An Integrative Approach to Chronic Pain : *Beyond the Pills*

(The short version)
Andrea Gordon, MD
10/13/22

Long version at Integrativepaincme.com

1

Does this seem familiar?

2

Shared frustrations

Ours

The patient's

Our colleagues

3

Why can't we move forwards?

4

Maybe we are not seeing the real issues

5

Why is this so hard?

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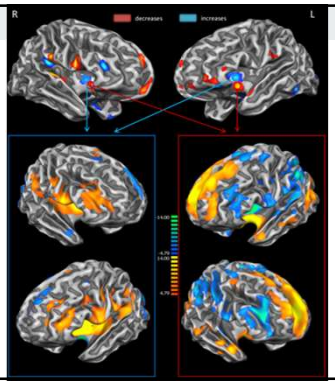

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Are we using the wrong tools?

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First we have to check our biases

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Factors we don't realize

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How can we judge another's experience?

[redacted]

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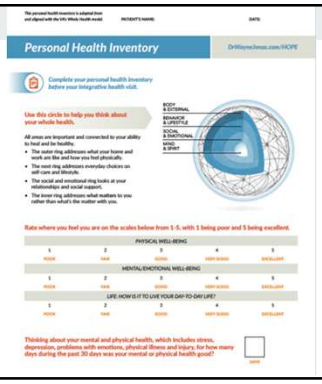
What if we had tools to help?



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Slide 9

1 do you mention race bias in pain treatment?
Elena Rosenbaum, 6/7/2021

1 Good point!
Andrea Gordon, 6/7/2021

2 Nor explicitly but I will. Thanks so much for these
Andrea Gordon, 6/7/2021

2 do you mention chronic pain stigma to?
Elena Rosenbaum, 6/7/2021

Rate where you feel you are on the scales below from 1-5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent.

PHYSICAL WELL-BEING				
1	2	3	4	5
POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT

MENTAL/EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING				
1	2	3	4	5
POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT

LIFE: HOW IS IT TO LIVE YOUR DAY-TO-DAY LIFE?				
1	2	3	4	5
POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT

Thinking about your mental and physical health, which includes stress, depression, problems with emotions, physical illness and injury, for how many days during the past 30 days was your mental or physical health good?

DAYS

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What do you live for? What matters to you? Why do you want to be healthy?

Write a few words to capture your thoughts:

Tell me when you were last well.

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Where You are Now

Write in a number between 1 (poor) and 5 (excellent) that best represents where you are now. Then rank how ready you are to work on that area between 1 (not interested) to 5 (would start today).

Area of Whole Health	Where I am now (1-5)	Mark how ready you are to make changes (1-5)
BODY & EXTERNAL		
Feeling safe: Having comfortable, healthy spaces where you work and live. The quality of the lighting, color, air, and water. Decreasing unpleasant clutter, noises, and smells.		
BEHAVIOR & LIFESTYLE		
Moving: Moving and doing physical activities like walking, dancing, gardening, sports, lifting weights, yoga, cycling, swimming, and working out in a gym.		
Sleep: Getting enough rest, relaxation, and sleep.		
Food: Eating healthy, balanced meals with plenty of fruits and vegetables each day. Drinking enough water and limiting sodas, sweetened drinks, and alcohol.		
Stress Management: Tapping into the power of your mind to heal and cope. Using mind-body techniques like relaxation, breathing, or guided imagery.		
SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL		
Social Support: Feeling listened to and connected to people you love and care about. The quality of your relationships with family, friends and people you work with.		
Paying for Basics: Quality and availability of food, housing, utilities, and transportation.		
MIND & SPIRIT		
Purpose: Having a sense of purpose and meaning in your life. Feeling connected to something larger than yourself. Finding strength in difficult times.		

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Opening up the conversation

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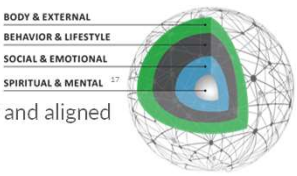
What now?

1. **Offer an integrative health visit** to discuss their personal determinants of health - focused on lifestyle, the social and spiritual
1. Give them the **Personal Health Inventory**
1. **Know the five domains**
   - Why they want health &
1. **Have your team, offerings** ready and aligned



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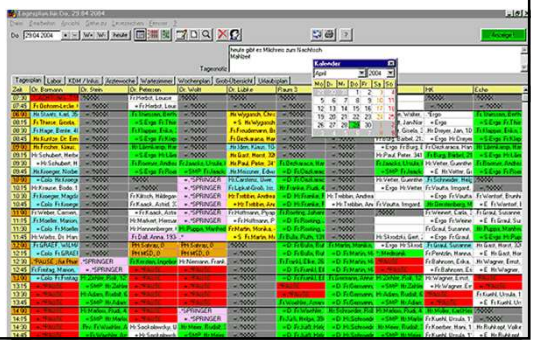

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Conducting An Integrative Visit

1. Do the **Personal Health Inventory**
2. Ask the **HOPE questions** – keep fluid, it is not a checklist
3. **Prioritize** action items
4. Reflect back and listen
   - Action plan → **Personalized Health Plan**
   - Close the loop with teach back

1. **Hand off :** medical assistant, health coach, nurse, CHW, and/or group visit - schedule follow ups as needed.

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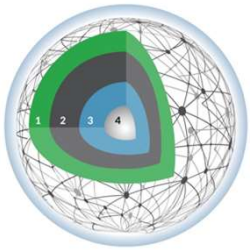

SPIRITUAL & MENTAL 4

- *Why do you want to be healthy?*
- *What is most important for you in your life?*

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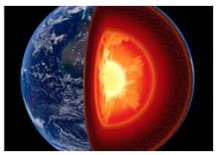
Why do you want to be healthy?
What is most important for you in your life?

- **"What matters"** rather than **"what's the matter"**
- Their inner life:
  - desires, beliefs and needs, purpose and meaning in life



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Help the patient find their original story
What is your "why"?

Sense of purpose in life

- Predictor of lower all cause mortality risk and lower CV risk
- Motivator for self care and preventive screening

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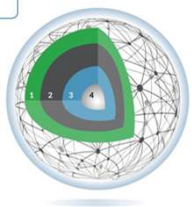
BEHAVIOR & LIFESTYLE 2

- *How is your diet?*
- *How is your sleep?*
- *How is your stress?*
- *How is your activity level?*



- Can impact up to *60-70 %* of chronic illnesses,
- Key to reversing chronic disease and improving function.

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- Behavior change must be connected to what is meaningful to be sustained.

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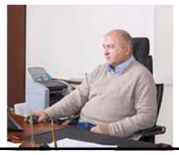

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Diet Resources

- Referral to nutritionist for nutritional counseling
- Condition-specific group visits
- Educational handouts
  - Integrative Health Guide
  - Mediterranean diet
  - DASH Diet – for high blood pressure
  - Nutrition for pain guide
  - IFM elimination guide

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Activity

- Be specific! (Exercise prescription)
- Referral to integrative health therapist or course (e.g. Alexander technique)
  - Therapeutic yoga provider
  - Moving meditation (Tai chi or Qi gong)
  - Help patient find a local resource
    Ex. Find a YMCA (scholarships)

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ANY activity *counts*

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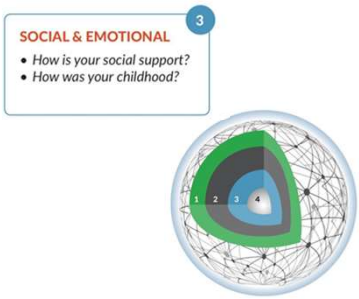

How is your social support? – *family, friends, frequency, fullness*

How was your childhood? – *explain that ACE can influence healing*

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Honor that they have shared this with you

- Might be the first time anyone connected this with their health
- Ask for permissio ources

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Stress Management

- Guided imagery
- Journaling
- Biofeedback (HeartMath)
- Art therapy
- Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)
- Mindfulness meditation
- Mobile phone apps (CALM; Curable (for pain))

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- Medication/supplement management
- Refer to guided imagery relaxation resources: HealthJourneys Sleep
- Referral to specialist:
  - Behavioral health therapist for sleep hygiene instruction
    - Referral to Behavioral/mental health professional
  - Guided Imagery Practitioner
  - Sleep study if indicated

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TELEHEALTH

healthjourneys

HeartMath

InsightTimer

HEADSPACE

ALPHA-STIM

Calm

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Loneliness

- **Risk factor** for disease and death
- Impacts recovery, resilience, return visits and readmission
- So often healing has to do with **relationships**
  - Men – spouse
  - Women – friends, family; church; community; work colleagues

Depth (quality) of the relationship more important than number (quantity)

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Connections

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Social & Emotional Solutions

- Discuss resources such as clubs, churches, sports gro group class within system or in community
- CaringBridge – online storytelling community
- Loneliness project
- https://connect2affect.org/
- https://www.volunteermatch.org/
- Pets can be wonderful companions and motivators to activity.

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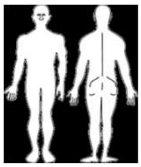
BODY & EXTERNAL 1

- *What is your home like?*
- *Your work environment?*
- *Do you get out in nature?*

- **Zip code vs. genetic code**
- **Safety**
- **Time and place for oneself**



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Physical Environment

- Community
- Work
- School
- Home

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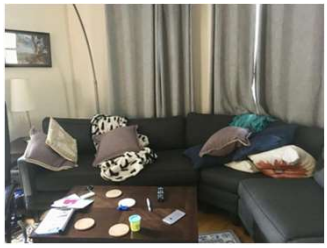
Can you make one change in your home or work environment?



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Social and Economic Factors

Largest influences on health

-Impact a person's ability to engage in healthy behaviors and make healthy choices

- *Education*
- *Employment*
- *Housing Insecurity*
- *Food Insecurity*
- *Financial Strain Problems* or *Paying for Basics*
- *Transportation issues*
- *Exposure to Violence* or *Concerned about Child*

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Addressing Social Determinants

- Refer to social workers within the team or in community
- EveryONE Project Toolkit by AAFP
- Healthy neighborhood atlas by zip code – U of Wisc
- Build relationships with community organizations for transportation resources; housing support; domestic violence referrals
- Consult experts (ex. Dr. Rishi Manchanda of Health Begins)
- Explore food prescription programs

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But what does this have to do with pain?

Everything

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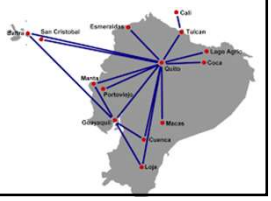
Plan together



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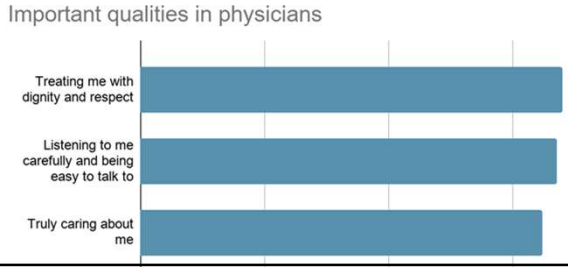
Remember - YOU are the best tool



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Teams!

Nurses
Nutritionists
Behavioral health
Community resources
Health coaches
Other practitioners - conventional and CAM

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And you can be paid for this

Billing codes for your time and
Your team's time
Team meetings
Group visits can also be billed

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Learn more!
http://integrativepaincme.com

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