

Metrowest Health Foundation

Fear and Doubt: What Stands Between Us and a Vaccinated Public

February 22, 2021



Our Objectives Today

- Understand how mindsets shape behavior
- Understand how messages shape mindsets
- Explore what traps to avoid
- Identify what strategies to advance

**Tell us about your
vaccination conversations.**



World Health Organization

“Vaccine hesitancy – the reluctance or refusal to vaccinate despite the availability of vaccines – threatens to reverse progress made in tackling vaccine-preventable diseases.”



LET'S PLAY A GAME

Have I ever...?

**Have I ever been a
member of a cult?**

Experience

Family

Community

Heritage

MINDSETS

Workplace

*Social
Cues*

Friends

Culture

Media



Worldview

Perceptions of those like them

Who they trust

Perceptions of risk

Consistency of message

Convenience of getting vaccine



TRAPS TO AVOID

#1 Fact Checking

Flu Vaccine

Facts & Myths



Department of Health
and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention

MYTH "The flu isn't a serious disease."

FACTS Influenza (flu) is a serious disease of the nose, throat, and lungs, and it can lead to pneumonia. Each year about 200,000 people in the U.S. are hospitalized and about 36,000 people die because of the flu. Most who die are 65 years and older. But small children less than 2 years old are as likely as those over 65 to have to go to the hospital because of the flu.

MYTH "The flu shot can cause the flu."

FACTS The flu shot cannot cause the flu. Some people get a little soreness or redness where they get the shot. It goes away in a day or two. Serious problems from the flu shot are very rare.

MYTH "The flu shot does not work."

FACTS Most of the time the flu shot will prevent the flu. In scientific studies, the effectiveness of the flu shot has ranged from 70% to 90% when there is a good match between circulating viruses and those in the vaccine. **Getting the vaccine is your best protection against this disease.**

MYTH "The side effects are worse than the flu."

FACTS The worst side effect you're likely to get from a shot is a sore arm. The nasal mist flu vaccine might cause nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat and cough. The risk of a severe allergic reaction is less than 1 in 4 million.

MYTH "Only older people need a flu vaccine."

FACTS Adults and children with conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, and kidney disease **need to get a flu shot**. Doctors also recommend children 6 months and older get a flu shot every year until their 5th birthday.

MYTH "You must get the flu vaccine before December."

FACTS Flu vaccine can be given before or during the flu season. The best time to get vaccinated is October or November. **But you can get vaccinated in December or later.**

For more information, ask your healthcare provider or call
800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) Website www.cdc.gov/flu

Flu Vaccine

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- Myths misremembered as facts
- Got worse over time
- Attributed false info to CDC

Myside bias

Bush assertion that tax cuts increase revenue.

“The tax relief stimulated economic vitality and growth and it has helped increase revenues to the Treasury,”

Bush said in his weekly radio address. “The increased revenues and our spending restraint have led to good progress in reducing the federal deficit.”

Same message, plus data

“However, even with the recent increases, revenues in 2005 will remain well below previous projections from the CBO. The major tax cut of 2001 and further cuts in each of the last three years were followed by an unprecedented three year decline in nominal tax revenues, from \$2 trillion in 2000 to \$1.8 trillion in 2003.”

Source: Nyhan, Brendan, and Jason Reifler. 2010. “When corrections fail: The persistence of political misperceptions. Political Behavior, 32(2), 303-330.

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Findings

Conservatives more likely than liberals to believe that tax cuts increase revenue.

But, conservatives exposed to myth + fact were **TWO TIMES** more supportive of “tax cuts increase revenue” statement than those exposed to just the myth.

Source: Nyhan, Brendan, and Jason Reifler. 2010. “When corrections fail: The persistence of political misperceptions. Political Behavior, 32(2), 303-330.

Human cognition is not logical.

Our goal is to offer alternative,
more compelling frames, not
refute the ones that don't align.

Offer an alternative frame

- **Recognize existence of misperception.**
“Contrary to what you may have heard...”
- **State affirmative case**
“In fact...”
- **Expand affirmative case**
Examples, explanatory chain, etc.
- **Kill off misperception completely**
“The data clearly shows...”

#2 Crisis Framing

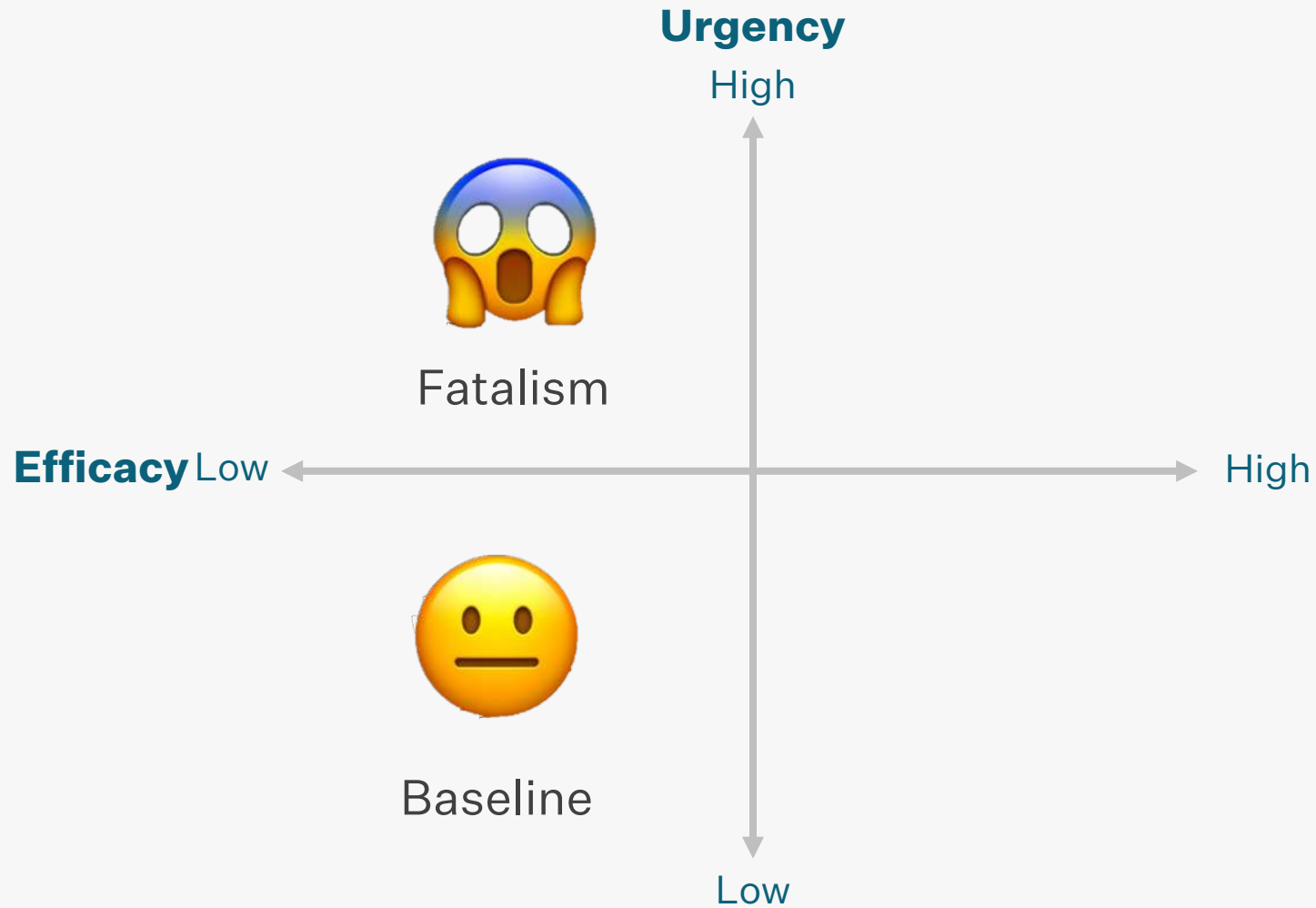


“The choice not to get a COVID-19 vaccine is the choice to be among the almost now 230,000 people who have died from this virus.”

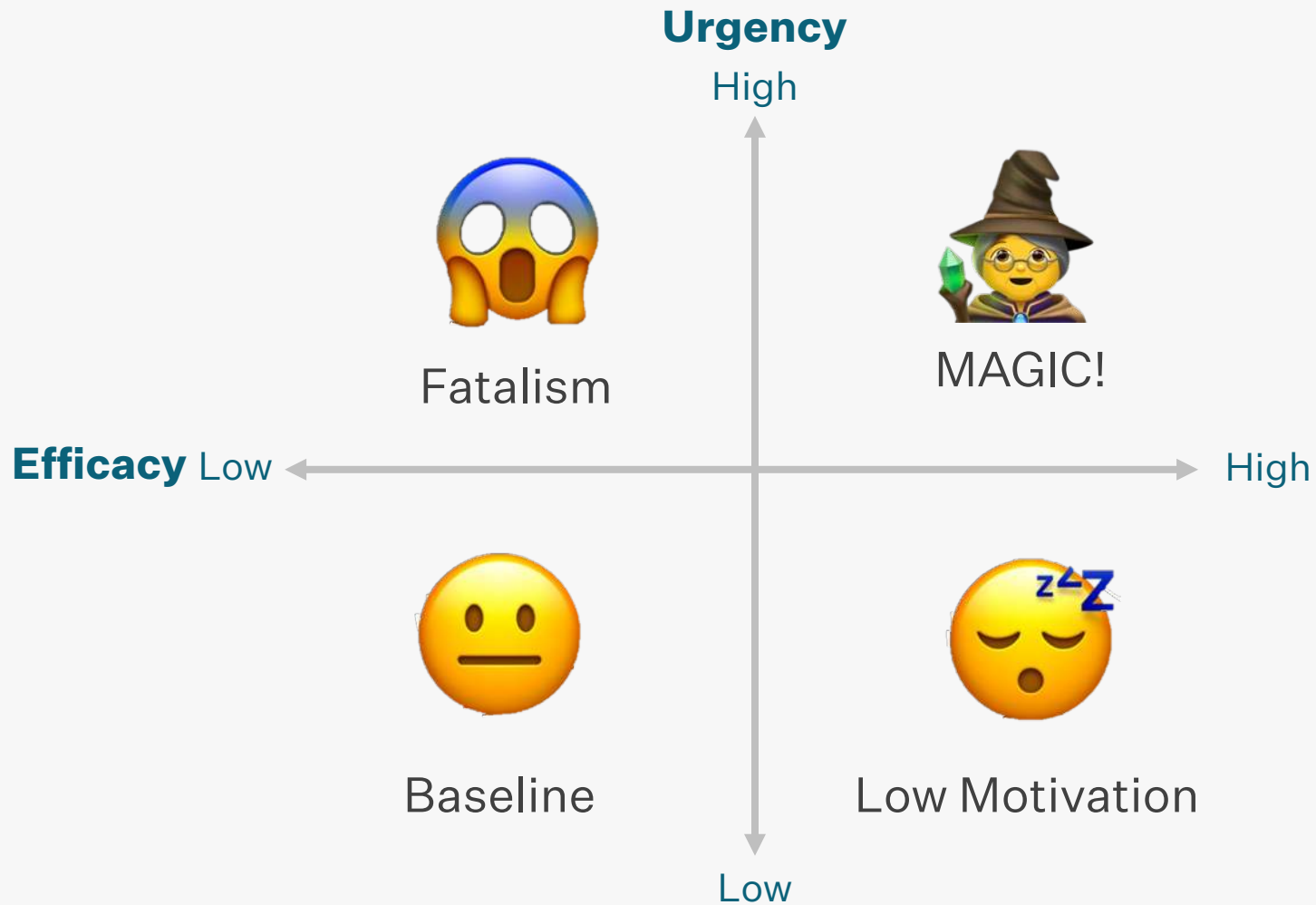
Paul A. Offit, MD

**Crisis framing is designed
to elicit a behavior change.
BUT IT DOESN'T LAST.**

The Problem With Problems



The Problem With Problems



#3 Resonance

Communication Issues? Meet People Where They Are

Published on April 20, 2016



Kelly
Exec



23

MEET PEOPLE
WHERE THEY
ARE, NOT
WHERE YOU
WOULD LIKE
THEM TO BE

09.04.15 | KNOW IT ALL

6 Ways For Leaders To Make Their Messages Resonate

When you're truly invested in your message, you don't have to shout.

WHAT'S THAT YOU SAY?

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION BY
MEETING PEOPLE WHERE
THEY ARE

Lucy Crown
Greenway Coordinator

Joey Robison
Communication Specialist

Sara Henry
Riverfront Redevelopment
Operations Coordinator

Meeting People Where They Are

Posted on January 11, 2016 by [Erin Hennessy](#)

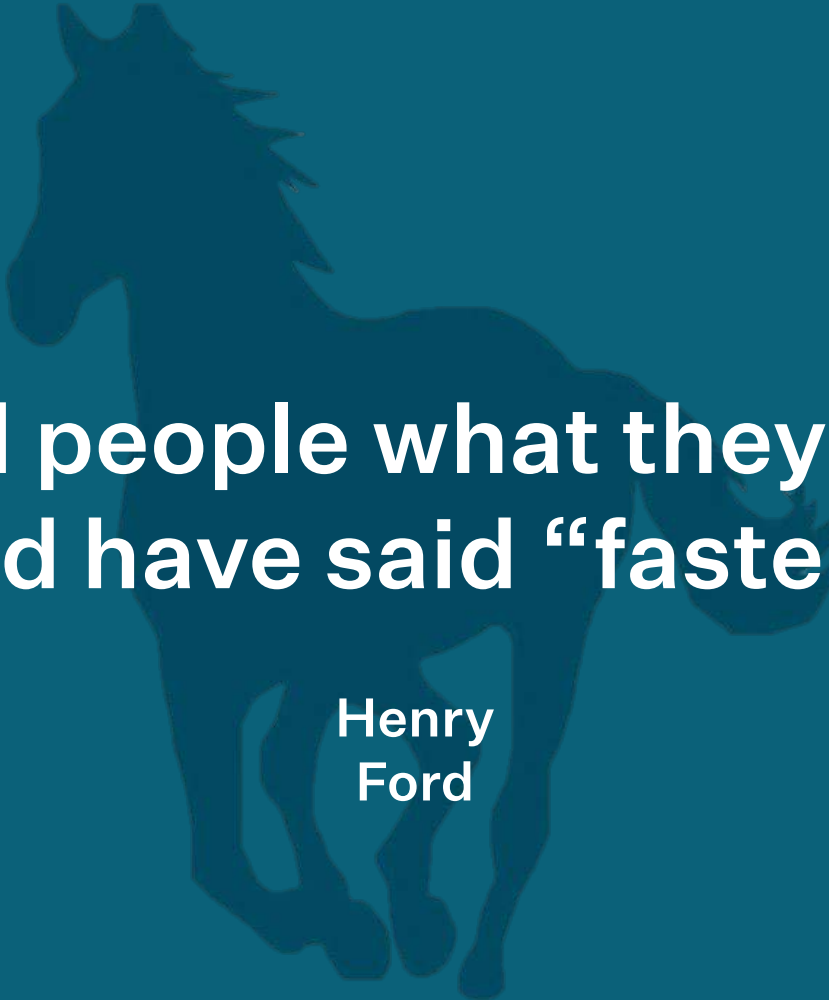
Over the past 20 years, when I haven't been working in higher education, I've worked in government, at both the state and federal levels. So I'm always pretty

GROW

6 Ways To Make Your Message Resonate Better

BY LAURA ABRAR | SMALL BUSINESS



A dark teal silhouette of a horse in a running or galloping pose, facing left. The horse's mane and tail are slightly raised, suggesting motion. It is centered in the background of the slide.

**If I asked people what they wanted,
they would have said “faster horses.”**

**Henry
Ford**



Measles: Unprotected Story

106 Degrees: A True Story

true
story

“

We spent 3 days in the hospital fearing we might lose our baby boy... We spent a week [at home] waking at all hours to stay on schedule with fever reducing medications and soothing him with damp wash cloths.

”

If you hear "106 degrees" you probably think "heat wave," not a baby's temperature. But for Megan Campbell's 10-month-old son, a life-threatening bout of measles caused fevers spiking to 106 degrees and sent him to the hospital.

"After picking our son up at child care because he had a fever," says Megan, "we went straight to our pediatrician who said our baby had a virus. Two days later, his fever hit 104 degrees and a rash appeared on his head."

The rash quickly crept down to his arms and chest. Megan and husband Chris turned to the Internet. Finding pictures of measles that looked like their son's rash, they rushed him to the local children's hospital.

"No one there had seen or tested for measles for about 17 years," says Megan. "And no one expected it in the year 2008 in the United States. The next day, an infectious disease specialist confirmed measles."



Beliefs that **vaccines**
have serious side effects



Intent to vaccinate

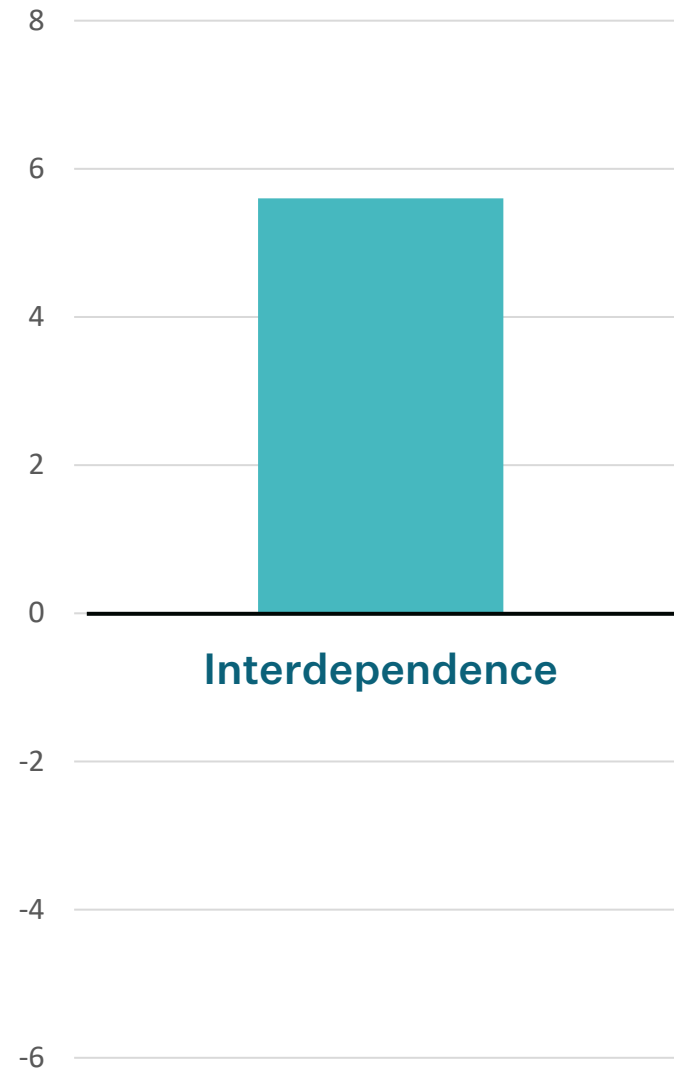
Nyhan, B., Reifler, J., Richey, S. and Freed G.L. (2014) *Effective Messages in Vaccine Promotion: A Randomized Trial. Pediatrics*; March 3, 2014; DOI: 10.1542/peds.2013-2365

Confirmation Bias

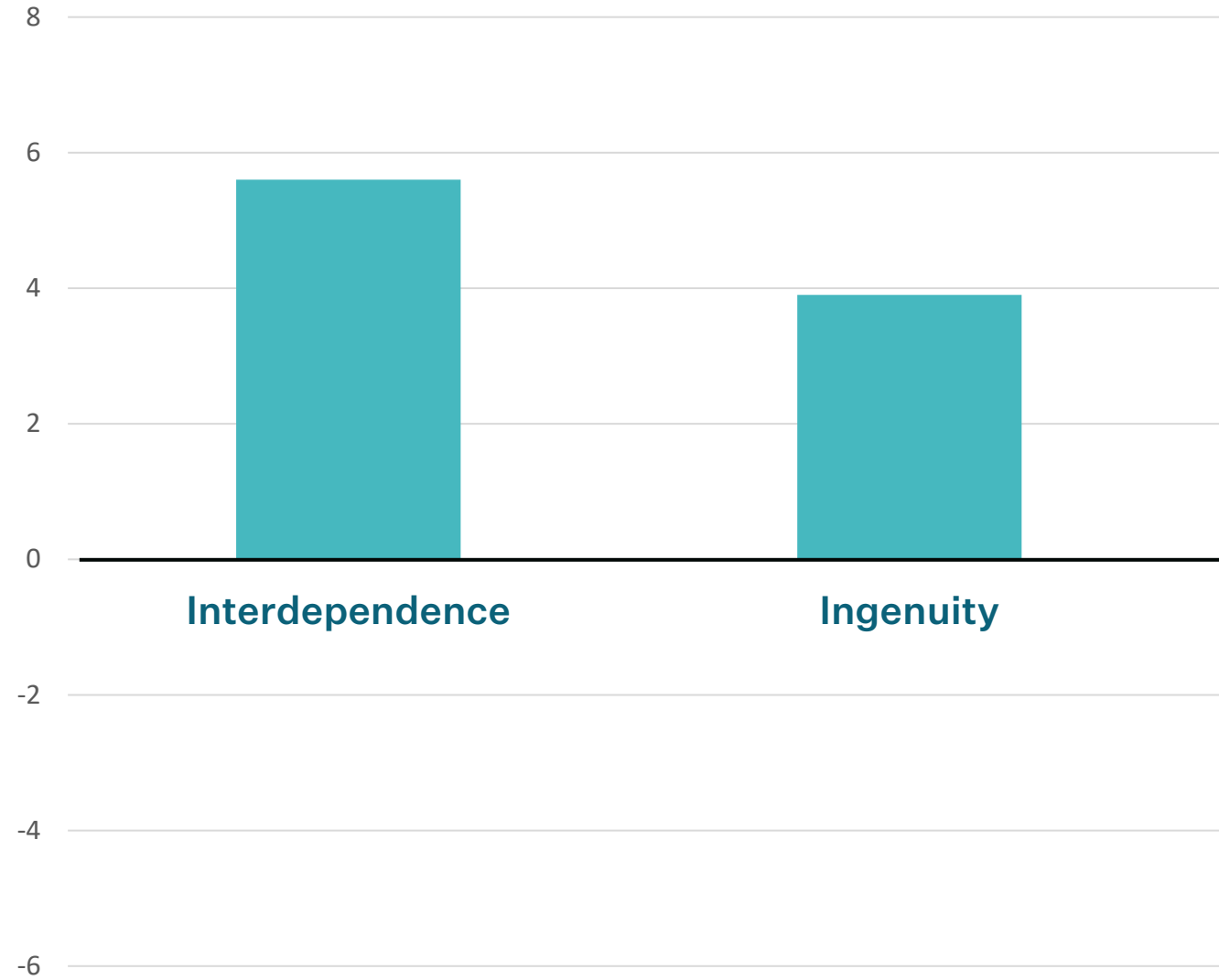
“People will resist abandoning a false belief unless they have a compelling alternative explanation.”

David Ignatius, Washington Post 2016

Support for Evidence-Based Addiction Policies



Support for Evidence-Based Addiction Policies



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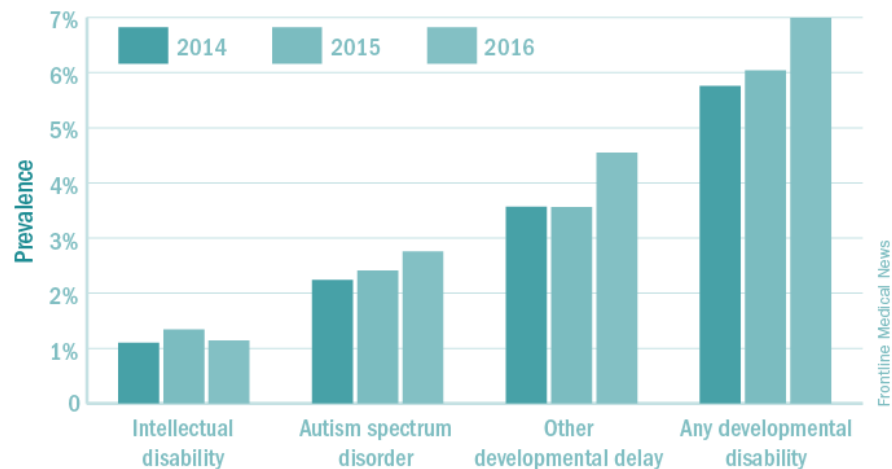
We can hold two competing frames as true.

Our goal is to appeal to the more productive frame.

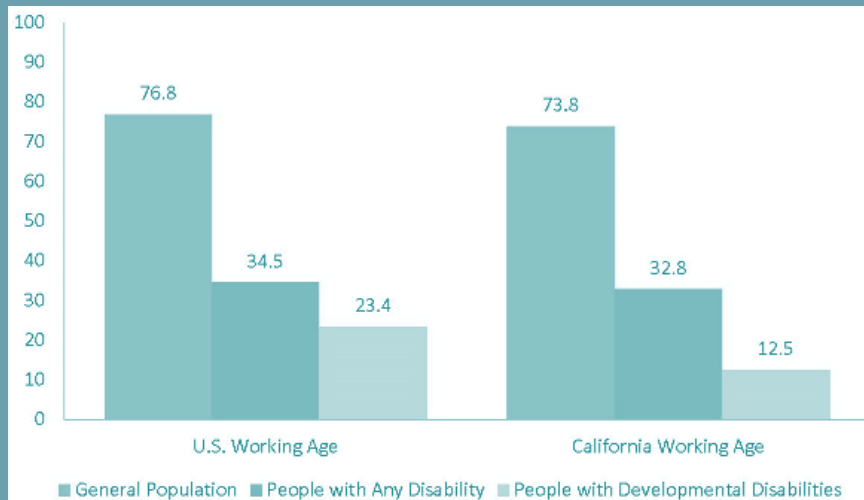
Resonate in the right direction.

#4 Data Dump

Children with diagnosed developmental disability

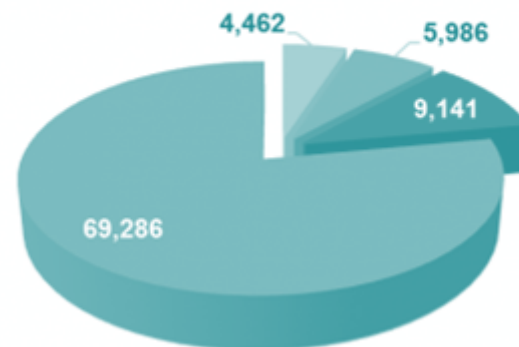


Note: Based on data for children aged 3-17 years from the National Health Interview Survey.
Source: National Center for Health Statistics



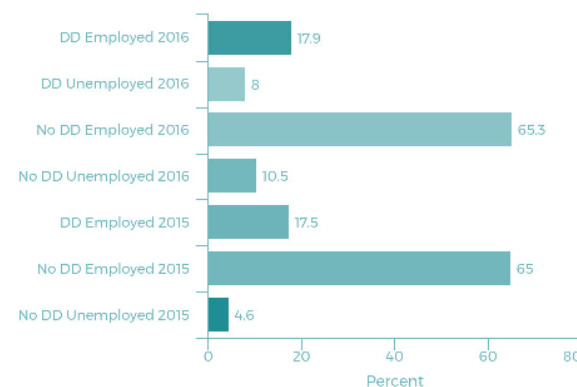
FY 2015/2016

- Supported Employment Individual
- Supported Employment Group
- Work Activity Programs
- Day & Look Alike Program



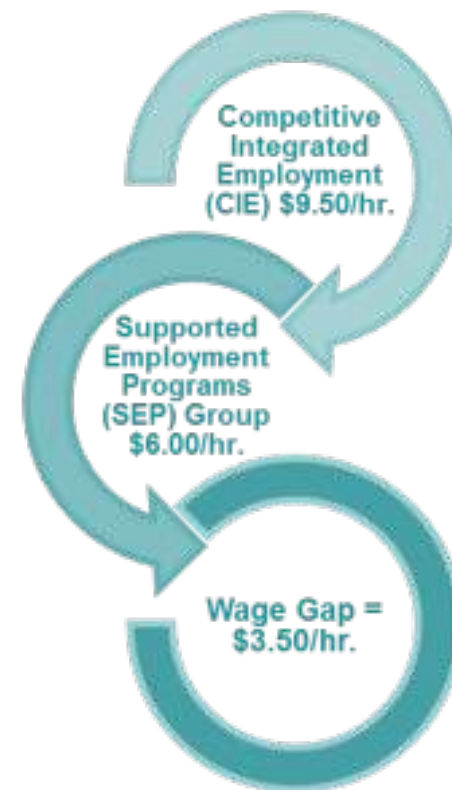
Data from Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Purchase of Service

US Employment of Developmentally Disabled Statistics



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

BEAM venngage.com/beam



Some Kids Doing Better, Others Fall Behind: New Report Pinpoints Victories and Problem Areas for California

The well-being of California children has held amazingly steady, despite the horror stories that we all hear, says a new report from the state's leading child advocacy organization. School achievement, as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, shows scores at par with those of the early 1970s, while the percentage of California youth who work part-time and contribute to family incomes has remained constant over the same period. More young people are volunteering than ever before, with 40 percent of all youth regularly involved in community service. And, while it is commonly believed that drugs and crime occupy young people's time, in fact marijuana use has declined substantially, and "kids today use marijuana less than their parents did," says the report. The violent crime rate has increased from 1 in 100,000 youth to 3 in 100,000 youth, but that statistic is interpreted by California Kids First leader Jim Johns as meaning "the chance of being involved in teenage violent crime is about as high as being hit by a meteor." Johns attributes the good news to "the social cohesiveness of neighborhoods." He explains this as "when adults socialize, care about their community, go to church, and join clubs," the community does a better job of "nurturing young people." "What we need to do," according to Johns, "is reach out to those areas without a community focus, and help them build a sense of neighborhood through community centers, churches and schools." On some factors, however, California lost ground. Poverty continued to rise among the poorest families, and the number of teen deaths reached an all-time high in 1998. The number one reason for teen death is auto accidents, followed by suicide. Teen pregnancy has receded in recent years, but it is too early to tell if this is a trend or a blip on the screen, say experts. The report tracked four key indicators of youth achievement — health, education, safety and financial security — and found 1 in 7 children in the state is at risk to such a degree that "their chance of becoming a productive adult is seriously at question."

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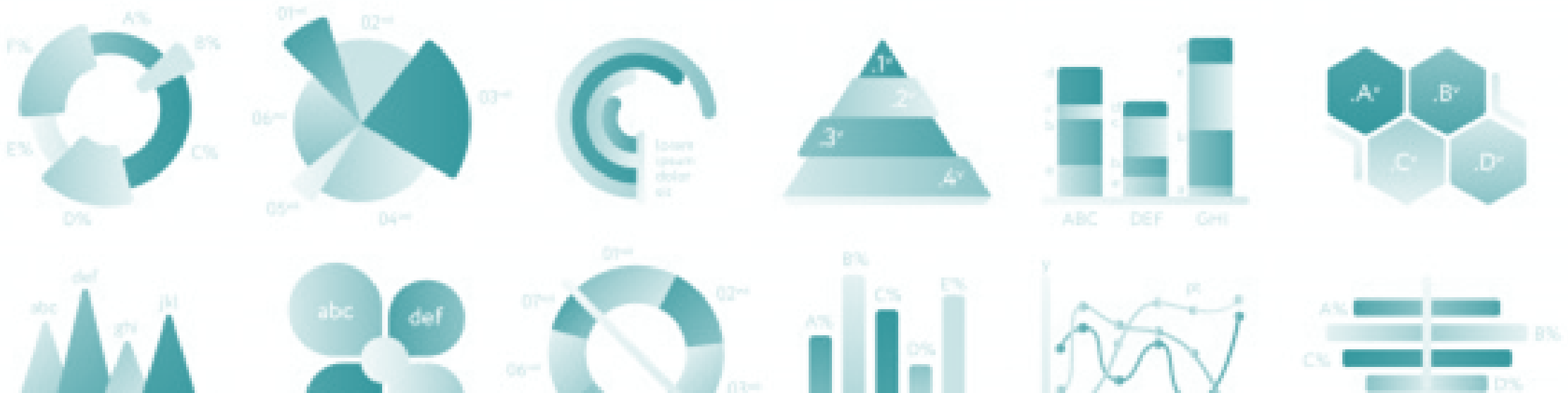
Results

- Disbelief and skepticism
- Questioning of methodology
- Manipulation of findings to support original assumptions

"I question almost the whole story."

"How did they do this poll?"

"Maybe. Maybe not."



Use data to underscore your point.



Use data to underscore your point.

- **State affirmative case**
“Vaccinations are overwhelmingly safe.”
- **Underscore with data**
“In fact, the COVID-19 vaccine went through every safety step of any vaccine...”
- **Frame the data**
“That includes the [LIST OF VACCINES]...”
- **Reaffirm the case**
“The safety of the COVID-19 vaccine is well established.”

#5 Ridicule



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www.bostonglobe.com/wasserman



WASSERMAN © 12.20



When Prophecy Fails

LEON FESTINGER

/ HENRY W. RIECKEN

/ STANLEY SCHACHTER

A social and psychological study of a modern group that predicted the destruction of the world

Instead of admitting error, “members of the group sought frantically to convince the world of their beliefs,” and they made “a series of desperate attempts to erase their rankling dissonance by making prediction after prediction in the hope that one would come true.”





STRATEGIES

#1 Find Common Ground



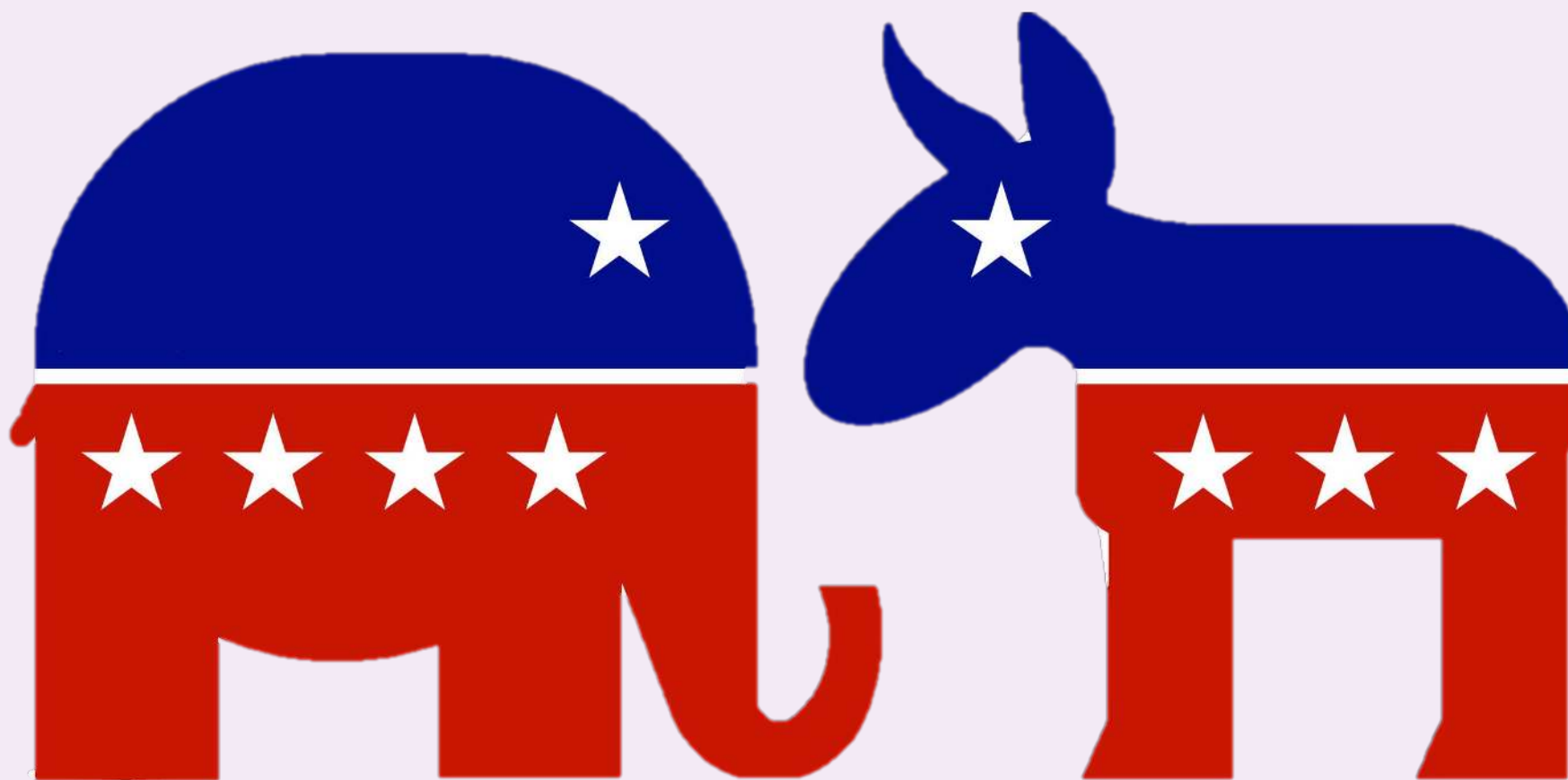
Antivaxxers are part of a tribe,
but it isn't their only tribe.



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- **Parents:** Role model for kids
- **Neighbors:** Member of a community
- **Workers:** Modern workplace
- **Americans:** History of pragmatism
- **Adult Children:** Protect aging parents

#2 Reframe. Don't reject.



Advance

**Provide
Alternative
Frames**

*Rather than refuting,
create a more
compelling alternative.*

**Common
Values**

*Start with universally
appealing frames,
We/Us*

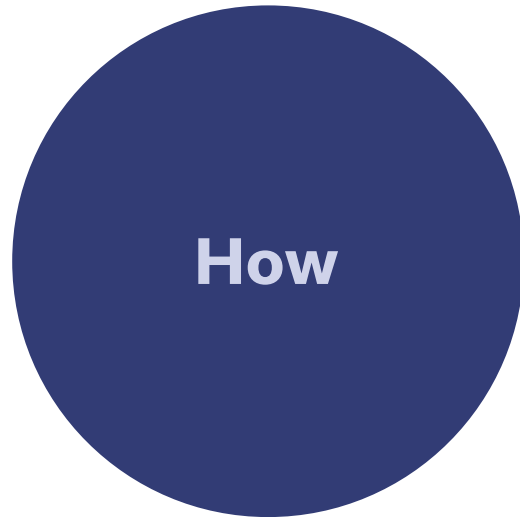
#3 Be transparent.

Be explicit about your motivations
AND their barriers.





Who needs to change?



How must they act?



Who

Who needs to change?

Why would they do that?

How

How must they act?

Why wouldn't they do that?

#4 Tell a story.





Narrative

Understanding

Interest

Engagement



Assertion

Rancor

Defensiveness

Cognitive Dissonance





Hero Elect

- Ascribe rare personal characteristics to people who do something special.
- Bystander effect – people witness an emergency and assume a hero will help.

Advance

**“What
Surrounds Us
Shapes Us”**

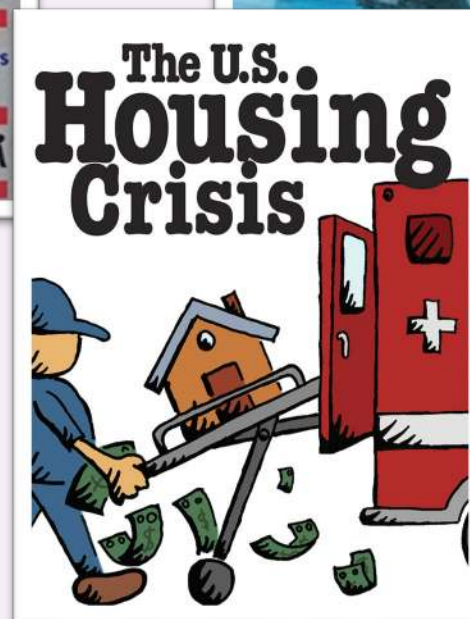
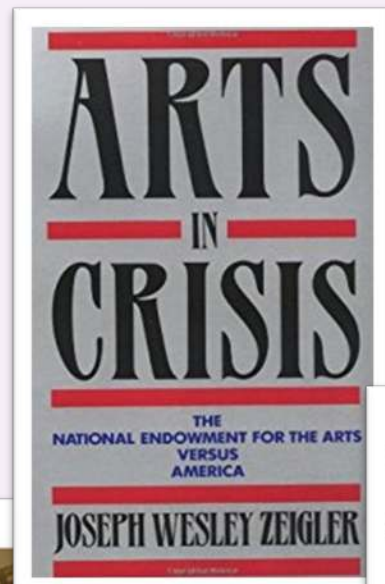
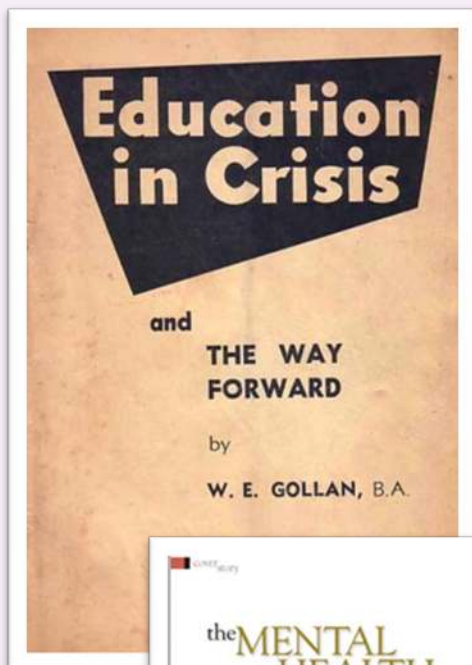
*Explain the role of context,
resources, systems in
shaping outcomes.*

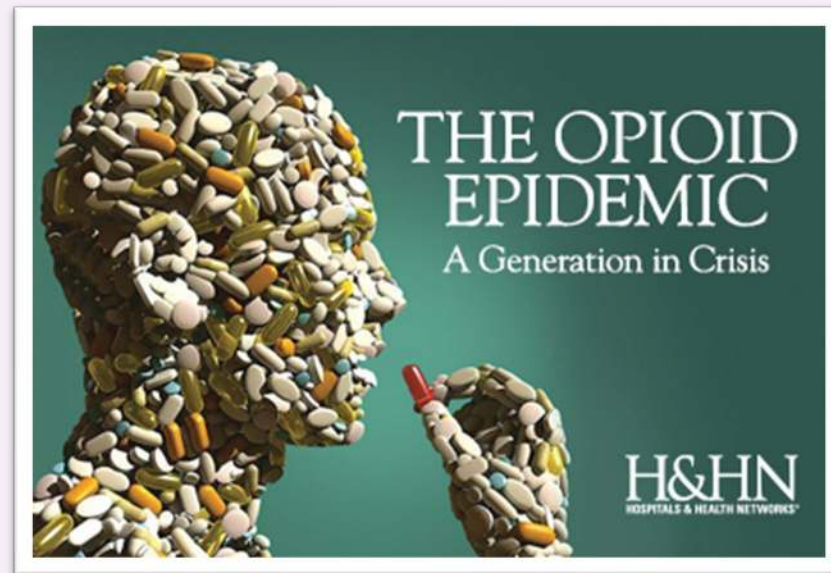
**Universal
Applicability**

*Share stories that can be
universally applied.*

#5 Evoke the right emotions.







**Fear destabilizes and
reverts people backwards.**



**Fear
Shame
Outrage**



**Love
Hope
Community**



QUESTIONS