

Eating Disorders in Low Socioeconomic Status Populations: The Who, What, and Why and How we can Address

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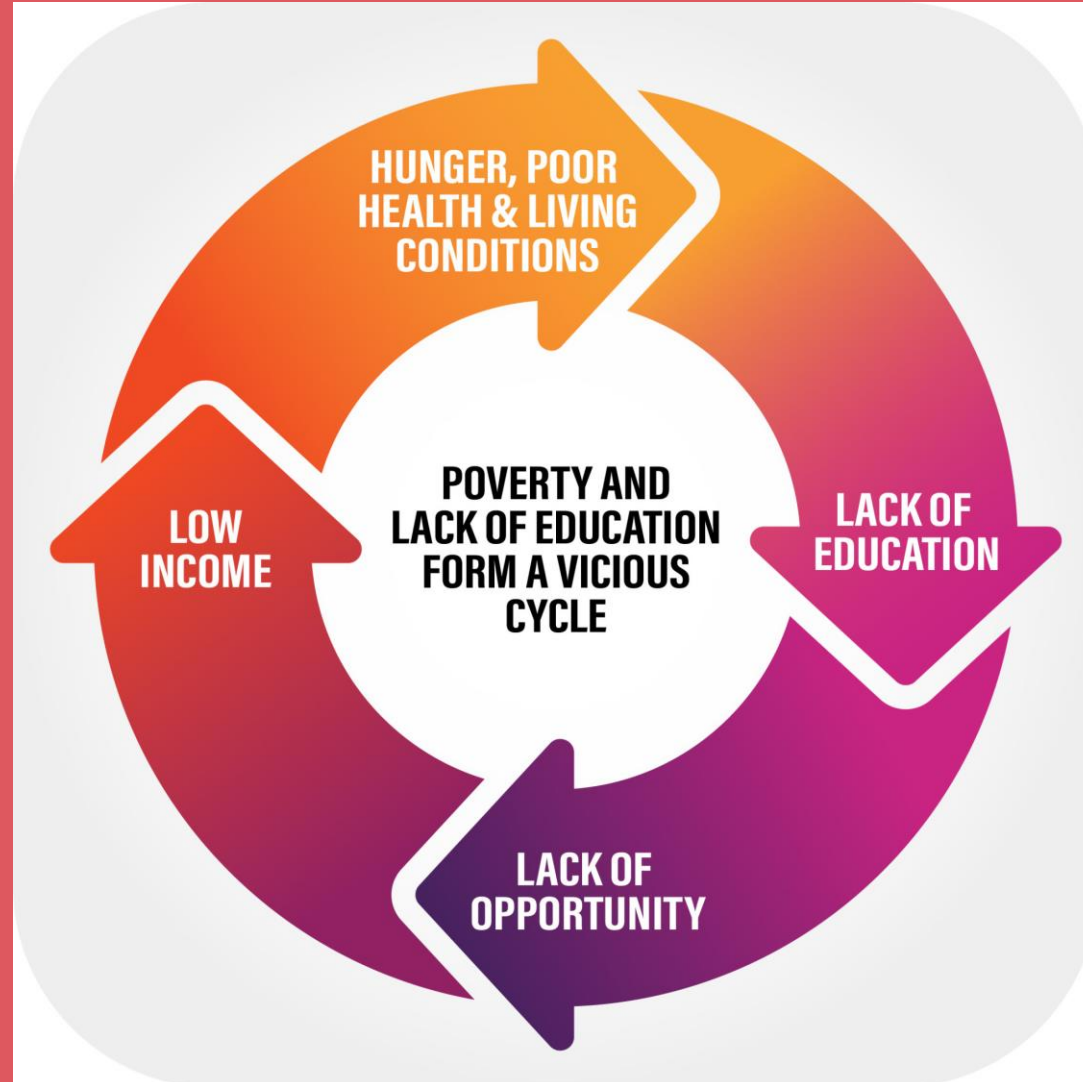
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Low socioeconomic status (SES)



“Socioeconomic status (SES) encompasses not only income but also educational attainment, occupational prestige, and subjective perceptions of social status and social class.”

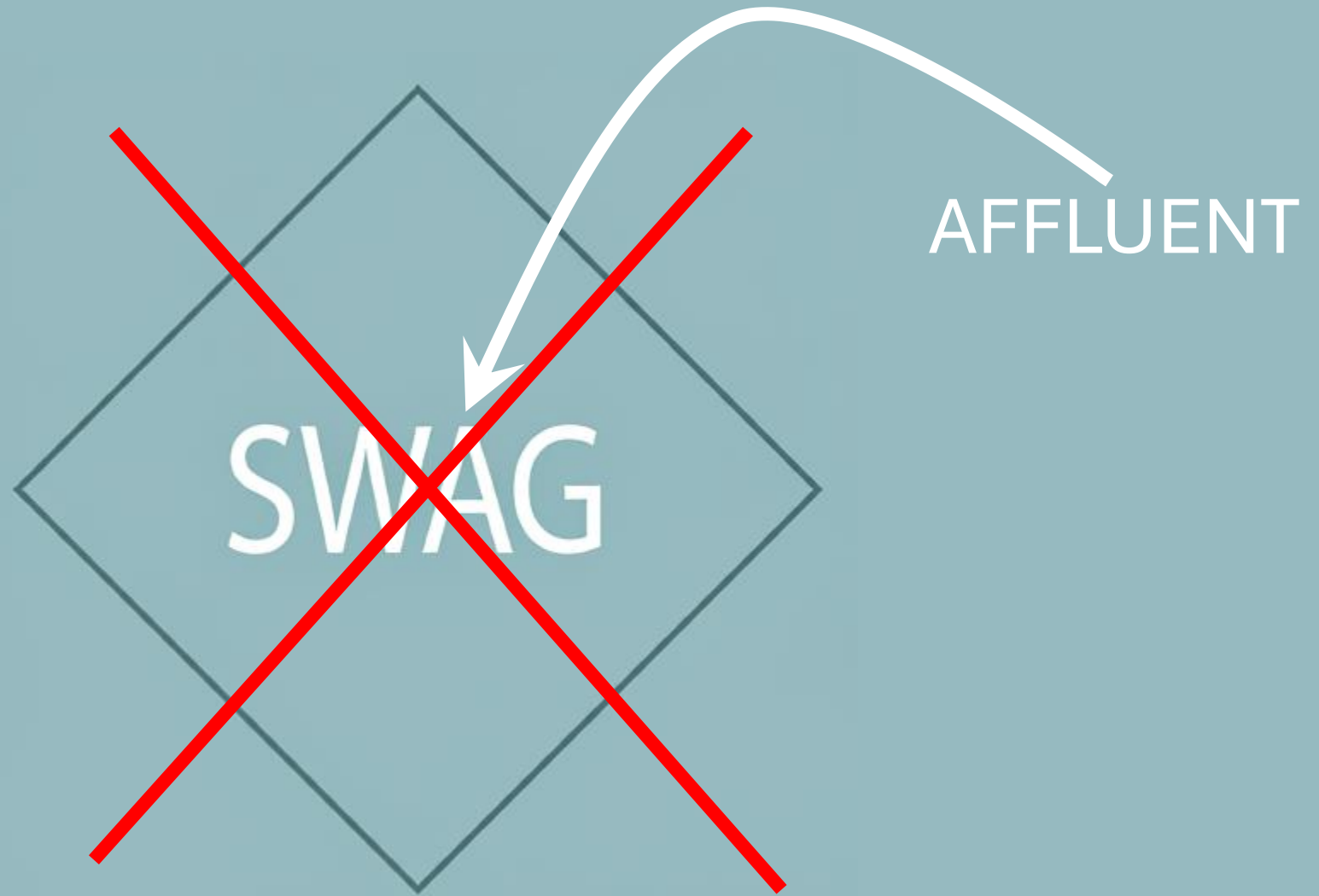
Low SES is cyclical and multigenerational



The stereotype of who has an eating disorder



The stereotype of who has an eating disorder



What about low SES and eating disorders? Likelihood of having?






↑ 30%



Psychological Medicine

Socioeconomic status and eating disorder prevalence: at the intersections of gender identity, sexual orientation, and race/ethnicity

Published online by Cambridge University Press: 16 May 2022

Natasha L. Burke , Vivienne M. Hazzard , Lauren M. Schaefer , Melissa Simone , Jennifer L. O'Flynn and Rachel F. Rodgers 

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What about low SES and eating disorders? Perceiving need for treatment?

↓ 52%

International Journal of

EATING DISORDERS

ORIGINAL ARTICLE |  Full Access

Disparities in eating disorder diagnosis and treatment according to weight status, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic background, and sex among college students

K. R. Sonnevile ScD, RD  S. K. Lipson PhD

First published: 02 March 2018 | <https://doi.org/10.1002/eat.22846> | Citations: 224

What about low SES and eating disorders? Likelihood of diagnosis?

↓ 48%

International Journal of

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What about low SES and eating disorders? Likelihood of treatment in past year?

↓ 89%

International Journal of

EATING DISORDERS

ORIGINAL ARTICLE |  Full Access

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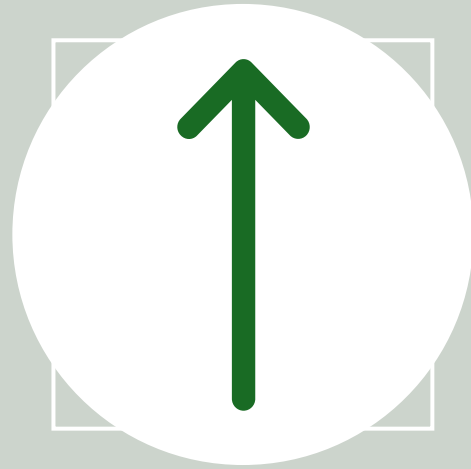
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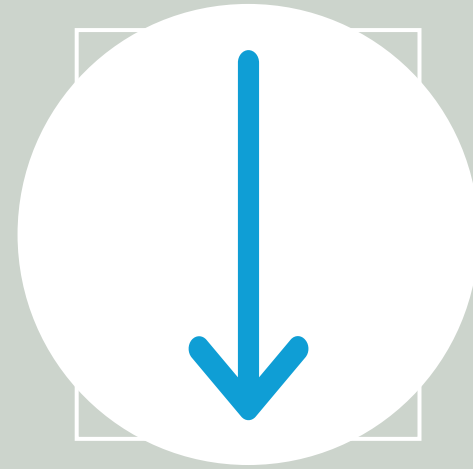


Why? It doesn't fit the stereotype...

Two overarching reasons low SES populations have higher eating disorder risk:

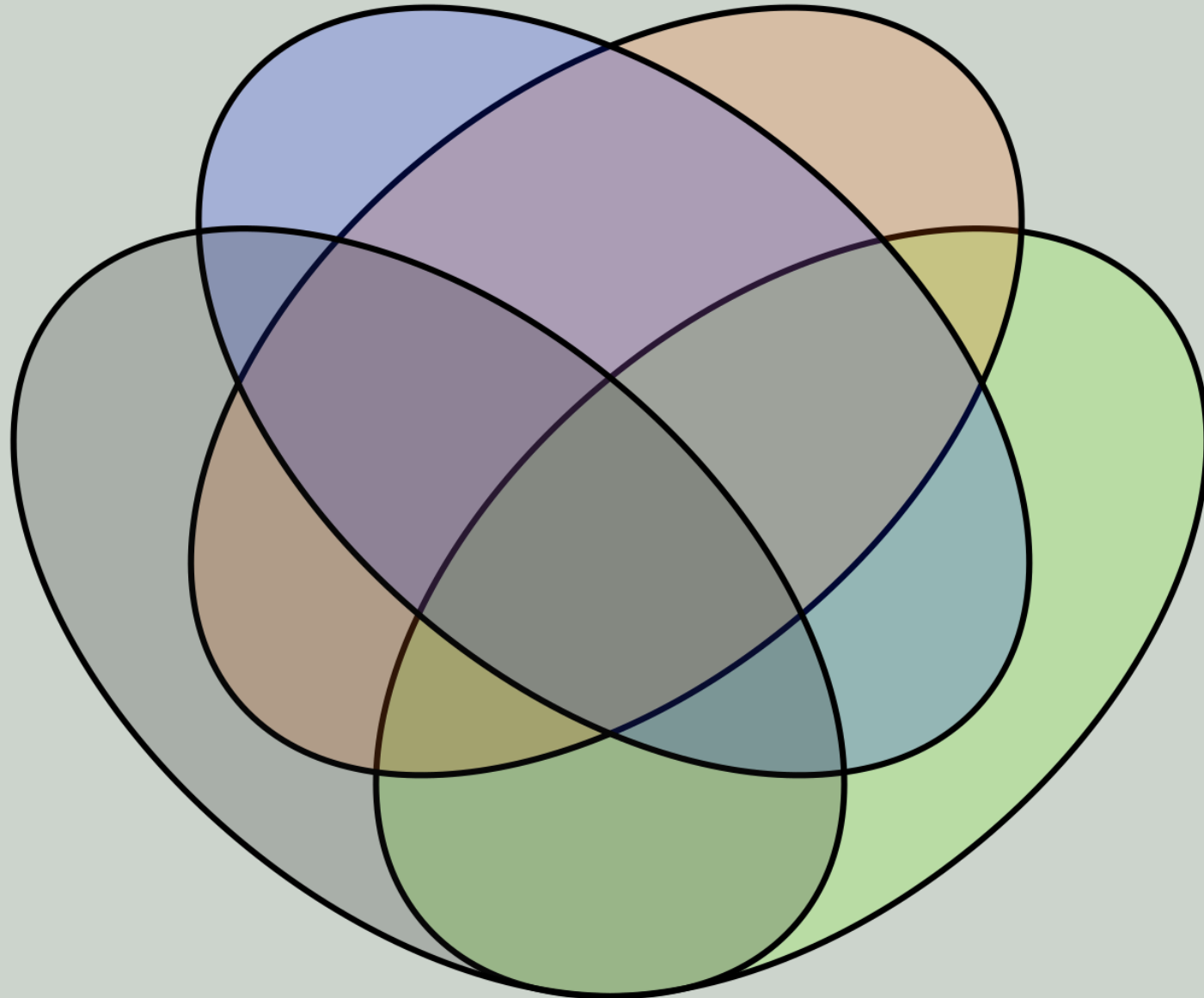


**INCREASED LIKELIHOOD
OF RISK FACTORS**



**DECREASED TREATMENT
ACCESSIBILITY**

Intersectionality of low SES and other identities



Increased likelihood of eating disorder risk factors

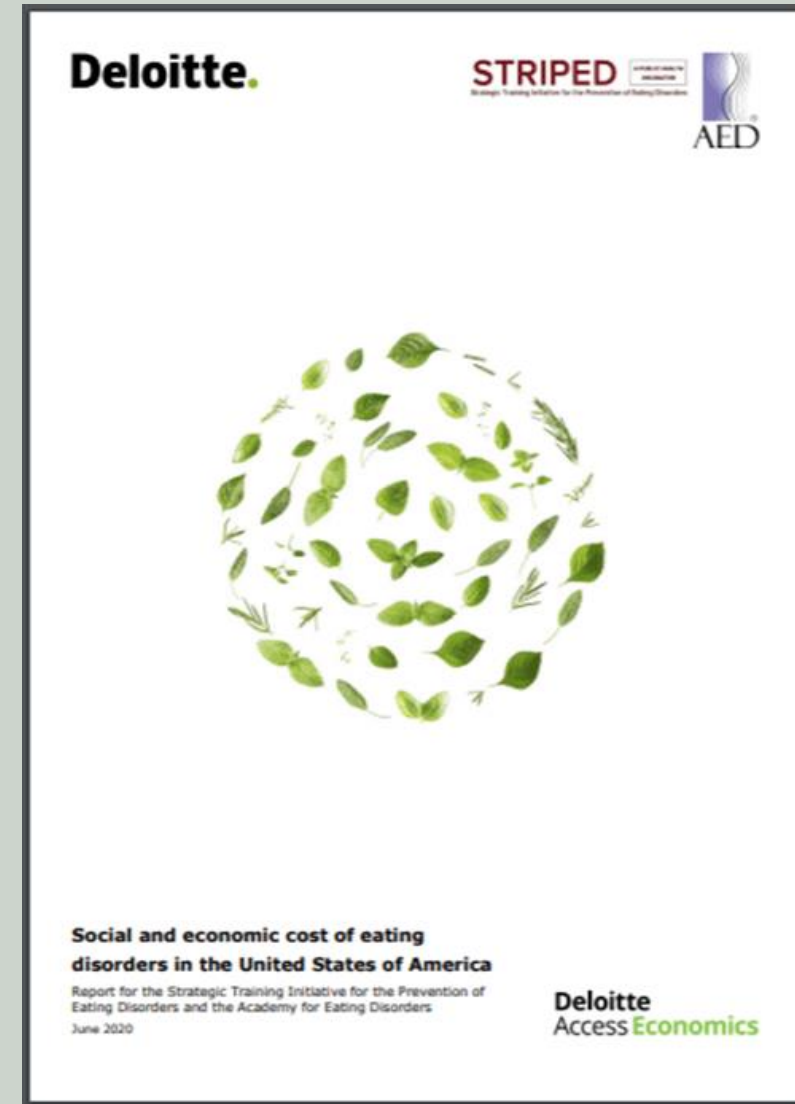




Certain risk factors may be MORE harmful among those with low SES

Decreased likelihood of eating disorder treatment: financial restrictions

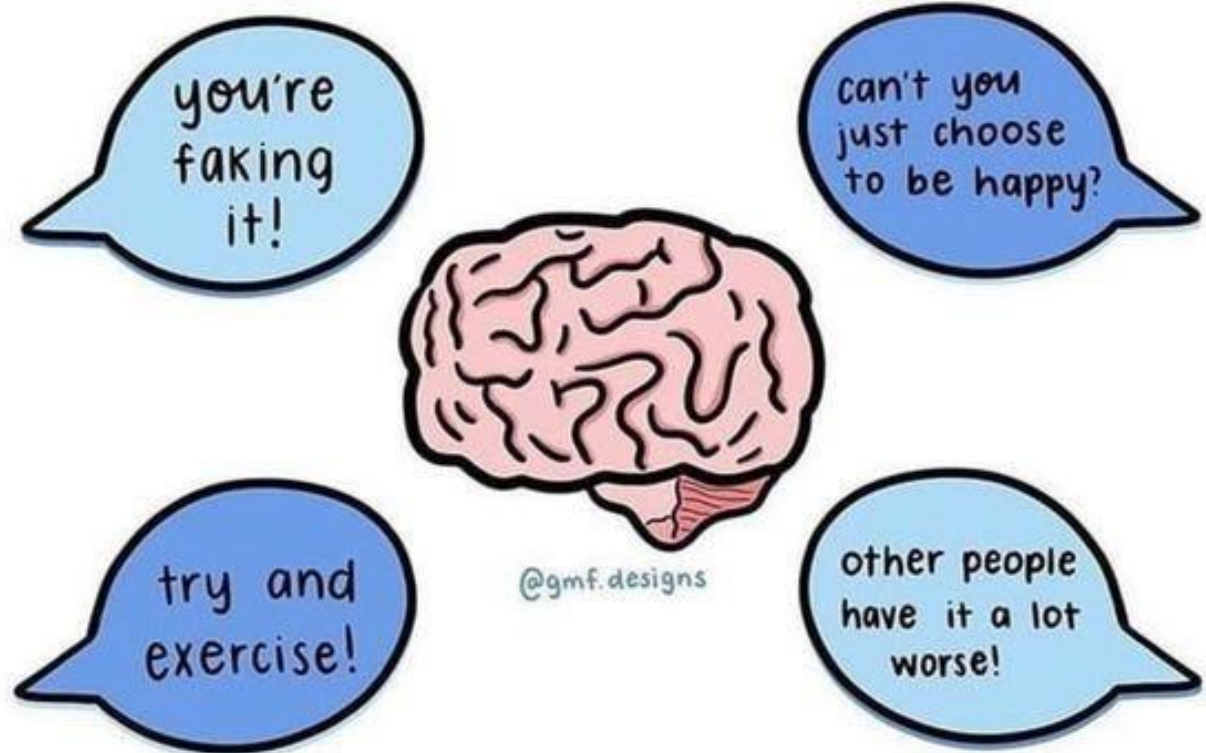
- Unable to afford expensive private treatment
- Long wait times to be seen
- Transportation is not readily available (car, public transport, etc.)
- Money for food or other treatment needs



Decreased likelihood of eating disorder treatment: sociocultural characteristics



WHAT MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA SOUNDS LIKE



Treatment isn't designed for low SES families



- Many recommendations for treatment aren't possible:
 - Food insecurity
 - Having a parent/family monitor meal times
 - Eating at specific times
- Ex. Family Based Therapy

What does this mean?

Individuals who are low SES are:

- More likely to develop an eating disorder
- Less likely to get treatment
 - Less likely to believe that they need treatment
 - Less likely to get a diagnosis
 - Treatments are not designed for them, may be less efficacious

=

More eating disorders,
with worse outcomes

How do we reduce disparities?



POLICY &
ADVOCACY

How do we reduce disparities?

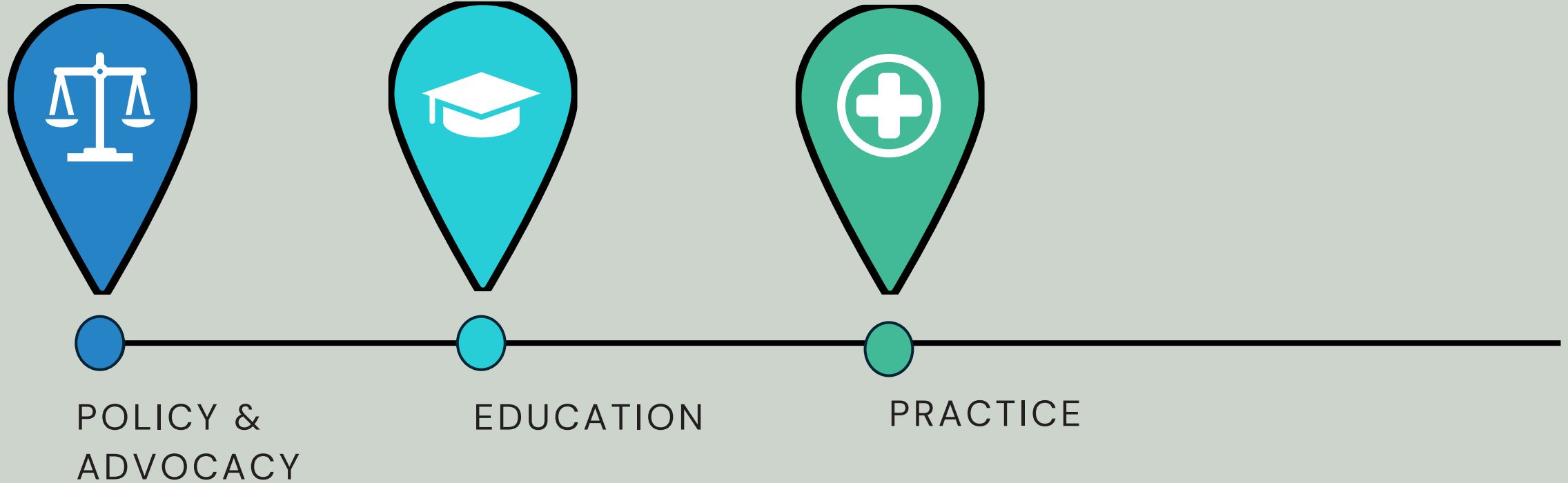


POLICY &
ADVOCACY



EDUCATION

How do we reduce disparities?

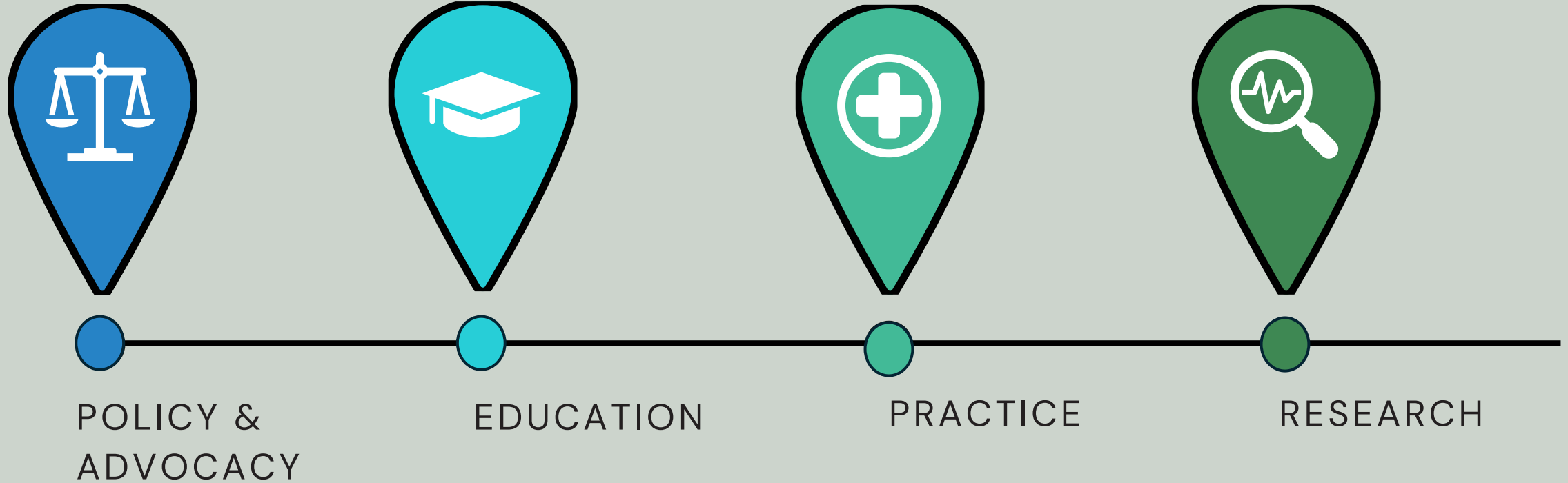


Providing culturally competent care to low SES populations

- Be knowledgeable about the realities of those who are low SES including stresses, available resources, barriers, *supports*
- Consider whether existing treatment options are genuinely accessible to those with low SES
- Knowledge of the barriers:
 - Keep them from treatment
 - Traditional approaches not feasible
 - More stress
 - Less time
- Barriers can include
 - Social
 - Monetary
 - Geographical
 - Time
 - Etc.



How do we reduce disparities?



How do we reduce disparities?



POLICY &
ADVOCACY



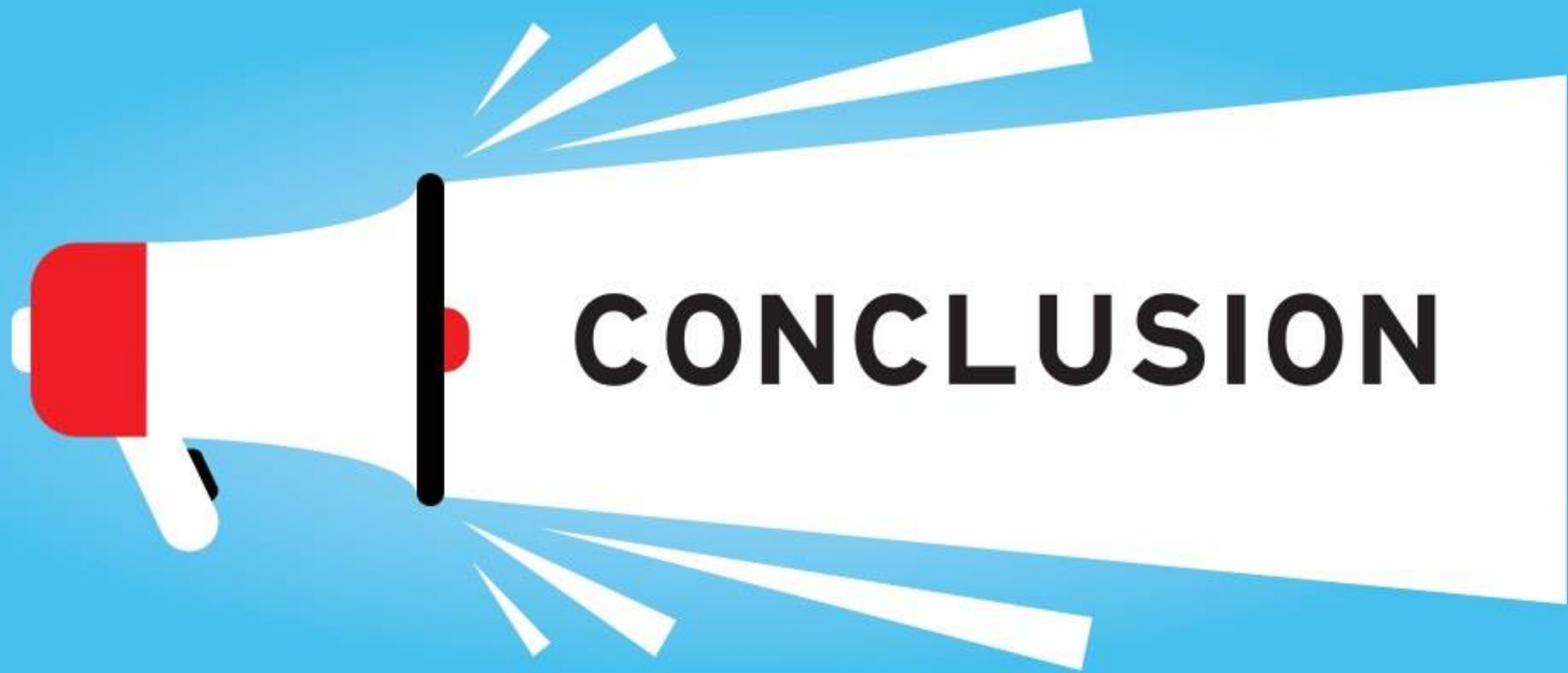
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PRACTICE



RESEARCH



CONCLUSION

THANK YOU!



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