

Health Equity: From Theory to Practice, From the Textbook to the Street

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Born in to.....

- Poverty
- Racial Tension
- Urban Ghetto
- Segregation
- Domestic Violence
- Alcoholism
- Abandonment
- Single Parent

The thing that brought me out.....

- Love of reading, sports, poetry
- Passion for music, my people
- Connection to “The Movement” Civil Rights
- Discovery of the rich history of African People and the Diaspora
- Commitment to the Power of One and that “I” could change the system
- The notion that I really could change the world

Power of ONE

- Martin Luther King, Malcolm X
- Angela Davis, Gloria Steinham
- Steve Jobs
- Harvey Melk
- Tiananmen Square “Tank Man”
- Nelson Mandela, Steven Biko
- Mother Teresa, Gandhi
- Adewale Troutman
- **The Power is in this room.....**

YOU

We are all connected

- Bird Flu
- SARS
- West Nile Virus
- Natural Disasters - Tsunami
- Technology-ECHO Internet
- Economy
- New Physics-Depak Chopra's Molecular Science
- There is no them there is only us



“We are all
Connected by
the great circle
of life”

Mufasa
The Lion King

- “If we could but recognize our common humanity, that we do belong together, that our destinies are bound up in one another’s, that we can be free only together, that we can survive only together, that we can be human only together, then a glorious world would come into being where all of us lived harmoniously together as members of one family, the human family.”

Desmond Tutu

Ensuring Connection

- Come to terms with our individual “ism”
- Take our own personal leadership seriously
- Continue to strengthen community relationships
- Genuinely believe in the possibility
- Break out of our silos
- Be good listeners
- Embrace change and “be the change”
- There is no them there is only us!
- **Begin to Create a COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS**



**UNNATURAL
CAUSES**

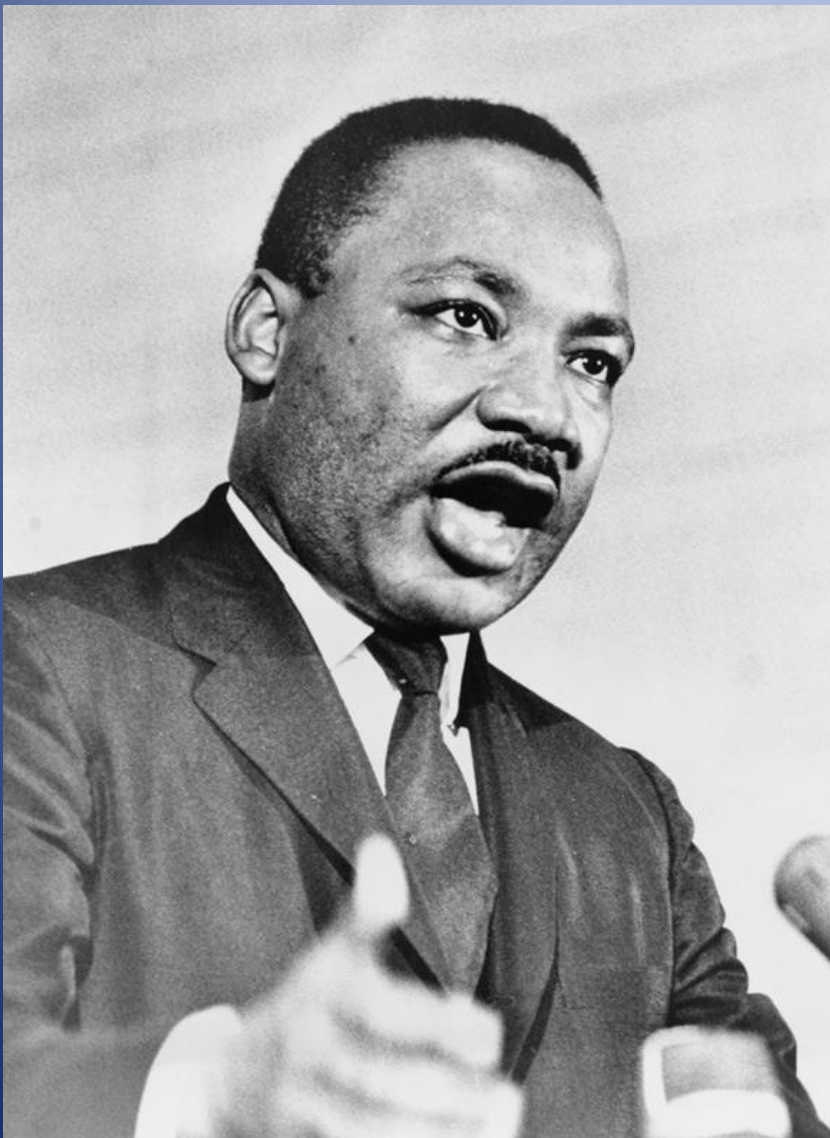
Is Inequality Making Us Sick?

Integrate
“Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality
Making Us Sick”
into all community dialogue

Reframing

How You Frame an Issue

- Health vs. Healthcare
- Individual (Medical model) vs. Population Health
- Market Justice vs. Social Justice
- Rights vs. Privileges
- Biological/Behavioral Determinants vs. Social Determinants
- Creating Health Equity vs. Eliminating Health Disparities



“Of all the injustices,
injustices in health are
the most shocking and
inhumane”

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Health Equity

- The realization by ALL people of the highest attainable level of health.
- Achieving Health Equity
 - Valuing all individuals and populations equally
 - Focusing and ongoing societal efforts
 - Assuring the conditions for optimal health
 - Addressing historical or contemporary injustices and socioeconomic disadvantage

Health Inequities

- Systemic, avoidable, unfair and unjust differences
- Population based
- Sustained over time and generations
- Beyond the control of individuals

“Ensuring access to quality, affordable health care services is not merely a matter of system reform. It is a matter of human dignity and of national wellness”.

The Commonwealth Fund

Human Rights

- Universal
- Safeguarding the equal worth of everyone
- Inalienable
- Interdependent
- Entitlement
- Internationally guaranteed

Health is a Basic Human Right Not a Privilege

Preamble to the constitution of the
World Health Organization

“ The enjoyment of the highest standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition”

“There can be no hope for the spread of freedom, democracy and human dignity unless we treat health as a basic human right”.

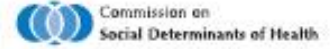
Keynote address to the 7th Conference of European Ministers, WHO

Justice

- The quality of fairness
- The principle of moral rightness; equity
- Conformity to moral rightness in action or attitude

Social Justice

- The application of principles of justice to the broadest definition of society
- Implies
 - Equity
 - Equal access to societal power, goods and services
- Universal respect for human and civil rights

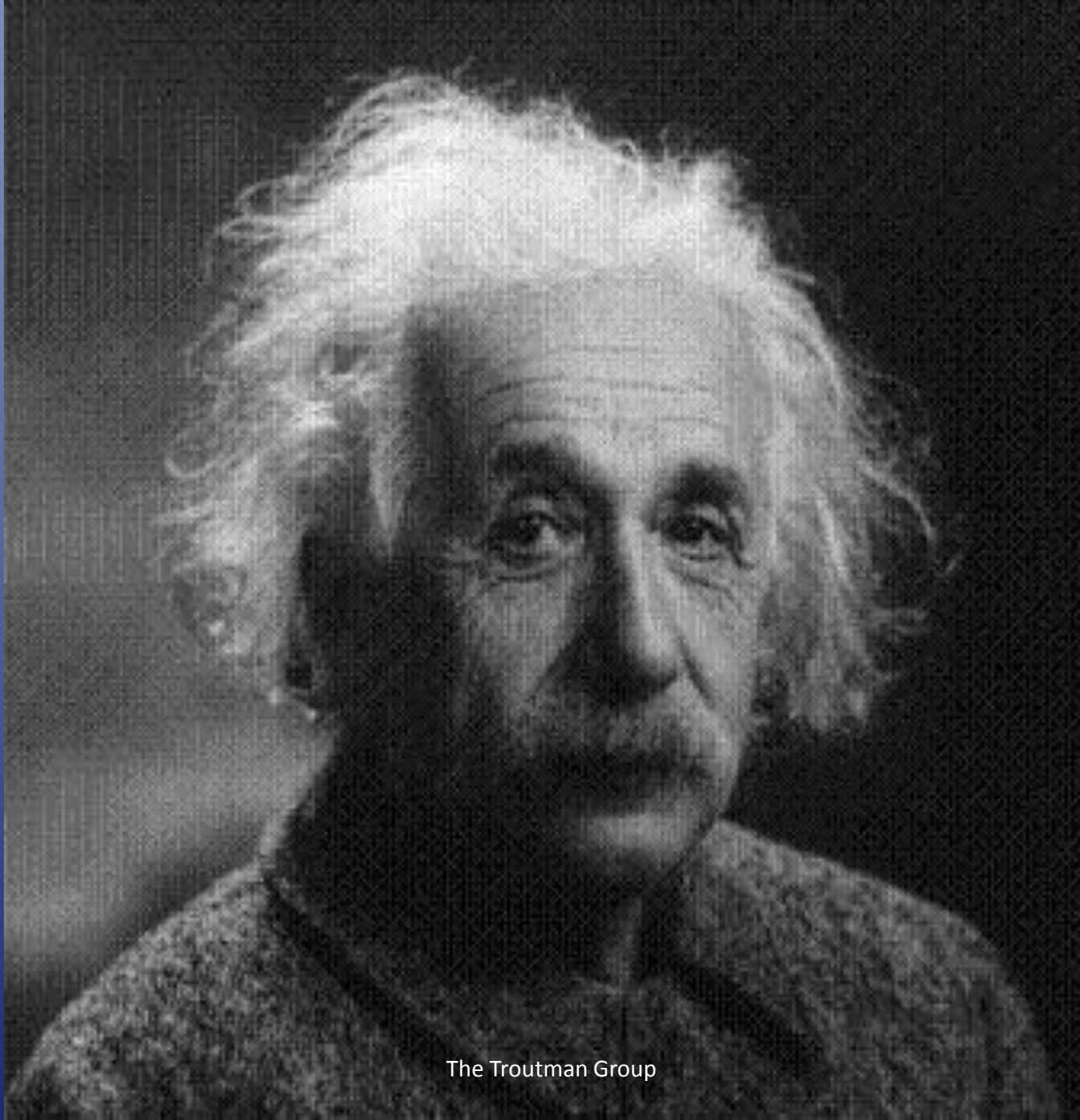


Closing the gap in a generation

Health equity through action on the social determinants of health

Social justice is a matter of **life and death**. It affects the way people live, their consequent chance of illness, and their **risk of premature death...**





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A New Direction
An Exciting Direction
A Bold Direction
A Risky Direction

Social Determinants

Outside the Institutional Walls

Who is on
the banks of
the river?
And, what
are they
doing?

*“The web of
causation”*

Nancy Kreiger

Finding the balance



Social Determinants of Health

- The complex, integrated, and overlapping social structures and economic systems that are responsible for most health inequities.

Social Determinants

- Socioeconomic Status
 - **Education**
 - Occupation
 - **Income**
- Housing- Zip code
- Built Environment
- Food- Security, Desert
- Political Power
- Racism & Discrimination
- Early Life
- Social Exclusion
- Work
- Unemployment
- Social Support
- Addiction
- Stress
- Transport
- The Social Gradient

Place Matters The Built Environment

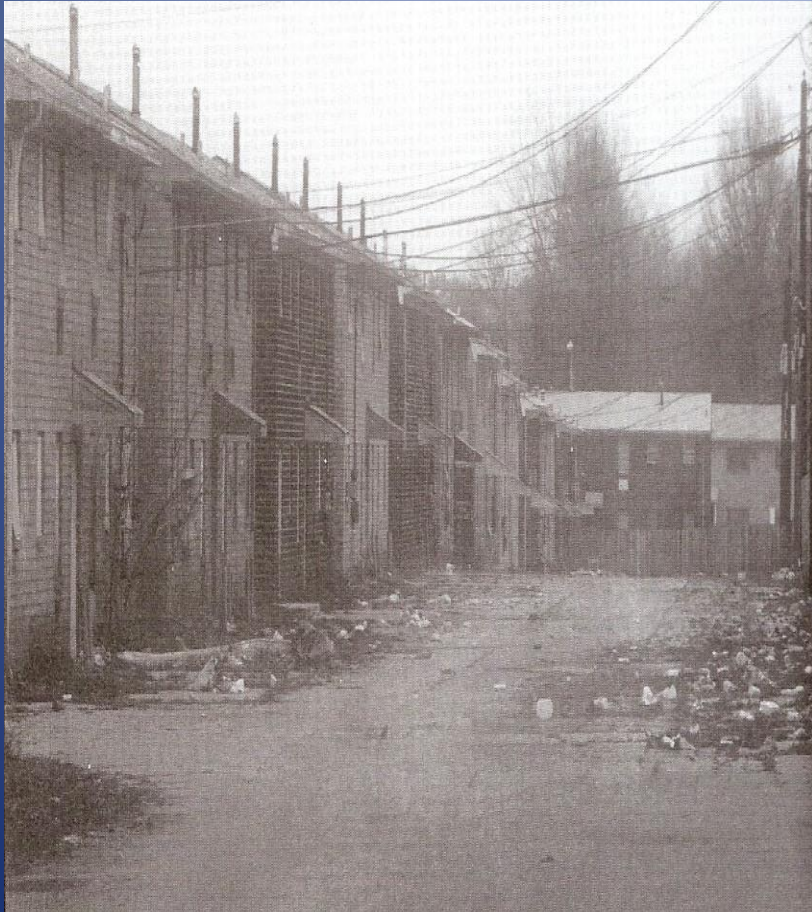
“Tell me how a man died and I’ll tell
you where he lived”

Aristotle

Zip Code over Genetic Code

Housing

- **Place and Environment**







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UNEQUAL TREATMENT

CONFRONTING RACIAL
AND ETHNIC DISPARITIES
IN HEALTH CARE

INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE

TRENDS

What If We Were Equal? A Comparison Of The Black-White Mortality Gap In 1960 And 2000

Closing this gap could eliminate more than 83,000 excess deaths per year among African Americans.

by David Satcher, George E. Fryer Jr., Jessica McCann, Adewale Troutman, Steven H. Woolf, and George Rust

ABSTRACT: The United States has made progress in decreasing the black-white gap in civil rights, housing, education, and income since 1960, but health inequalities persist. We examined trends in black-white standardized mortality ratios (SMRs) for each age-sex group from 1960 to 2000. The black-white gap measured by SMR changed very little between 1960 and 2000 and actually worsened for infants and for African American men age thirty-five and older. In contrast, SMR improved in African American women. Using 2002 data, an estimated 83,570 excess deaths each year could be prevented in the United States if this black-white mortality gap could be eliminated.

THE 1985 TASK FORCE report on black and minority health raised national concern that 60,000 excess deaths were occurring annually because of health disparities, primarily among African Ameri-

In the past forty years, African Americans have witnessed some progress in civil rights, housing, education, employment, and health care. In 1960 segregation was evident in hospitals and doctors' offices throughout the

**Dealing with the social
determinants of health may yield
greater and more sustainable
returns**

From Theory to Practice Around the Country

Louisville, Kentucky

Alameda County

Seattle King County , Washington

Boston Health Department

Kalamazoo, Michigan

Portland, Oregon

Oakland, California

Connecticut Health Officers Association

Center for Health Equity (CHE)

CHE works to eliminate social and economic barriers to good health, reshape the public health landscape, and serve as a catalyst for **capacity building, policy change** and **evidenced-based initiatives**.



Initiatives

- Framing research
- Health Equity Community Hearings
- Health Equity (Civic capacity building) mini grants
- Undoing Racism workshops (community wide)
- Health Equity Summit
- Community dialogues (Unnatural Causes)
- CHI project
- HIA-Shepard Square (Hope 6)
- Food justice/Food security task force

Alameda County Health Dept

Alameda, California

- Rethink infrastructure and organizational culture
- Building **community capacity**-a method for **combating social inequities** such as **poverty, racism and unemployment**
- Using **public policy to tackle societies inequities**

Addressing Health Equity and Community Health Through Policy Change

- Housing policy
- Education policy
- Poverty Elimination policy
- Access to health policy
- Living wage
- Access to tobacco products
- Short term downstream policies just develop a healthier underclass of poor folk

Tips for Staying Healthy: A Social Determinants Approach

- 1. Don't be poor. If you can, stop. If you can't, try not to be poor for too long.
- 2. Don't have poor parents.
- 3. Don't live in a poor neighborhood.
- 4. Own a car – but use only for weekend outings. Walk to work.
- 5. Practice not losing your job and don't become unemployed.
- 6. Don't be illiterate.
- 7. Avoid social isolation.
- 8. Try not to be part of a socially marginalized group.

The Civil Rights Movement
Didn't Go Far Enough

Time to Build a Social Justice and
Health Equity Movement

A Common Vision of Hope

Build a Movement

Throughout history, **social movements** have brought about the most significant changes for racial, economic and gender justice.

From the **labor movement** to the **civil rights** movement to the **women's movement**, to the **gay and lesbian** movement, it has been the actions of people most impacted by injustice that **transformed our society's systems and institutions**, as well as our hearts and minds.

- Organizing for big change /**transformational change**
- Developing **collective consciousness** around the issue (**A common voice**)

APHA

Healthiest nation in a generation

Build a Public Health Movement

Build a Movement

- Movement Building is the **long-term**, coordinated effort of individuals and **organized groups of people to intentionally spark and sustain** a social movement.
- By cultivating a movement perspective, we choose to **leave behind a more narrow vision** and strategy that is based on our organizational needs/capacity and **take on an expansive vision** and align strategies towards **common movement goals**.

What Can We Do?

- Strive for a Collective Consciousness
- Find Political will, it takes courage
- Become a true Ambassador for Health Equity and Social Justice
- Redefine your personal and professional values
- Be our Sister's and Brother's Keeper
- Start looking at the world as if we all came from "one womb" -
Johnetta Cole
- "There is no them. There is only us"
- Remember the POWER OF ONE is real
- **Remember this has to be a MOVEMENT**

Be willing to take The Risk



Taking the RISK





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