

Minority stress:

The effects on minority youth

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The Finnish League for Human Rights



- Mother
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Overview

- What is minority stress theory?
- Norms and how they effect us
- Impact on mental health
- Conversation



Mental health

"... a state of well-being in which the individual realizes their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community."

World Health Organisation

- Includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act.



Minority stress

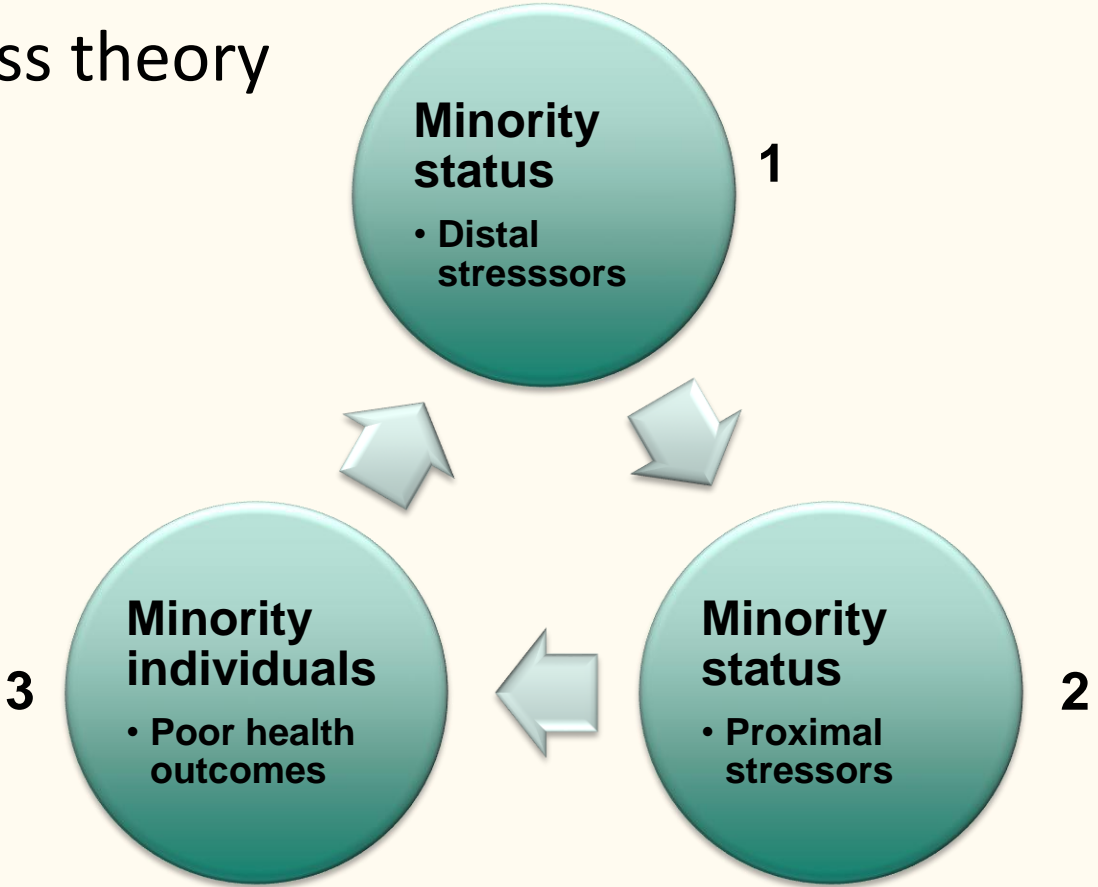
- minority individuals experience continuous prejudice
 - causes stress responses
- minority individuals suffer from mental and physical health disparities compared to peers in majority groups.
 - higher rates of suicide, substance abuse, and cancer
 - health disparities impact day-to-day well-being as well as overall life expectancy



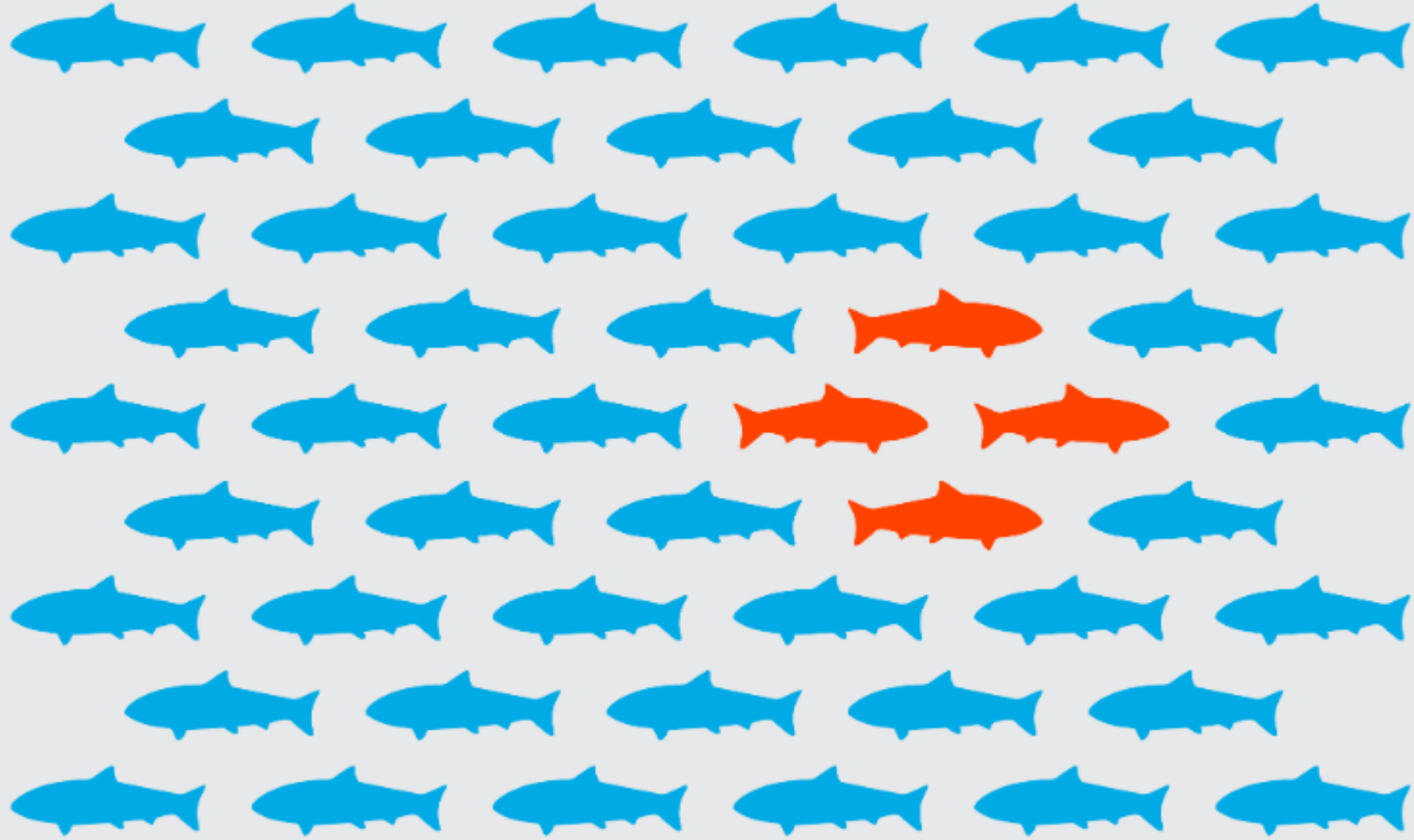
Minority stress theory

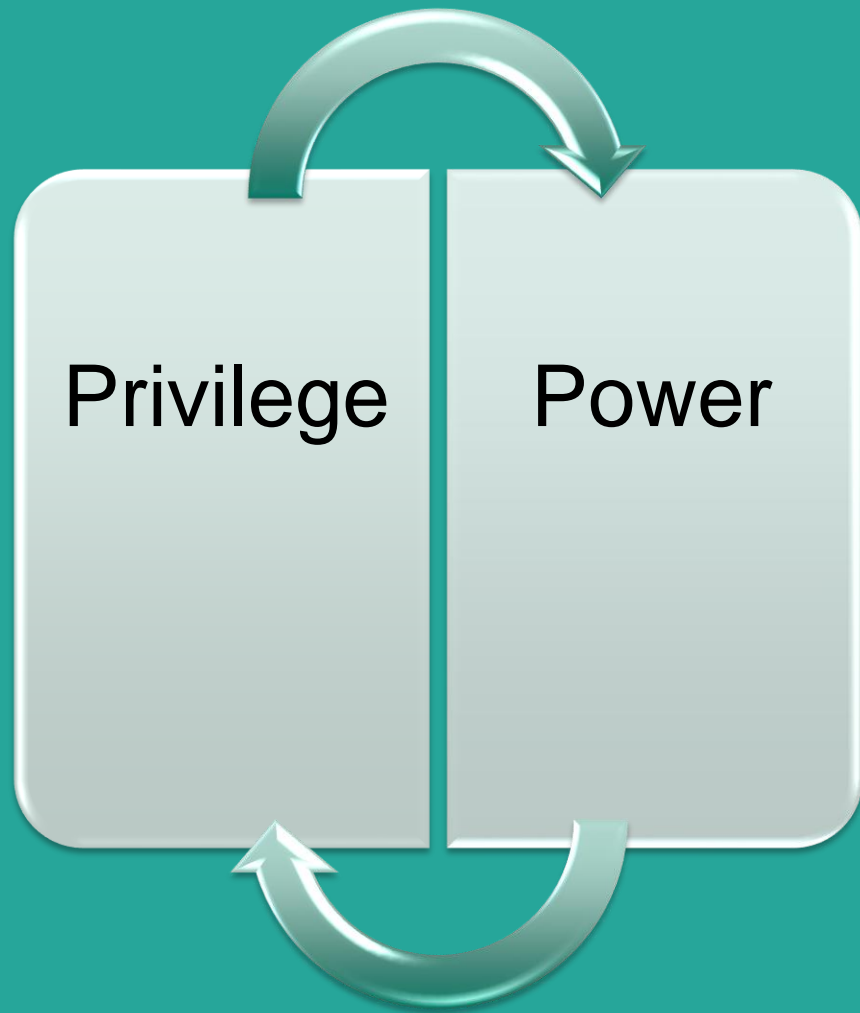


Minority stress theory



Norms





Impact on mental health



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Possible presenting symptoms

Psychological

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Shame
- Anger
- Self-blame
- Low sense of belonging

Physiological

- Hypertension
- High blood pressure
- Break-outs
- Eating/sleeping too much/too little
- Unexplained aches & pains
- Heart disease

Social

- Isolation from people & valued activities
- Changing behavior
- Avoidance

Internalized oppression

On individual level

A person believes that the stereotypes and misinformation that they hear are true about them.

These beliefs can hold them back from living life to its full potential or the individual acts in ways that reinforce the stereotypes and are ultimately self-defeating.



Internalized oppression

*Among members
of the same marginalised
group*

Individual in the same group believe (often unconsciously) the misinformation and stereotypes society communicates about other members of their group.

People turn the oppression on one another, instead of addressing larger problems in society. The results are that people treat one another in ways that are less than fully respectful. Can lead to → people from the same minority group hurt, undermine, criticize, mistrust, fight with, or isolate themselves from one another



Stereotype threat

Individuals who belong to a marginalized group are or feel themselves to be at risk of conforming to negative stereotypes about their social group

- a reduction in the performance of individuals who belong to negatively stereotyped groups
- if negative stereotypes are present regarding a specific group, group members are likely to become anxious about their performance, which may hinder their ability to perform to their full potential
- It is hypothesized that the mechanism through which anxiety (induced by the activation of the stereotype) decreases performance is by depleting working memory



Imposter syndrome

- A psychological phenomenon that doesn't let us internalize our achievements. An individual experience of self-perceived intellectual phoniness
- Constant fear of losing ones cover can ultimately lead to mental health issues such as depression and anxiety.



Coping mechanisms

- Overachieving/underachieving
- Self-deprecating humor/humor
- Making ourselves smaller/bigger
- Performative normativity
- Self-medication(drugs&alcohol)

→ Can lead to societal isolation



Solutions

- Safe spaces
- Norm awareness/criticalness
- Giving language to support lived experiences
- Affirmation of lived experiences
- Affirmation of identity
- Solution focused
 - make visible the strength that patients might not see in themselves
- Group therapy
- Self-care
- Music
- Pop-culture

Thank You!

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