

WARRIOR STRONG



WAYNE STATE
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Social Work: A Relational Profession in a Time of Social Distancing

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A Relational Profession: What do we mean?



Values and Ethics

- Service
- Social Justice
- Dignity and Worth of the Person
- **Importance of Human Relationships**
- Integrity
- Competence.



Value: *Importance of Human Relationships*

Ethical Principle: *Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.*

Social workers understand that relationships between and among people are an important vehicle for change. Social workers engage people as partners in the helping process. Social workers seek to strengthen relationships among people in a purposeful effort to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the well-being of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities.



Early History of the Profession

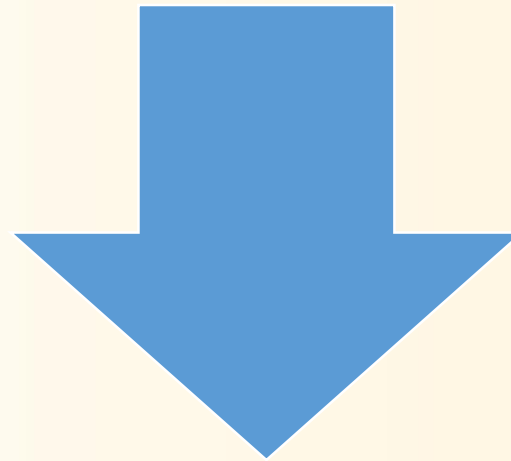
- Mary Richmond (1861-1928)
- Jane Adams (1860-1935)
- Mary Church Terrell (1863 – 1954)
- Thyra J. Edwards (1897-1953)



Social Network Relationships-How do they Help?



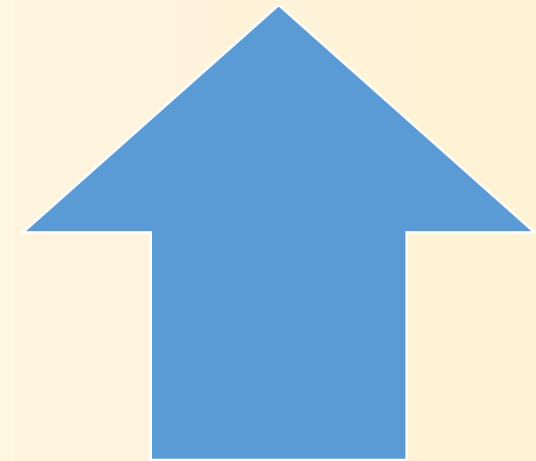
Stress and
Coping



Demands



Social
Resources



Interpersonal Relationships and Support as Social Resources

- Concrete
- Emotional
- Informational
- Network Structure-Density, reciprocity, duration



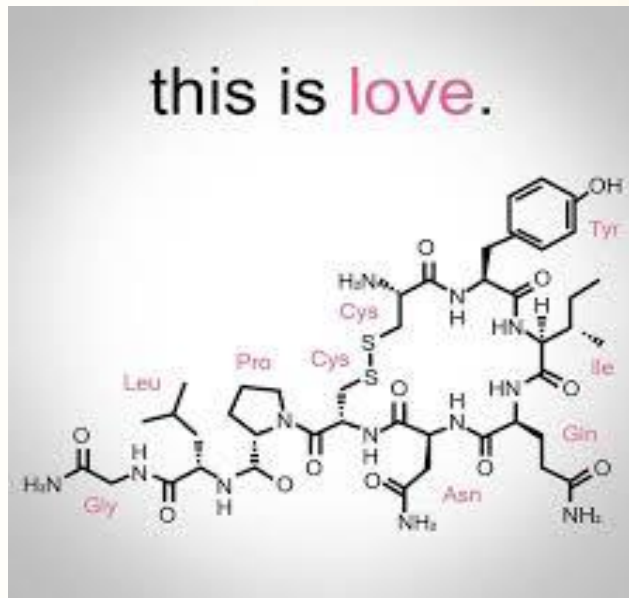
Health

- Health Behaviors (Berkman et al, 2000)
- Inflammatory Responses (Uchino et al, 1996)
- Mortality from Major Illnesses (Rodriguez-Artalejo et al, 2006)
- Breast Cancer Survival (Cousson-Gelie et al, 2007)



Biological

Oxytocin



Cortisol



Psychological

- Social Support-Anxiety and Depression (Grav, et al, 2012)
- Social Support moderates the impact of events on development of PTSD among military (Han et al, 2014)
- Increased Quality of Life across physical, psychological, social, and environmental domains (Brown, et al, 2016)



Treatment

- Therapeutic Alliance
- Consistent treatment attendance (Lewandowski, 2009)
- Improve treatment outcomes following MH and SA treatment (Warren, Stein & Grella, 2007).
- Improved Treatment Retention (Cosden & Cortez-Ison, 1999)



Children and Families

- Lower stress
- Concrete assistance
- Emotion regulation
- Increased resilience



Role of Social Workers in Facilitating Relationships

- Micro-Macro Continuum
- Attention to the Therapeutic Relationship
- Common Factors
- Regulation
- Assessing and Facilitating Natural Helping Relationships
- Policies that intensify social exclusion



Current Context and Impact on Practice

- COVID 19
- Physical (Social) Distancing
- Ongoing
- Disproportionate impact
- Changes the Nature of social work practice
- Social contact is limited



Strong Social Connections are Vital



Social Isolation: A Potent Killer

The magnitude of risk associated with social isolation is comparable with that of cigarette smoking and other major biomedical and psychosocial risk factors.

House, J.S. (2001). *Psychosomatic Medicine* 63(2):273-274.



Social Isolation and Loneliness (Matthews et al., 2016)

Social isolation =

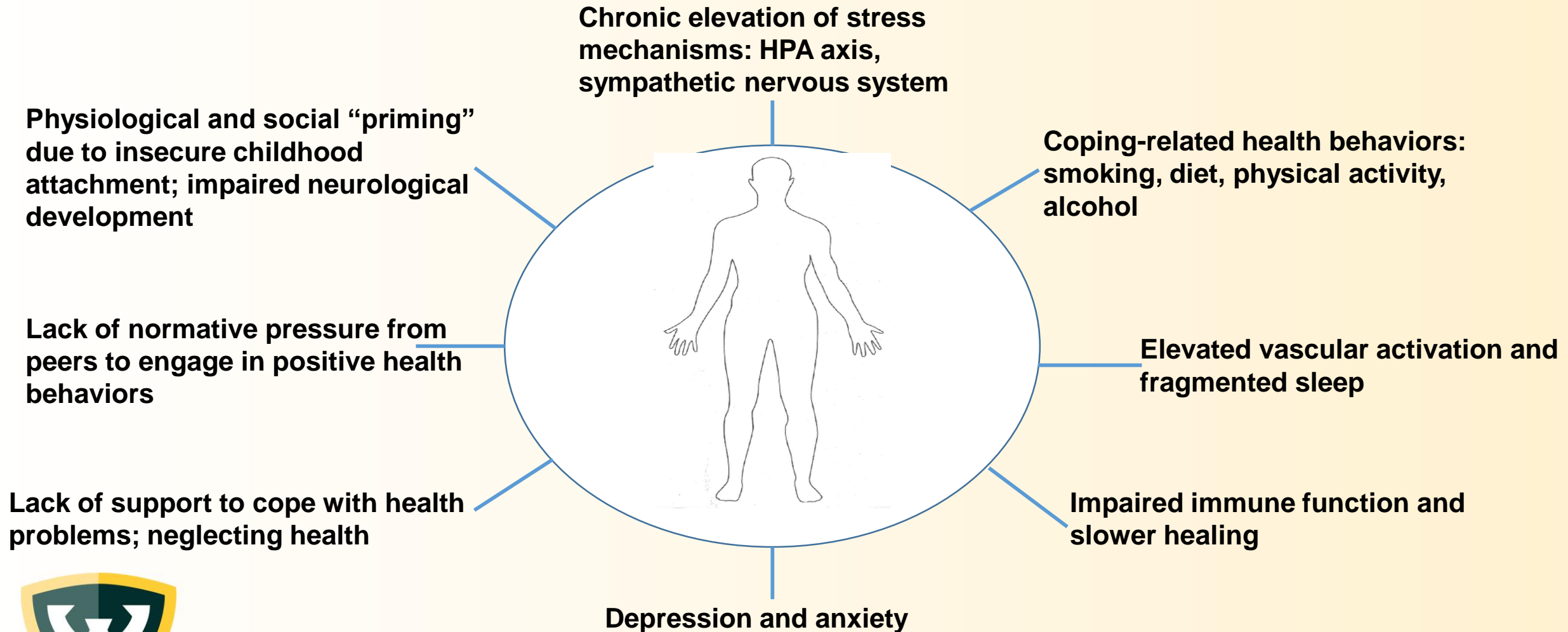
1. *State* of estrangement from others
2. Absence of social relationships

Loneliness =

1. The *feeling* that one's desired quality and quantity of social connections are not being fulfilled
2. Subjective feeling of distress, arising when social connections are perceived to be inadequate or unfulfilling



Some of the ways social isolation impacts health



Social Isolation and Children/Adolescents

- Depression and Anxiety (Loades et al, 2020)
- Violence and Emotional Dysregulation (Kalvin & Bierman, 2017)
- Substance abuse relapse (Johnson et al, 2018)



Parental Isolation and Children

- Maltreatment/Neglect
- Lower parenting efficacy
- Emotion regulation deficits
- Less social capital



Social Isolation and Older Adults

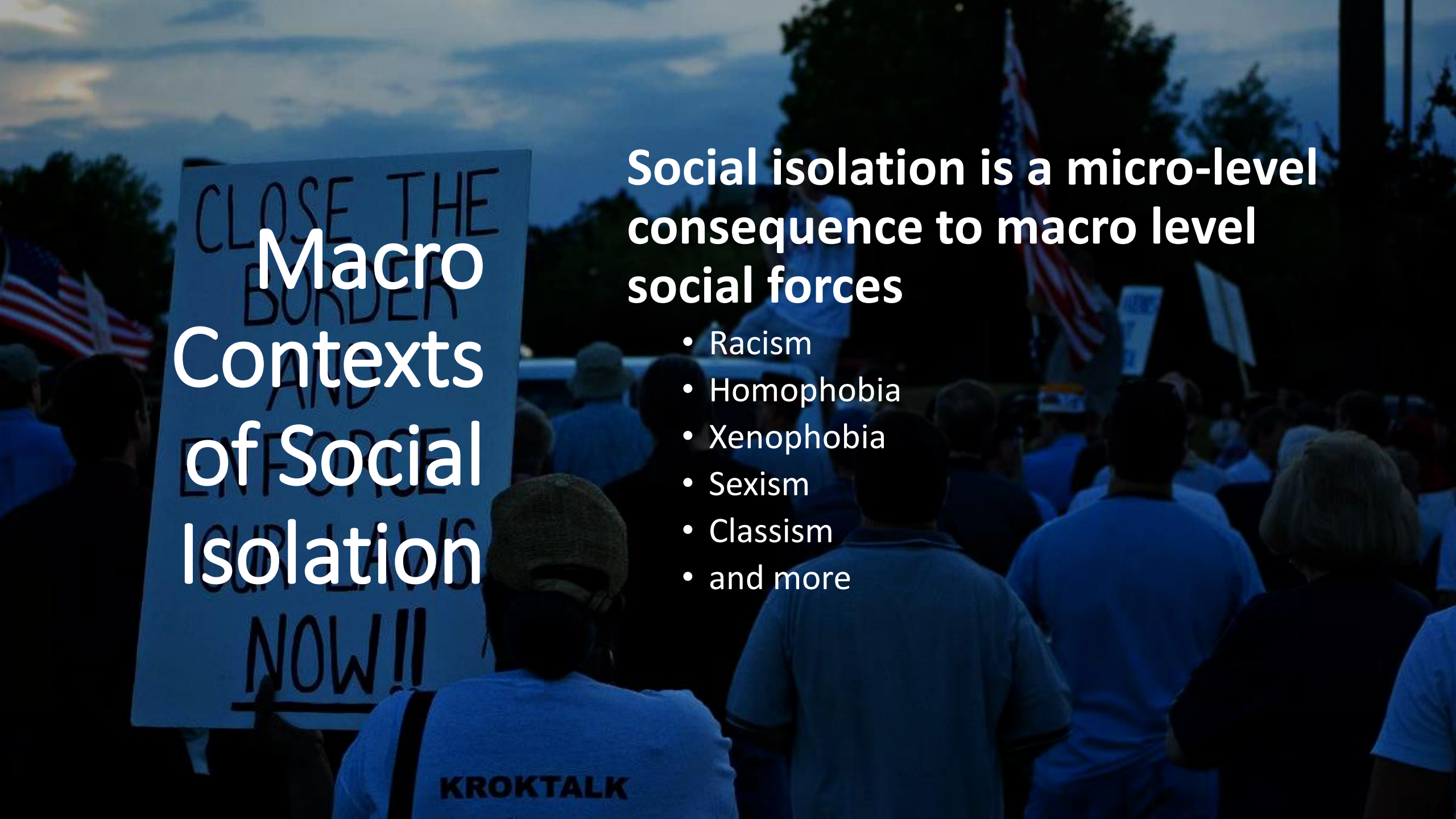
- Sleep disturbance, Depression, Fatigue (Choi et al, 2015)
- Health related Quality of Life (Hawton et al, 2011)
- Loneliness and Dementia (Holwerda et al, 2014)



Social Exclusion and Discrimination

- **Social exclusion** refers to ways in which individuals may become cut off from full involvement in the wider society
- **It is not accidental but systematic** –it is result of structural features of society.





Macro Contexts of Social Isolation

**Social isolation is a micro-level
consequence to macro level
social forces**

- Racism
- Homophobia
- Xenophobia
- Sexism
- Classism
- and more

Macro Context- Opportunity Structure



- Poverty/Socioeconomic disadvantage
 - Poor education
 - Health disparities
 - Poor housing/homelessness
 - Violence



How Can Social Workers Help?

What is the Role of Social Work within the Current Context?



Assessing Relationships and Isolation

- In clinical practice focusing on interpersonal along with intrapersonal
- Asking about relationships in people's lives
- Asking about quantity and quality of time spent with others



Assessing Parents Social Support

Domains to Consider in Assessment

- Concrete
- Emotional
- Instrumental



Assessing relationships and isolation within a developmental framework

- Adolescent Tasks
- Young Adulthood
- Aging
- Economic impact
- This is not where I thought I would be at this point in my life



Measurement of Social Isolation

- **Multidimensional Scale Perceived Social Support** (Zimet, Dahmen, Zimet, & Farley, 1988)
 - Brief measure, 12-items, valid and reliable for youth
 - Response option anchors (Five-point scale)
 - (1) strongly disagree
 - (5) strongly agree
 - Sample items:
 - I have a special person who is a real source of comfort to me.
 - I can count on my friends when things go wrong.
 - I can talk about my problems with my friends.
 - My family really tries to help me.



Measurement of Loneliness

- **UCLA Loneliness Scale** (Russell, 1996)
 - Brief measure, 20-items, valid and reliable
 - Response option anchors
 - (1) Never
 - (4) Always
 - Sample items
 - How often do you feel that there is no one you can turn to?
 - How often do you feel part of a group of friends?
 - How often do you feel left out?
 - How often do you feel that no one really knows you well?



Assessment Tools

Family Support Scale (Dunst, Jenkins, & Trivette, 1984)

Assesses across these Relationships:

Parents; Partner; Partner's Parents; Relatives; Partner's Relatives; Friends; Partner's Friends; Other Children; Other Parents; Co-Workers; Parent Groups; Social Groups/Clubs; Church Members; Minister; Family or Child Physician; Early Childhood Intervention Program; School/Day Care Professionals (Therapists, Social Workers, Nurses); Professional Agencies (Hospital, Clinic, Social Services); Other



Assessment Tools

Family Support Scale (Dunst, Jenkins, & Trivette, 1984)

- 19-items
- Response option anchors (Five-point scale)
 - (1) not at all helpful
 - (5) extremely helpful
- Respondents asked to circle the response that best describes how helpful these people or groups have been to them and their family during the past 3 to 6 months.



Lubben Social Network Scale

1. How many **relatives** do you see or hear from at least once a month?
2. How many **relatives** do you feel close to such that you could call on them for help?
3. How many **relatives** do you feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters?
4. How many **friends** do you see or hear from at least once a month?
5. How many **friends** do you feel close to such that you could call on them for help?
6. How many **friends** do you feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters?



Know the Science

- Public health information and COVID 19.
- Infection rates in your and your clients' communities
- Identify Risk Factors
- Weigh pros and cons
- Self-Determination



Know the Technology Platforms

- Platforms for technology-mediated social connection
- Help clients research, navigate and use platforms
- Social Work role-Navigating systems
- Popular Platforms Include: Zoho Meeting, FaceTime, Whatsapp, Skype, Zoom, BigBlueButton, BlueJeans, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams



Tele social work

- HIPAA-Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act-Requires the protection and confidential handling of protected health information. Sets standards for healthcare information and electronic billing specifically related to confidentiality.



HIPAA Compliant Platforms

- Helping clients use social media platforms to maintain access to physical health, behavioral health, and substance abuse treatment services
- Maintaining the alliance via these platforms
- Some platforms: Zoom for Healthcare, GoToMeeting, Doxy.me, Thera-Link, TheraNest, Medici



Policy and Advocacy

- Identifying policies that exacerbate disenfranchisement for some communities.
- Attending to disparities.
- Community organizing and advocacy to enhance social connection to further social justice



Conclusion

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much”
Helen Keller





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