



Society For Oncology Massage – Topics of The Day Series

Health Equity: Part 1

Awareness Into Action



Gayle MacDonald is entering year 28 in the field of oncology massage. After many years of hospital work and training therapists to work with people who have cancer in medical settings and private practice, she is focusing on S4OM and bringing its vision into reality.



Ericka Clinton is a NY State Licensed Massage Therapist and a massage educator training therapists in the U.S. and abroad. She currently holds the position of Dean for the Massage Therapy Program at the Swedish Institute, her alma mater. Ericka has been practicing oncology massage since 2011. She currently serves as the President for the Board of Directors for the Society for Oncology Massage.



Kathleen Wing has been practicing oncology massage since 2012. She led and developed the Complementary Therapies programs for the Dempsey Center, a non-profit cancer support organization based in Maine, between 2015-2020. She now works in Data and Evaluation for the organization. She has been an S4OM member since 2013 and a Regional Champion for the state of Maine.

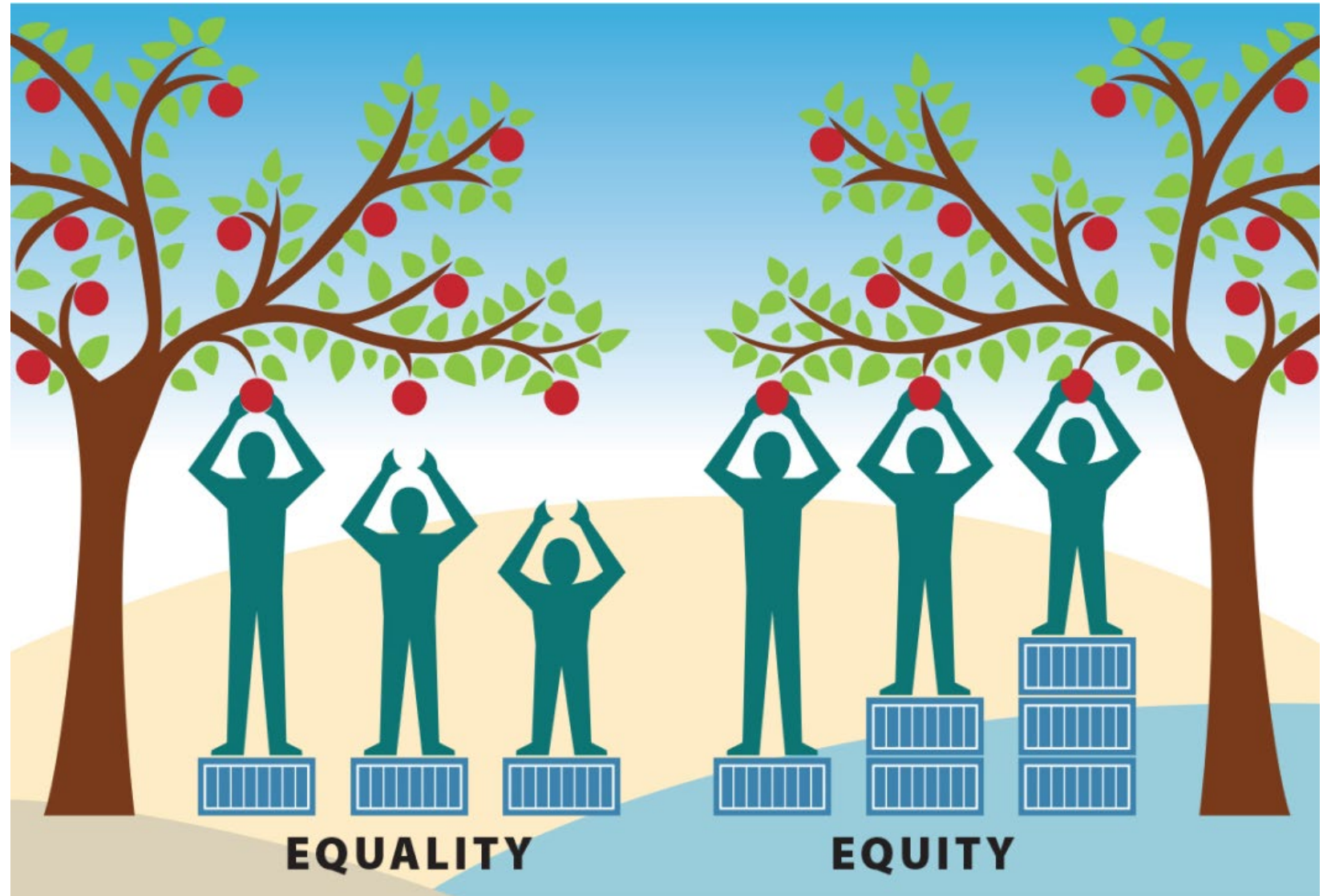
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Therapists can define health equity.
- Therapists understand the difference between equity and equality.
- Therapists can list five factors that contribute to health equity or inequity.
- Therapists can describe how bias influences equitable care.
- Therapists can list two factors that hinder their ability to give equitable massage care.

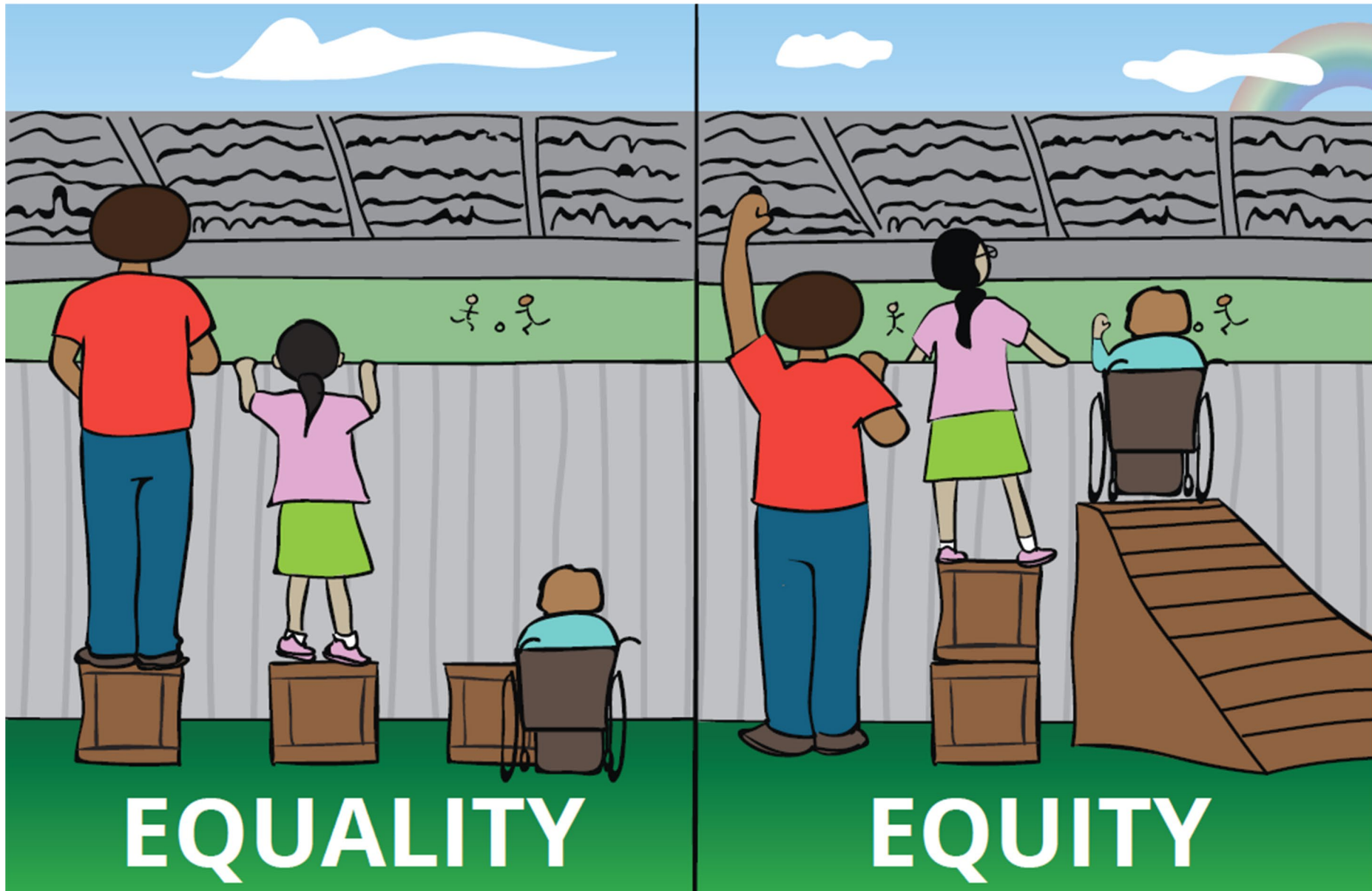


Health Equity

CDC: Health equity is achieved when every person has the opportunity to “attain his or her full health potential” and no one is “disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or other socially determined circumstances.”



<https://www.axishealthsystem.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/equity-and-equality.jpg>



EQUALITY

EQUITY

Stereotype:

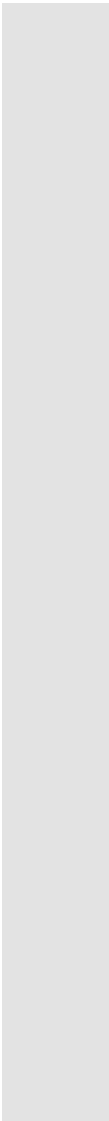
A preconceived idea that attributes certain characteristics (in general) to all members of a set, group or class.





Bias

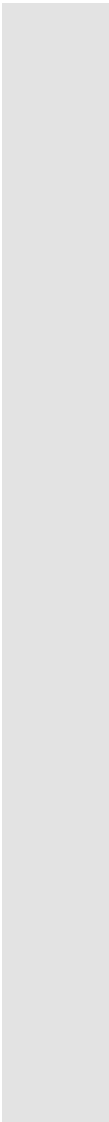
A personal preference that may interfere with the ability to be impartial, unprejudiced or objective





Explicit Bias

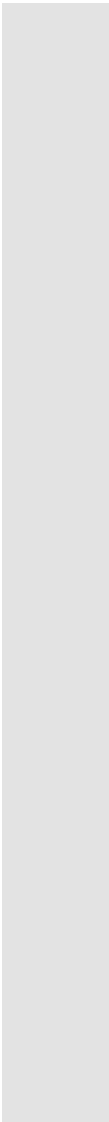
Conscious attitudes and beliefs about a person or group.





Implicit Bias

Unconscious stereotypes or attitudes towards categories of people or events.



Unconscious Bias

- Priming
- Associations
- Assumptions

Priming – a word, image or sound elicits an associated response.

- Hard-working
- Lazy

Associations – cognitive pairing shortcuts based on priming.

- Hard-working – physical, mental or emotional labor
- Hard working – overworking
- Lazy – Saturday morning; vacation
- Lazy – a person who isn't interested in working too hard

Assumptions - conclusions about who/what belongs or who/what is safe based on priming and associations.

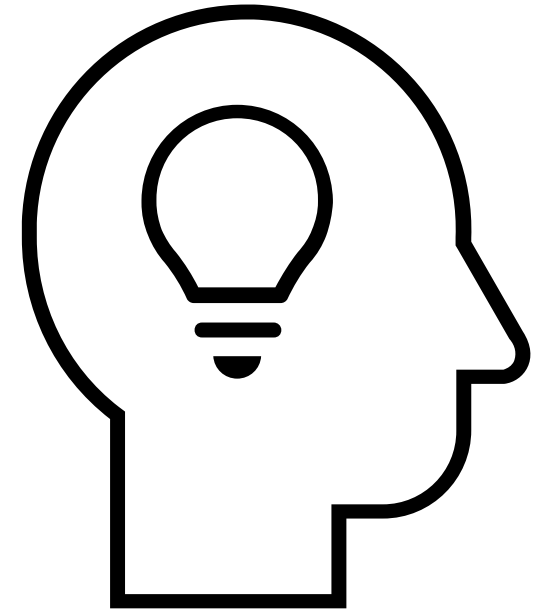
- Hard-working – wants to get ahead; cares for their family; driven
- Lazy – don't care too much; content to float along

Unconscious Bias

- In-groups, Out-groups
- Blind Spot

- People tend to favor their **in-group** with positive stereotypes and **out-groups** with negative stereotypes. (Who or what belongs, who or what is safe.)
- With unconscious bias, a person consciously and genuinely believes in fairness, equity, and equality, but despite these stated beliefs, holds unconscious biases that can lead to reacting in ways that are at odds with their values.
- Unconscious biases are not accessible through introspection. **Blind spot.**
 - Example. Program data showed oncology massage offered primarily to women.

Learning Poll



Health Equity & Health Inequity

Factors That Contribute to Health

- Socioeconomic position
- Race, ethnicity
- Gender
- Religion
- Sexual identity
- Disability
- Location (urban, rural)
- Education

Health Equity & Health Inequity

Additional Factors That Contribute to Health

- Body Type
- Occupation
- Tobacco or marijuana use
- Transportation
- Hygiene
- History of Incarceration
- Ideology
- Institutional Bias
- Cultural ethos

Cultural Ethos

A sampling of cognitive associations in American popular culture

The Myth of Bootstrapping

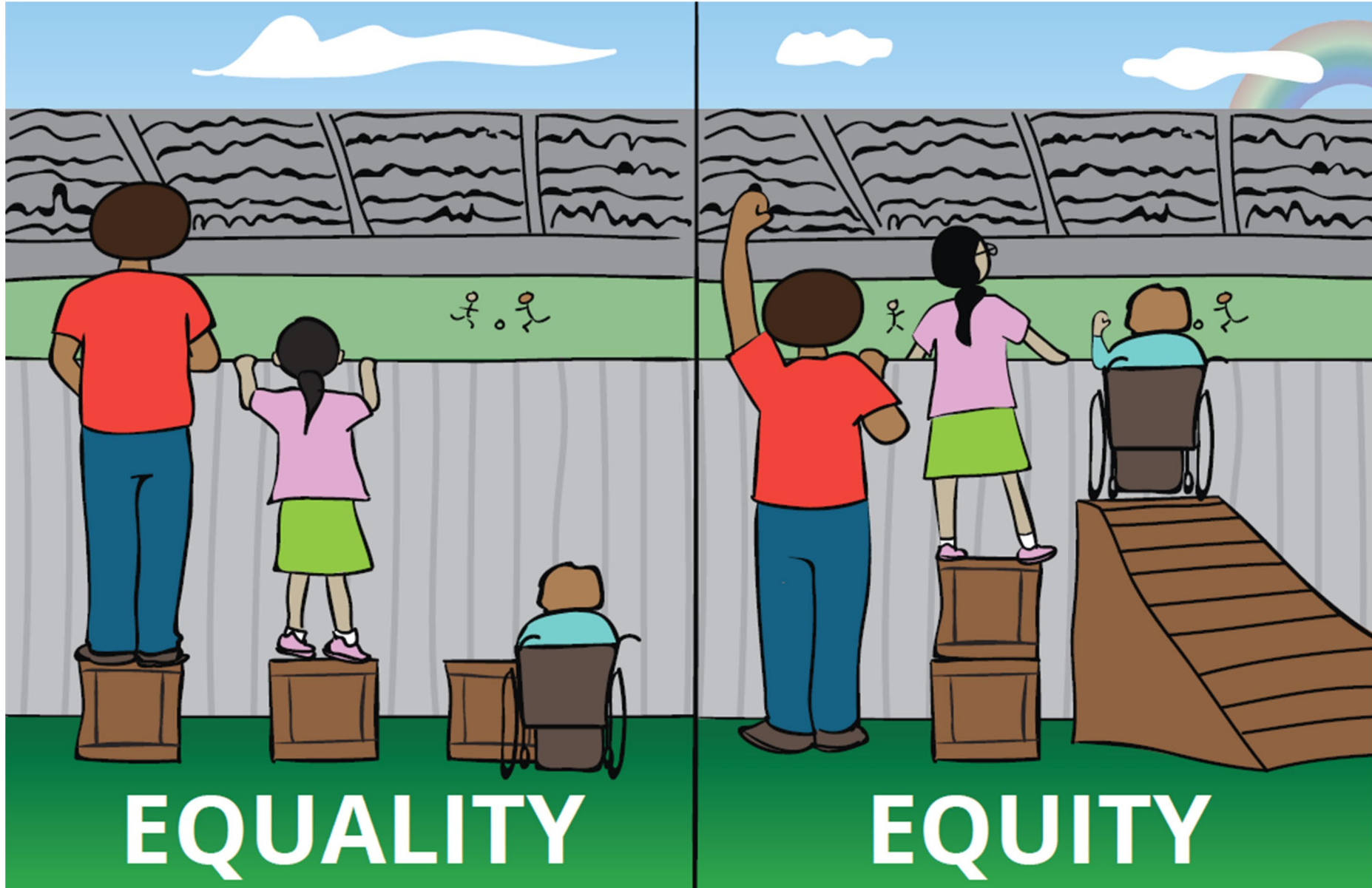
- Individual Effort = Success.
- Meritocracy: advancement in society is based on an individual's capabilities and merits, regardless of one's social position.

Rugged Individualism

- Self-reliance = Success

Exceptionalism

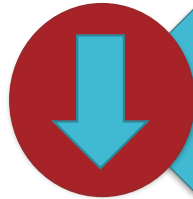
- Exceptional individual effort = Success



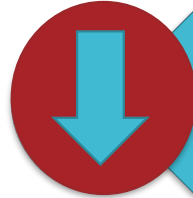
EQUALITY

EQUITY

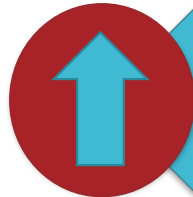
Outcomes of Health Inequity



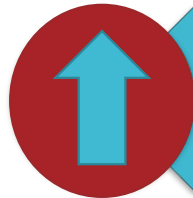
Length of life



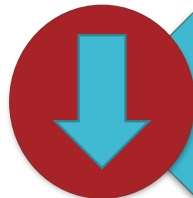
Quality of Life



Rates of disease, disability and death



Severity of disease



Access to treatment

How do you think health
inequity shows up in the
world of oncology
massage?

Oncology Massage Therapy and Health Equity

The Massage Therapy Profession has documented disparities in who provides massage therapy in the United States.

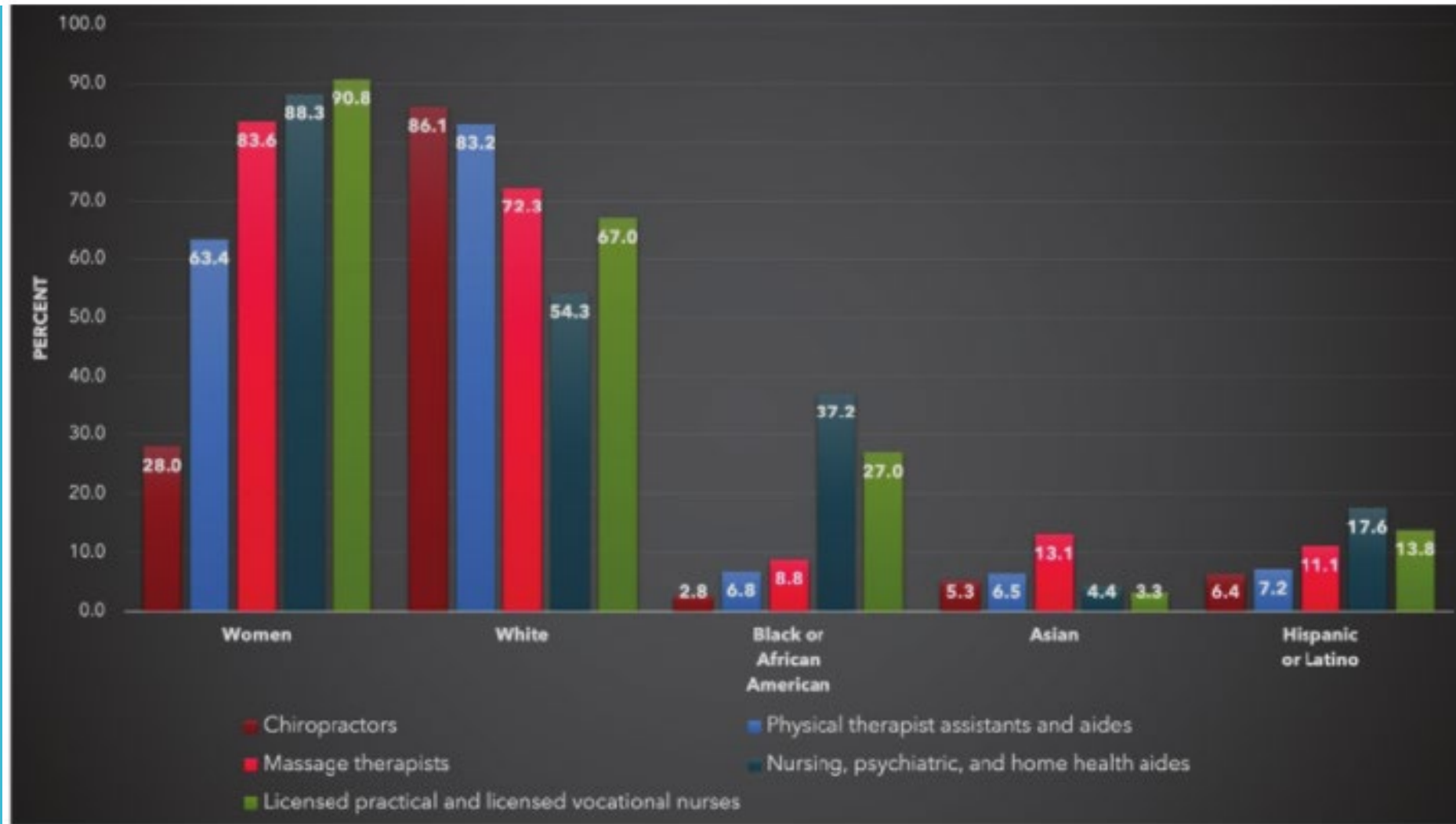


FIGURE 1. Percentage of individuals within select occupations in 2019 by gender and race/ethnicity from data the US Bureau of Labor Statistics⁽⁴⁾

Oncology Massage Therapy and Health Equity

The Massage Therapy Profession has documented disparities in who seeks massage therapy in the United States.

- National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) results for complementary and integrative health (CIH) utilization showed a widening gap in who sought these services by race/ethnicity between 2002-2012. While non-Hispanic whites were increasing usage of CIH, Hispanic adults and non-Hispanic Black adults saw a decrease in usage.
- The 2012 NHIS found those who were living in the Western part of the United States, non-Hispanic white, and female were more likely to report receiving massage therapy within the last year compared to males, minority populations, and those living in areas other than the Western US.
- There is a trend in the data from 2002, 2007, 2012 showing racial and ethnic minorities in the US accessing massage therapy services less often than non-Hispanic white individuals.

Balogun, Oluwakemi & Kennedy, Ann Blair. (2020). Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Massage Therapy Profession. *International journal of therapeutic massage & bodywork*. 13. 1-5. 10.3822/ijtmb.v13i3.571.

Oncology Massage Therapy and Health Equity

Massage Therapy is not integrated into the healthcare system in a way that is accessible for everyone with a cancer diagnosis. This requires workarounds:

➤ **Client-driven**

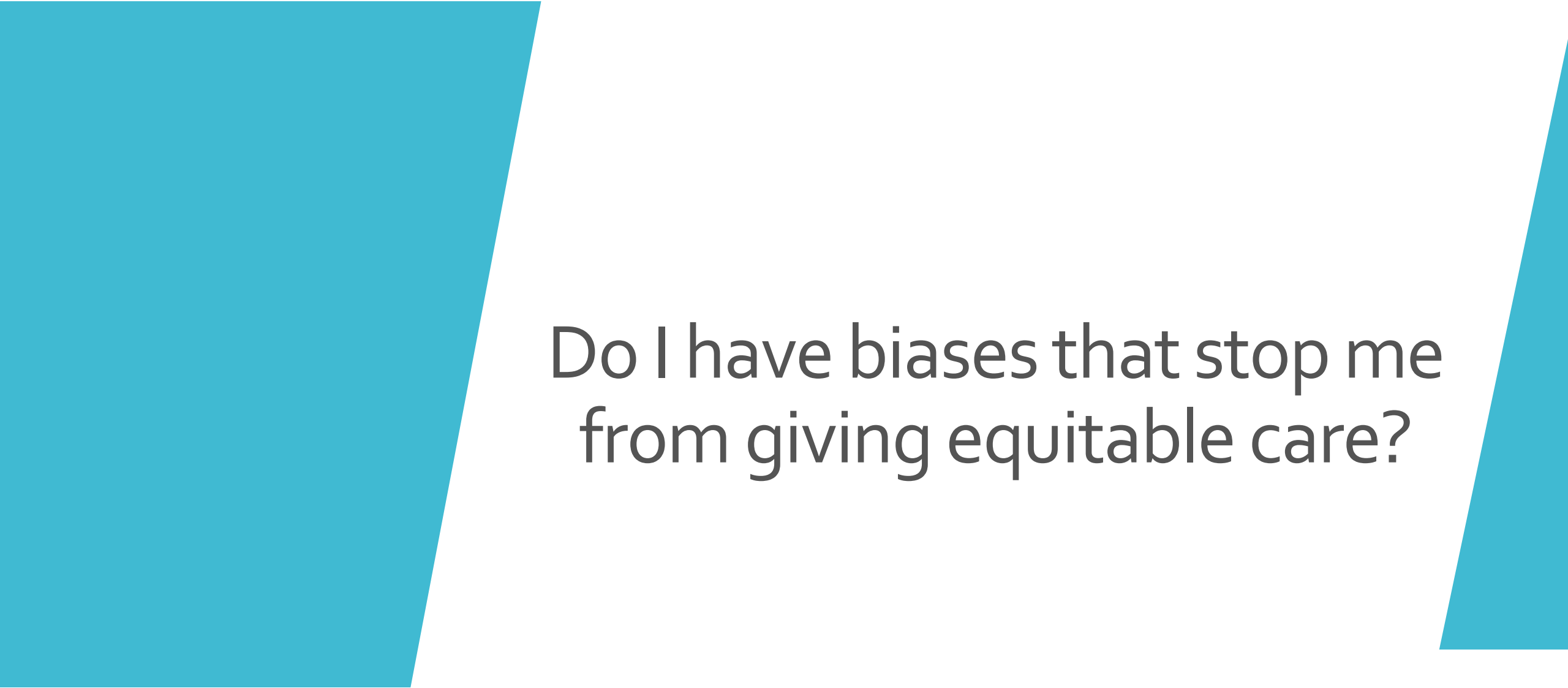
- “Massages with a doctor’s note of necessity”
<https://blog.healthequity.com/4-ways-to-work-the-system-with-an-hsa>

➤ **Healthcare System-driven**

- Using Paid Program and Insurance reimbursement to provide accessible care
- Memorial Sloan Kettering Institute – In-Hospital support due to large endowment

➤ **External Partner-driven**

- Non-profit partnership with a medical system



Do I have biases that stop me
from giving equitable care?

Awareness Building Exercise

Skill: Bias Awareness

Age

Race, Ethnicity

Body Type (obesity, underweight); or Body Areas

Gender, Gender Identity, Gender Fluidity

Location (urban, rural, suburbs, "part of town")

Sexual Identity

Socioeconomic Status (wealthy, middle class, poor)

Religion

Ability/Disability

Occupation

Tobacco or Medical Marijuana Use

Language

History of Incarceration

Housing

Transportation

Hygiene

Practice Awareness

- Practice awareness of bias.
- Notice the factors contributing to health equity.
- Consider where health inequity shows up in your practice.

Next Steps

- CE Credit link will be provided
- Next TOD November 18th. Health Equity: From Awareness to Action - Part 2
- S4OM Diversity, Equity & Inclusion workgroup
- Recording of this session
- Course Evaluation link

- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/healthequity/index.htm>
- HRSA: <https://www.hrsa.gov/about/organization/bureaus/ohe/index.html>
- ASCO: <https://www.asco.org/news-initiatives/current-initiatives/health-equity>
- Massage Therapy Profession – Scholarly article by Balogun and Kennedy (2020):
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344256865_Equity_Diversity_and_Inclusion_in_the_Massage_Therapy_Profession
- SHRM: <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/hr-qa/pages/resources-articles-workplace-bias.aspx>
- ASCO Podcast on the Social Determinants of Health and how they affect people with cancer:
<https://www.cancer.net/blog/2021-07/what-are-social-determinants-health-and-how-do-they-affect-people-with-cancer?cid=DM8317&bid=97248459>
- The Decision Lab – Biases: A practical guide to how our minds understand the world around us.
<https://thedecisionlab.com/biases-index/>

RESOURCES

THANK YOU!



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