

First Do No Harm: Teaching for Equity

Understanding Historical Trauma

Objectives

- Define historical trauma.
- Describe how historical trauma impacts the well-being of patients.
- Apply the concept of historical trauma to basic science and clinical medicine teaching.

Historical Trauma

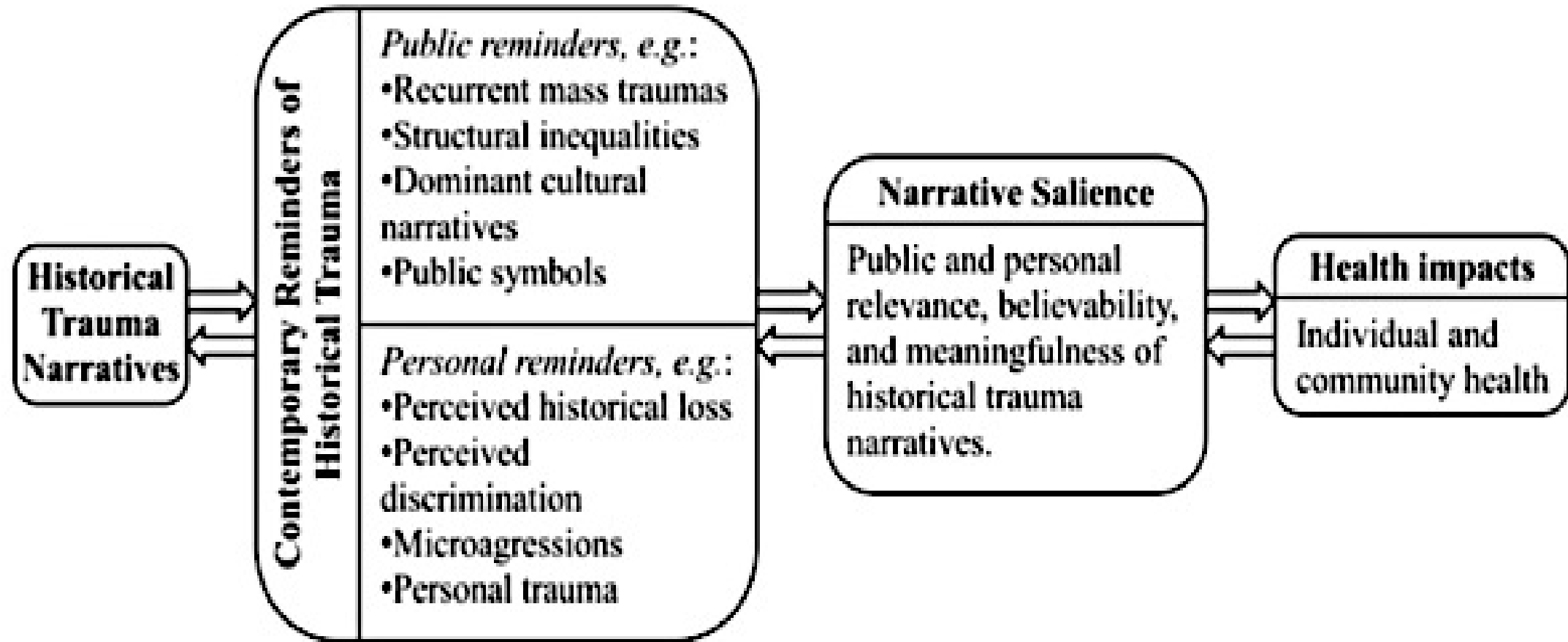
- Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart **defined this** as the “cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations, which emanates from massive group trauma”
- Different than intergenerational trauma
 - This can include natural disasters

Connecting Definitions of Trauma

- Individual trauma results from
 - an **event**, series of events, or set of circumstances that is
 - **experienced** by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has
 - lasting **adverse effects** on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

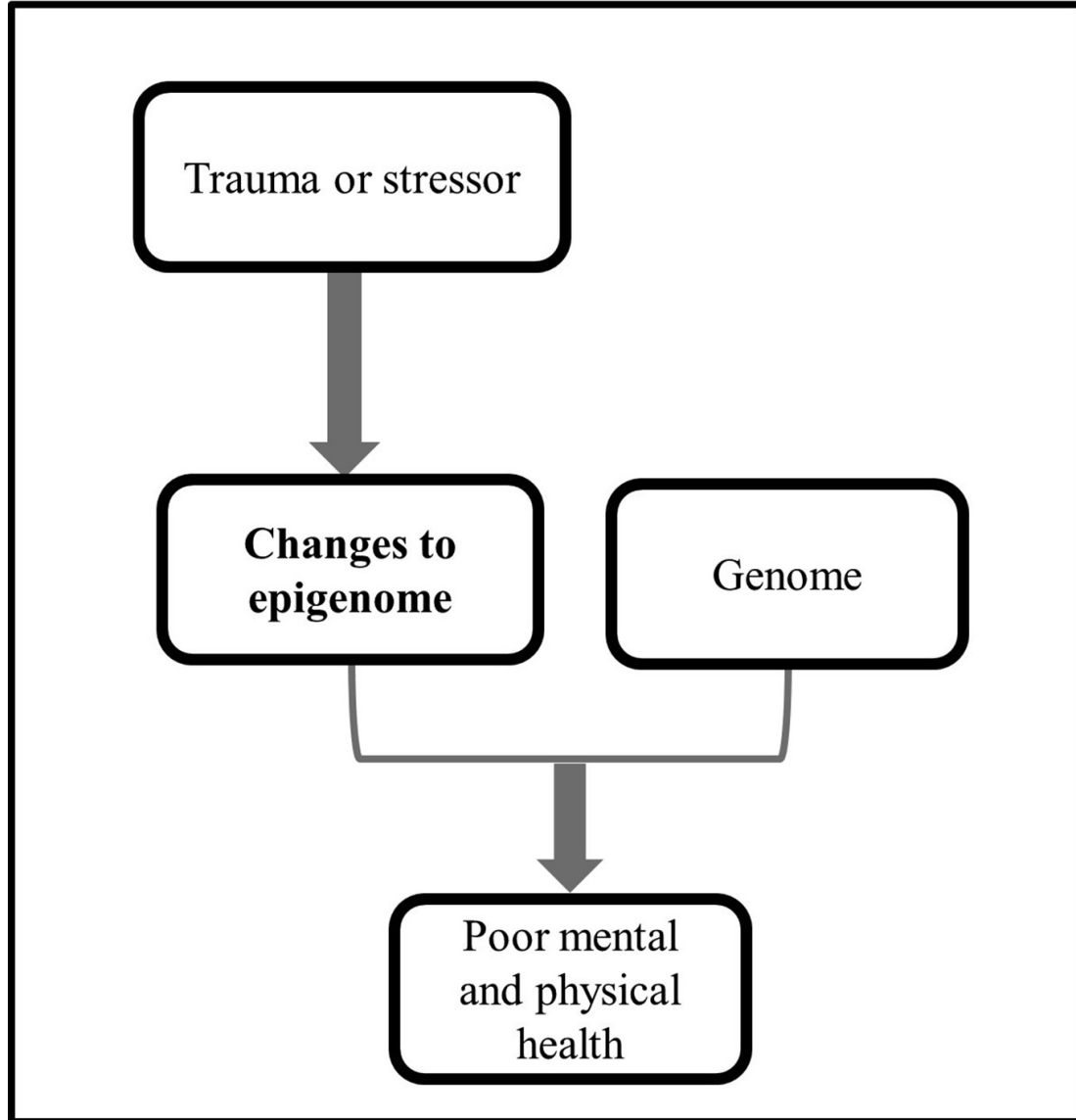
Historical trauma can be conceptualized as **the consequence of** an **event** or set of events perpetrated on a group of people (including their environment) who share a **specific group identity** (e.g., nationality, tribal affiliation, ethnicity, religious affiliation) with **genocidal or ethnocidal intent** (i.e., annihilation or disruption to traditional lifeways, culture, and identity)

Historical Trauma and Health Impacts

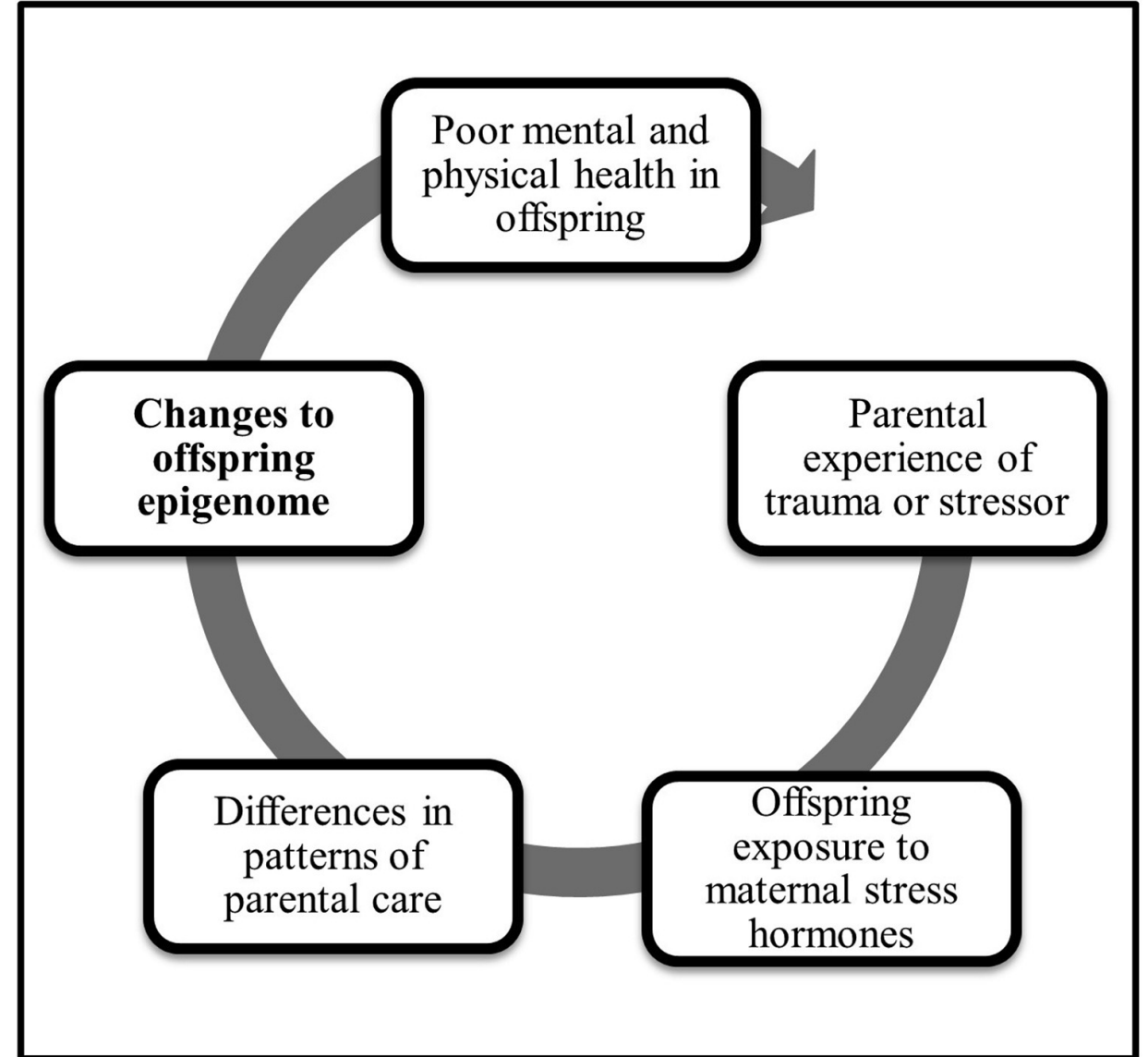


Biological Pathways for Historical Trauma to Affect Health

Pathway 1: Individual experience



Pathway 2: Intergenerational effects



A few more definitions

- Narrative humility
 - “the stance from which we witness stories of suffering must be one of *narrative humility*.”
 - “the fact that the patient's story, at least initially, belongs entirely to the patient”
 - “each story we hear holds elements that are unfamiliar—be they cultural, socioeconomic, sexual, religious, or idiosyncratically personal” (DasGupta)
- Embodiment
 - Humans are three kinds of beings
 - Physical
 - Mental/Emotional
 - Social
 - How we literally incorporate the outside world (including history) into the expression of our biology. (Krieger)

Applying to Basic Science Teaching

Incorporate historical trauma as a contributing factor for health inequities

Identify diseases that may be influenced the concept of embodiment

Student experience of historical trauma informs their approach to their education and curriculum

Applying to Clinical Medicine Teaching

Demonstrate
narrative
humility

Seek to educate
yourself on the
historical events
of the patient
populations you
serve

Consider how
historical trauma
can influence the
patient's
experience with
the healthcare
system

References/Questions/Comments

- Contact me at akost@uw.edu
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