

GLOSSARY

Edits, queries and additions?
Do let me know!

By Lucy Aphramor with input from participants in Well Now facilitator training



ALLOSTASIS

Physiological adaptation to chronic stress.

A point of no return in homeostasis, an adaptive response to living with chronic stress.



BINARY ~BLACK & WHITE ~ or HIERARCHICAL THINKING aka CARTESIAN DUALISM

A way of thinking that relies on having two unequal opposites eg. fat/thin; gay/straight; fit/unfit. It fosters judgment and stereotype.

Difference is used to compare and rank things in worth rather than being celebrated and valued.

Thinking in this way constructs absolutes and certainties. There is no scope for a middle ground or maybes or queering the pitch.



BOMB CALORIMETER

A machine for measuring how much energy food releases.

You put the food in and explode in and measure the heat energy given off in kilocalories.

Humans are not one.



COMPASSION

Being kind and understanding with a willingness to support yourself and others without judgment.



CRITICAL THINKING

Involves seeking out a range of perspectives on a topic and exploring our own biases, beliefs, and emotional responses.

It recognises there is no such thing as objectivity ~

and that there is no neutral.



EMBODIED KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge that comes from our felt sense.

It's often experienced in tandem with other ways of knowing, so an emotion might register in a body sensation and our awareness of a feeling.

Embodied knowledge includes all the senses, plus muscle stretch (eg. stomach fullness), position in space, touch, arousal, tacit knowledge, intuition eg. gut feeling and more.



HEALTHISM

A belief system that sees health as the property and responsibility of an individual and ranks the personal pursuit of health above everything else, like world peace or being kind.

It ignores the impact of poverty, oppression, war, violence, luck, historical atrocities, abuse, and the environment from traffic pollution to clean water and nuclear contamination and so on. It protects the status quo, leads to victim blaming and privilege, increases health inequalities and fosters internalised oppression.

Healthism judges people's human worth according to their health.



INTER-SECTIONALITY

The study of the inter-play between different dimensions of oppression and domination.

It reminds us that people's experiences arise from the sum of all their identities are cannot be homogenised to one overarching group characteristic. Eg. The experience of being fat will be mediated by identities and circumstances such as financial status, health status, ethnicity, sexuality, gender and so on.



CONNECTED EATING

An approach to eating where someone uses circumstances, body cues and existing knowledge and experience when selecting foods.

Teaching connected eating where a capacity for using body signals has been lost can involve people in thinking things through as a stepping stone to eating in an attuned, connected way. For example, by tuning in to how hungry they feel, or working out what they fancy eating.



LIFECOURSE

Your life over time: it's made up of your unique experiences.

It's a more useful way of thinking about eating and self-care than the 'snap shot' version. It provides a context for understanding eg. people's relationship with food and their bodies, which can help them make sense of their behaviours and health status now so that things becomes more meaningful and they gain a sense of agency.

It also enables us to integrate the impact of historical and inter-generational trauma.



LIFEWORLD 1 of 2

How you experience your world in real-time.

A term that describes the 'everydayness' of someone's life, the place where emotions are played out or repressed, our inner circle of interconnected experience.

People who have grown up with material and emotional security experience the world as nurturing, and the self as worthwhile, their everyday interactions reinforce these experiences of a meaningful world where they get respected. When something difficult happens they expect support, and build resilience as they come through. People who don't have this, experience the lifeworld as harsh and hostile. Contd:



LIFEWORLD 2 of 2

Their response to insult (in its broadest sense) is very different to someone who has a nurturing lifeworld - this is seen in people's experience of racism and prevalence of hypertension for example. The same stressors affect us differently depending on our response to them and our response originates in our

Of course oppression is always wrong, but our response to oppression, , the toll it takes on us, will differ according to how we generally experience the world - itself a function of our life course.

See:[http://www.publichealthjrn.com/article/S0033-3506\(08\)00279-5/pdf](http://www.publichealthjrn.com/article/S0033-3506(08)00279-5/pdf)



MECHANISTIC

A model that uses the metaphor of a machine for explaining phenomena.

In a mechanistic understanding of the body, for example, food becomes fuel –ignoring the social, sensual, emotional aspects of eating; the energy balance equation is held to apply as if we were calorie-burning machines; there is little room for relational and spiritual dimensions of our lives; health is attained by following proscribed lifestyle recommendations; society barely exists.



MINDFULNESS

A non-judgmental awareness of your lifeworld.

Or, according to Jon Kabat-Zin, paying attention in a particular way:

- on purpose
- in the present moment
- without judgment



RELATIONAL

A way of approaching ideas and people that takes account of context.

It looks for links between things as a way of finding meaning rather than seeking to isolate and separate things out to understand them.



RESILIENCE

The capacity to 'stay afloat' during life's challenges and come through, maybe transformed.

People, and communities, who are resilient have the ability to cope with setbacks and overcome ordeals so they can finding meaning and enjoyment in life without being overwhelmed by their difficulties.

I avoid the metaphor 'bouncing back' as this suggests we remain untouched by experience. I think metaphors that assume events have an impact on our body are more useful, and accurate.



SENSE OF AGENCY

People with a sense of agency feel able to act in a meaningful way in their own, and maybe other's, lives.

Having a sense of agency means you trust are able to represent yourself. It is tied up with factors such as self-worth, previous experiences of trying to change things, resilience (and sense of coherence).



SET POINT

The weight (body fat percentage) someone oscillates around when they're eating to appetite.

It's influenced by factors including genetics, environment, biography.



STATUS SYNDROME

This describes the fact that your health will suffer if you are treated like a second class citizen.

The term was coined by Michael Marmot following the findings of the now classic Whitehall studies which showed how class influenced health outcomes in British civil servants – even when health behaviours were controlled for.

It describes the impact of the insult to dignity and loss of agency experienced by people who are disadvantaged by living in unequal societies.



STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

A violence experienced by oppressed groups as they are disadvantaged by institutional norms and suffer because of the way society is set up.

Structural violence is perpetuated when we make choices that support the status quo even when we may not intend it, and when we have not directly sought to disadvantage any person or group.

Conventional models of health ignore the impact of structural violence on health outcomes; they might allow for the impact of structural violence on 'lifestyle choices' but typically fall back on the 'personal responsibility' line anyway.

