

**BALANCING THE SYSTEM:  
STIGMA, REPURCUSSIONS AND  
HOPE**

—

Saima Nazar Khan

# Welcome to Country

- I **acknowledge** the Traditional Custodians of the land on which I work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community. I pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.





# A little bit about me: I have the following accreditations

- Bachelors in English and Comparative Literature
- Post graduate Certificate in Tertiary and Adult Education
- Postgraduate Diploma in Education
- Masters in Education
- Postgraduate Certificate in Counselling
- Professional Certificate in Adolescent Counselling (Monash University)
- Why am I telling you this?



# Stigma:

- The most established definition regarding stigma is written by Erving Goffman (1963) in his seminal work: Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity. Goffman (1963) states that stigma is “an attribute that is deeply discrediting” that reduces someone “from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one” (p. 3).
- Mental Health Stigma: Society, Individuals, and the Profession Brian K. Ahmedani.
- The World Health Organization has defined stigma as a sign of humiliation and disgrace that leads to rejection , discrimination ,and exclusion from participating in different areas of society (17) .It is Composed of three constructs ;problem in knowledge (ignorance), problem in attitudes (prejudice), and problem in behavior (discrimination)





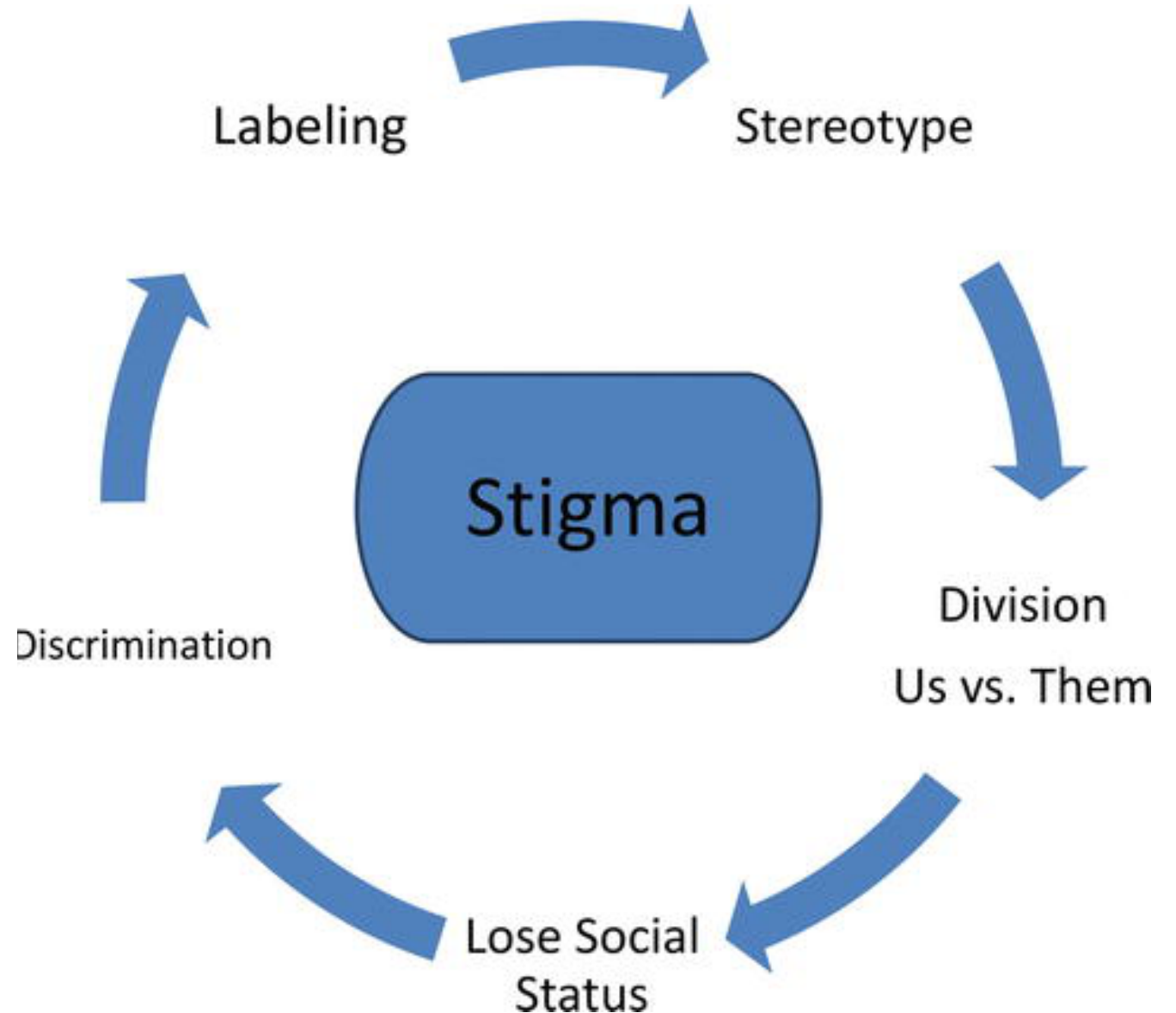
# What is Stigma?

- Broadly:
- There are two types of stigma:
- 1. **Social/Societal** :Attitudes that people exhibit towards people with mental health issues
- 2. **Self Stigma**: Stigmatised attitudes which people with mental health issues internalized. ***Internal Stigma is a bit of a paradox***



# Mental Health and Stigma

- “People suffering from mental illness and other mental health problems are among the most stigmatized, discriminated against, marginalized, disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our society.”



# Stigma:Identity

---

People with mental health concerns sometimes form what is called by Goffman as a virtual social identity – when they are ‘dis-favoured’ or not considered to have any dignity in the eyes of other people.

The reason for this is that Mental health issues – historically – have been seen as a ‘character’ or ‘moral flaw’.

The need is to highlight that the whole identity of people with mental health issues and disabilities is brought into question.

(Talk about the image)



# Stigma and mental health

As Goffman (1968) puts it, there is a 'self-other, normal-stigmatized Binary –

stigmatised and non-stigmatised alike are products of the same norms.

In this instance, the general public perceives those with mental disorders as frightening, unpredictable, and strange

This also suggests that fear and discomfort arise as a result of the social cues attributed to individuals. Social cues can be evidenced by psychiatric symptoms, awkward physical appearance or social-skills,

Stigma is a direct consequence of these binarized identity markers and is not only responsible for evoking feelings of fear and discomfort – but also through these feelings maintaining these perceptions in the general media and social arenas.







## What is stigma?

**S**ecrecy  
**T**aboo  
**I**gnorance  
**G**ulf  
**M**yth  
**A**voidance

# Self- stigma

- The robust factor that influences the quality of life is selfstigma. Self-stigma is a three-phase process in which the person assigns to himself/herself a socially handicapping label, internalizing it, and assumes that others will behave in a negative way to him/her, or despise him/her.



- Higher rates of self-stigma are connected to a higher rate of overall psychopathology, a higher rate of depression, social anxiety, low self-esteem, a lesser degree of hope, worse social, occupational and vocational functioning, poorer treatment outcomes, less social support and less cooperation in the treatment, and last but not least a lower quality of life.

- This may lead to avoidance, running away from friends, sometimes even from their families, and ultimately to social isolation.

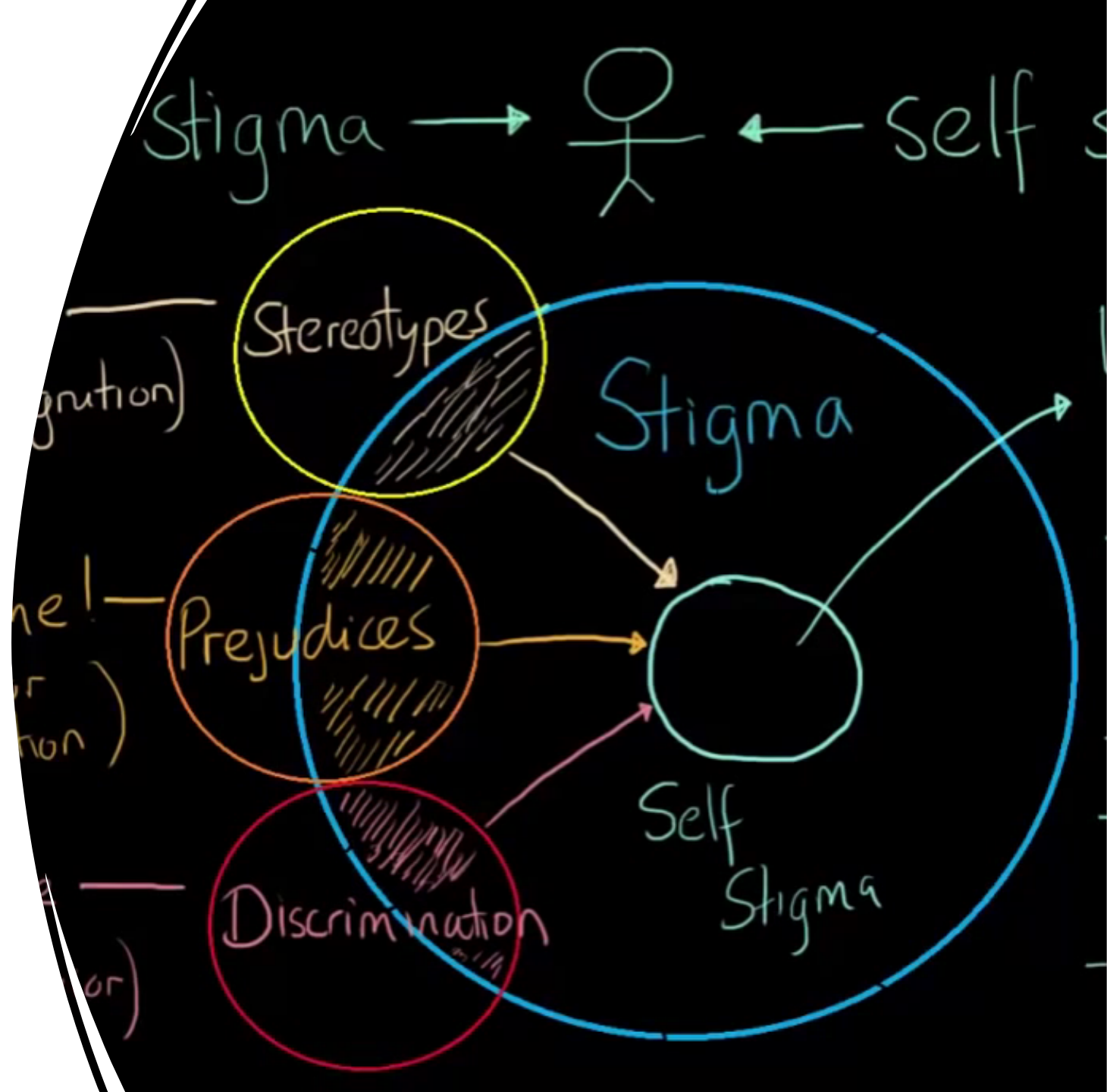
- Formerly, the stigma and risks of stigma internalization were reported particularly in patients with severe mental disorders such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depressive disorder.

- Kristyna Vrbova Jan Prasko1 Marie Ociskova Dana Kamaradova Marketa Marackova Michaela Holubova Ales Grambal Milos Slepecky Klara Latalova

# Attitudes

---

- Stereotypes and prejudices about the psychiatric patients typically appraise the mentally ill as dangerous, aggressive, irrational in negotiations, and therefore unpredictable and irresponsible.





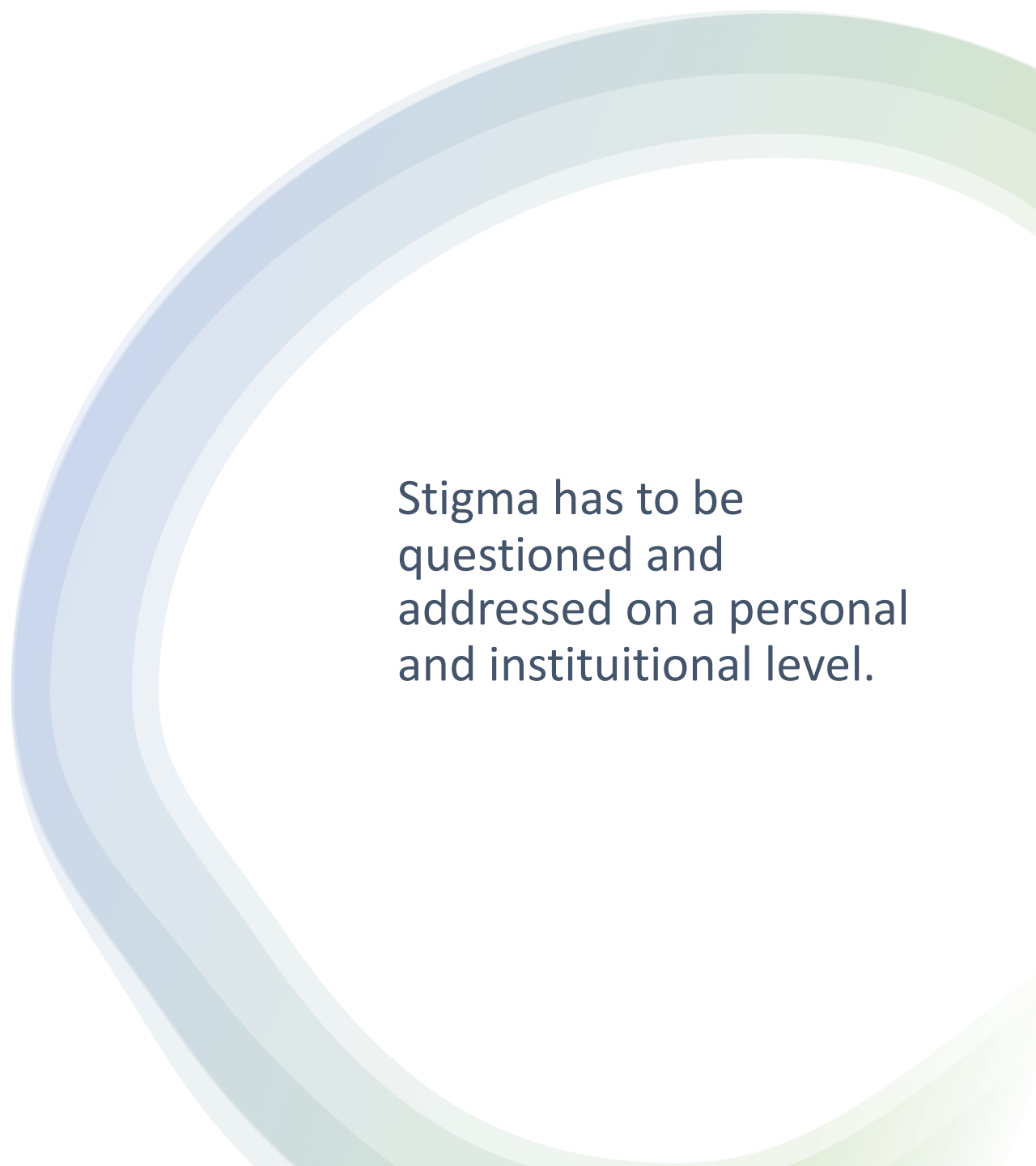
# Hard Conversations: Talking about Mental Illness



- Talk Openly About Mental Health
- Educate Yourself And Others
- Be Conscious Of Language
- **Encourage Equality Between Physical And Mental Illness**
- Show Compassion For Those With Mental Illness
- **Choose Empowerment Over Shame**
- Be Honest About Treatment
- Let The Media Know When They're Being Stigmatizing
- **Don't Harbor Self-Stigma**
- This is what our collective voice sounds like. It sounds like bravery, strength and persistence—the qualities we need to face mental illness *and* to fight stigma. No matter how you contribute to the mental health movement, you can make a difference simply by knowing that mental illness is not anyone's fault, no matter what societal stigma says. You can make a difference.



Hope and Stigma:  
Challenging the norms



Stigma has to be  
questioned and  
addressed on a personal  
and institutional level.

ASK SOMEONE

**HOW  
ARE YOU  
REALLY?**

Destigmatize mental health by joining the  
**#howareyoureallychallenge**



**Thank you  
for listening**

