michigan Adults



(Fussman & McKane, 2013)

Lakeland Health

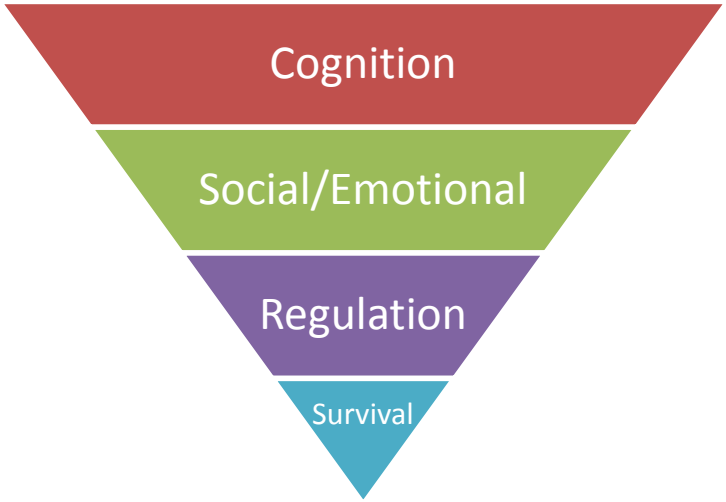
Trauma:

Impact On Development and Behavior

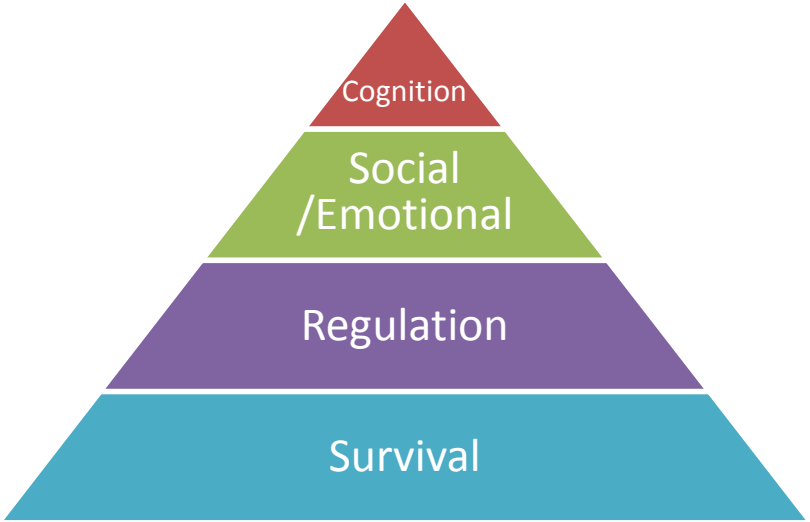
Lakeland Health

Trauma and Brain Development

Typical Development



Developmental Trauma



(Ogden, Pain, Fisher, 2006)

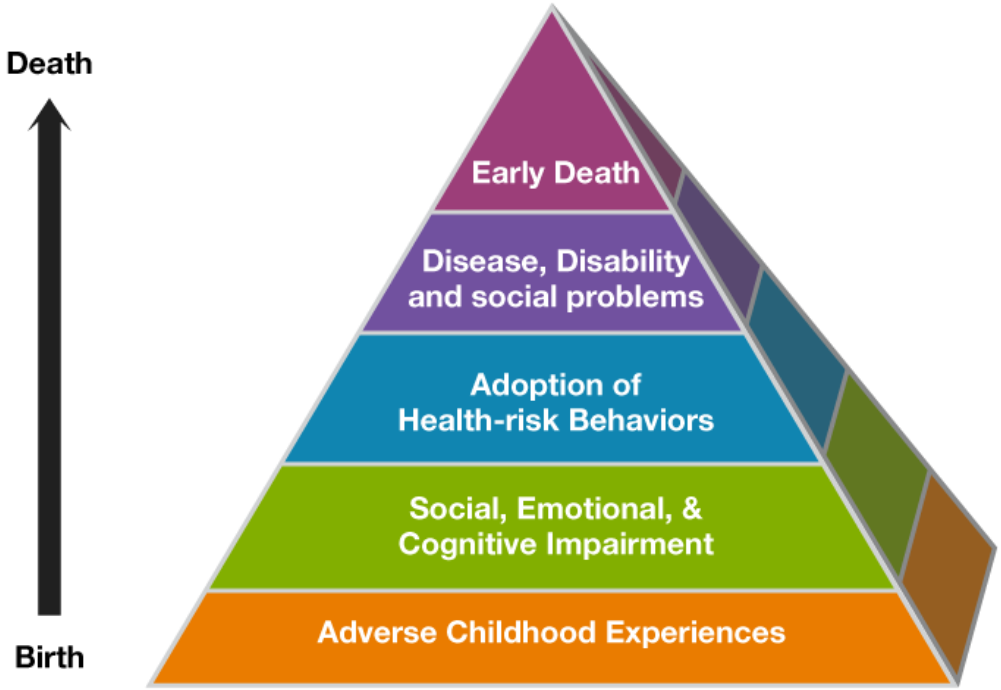
Lakeland Health

Life Domains Impacted by Complex Trauma

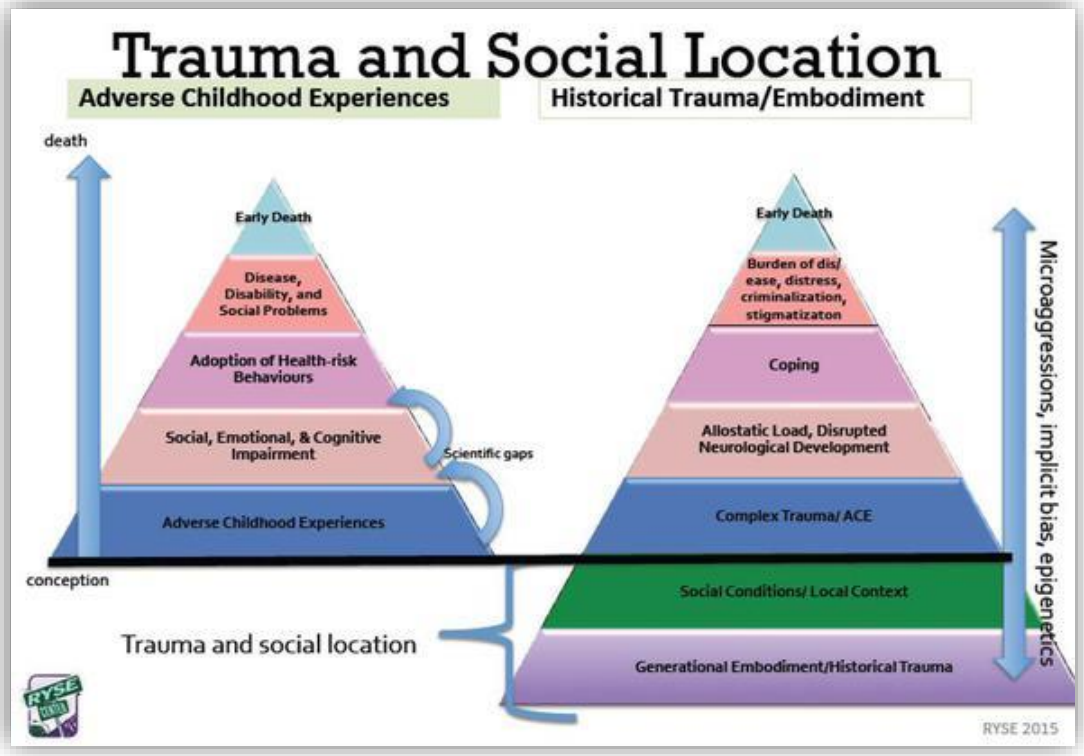
- Attachment and Relationships
- Physical Health: Body and Brain
- Emotional Response
- Self-Concept and Future
- Thinking and Learning
- Behavior
- Dissociation

Lakeland Health

ACEs: Impact



Lakeland Health



Lakeland Health

Trauma & Chronic Disease:

Implications for Healthcare

Pat Rush, MD, MBA

Lakeland Health

Topics

Part 1: My Journey: Understanding Complex Illness

- Patients at High Risk: Dual Eligible [Medicare + Medicaid]
- Pattern of Adversity & Trauma

Part 2: Health Inequity: Differences in health outcomes (i.e., health disparities) that are avoidable, unfair and unjust

- Racism: Unfair treatment in healthcare and other systems that are essential to good health

Part 3: Moving Forward:

- Actions by Healthcare Systems and Clinicians Toward Health Equity

Lakeland Health

Taking a Moment

- This is a **Challenging Conversation**
- Change requires **New Framework**
- This is a **Conversation of HOPE**

Lakeland Health

Part 1: My Journey

Care of Underserved & Severely Ill Patients

Internal Medicine MD – Complex Chronic Illness

Public hospital; Former Director Cook County ER

MBA – University of Chicago; Finance & Strategy

National Expert in Medicare & Medicaid Health Insurance executive

Lakeland Health

Part 1: My Journey:

The Quadruple Aim*

Aim #1	Enhancing Patient Experience
Aim #2	Improving Population Health
Aim #3	Reducing Costs
Aim #4	Improving Work Life of Healthcare Providers

* Sources: Berwick, Nolan & Whittington, *The Triple Aim*, 2008 Bodenheimer & Sinsky, *From Triple to Quadruple Aim*, 2014

Lakeland Health

Understanding Patients at High Risk

MEDICARE
- Age 65+ years
- Perm Disabled

MEDICAID - POOR
- Women-children
- Adult chronic illness

Dual Eligible >> BOTH
Medicare + Medicaid

Poor Frail Elderly
(Skilled Nursing)

Poor < age 65
Severe Illness

Lakeland Health

Typical Medical Approach to Disease

DIAGNOSIS	TREATMENT
Patient Appears healthy or develops symptoms	Time →
Screening Tests/Early Detection and/or Diagnostic Tests ↓ **Diagnose Disease**	**Start Therapy** Measure Outcomes **Disease Management** **New Diseases ** Appear ** WHY?**

Lakeland Health

Results of TYPICAL Healthcare (National Problem)

1. Patient Experience: Patient feels rushed, unheard, overmedicated & is angry at cost
2. Population Health: 80% chronic disease still considered “idiopathic” (i.e., no known cause)
3. VERY expensive with disappointing results
4. High Rate of Provider Burnout

The Quadruple Aim

#1 – Enhancing Patient Experience

#2 – Improving Population Health

#3 – Reducing Costs

#4 – Improving HC Work Life

How can we do better?

Lakeland Health

Medical Impact of the Social Determinants of Health (SDoH)

Social Determinants of Health

- **RACISM….**
- Poverty
- Precarious housing
- Food Insecurity
- Unemployment
- Low literacy
- Geographical & Social Isolation

→ ????? → **Disease**

What is the biologic mechanism for SDoH, such as racism to cause disease?

Lakeland Health

Can a LIFE COURSE Approach Help Us?

Example: 30 yr old diagnosed with Hypertension or Diabetes

Prenatal	Birth	**Infant 0-3**	Childhood Age 4-12	Puberty Age 13-19	Young Adult Age 20-40	Middle Age Age 40-65	Older Age 65-85	Frailty Age 85+
					Person diagnosed with DISEASE Start TREATMENT	→	→	→

What Happened Here?

New Diseases ** Appear ** WHY?

Lakeland Health

My Experience with Trauma-Informed Care

I came to believe:
Current medical theory of chronic illness and health inequities are incomplete.

2000 - 2008:
I created solo primary care practice that involved detailed interviews of over 500 patients.

Realized most important interview question was….

“How was growing up for you?”

“Mostly OK?” or **“Pretty difficult?”**

Lakeland Health

My Patients Who Answered *"Pretty Difficult"* Had Serious, Complex Chronic Illnesses

- Lupus; Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Severe Obesity
- Type 1 - Juvenile Onset Diabetes
- Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Young women with aggressive Breast Cancer
- Severe Chronic Pain, Fibromyalgia
- End Stage Kidney Disease on Dialysis
- End Stage Congestive Heart Failure
- And more

Lakeland Health

What Did I Find Out About Trauma and Severe Chronic Illness?

Underlying the history of serious chronic illness >> Difficult childhood:

- Painful memories [abuse, neglect, loss of a parent, foster care, poverty]
- Cruel discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual preference
- Sexual assault [50% of the women; 25% of the men]
- Witnessing community violence or family violence
- Veterans-survivors of war, the Holocaust, Refugees

Lakeland Health

What My Patients Told Me:

Impact of Discrimination

- Never feeling safe
- Never feeling accepted
- Always feeling judged
- Expected to fail
- Never getting a fair chance

Could I *(as a straight, white woman)* *REALLY* understand?

Probably Not

Could I see the exquisite anguish at the unending injustice and corrosive fear?

YES

Lakeland Health

Consistent Pattern from (of?) Adversity

Severe Adversity-Trauma-Neglect

↓

Overwhelming Psychological Distress

↓

Disturbed Sleep

↓

Physical Dysregulation

→

Seek to Calm Overwhelming Distress

Nicotine | Alcohol | Drugs | Sex
Food | Video Games | Social Media
Shopping | Gambling | Self-Harm
And more

↓ ↓

THIS is the Pathway to Severe Chronic Illness

Lakeland Health

I Asked Myself:

How Did I Miss this Connection for 30 Years?

I was shocked and humbled

And then, I became determined!

- Learn what others know
- Develop a new MODEL
- Build a COLLABORATION for CHANGE

Lakeland Health

Let's Take a Breath and Think DEEPER

Lakeland Health

Part 2: Health Inequity

1. Unequal Treatment (by healthcare system)
   - Lack of respect and access to diagnosis and treatment
   - Delay in diagnosis

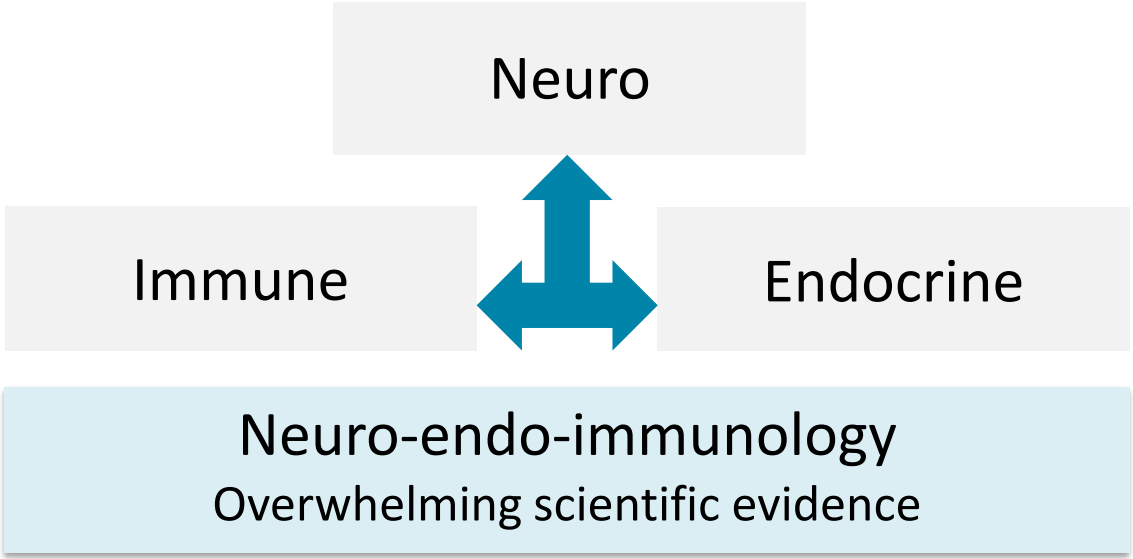
AND

2. Traumatic Life Experience
   - Severe adversity, poverty, neglect
   - Trauma/abuse, loss of parent, incarceration
   - **Toxic experience >> Racism/Discrimination**

Lakeland Health

New Model:

Body-Mind as Interconnected Network Systems Biology



Lakeland Health

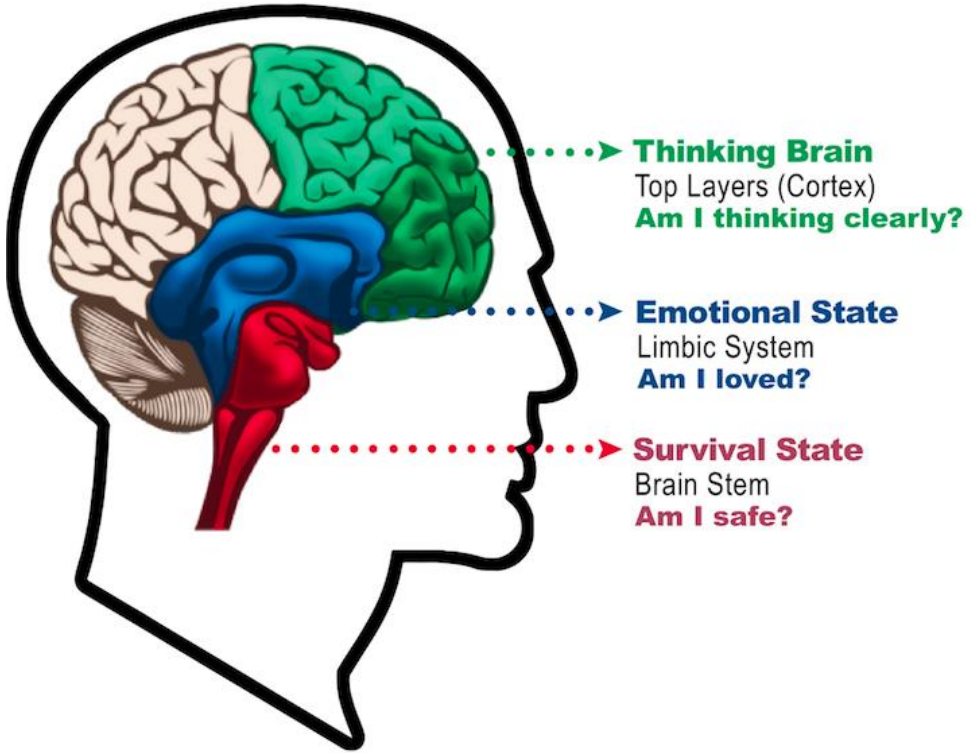
New Model:

Neurobiology Basics

Functionally:
3 Parts of the BRAIN

Evidence that brain develops
- and functions - from the bottom up

Source: Bruce Perry, MD PhD



Lakeland Health

Recap:

Brain Develops in the Context of Parent-Child ATTACHMENT - ATTUNEMENT
#1 process for brain to learn Self-Regulation

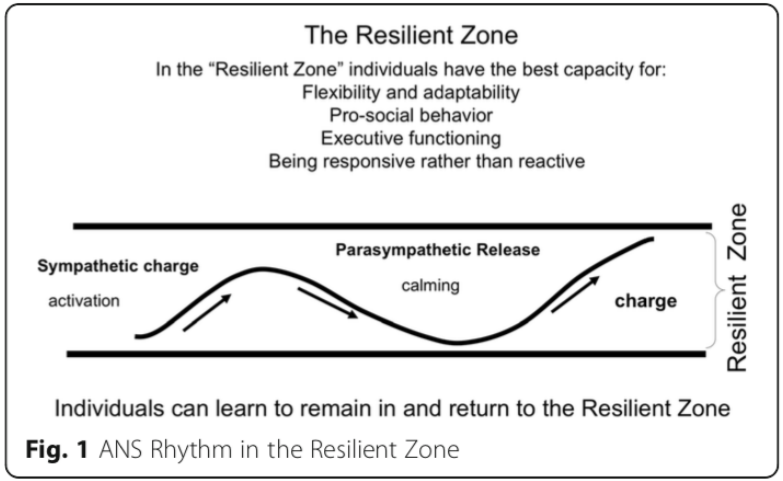


Fig. 1 ANS Rhythm in the Resilient Zone

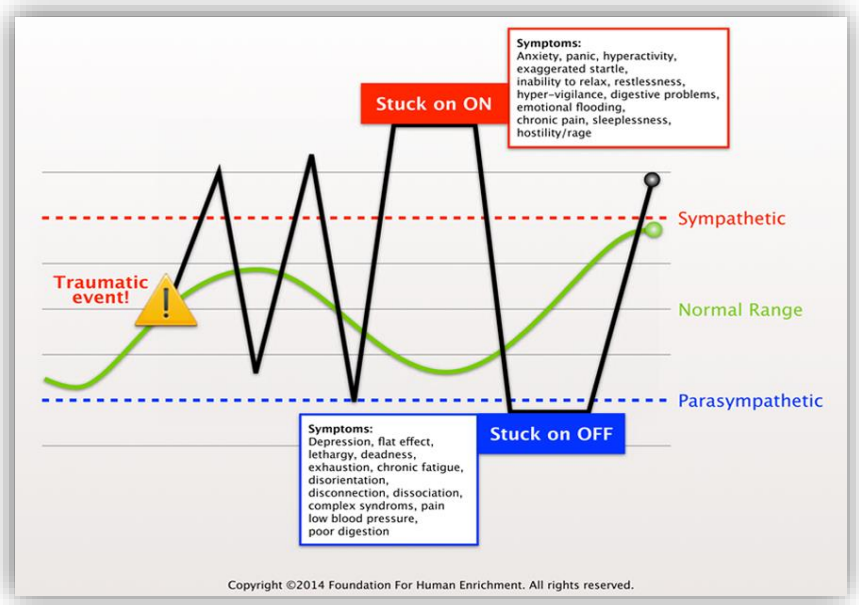
SOURCE: Leitch. Action Steps using ACEs and trauma-informed care: a resilience model *Health and Justice* (2017) 5:5

Lakeland Health

Recap:

Toxic Stress and Trauma <> DISRUPT Brain-Body Self-Regulation

Symptoms of Un-Discharged Traumatic Stress



Lakeland Health

Everyday Discrimination – a Major Trauma

David Williams, PhD, MPH - Harvard

QUESTIONNAIRE

In your day-to-day life, how often do these things happen to you?

What do you think was the main reason for these experiences?

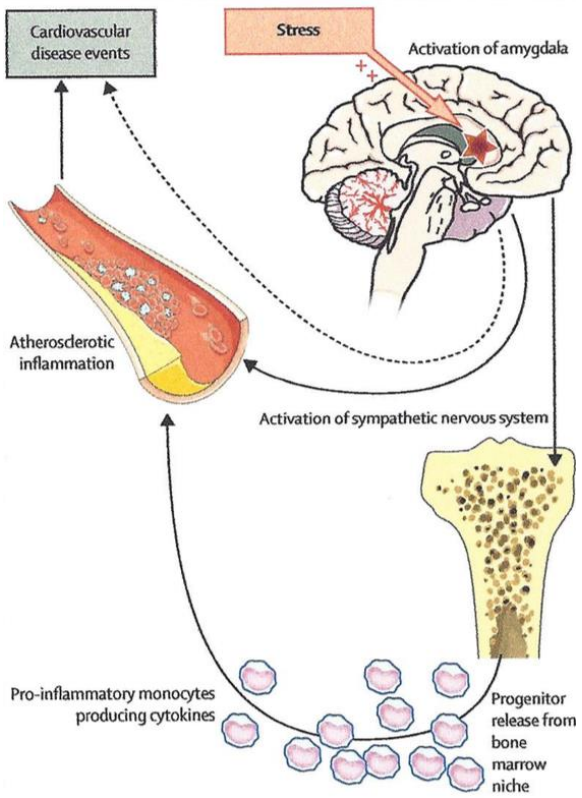
- Treated with less courtesy?
- Treated with less respect?
- Receive poorer service?
- You are called names or insulted?
- You are threatened or harassed?
- People act as if you're not smart
- People act as if they are afraid of you
- People act as if you're not honest
- People act as if they are better than you

Lakeland Health

Physiologic Mechanism:

Hypertension and Heart Disease are result of complex chain of events

Tawakol, et.al. Lancet January 11, 2017
Harvard Division of Systems Biology



Lakeland Health

2018 Research Consensus:

Pathway to Chronic Illness

TRAUMA

Neuro

Dysregulation

Inflammation

Abnormal Endocrine Signaling

End Organ

Cardiovascular | Lung
Intestines | Joints
Kidneys | Brain
MORE

This is the **ROOT**

- Opportunity for prevention
- Most effective treatment

Lakeland Health

Science Tells Us:

Disruption Starts in Childhood

Hypertension in African American Men *starts by AGE 8*

Prenatal	Birth	**Infant 0-3**	Childhood Age 4-12	Puberty Age 13-19	Young Adult Age 20-40	Middle Age Age 40-65	Older Age 65-85	Frailty Age 85+
					Person diagnosed with DISEASE Start TREATMENT	→	→	→

What Happened Here?

New Diseases are result of CHAIN of EVENTS

Lakeland Health

Pathway to Disease

Toxic Stress or Traumatic Memory << >> Disrupts Brain-Body Regulation

- Woman's ability to carry pregnancy to full term (premature birth); low birth weight
- Obesity
- Asthma
- High Blood Pressure
- Depression and other Mental Distress
- Self-soothing, but health-compromising behaviors (ADDICTION)
- Autoimmune Disease (lupus, rheumatoid, Crohn's, MS)
- Diabetes
- Thyroid disease
- Cardiovascular Disease (heart attack, stroke)
- Chronic Pain
- More than 30 additional

Lakeland Health

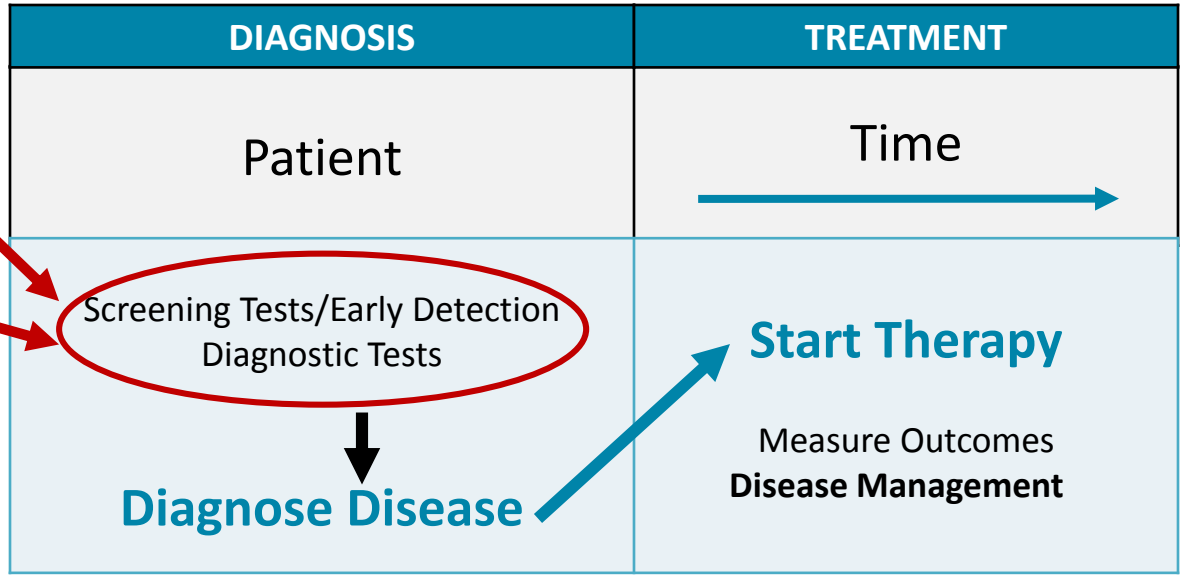
Taking Courageous Action

Changing the Framework of the Typical Medical Approach

Need to rethink "Early Detection"

When our current model "finds" disease, process well underway.

PRIMARY PREVENTION is the key!



Lakeland Health

PART 3: Trauma-Informed Care

How do we start to approach such a complicated problem?

AND how do we care for ourselves?

Lakeland Health

Quick Time-Out: *Let's Talk About Us*

Quadruple Aim #4: TRAUMA and PROVIDER WELLBEING

- Healthcare staff very likely > personal trauma history
- Hard to witness fear & pain our clients' experience
- **Secondary Trauma** results we hear about or witness traumatic experiences of another

  Can happen: At home
  Living in society
  At work

- Secondary Trauma can be ***PREVENTED***

Lakeland Health

Quadruple Aim #4: Self Care Ideas

Preserving Our Own BALANCE

- Keep things in perspective; Start with Gratitude
- Let Go with Love
- Deep Breathing Practice
- Nurture Sleep
- Talk (or write) about Feelings and Experiences
- Exercise
- Make time for Fun and Sharing

Lakeland Health

My Scientific Conclusions:

#1 - Racism is a MAJOR cause of Disease & Health Inequity

Social Determinants of Health

- **POVERTY**
- **RACISM**
- Housing
- Access to Food
- Employment
- More

→ Everyday Discrimination → Disease

↑ TOXIC Unrelenting STRESS

Lakeland Health

Conclusion #2:

It is Time for Courageous Action In OUR Community

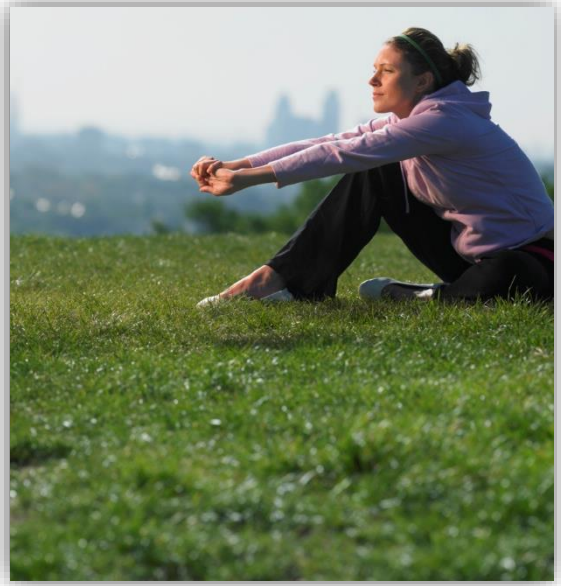
PRIMARY PREVENTION is the key!

- Eliminate ROOT causes
  - Heal the trauma of racism and every form of discrimination
- Provide REAL support for ALL at-risk families
- Healing resources for trauma
- Continued EXCELLENCE in Medical Care

Lakeland Health

In Summary

- In our culture AND our community, Trauma is all around us
  Traumatic Experience >> DISEASE
- To understand Health Inequity, we must acknowledge Discrimination & Racism are Trauma
- A different – and deeper – approach is needed to achieve **HEALTH EQUITY**



Lakeland Health

Trauma-Informed Care

- Realizes
- Recognizes
- Responds
- Resists

The Foundational Assumptions

(SAMHSA, 2014)

Lakeland Health

- Safety
- Trustworthiness and Transparency
- Peer Support
- Collaboration
- Empowerment, Voice, and Choice
- Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues

Principles of the Trauma-Informed Approach

(SAMHSA, 2014)

Lakeland Health

Lakeland Health