



Reducing stigma and increasing understanding through mental health education in Powell, WY

Ethan Slight | RUOP iii-3 | 2018 | University of Washington School of Medicine

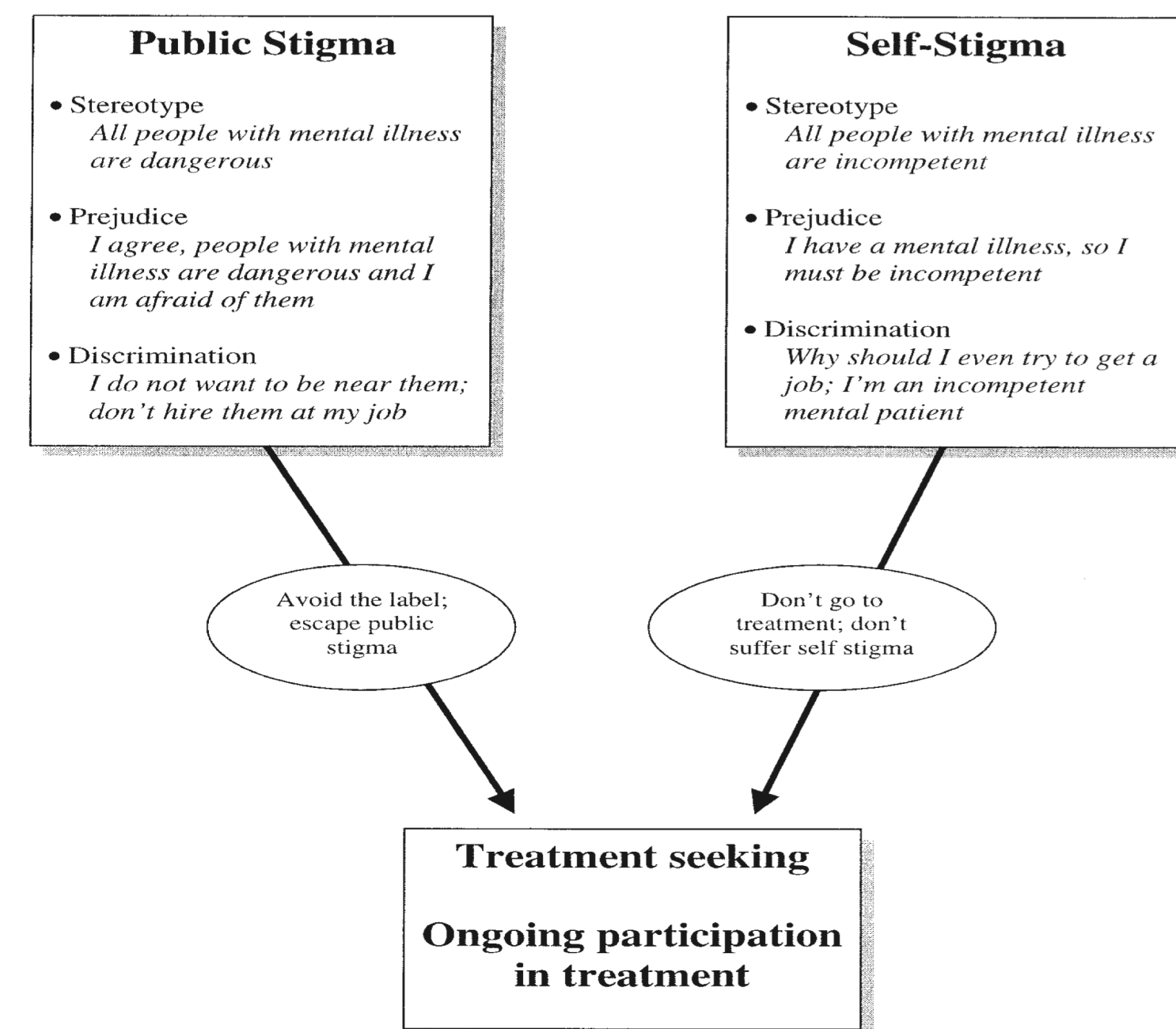
Background

- Powell is a small agricultural community in northwest Wyoming, home to 6,500 residents
- Hard working and self-reliant attitudes contribute towards population health
 - Lower incidence rates of obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease when compared to Wyoming average.
 - These attitudes may also contribute to the **severe mental health stigma** that exists in the community
- Large population of patients attend mental health sessions in private and terminate their treatment plan early in fear of negative judgment from others
- Many people suffering with mental health issues do not get treatment they need



Hypothesis

Providing mental health education involving mechanism of disease and treatment options from both a provider and patient will reduce both public and self-stigma, leading to improved treatment.



Literature Review

- Mental health education that involved both a provider and an individual with a mental health illness discussing disease mechanism of action and treatment showed to effectively reduce stigma in school aged children
- Stigma can be reduced through low cost and time effective sessions
- Social media is an effective tool for reducing stigma
- Anti-stigma workshops are effective at reducing stereotypes of individual disorders or grouped to encompass range of illnesses



Community Health Project Design

- Anti-stigma mental health workshops for students at Powell Middle School
- Students receive education on mental health disorders from patients and providers
- Workshops include information on treatment as well as mechanisms and characteristics of disorder
- Curriculum design established through community collaboration between Powell Middle School and Beartooth Brain Works



Target audience: Powell Middle School students

Deliverables to Community

- Literature review of effective mental health stigma reducing strategies
- Facilitate meeting between Powell Middle School counseling staff and Beartooth Brain Works
- Sample mental health work shop curriculum



Student engagement in mental health education

Next Steps

- Identify patients and providers to help teach in mental health sessions
- Set aside time in curriculum for stigma reduction workshops in or out of regular school hours
- Identify mental health illnesses to be addressed in sessions
- Spread program to schools in the surrounding counties

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