

# More than the words we say: communicating through identity, stigma, and trauma.

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Last Updated: 6/7/2023

# Disclosures

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No conflicts of interest.

**Trigger warning: Will discuss topics of trauma and suicidality**

# Data Considerations

*Data in this presentation offer a limited perspective of how systemic, social, and economic factors impact health. We recognize that racism, not race, creates and perpetuates health disparities.*



To Learn More:

<https://www.cdc.gov/minorityhealth/racism-disparities>

# Objective

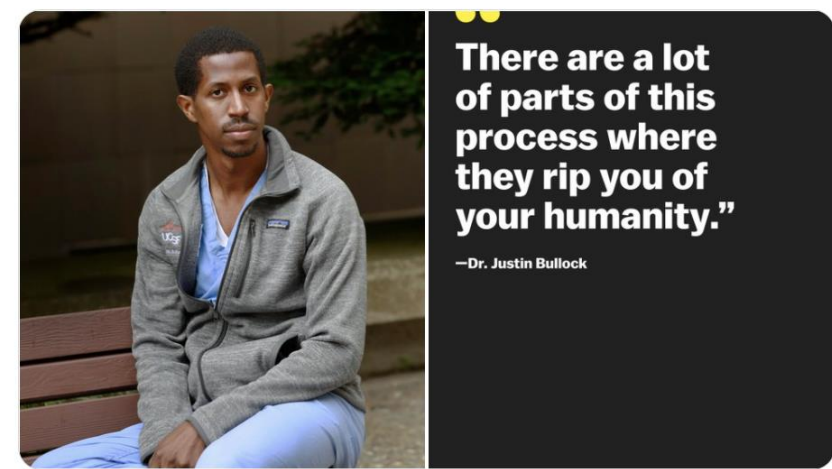
Critically explore communication in the intersection of personal and professional in caring for patients with lived experiences of trauma and stigmatized health conditions.

 **Vox**   
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1/ After a suicide attempt in 2020, Dr. Justin Bullock was put through a dehumanizing, month-long assessment by his employer.



It's part of a larger problem of stigma around mental health in the medical field that needs to change:  
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**There are a lot of parts of this process where they rip you of your humanity.”**  
—Dr. Justin Bullock

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## How does this relate to people with HIV?

- Rates of depression 15-40% in people with HIV
- Depressive symptoms are associated w/ HIV progression
- Interaction of diseases like bipolar with HIV risk factors

Pandey. The Lancet HIV. 2019  
Ickovics. JAMA. 2001.



One day  
in clinic...

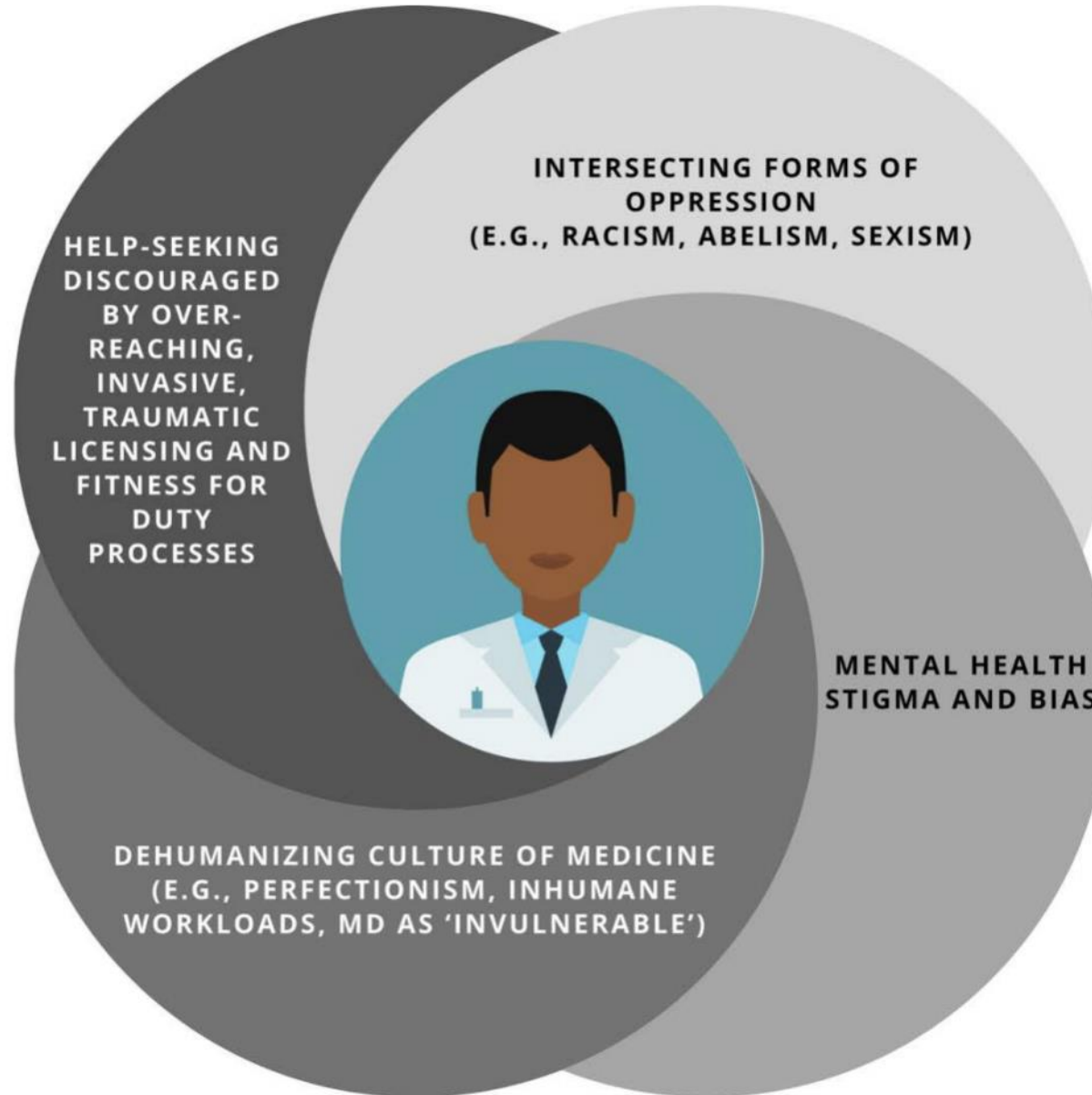
## PATIENT HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE-9 (PHQ-9)

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered  
by any of the following problems?  
(Use "✓" to indicate your answer)

	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things	0	1	2	3
2. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless	0	1	2	3
3. Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much	0	1	2	3
4. Feeling tired or having little energy	0	1	2	3
5. Poor appetite or overeating	0	1	2	3
6. Feeling bad about yourself — or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down	0	1	2	3
7. Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching television	0	1	2	3
8. Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed? Or the opposite — being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual	0	1	2	3
9. Thoughts that you would be better off dead or of hurting yourself in some way	0	1	2	3




## Traumatic System that Discourages Help-seeking in Medicine



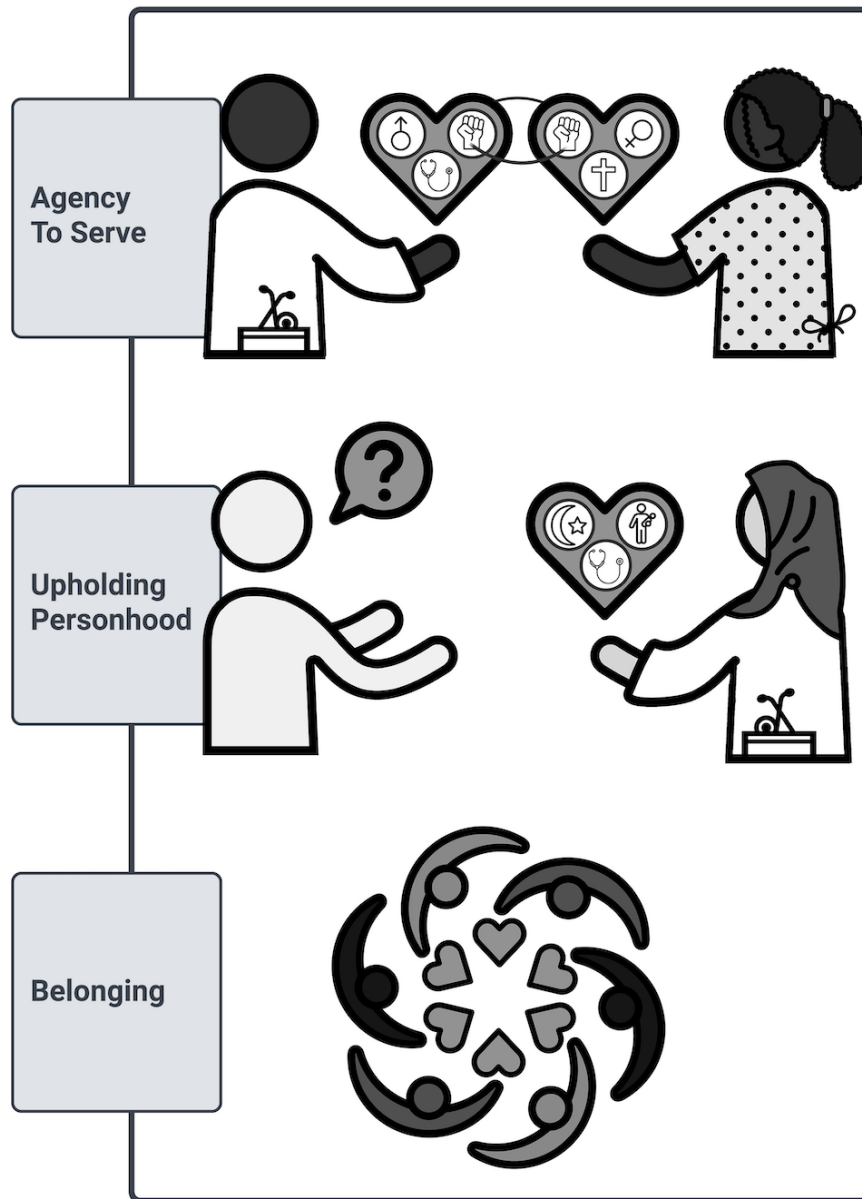
Bullock JL, Kimberg LS, Meeks, LM. Trauma-Informed Transformation of Evaluation and Licensure for Physicians With Mental Illness. Jour of Hosp Med. 2021

# Opportunities and challenges in discussing racism during primary care visits

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Justin L. Bullock MD, MPH<sup>4</sup> | Elena Fuentes-Afflick MD, MPH<sup>5</sup> |  
Nynikka R. A. Palmer DrPH, MPH<sup>6,7,8</sup>

**Healing is not always linear.**

# Identity Safety



@MedEdModels

**More than the words we say: communicating *through* identity, stigma, and trauma.**

Through: In spite of  
Through: by way of

# Acknowledgment

This Mountain West AIDS Education and Training (MWAETC) program is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$3,098,654 with 0% financed with non-governmental sources.

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