# Expanding Our Perspectives on Treatment: Community Participation Is a Medical Necessity

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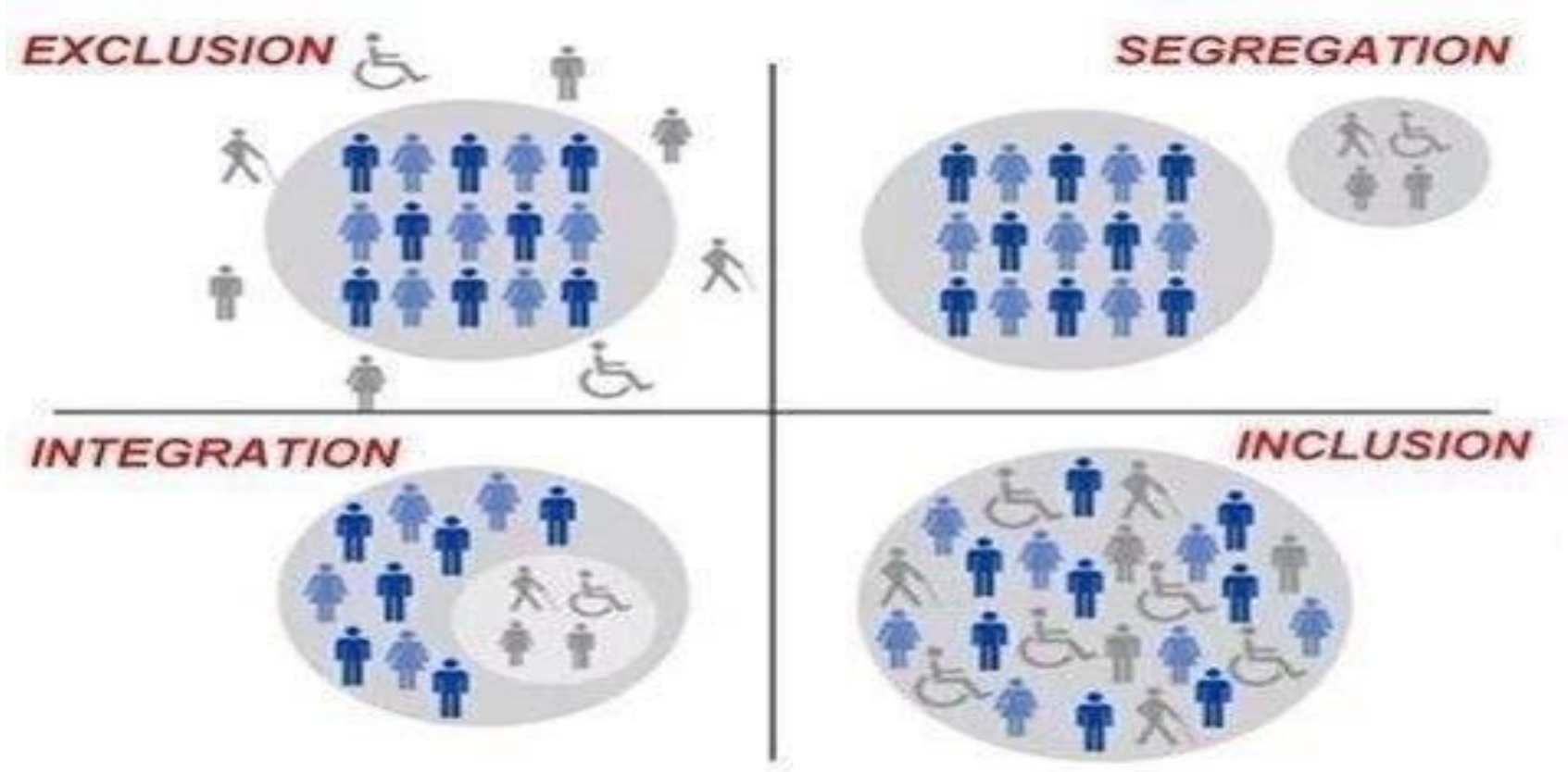
"People don't need more referrals to mental health services, they need referrals to life and community"

(Rapp, 1996)

# Community Participation

- Employment
- School
- Housing
- Dating/marriage
- Parenting
- Leisure/recreation
- Spiritual/religion
- Civic engagement (Volunteering, Voting)
- Friendships
- Family relationships

# What Is Community Inclusion?




1. Being valued for one's uniqueness
2. Opportunity to participate like everyone else
3. Welcoming and embracing environment

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# More people in the community…but ***NOT OF*** the Community

- People with SMI report less participation than general population (Nagata et al., 2020)
  - Fewer days of participation
  - Participate in fewer areas that are important to them
  - Less satisfied with the degree to which they participate
- Lowest employment rate of any disability group
- Diminished levels of educational attainment
- Largest disability group who are financially dependent on SSA – lifetime of poverty
- High levels of sedentary behavior
- Social isolation and loneliness

Nagata S, Townley G, Brusilovskiy E, Salzer MS. Community Participation Differences Between Adults With or Without Serious Mental Illness. Psychiatr Serv. 2020 Nov 1;71(11):1191-1194. doi: 10.1176/appi.ps.201900608.

# Community Integration/Inclusion as a Right

- Definition: “The opportunity to live in the community, and be valued for one’s uniqueness and ability, like everyone else.” (Salzer, 2006)
- Legal and Policy Grounding
  - Americans with Disabilities Act (1990)
  - Supreme Court Olmstead decision (1999): unnecessary institutionalization is a form of discrimination prohibited by the ADA
  - President’s New freedom Initiative (2001)
  - President’s New Freedom Commission Report (2003)
- ‘Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities’ (UN Convention, 2006), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly
  - Inclusion of those with disabilities is a human right - nations must “Promote full and effective participation and inclusion in society, including…competitive employment, and participation in the economic, political, social, cultural, recreational activities of their communities.”



Salzer, M.S. (2006). Introduction. In M.S. Salzer (ed.), Psychiatric Rehabilitation Skills in Practice: A CPRP Preparation and Skills Workbook. Columbia, MD.: United States Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association.

# Would, Could, and Should Participate

- People with SMI want to participate
- Evidence-based interventions exist that promote participation (supported employment, housing, education, socialization)
- Ample evidence that participation is good for everyone

# Community Inclusion and Participation as a Medical Necessity*

*Salzer, M.S. & Baron, R.C. (2016). Well Together – A blueprint for community inclusion: fundamental concepts, theoretical frameworks and evidence. Published by Wellways Australia Limited, Melbourne, Australia. Available at http://tucollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Wellways-Well-Together.pdf

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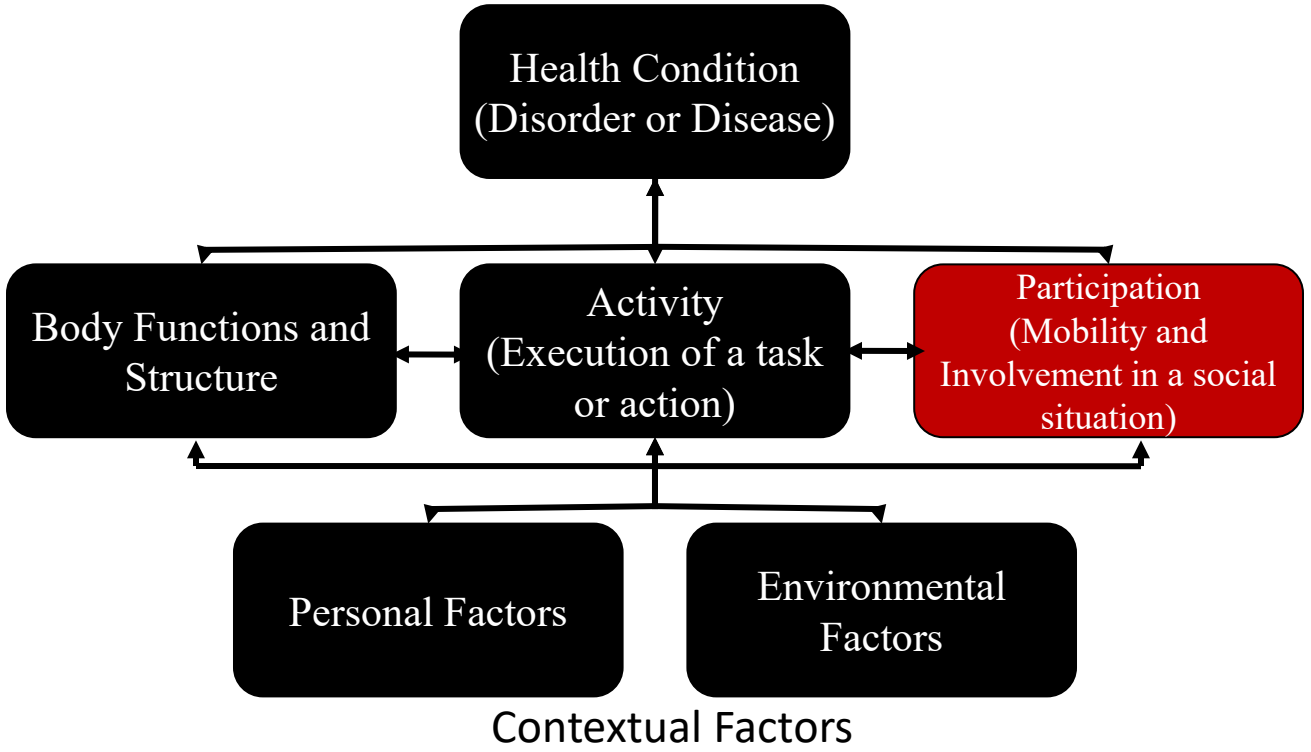
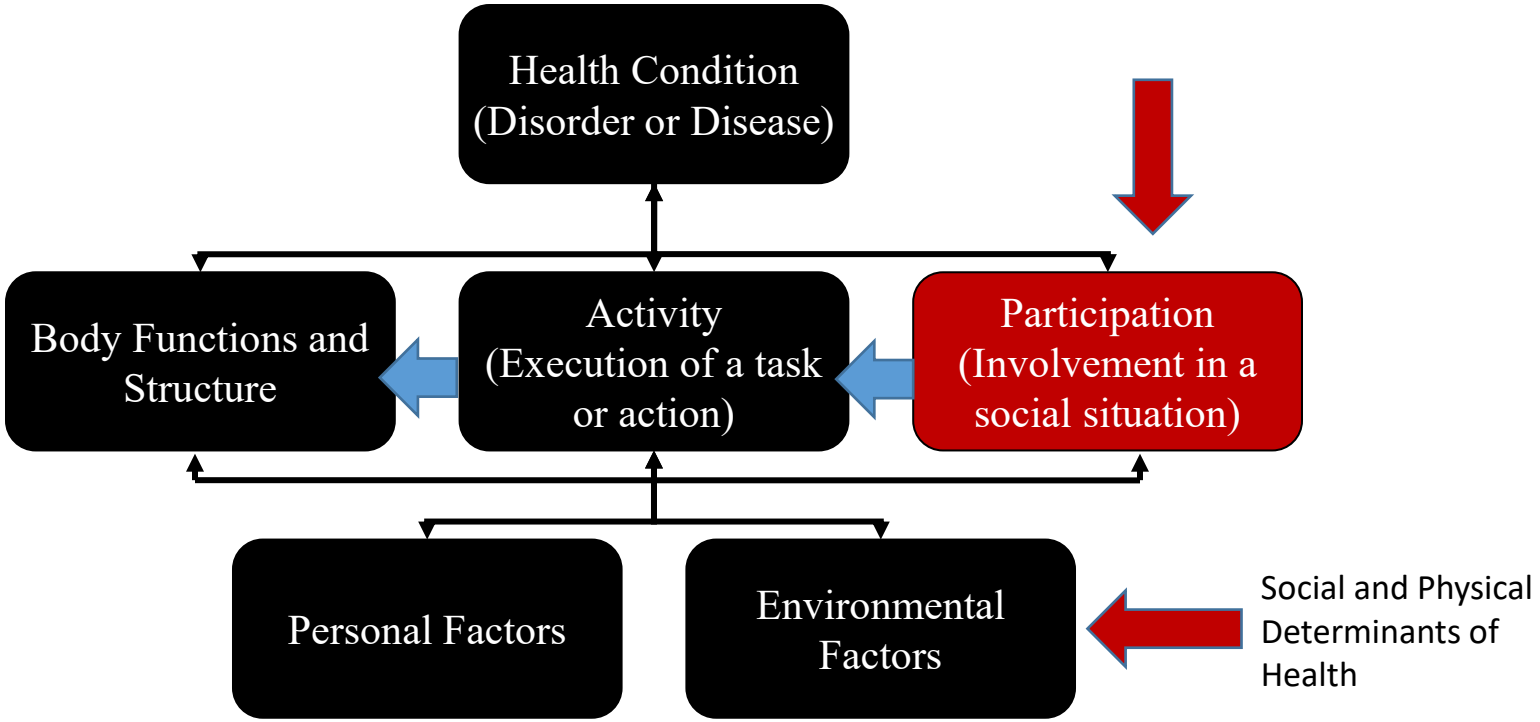
# State Definitions of Medically Necessary Services

- North Carolina Definition includes
  - “Service is necessary for and appropriate to the diagnosis, treatment, cure, or relief of a health condition, illness, injury, disease, or its symptoms, AND”
  - “Service is within generally accepted standards of medical care in the community, AND”
- Oregon
  - Medically necessary services are those services that are required by a member to address one or more of the following:
    - The prevention, diagnosis, or treatment of a member’s disease, condition, or disorder that results in health impairments or a disability
    - The ability for a member to achieve age-appropriate growth and development
    - The ability for a member to attain, maintain, or regain independence in self-care, ability to perform activities of daily living or improve health status or

# International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF: WHO, 2002)



# Promoting Participation And Addressing Environmental Barriers As a Path to Promoting Whole Health

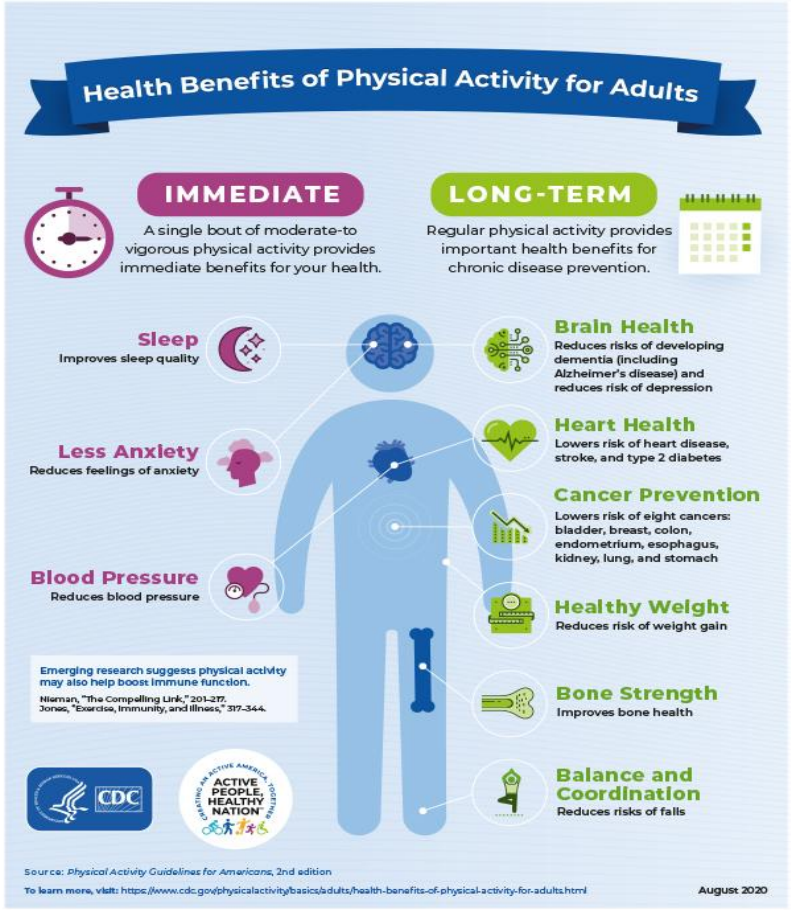


# Social Determinants of Health

- Employment: Increased self-esteem and personal mastery, help cope with symptoms, Higher quality of life, "..work contributes to the recovery process by providing meaning in one's life...," "…competitive work group showed higher rates of improvement of symptoms; in satisfaction with vocational services, leisure, and finances; and in self-esteem than did participants in a combined minimal work-no work group."
- Education: Better employment outcomes; significant decrease in hospitalizations; Significant increase in self-esteem; Achieve life goals, self-esteem, empowerment, meaning in life
- Friendships: Enhanced quality of life, and ability to cope with life stressors and vulnerabilities, - "Social support interactions were significantly associated with better satisfaction with social life…while negative interactions were associated with poorer overall life satisfaction, satisfaction with leisure and satisfaction with finances" (p. 415); Having a close friend and having a friend providing help were more highly correlated with general life satisfaction. Marital status also associated with higher general life satisfaction
- Parenting
- Leisure/Recreation
- Faith

Salzer MS. Community Inclusion and Social Determinants: From Opportunity to Health. Psychiatr Serv. 2021 Jul 1;72(7):836-839. doi: 10.1176/appi.ps.202000394. Epub 2021 Mar 18. PMID: 33730879.

# Physical Benefits of Physical Activity Associated with Participation




### Immediate Benefits for Adults

A single bout of moderate-to vigorous physical activity provides immediate benefits for your health.

**Sleep**
– Improves sleep quality
**Less Anxiety**
– Reduces feelings of anxiety
**Blood Pressure**
– Reduces blood pressure

### Long-term Benefits for Adults

Regular physical activity provides important health benefits for chronic disease prevention.

**Heart Health**
– Lowers risk of heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes
**Cancer Prevention**
-Lowers risk of eight cancers: bladder, breast, colon, endometrium, esophagus, kidney, lung, and stomach
**Healthy Weight**
– Reduces risk of weight gain
**Bone Strength**
– Improves bone health
**Balance and Coordination**
– Reduces risks of falls

Emerging research suggests physical activity may also help boost immune function.[1,2]



From https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adults/health-benefits-of-physical-activity.html#adults

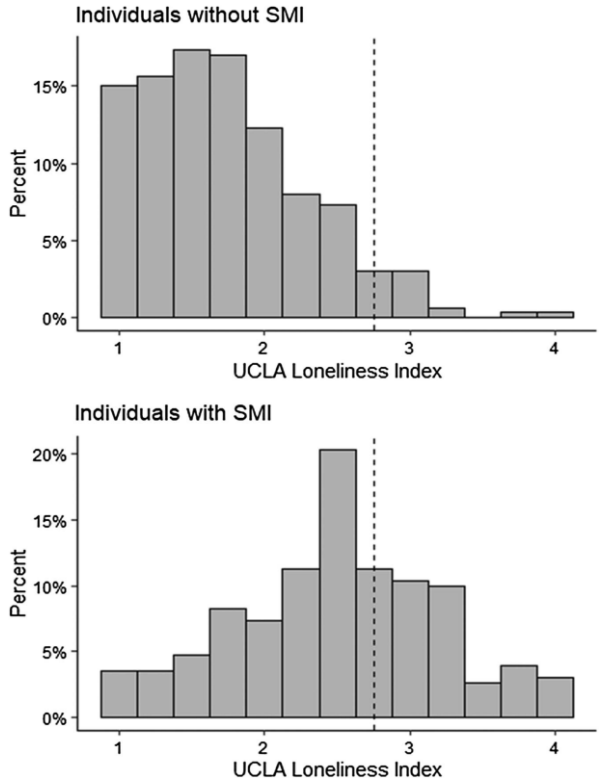
# Cognitive Benefits of Participation

- Physical activity: “A growing body of literature suggests that physical activity beneficially influences brain function during adulthood, particularly frontal lobe-mediated cognitive processes, such as planning, scheduling, inhibition, and working memory.” (Ratey, J. J., & Loehr, J. E. (2011). The positive impact of physical activity on cognition during adulthood: a review of underlying mechanisms, evidence and recommendations. Rev Neurosci, 22(2), 171-185. doi: 10.1515/rns.2011.017)
  - Enhanced brain health and reduced likelihood of dementia (Ahlskog JE, Geda YE, Graff-Radford NR, Petersen RC. Physical exercise as a preventive or disease-modifying treatment of dementia and brain aging. Mayo Clin Proc. 2011 Sep;86(9):876-84. doi: 10.4065/mcp.2011.0252. PMID: 21878600; PMCID: PMC3258000)
- Social interaction: Social isolation associated with cognitive decline (Cacioppo & Hawkley, 2009)
- Increased income from work: Eldar Shafir – Research on the science of not having enough -- “Poverty impedes cognitive function” (Science, Aug 2013)
  - The strain of poverty drains cognitive resources, especially as tasks become more challenging and complex
- Exposure to novel and stimulating environments enhances cognition

Thomas, E. C., Snethen, G., & Salzer, M. S. (2020). Community participation factors and poor neurocognitive functioning among persons with schizophrenia. The American journal of orthopsychiatry, 90(1), 90–97. https://doi.org/10.1037/ort0000399

# Depression and Severe Loneliness are Common Experiences of People with SMI

191 out of 300 (64%) people with SMI categorized as depressed using the Hopkins SCL depression subscale (score over 1.75)




41% of individuals with SMI are severely lonely versus 7% of adults in a community sample

Nagata, S., McCormick, B., Brusilovskiy, E., Snethen, G., Townley, G., & Salzer, M.S. (2021). Depressive Symptoms and Community Participation among Individuals with Serious Mental Illnesses. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 91(5), 598-606. doi: 10.1037/ort0000560.

Nagata, S., McCormick, B., Brusilovskiy, E., Townley, G., & Salzer, M.S. (2023). Disparities in severe loneliness between adults with and without a serious mental illness. Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal, 46(4), 368-372. DOI: 10.1037/prj0000591

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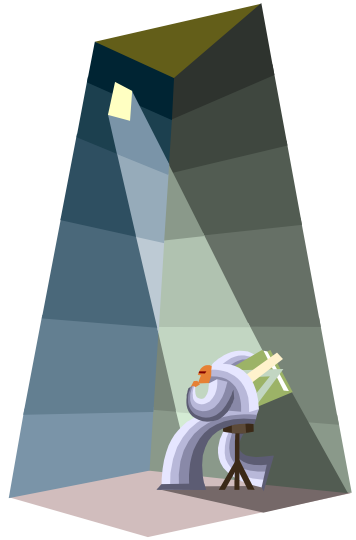
# Evidence: What Makes us Happy?

- Family and friends - the wider and deeper the better.
- Marriage
- Meaning in life, a belief in something bigger than yourself - from religion, spirituality or a philosophy of life.
- Goals that we are working for and find enjoyable.

# What Makes People Unhappy?

- Poor health
- Separation
- Unemployment
- Lack of social contact



Dolan, 2007, Journal of Economic Psychology

# Getting Out and About is Good for Health

| | % time at home | % time alone |
|---|---|---|
| U.S. Population | 54% | 41% |
| People with serious mental illnesses | 75-80% | 55-75% |

- "Getting out and about" is beneficial for health
  - More community participation is associated with more physical activity (Snethen et al., 2021)
  - Getting out of the house is associated with enhanced cognitive functioning (McCormick et al., 2022)
  - Getting out of the house and being with others is associated with greater happiness and less loneliness (Nagata et al., 2021)
  - Greater participation is associated with lower levels of depression (Nagata et al., 2021; 2022)

# Fundamentals for Promoting Community Inclusion and Participation

Salzer, M.S. & Baron, R.C. (2016). Well Together – A blueprint for community inclusion: fundamental concepts, theoretical frameworks and evidence. Published by Wellways Australia Limited, Melbourne, Australia. Available at https://media.wellways.org/inline-files/Well%20Together_2%20May%202016_Final_Web_0.pdf

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# Knowledge and Beliefs

- Fundamental #1:  Community Inclusion is important
- Fundamental #2:  Community Inclusion applies to everyone
- Fundamental #3:  Community inclusion requires seeing ‘the person,’ not ‘the patient’

# Practices

- Fundamental #4:  Self-Determination and Dignity of Risk are Critical
- Fundamental #5: Multiple domains of mainstream life should be sought
- Fundamental #6: Seek participation that is more like everyone else
  - Where does participation takes place?
  - Who chooses the type of participation?
  - Does the participation promote association with others?
- Fundamental #7:  Use emerging support technologies, the natural supports of families and friends, and the engagement of peer supports
  - Especially building and utilizing natural supports
    - COMPEER
    - Club 21 (Alternatives, Inc.)
    - Circles of Support

# Fundamentals #9-11: The Environment and Social Determinants

- Fundamental #9: Understanding and addressing environmental barriers
  - Social model of disability
- Fundamental #10: Using resources available to everyone
- Fundamental #11: Creating welcoming and embracing communities

# Creating a Welcoming and Embracing Environment

Flight from San Diego to Houston with a 4-year-old autistic boy

- Flight attendants: let Braysen sit on mother's lap for takeoff while the father was holding him; let the boy lie down on the floor after plane was in the air
- First Class: Let Braysen kick the back of their chairs; gave him high fives; "Everybody in first class was kind to him, asking his name, showing him pictures on their phones, letting him sit whenever he wanted," Gabriel said. "The flight attendants kept asking if we needed anything, making sure everybody was taken care of."

https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/united-airlines-boy-autism-flight-wellness/index.html
A boy with autism wouldn't sit still on a United Airlines flight. So crew and passengers stepped in to help.
Gianluca Mezzofiore, CNN • Updated 29th August 2019

Thank You!!

Feel free to contact me at
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Checkout our website:
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