



Aging HIV and Resilience

Monte Ephraim LCSW-C

www.betraumainformed.com



Prevalence and Impact of Trauma

- Over the course of our lives, many elders experienced one or more traumatic events, and the impact of that earlier trauma does not disappear with age.
- We are subjected to these events in the present as well as the past, we may have more recent or current traumas of these kinds with which to contend.
- For the LGBTQ community these traumas are often compounded and rooted in stigma, rejection in addition to aging and HIV.

Karen Heller Key, Foundations of Trauma-Informed Care: (Baltimore, MD: LeadingAge Maryland/ Resilience for All Ages, 2018

MESE
TRAINING AND
CONSULTING LLC 

The Three E's in Trauma

Events

Events/circumstances cause trauma.

Experience

*An individual's **experience** of the event determines whether it is traumatic.*

Effects

Effects of trauma include adverse physical, social, emotional, or spiritual consequences

Slide 3

Things to Keep in Mind

- Underlying question = “What happened to this person?”
- What are called behavioral health “symptoms” may be adaptations to traumatic events.
- Behaviors have meaning and purpose.
- Healing happens in relationships.

MESE
TRAINING AND
CONSULTING LLC 



Promoting Healing and Well-being

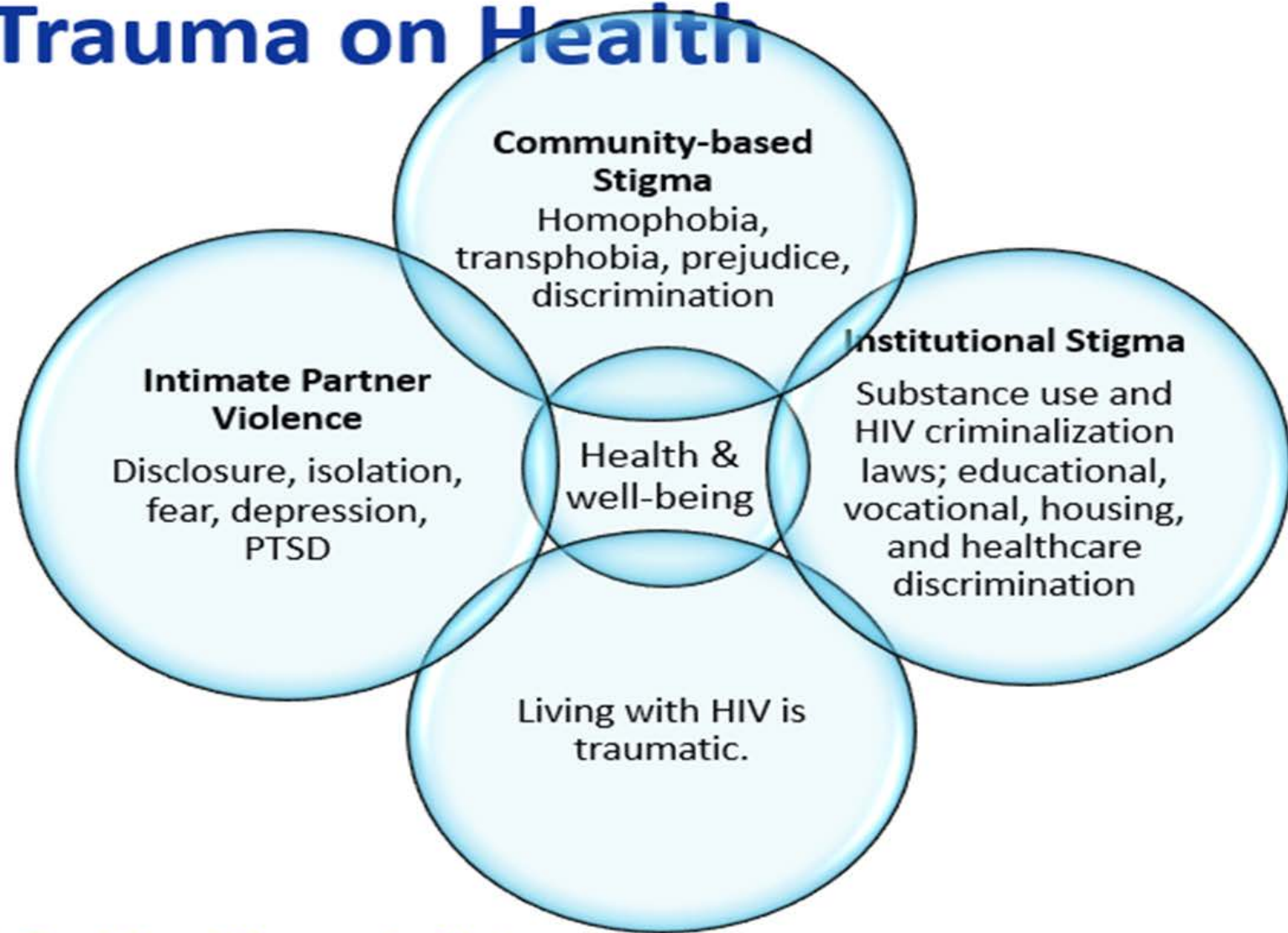
- People often use the terms “healing” or “wellness” instead of “recovery” when talking about trauma and HIV, but the basic message is the same:
- Everyone has the possibility of living a satisfying and meaningful life, regardless of what happened to them or what health challenges they are living with.

Healing happens in relationships.

MESE
TRAINING AND
CONSULTING LLC 



Impacts of Trauma on Health



Source: Sonia Rastogi, Positive Women's Network

“Providers recognize that patients may have past trauma, but what few realize is how prevalent it is and how much it affects patients’ health.”

—Michael Mugavero, researcher, Coping With HIV/AIDS in the Southeast (CHASE) Study



"Major Findings," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



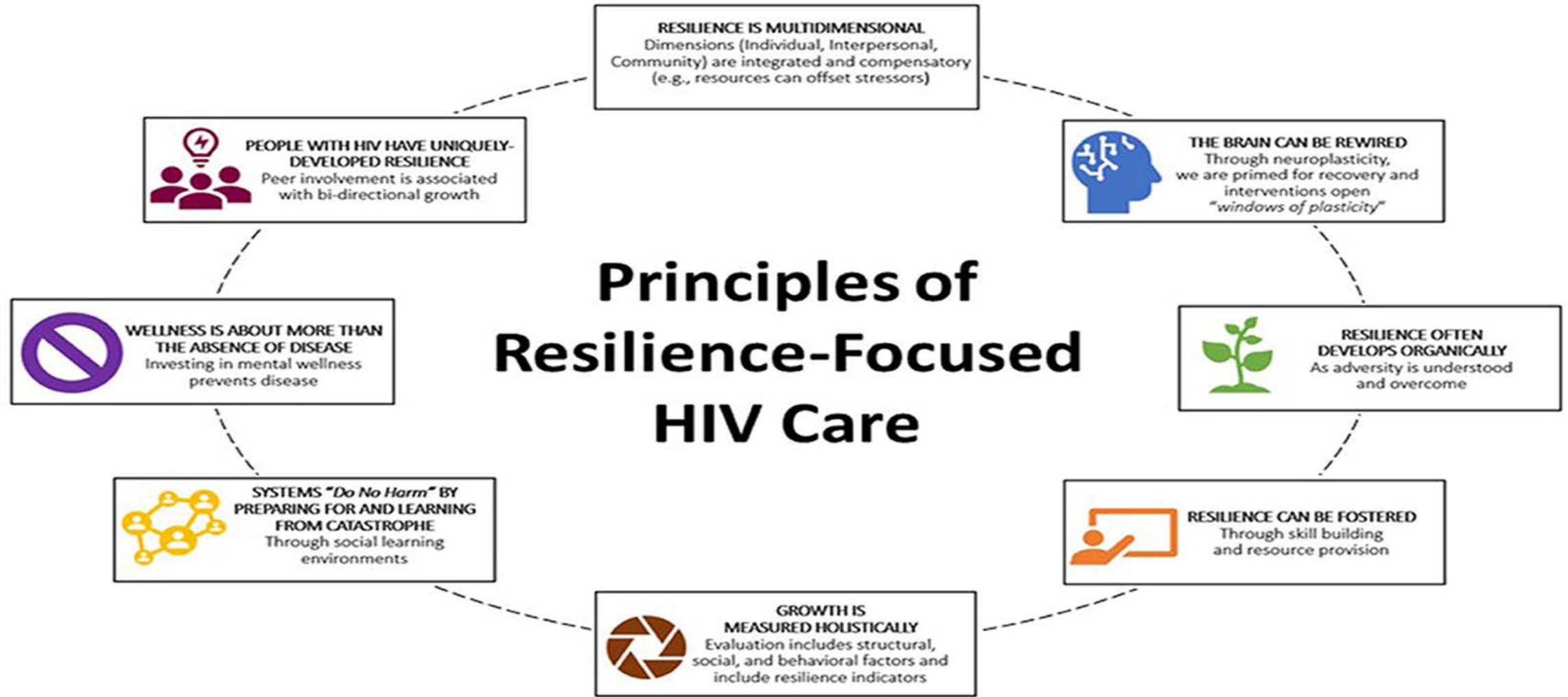
What is stigma in aging?

- Ageism refers to the stereotypes (**how we think**), prejudice (**how we feel**) and discrimination (**how we act**) towards others or oneself based on age.
- Alongside intersectional stigmas, people ageing with HIV face are specific challenges distinct from those faced by younger ages.
- Chronic comorbidities, which become more common as people age, can be more prevalent in people with HIV, and major determinants of poor HRQOL. (health related quality of life)

MESE
TRAINING AND
CONSULTING LLC 



Principles of Resilience-Focused HIV Care



MESE TRAINING AND CONSULTING LLC 

Citation: Brown LL, Martin EG, Knudsen HK, Gotham HJ and Garner BR (2021) Resilience-Focused HIV Care to Promote Psychological Well-Being During COVID-19 and Other Catastrophes. *Front. Public Health* 9:705573. doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2021.705573



Recommendations

- Engage at all levels in training that informs, promotes practical skills, interventions in trauma responsive care and healing for those that are aging re: HIV to shift from survivor to thriver on a psycho, social, emotional, spiritual level.
- Holistic comprehensive care that recognize and understand the head is part of the body and the body is part of the head.
- Revisit and improve upon practices that work ie. The Buddy System”
- Build on qualitative care that incorporates intervention and care collaboratively.

MESE
TRAINING AND
CONSULTING LLC 



www.betraumaformed.com

