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WHOLE HEALTH AND TEAM CARE: WHAT ARE WE LEARNING?

Benjamin Kligler MD, MPH

Executive Director, Office of Patient Centered Care & Cultural Transformation, Veterans health Administration
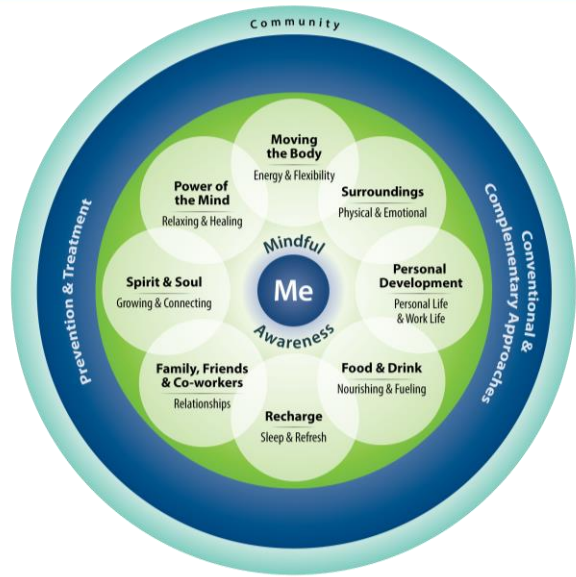
Council on Graduate Medical Education

September 2023

Whole Health is an approach to health care that **empowers** and **equips** people to take charge of their health and well-being and live their life to the fullest.

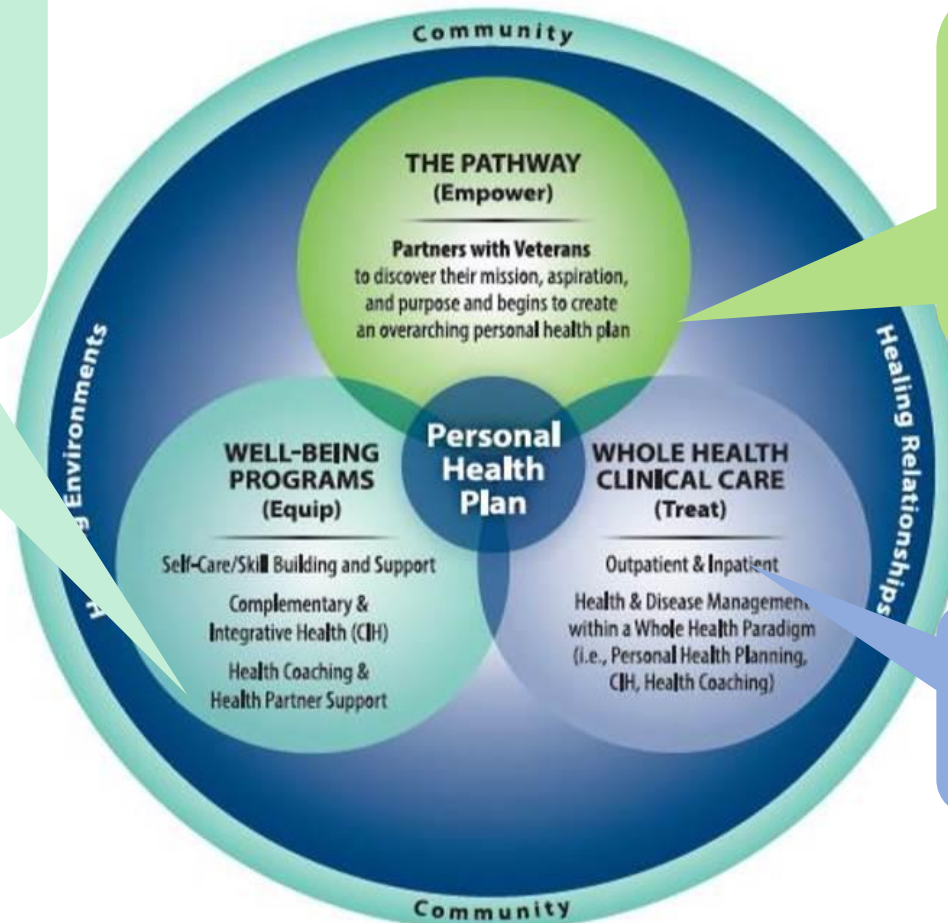Circle of Health

Whole Health System

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Whole Health = Health Care Transformation

✓ Encourage self-care

✓ Decrease reliance on provider delivered care

✓ Complementary and Integrative Health Approaches

Complementary/Integrative Health Approaches:
- Acupuncture
- Meditation
- Massage Therapy
- Biofeedback
- Clinical Hypnosis
- Guided Imagery
- Yoga
- Tai chi

✓ Engage Veterans in their Mission Aspiration Purpose (MAP)

✓ Veteran Partners, Whole Health Coaches

✓ Cultural transformation of how clinical health care is delivered

Community

Healing Environments

Healing Relationships

THE PATHWAY (Empower)

Partners with Veterans
to discover their mission, aspiration, and purpose and begins to create an overarching personal health plan

Personal Health Plan

WELL-BEING PROGRAMS (Equip)

Self-Care/Skill Building and Support

Complementary & Integrative Health (CIH)

Health Coaching & Health Partner Support

WHOLE HEALTH CLINICAL CARE (Treat)

Outpatient & Inpatient

Health & Disease Management within a Whole Health Paradigm (i.e., Personal Health Planning, CIH, Health Coaching)

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Social & Structural Determinants of Health
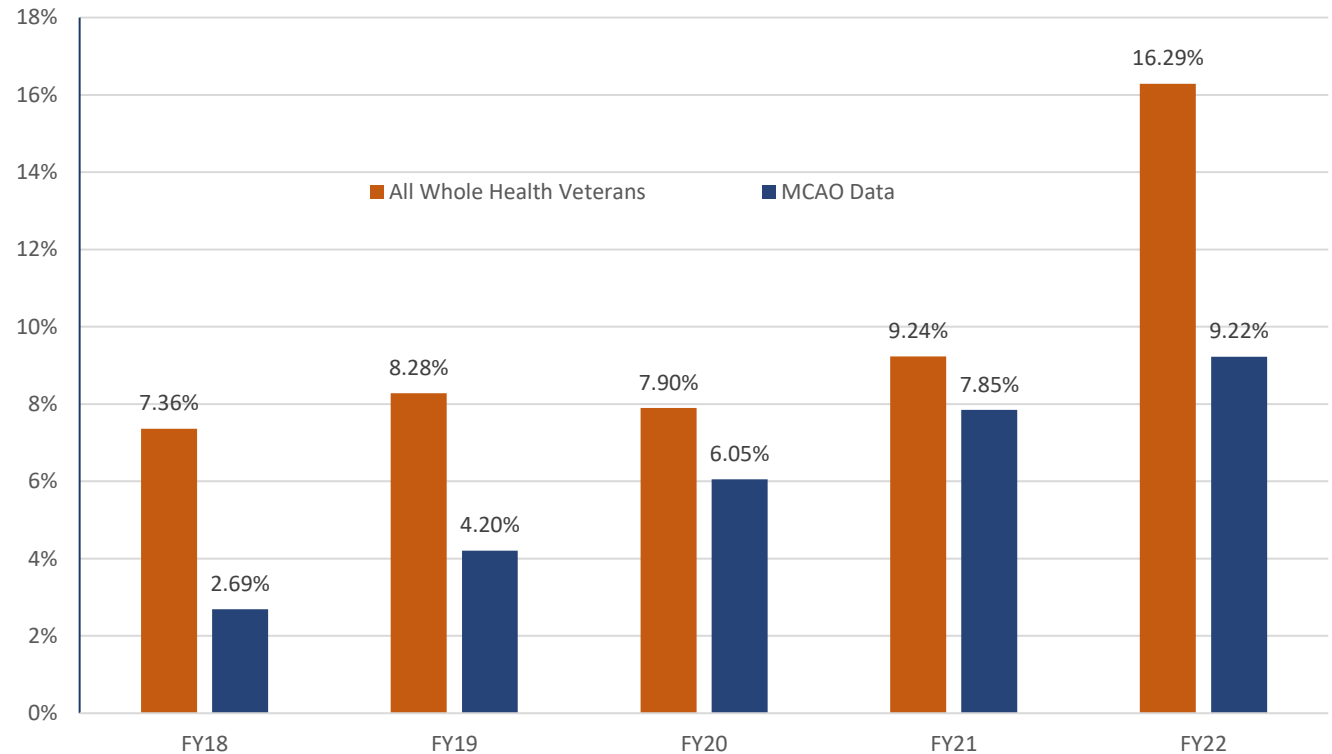
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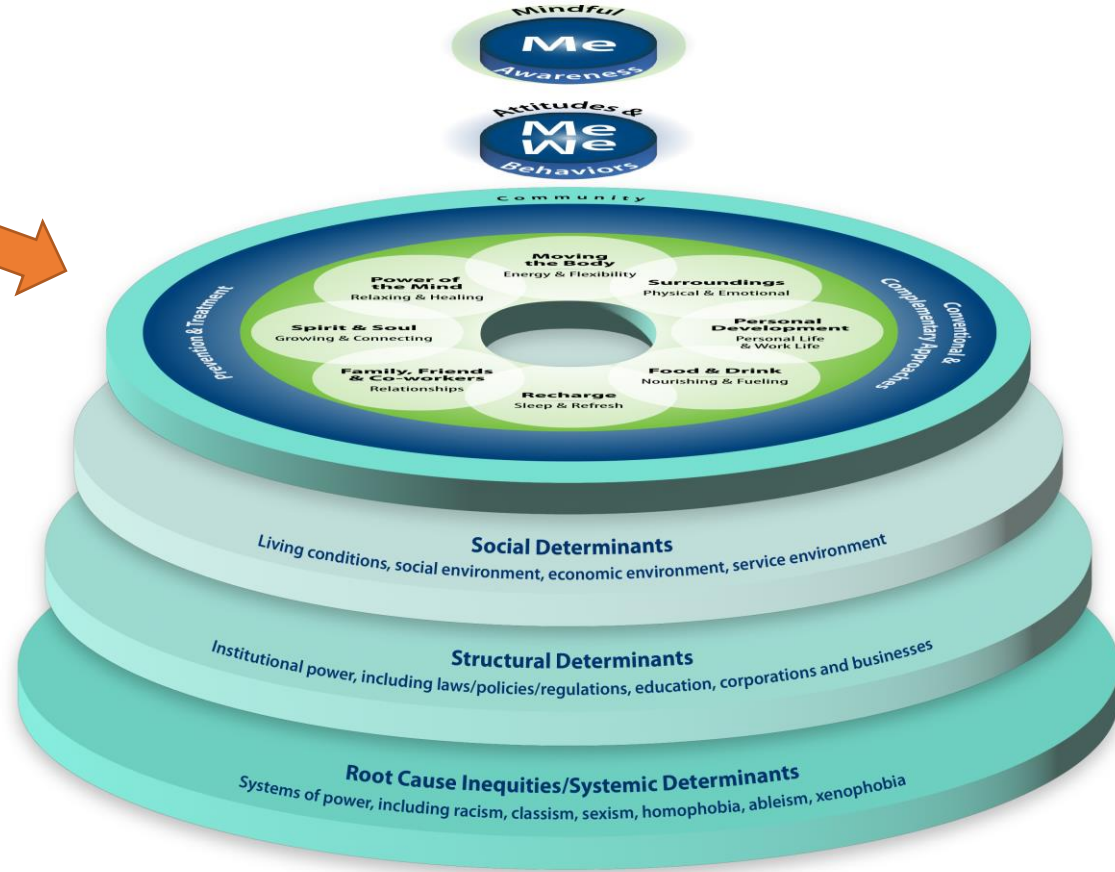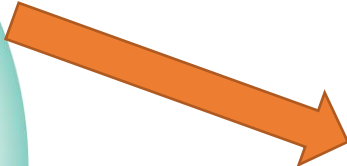
Whole Health Utilization Metrics

- In FY21 595,759 Veterans participated in Whole Health

- In FY22 1,009,393 unique Veterans accessed Whole Health services
  - Increase reflects both growth and the use of Health Factors in data capture

- **As of 8/6/23, 1,517,276 unique Veterans accessed Whole Health services**

Participation in Whole Health

Legend: ■ All Whole Health Veterans ■ MCAO Data

FY	All Whole Health Veterans	MCAO Data
FY18	7.36%	2.69%
FY19	8.28%	4.20%
FY20	7.90%	6.05%
FY21	9.24%	7.85%
FY22	16.29%	9.22%

*FY22 MCAO data is through August

Key Utilization Metrics – MCAO + Health Factors

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National Academies
Sciences
Engineering
Medicine

Achieving Whole Health

A New Approach for Veterans and the Nation

Alex Krist, Virginia Commonwealth University

Jeannette South-Paul, Meharry Medical College

Andrew Bazemore, American Board of Family Medicine

Harold Kudler, Duke University

Sara Singer, Stanford University

Achieving Whole Health

A New Approach for Veterans and the Nation

Consensus Study Report

Study Statement of Task

In particular, the committee considered:

1. Where is whole health currently being implemented

2. What does whole health accomplish at VA and in other systems?

3. How can effective whole health strategies spread?

4. What other factors affect the performance of Whole Health?

The committee's report includes findings and recommendations for future directions and priorities for the VA and other health systems caring for veterans in implementing a system of whole person, population health care.

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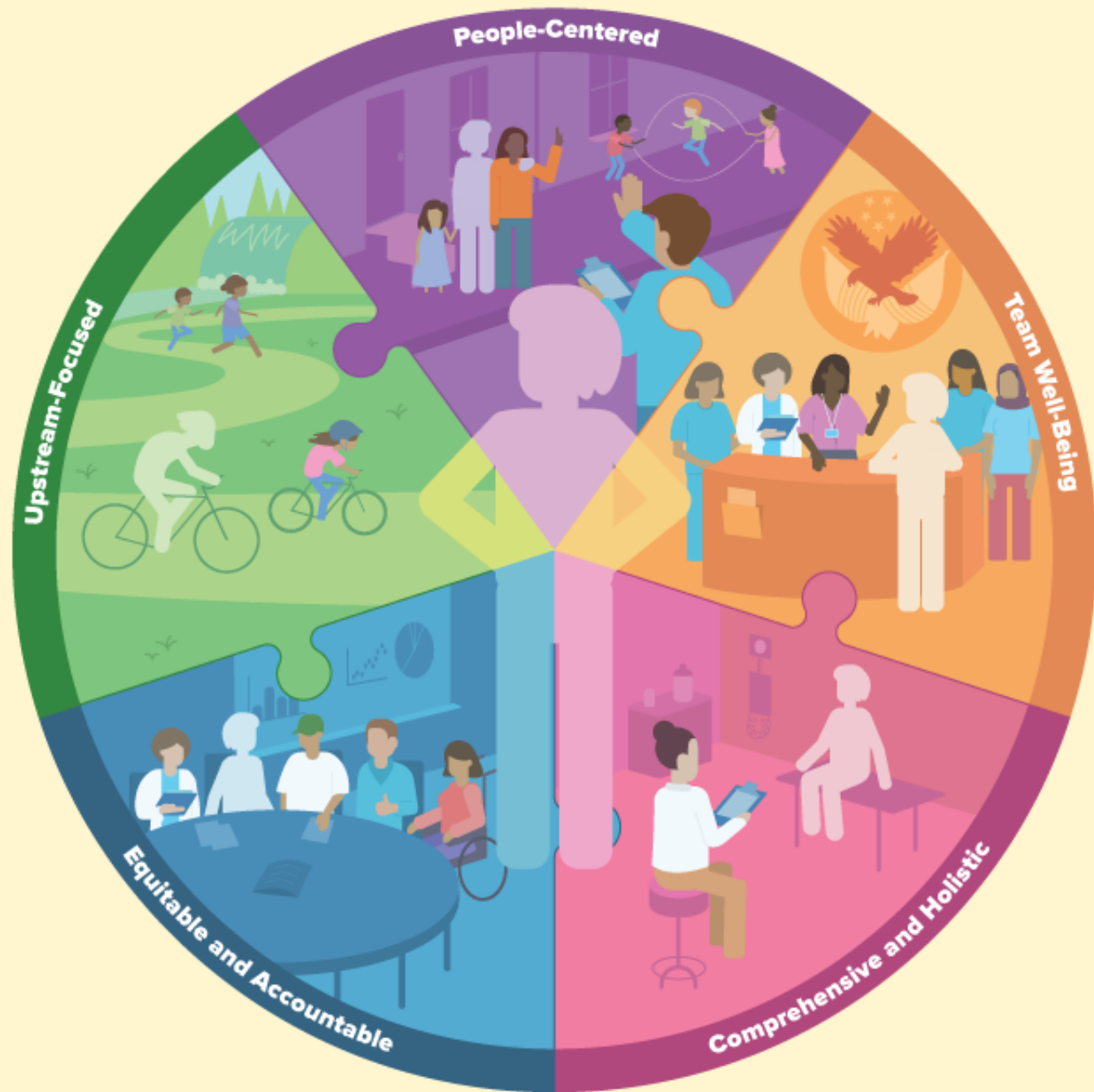
ACHIEVING WHOLE HEALTH

Five foundational elements of whole health that are necessary for an effective whole health care system.

The wheel diagram shows five labeled segments: People-Centered, Team Well-Being, Comprehensive and Holistic, Equitable and Accountable, and Upstream-Focused.

Whole Health: What does the evidence say?

- Improved patient experience and reported outcomes

- Increased access, reduced ED usage, fewer hospitalizations

- Improved quality metrics

- Improved outcomes for specific conditions (pain management, mental health, TBI, healthy aging)

- Reduced maternal and infant mortality

- Improved equity, promotion of team well-being, some cost reductions

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Conclusion

- Whole health is a common good that benefits everyone

- Scaling and spreading it so it is widely available requires seismic cultural, structural, and process transformation

- Requires a systematic shift in mindset about what it means to be healthy with participation from the top down and bottom up

- Multisector collaboration, investment, and reallocation of resources (locally and nationally)

- U.S. has made significant advances treating disease; need similar efforts to improve health and well-being and effective, efficient, and equitable care delivery

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What is the HEART of Whole Health?

Figure. Survival Curves Illustrating the Association Between Life Purpose and Mortality
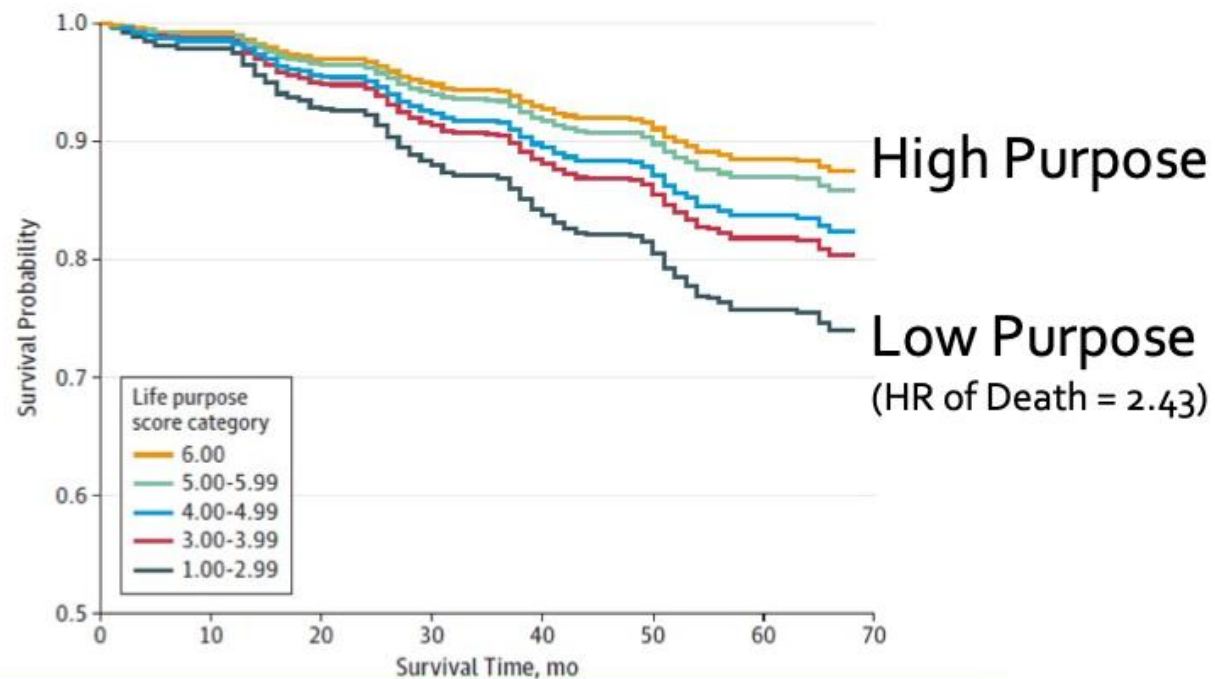
Alimujiang A, et al. Association Between Life Purpose and Mortality Among US Adults Older than 50 Years. JAMA Open. 2(5):2019

Employee Whole Health is essential to our health and resiliency and represents a **proactive model of well-being that is protective against stressors and challenges** we face in our day to day lives.

- **Focusing on "ME"** through **mindful awareness** and **self-discovery** allows us to reflect on what matters most. This brings **connection to our meaning, aspiration, and purpose and supports true work-life integration**.

- We **prioritize self-care**, such as movement, sleep, nutrition, personal and professional development, and relationships, and seek professional care to support our physical and mental well-being.

- We create a **community that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive** and connects us through our common, shared experiences.

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Together, ALL of these equal Whole Health!

Self-Compassion

Decreases in self-valuation/Self-compassion correlated with sleep impairment, which has been linked to reduced performance in cognitive tasks such as sustained attention, decision making, and affect regulation. (Trockel et al 2019)

Mindfulness

Improvements in cortisol, sympathetic system reactivity, immune function (Heckenberg et al 2018)
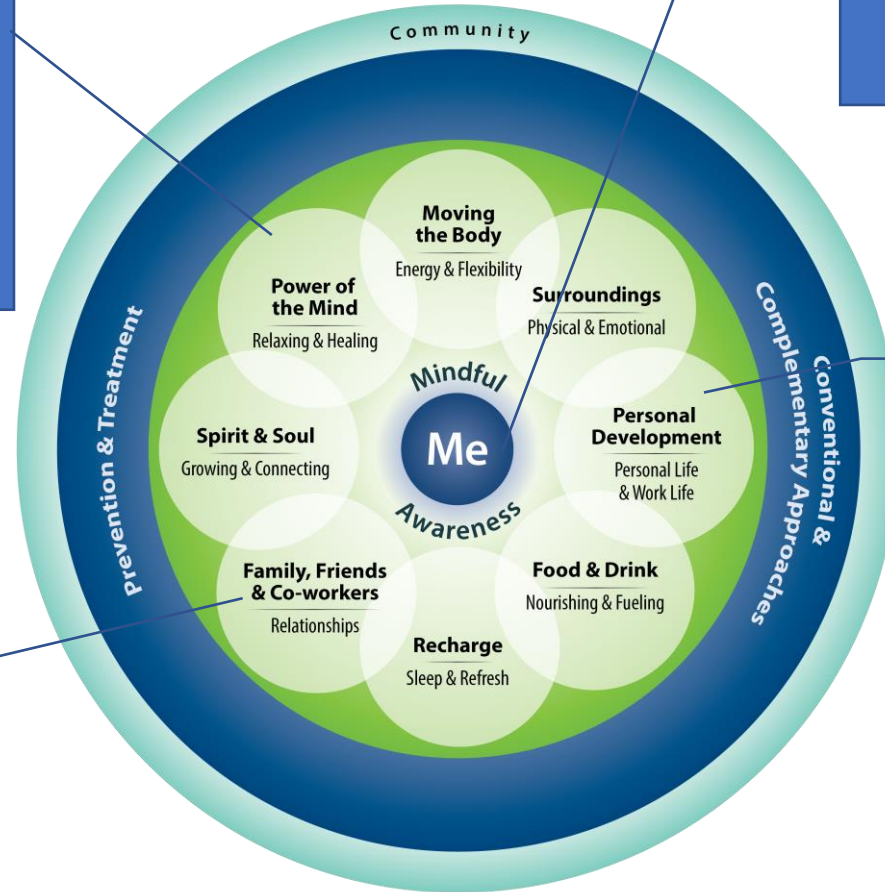
Gratitude

Brief gratitude tools (3 good things, Gratitude Letter , Looking Forward Tool) can be effective in improving emotional exhaustion, depression, subjective happiness, work-life balance, emotional thriving, and emotional recovery (Adair et al 2020)

Job Crafting- Meaning and Purpose

Improved engagement and reduced distraction when: (i) structure one's *tasks* so that they can be done more effectively, or so that tedious tasks are no longer necessary, or so that more challenging or interesting tasks are available; (ii) improve one's *social relationships and interactions* at work; and (iii) find *meaning and purpose* in the work being done, often by connecting it to the mission or vision of the entire organization itself. (Bialowolski et al 2020)

Community

Prevention & Treatment

Conventional & Complementary Approaches

Moving the Body — Energy & Flexibility

Surroundings — Physical & Emotional

Power of the Mind — Relaxing & Healing

Personal Development — Personal Life & Work Life

Spirit & Soul — Growing & Connecting

Mindful Me Awareness

Food & Drink — Nourishing & Fueling

Family, Friends & Co-workers — Relationships

Recharge — Sleep & Refresh

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What Humans Need to Thrive

Psychological Safety

Allows staff to bring their frustrations forward in a constructive and safe environment

**Camaraderie
and
Social Connectedness**

Staff come together to work collaboratively to improve team dynamics and build community to support each other

Agency

Provides an opportunity for staff to identify frustrations they have the power to change

Meaning and Purpose

Empowers staff to make changes to their work environment to aspire towards joy in practice and professional fulfillment

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"It isn't the mountains ahead to climb that wear you out; it's the **pebble** in your shoe." *– Muhammad Ali*

"the single biggest driver of professional satisfaction for the people in the organization is the behavior of each individual's immediate leader"

AMA Steps Forward, Cultivating Leadership, Swensen and Shanafelt

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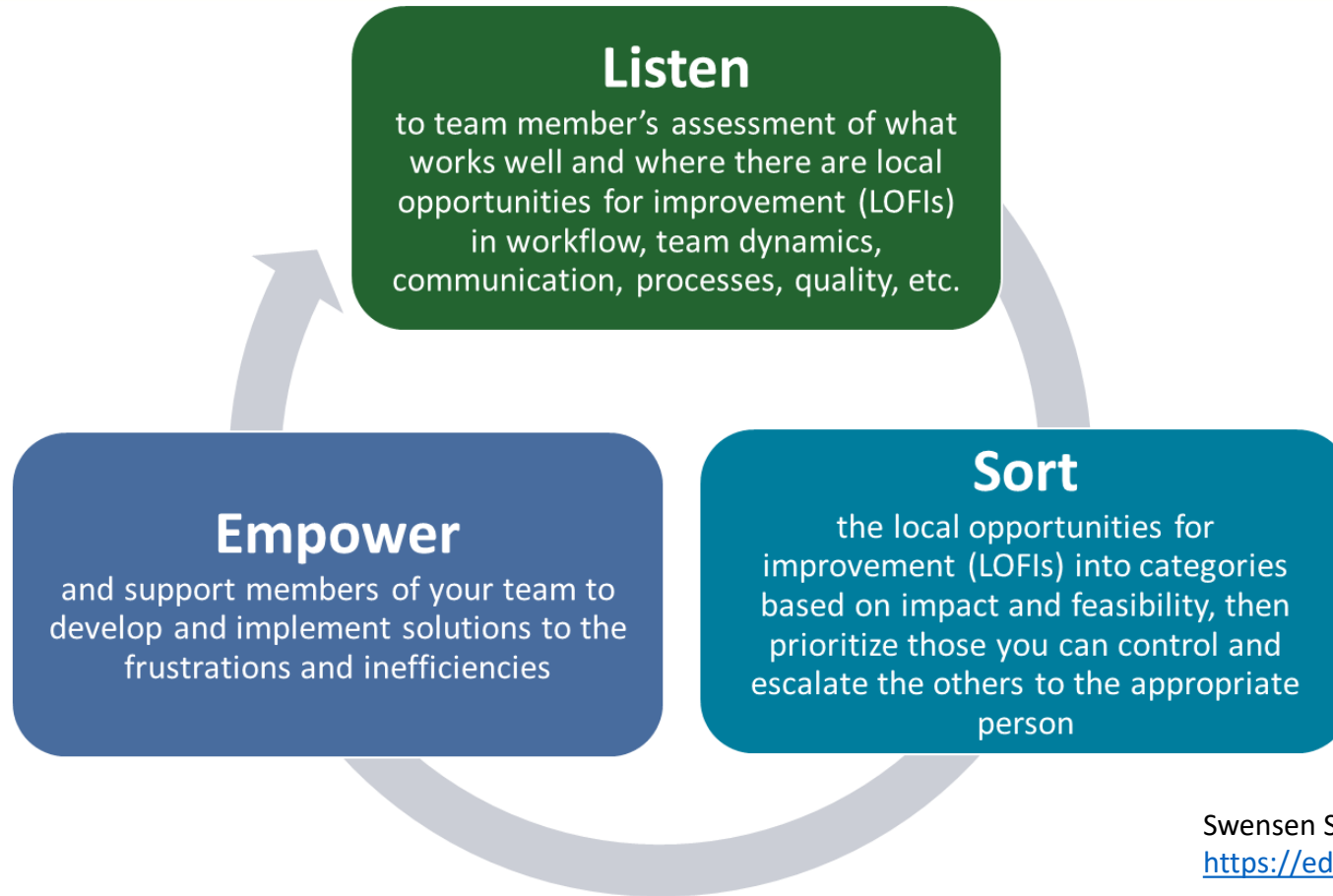Veterans Health Administration

Examples of Common Pebbles:

- EHR inefficiencies
- Dysfunctional teams
- Inefficient workflow

Start with the assumption that systems and behaviors – not people – are the source of many practice problems.

Listen-Sort-Empower is a *system-wide approach* for process improvement that empowers change, driven from the *local level*.

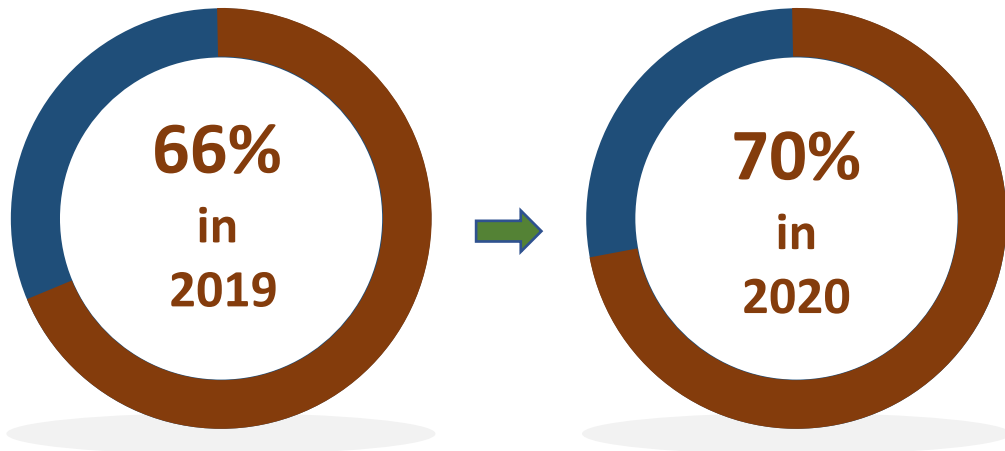**Live Whole Health.**

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Listen-Sort-Empower: What is it?

Listen
to team member's assessment of what works well and where there are local opportunities for improvement (LOFIs) in workflow, team dynamics, communication, processes, quality, etc.

Sort
the local opportunities for improvement (LOFIs) into categories based on impact and feasibility, then prioritize those you can control and escalate the others to the appropriate person

Empower
and support members of your team to develop and implement solutions to the frustrations and inefficiencies

Swensen S MD. *AMA Steps Forward* 2020.
https://edhub.ama-assn.org/steps-forward/module/2767765

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Best Places to Work Score
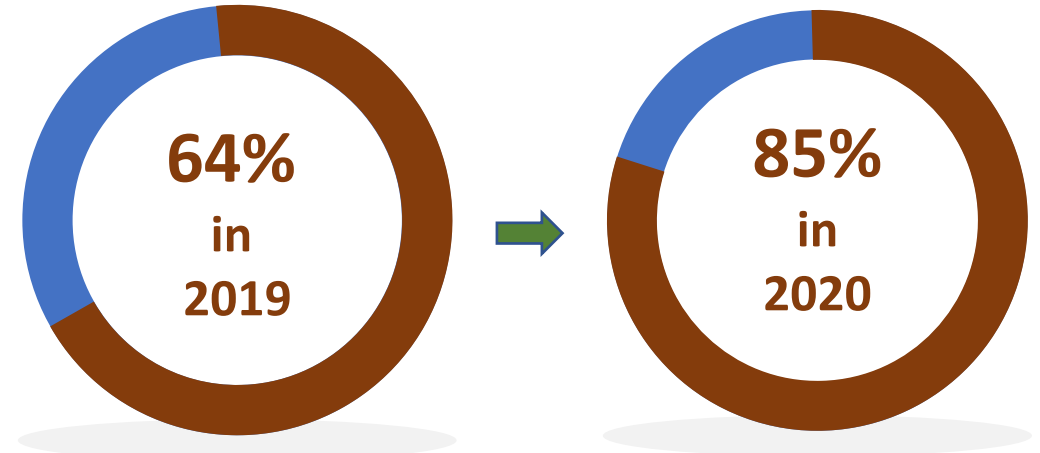
66% in 2019 → 70% in 2020

San Diego VA

VS

64% in 2019 → 85% in 2020

SDVA: Primary Care

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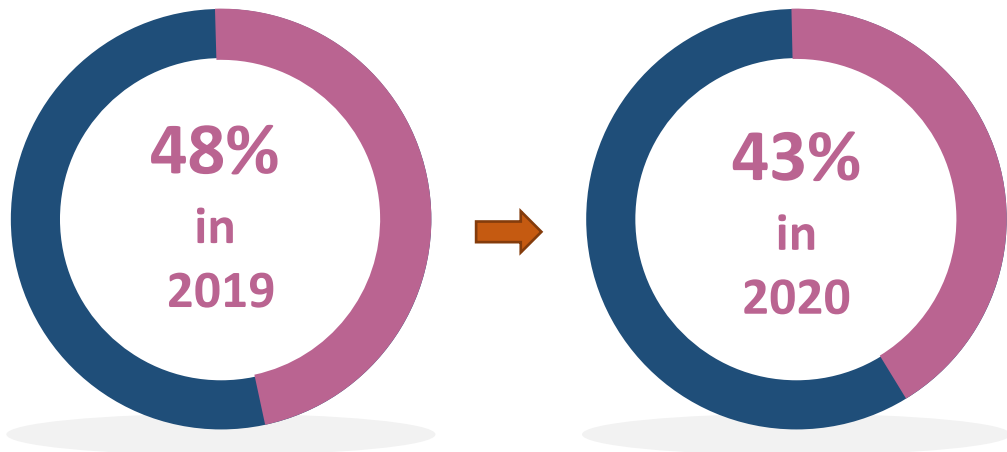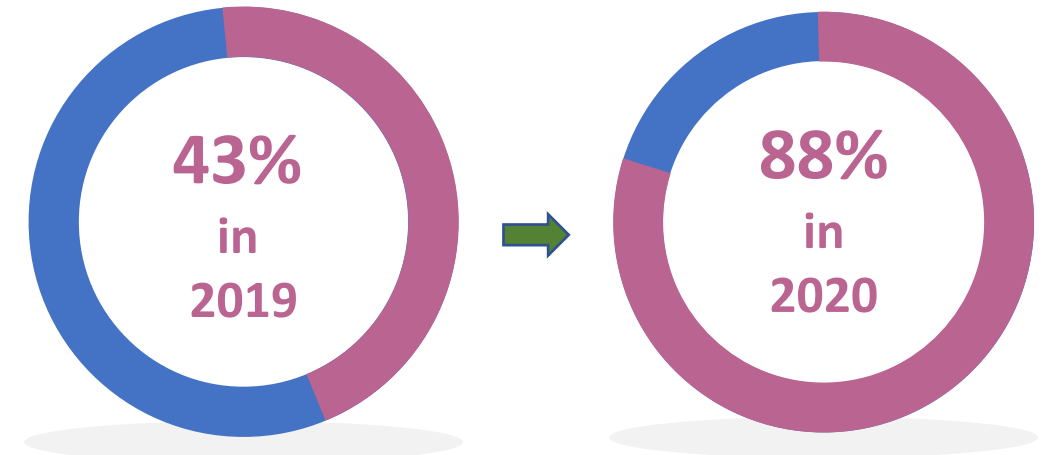
Foundational Education for ALL Employees

(Links included below)

Whole Health for All:
New Employee Orientation

15 minutes, Recorded Virtual TMS

This video introduces new employees to the Whole Health System of Care. Attendees can expect to gain foundational knowledge of Whole Health and Employee Whole Health.

Caring for Yourself

1 hour, Recorded Virtual

This video introduces employees to the Whole Health Approach to care and equip them with Whole Health strategies and tools for optimizing their own well-being.

Whole Health 102

4 1-hour modules, Live/Virtual

This is a locally facilitated course for all employees that explores Whole Health and your own mission, aspiration, and purpose, helps you understand how to make changes in your life and work towards achieving those personal goals.

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Taking It to the Next Level: ALL Employees

(Links included below)

Resiliency Taking Charge of My Life and Health

8 1-hour modules, Live/Virtual

This is a locally facilitated peer led course for all employees that features strategies and tools designed to counter empathy-based stress, strengthen social relationships, and build personal resilience.

Employee Peer to Peer Support

2 day 6 hours/day, Live Virtual

This is a nationally facilitated course designed to provide a deeper understanding of trauma informed approaches and the positive influence professional peer to peer support has on resiliency and patient safety.

Interested in more Whole Health Education?

Explore here

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Taking it to the Next Level: Supervisors and Managers
(Links included below)

Empowering Your Teams
2 hours, Live Virtual

This is a local or nationally facilitated training for supervisors and managers that explores how to apply principles of transformational leadership and how to build stronger trust-based relationships with your team.

Taking Time to Care
2 days, 6 hours/day, Live Virtual

This is a nationally facilitated course that strives to normalize the impact and experience of stress, trauma, moral injury, and burnout. This course provides tools to help cultivate individual and organizational resilience.

Interested in more Whole Health Education?

[Explore here]
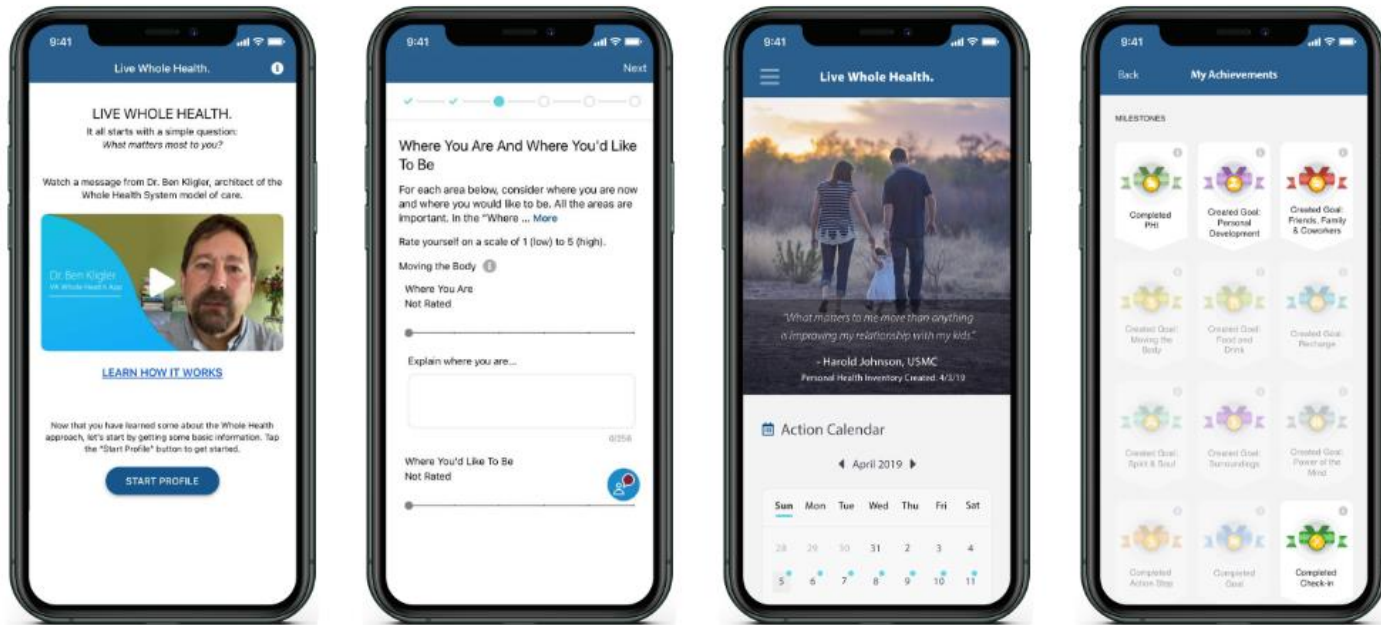
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Live Whole Health Mobile App

Develop a personal health strategy improving overall health and well-being.

- Guides the user through a Personal Health Inventory and helps create relevant SMART goals with actionable steps to achieve goals.

- Search LiveWholeHealth on your App Store.

[Live Whole Health | VA Mobile](#)

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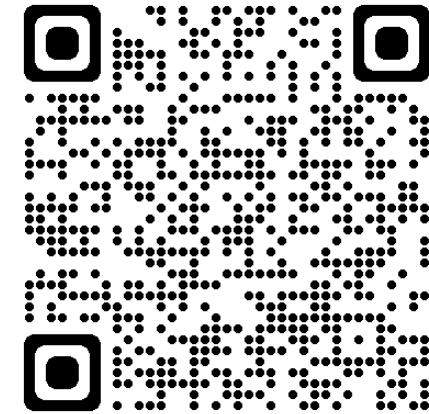
Experiential videos (181 as of 8/11/23) for Veterans, caregivers, employees and anyone who wants to practice self-care.

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MUSIC & MOVEMENT
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RELAXATION TRAINING
HEADACHE MANAGEMENT

ACUPRESSURE FOR STRESS RELIEF
#LiveWholeHealth

BREATHING FOR STRESS RELIEF
#LiveWholeHealth

CHAIR YOGA
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JOINT MOBILITY

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