

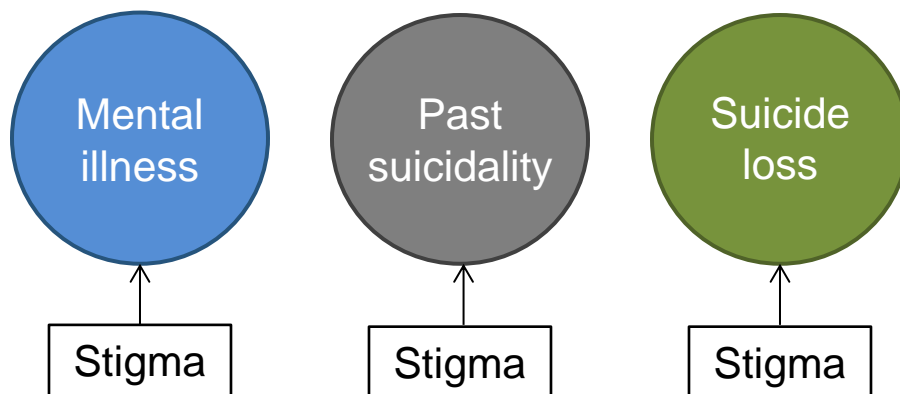


Mental illness stigma, suicide stigma and suicide prevention

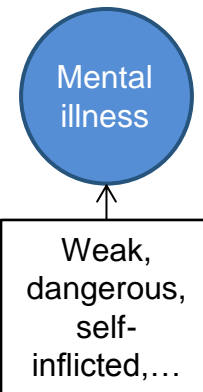
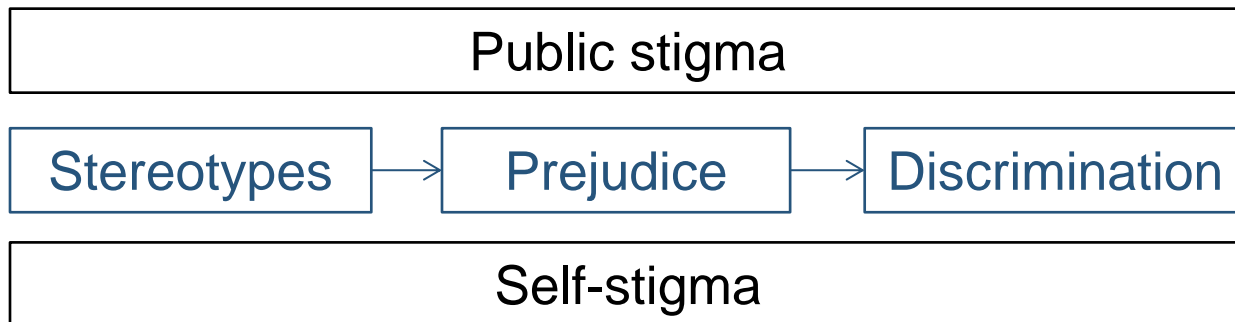
Nathalie Oexle

Background

- Approx. 1 million suicides/year worldwide.
- Many more attempts (estimation: 10-40 attempts/completed suicide).
- Strongest risk factors for suicide: past suicidal behavior, mental illness, suicide loss.

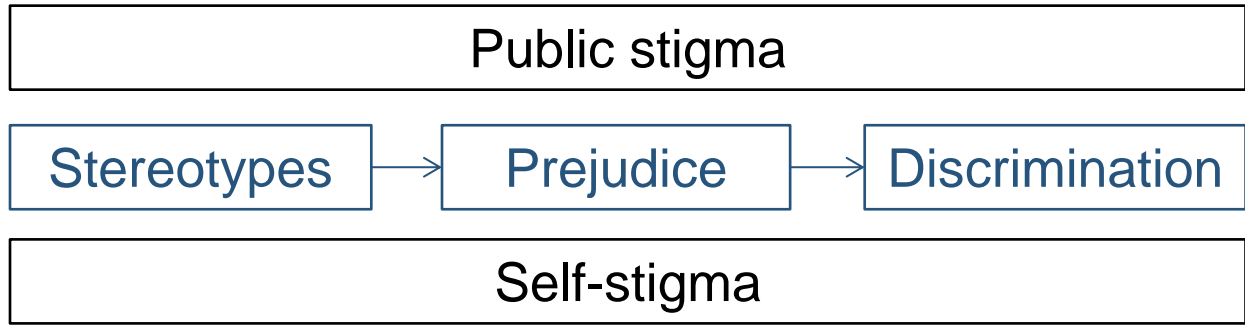
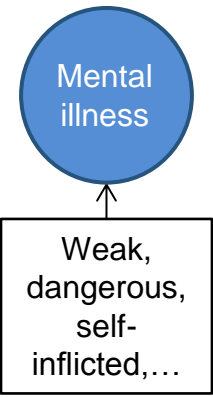


Mental illness stigma



Corrigan & Watson, 2002

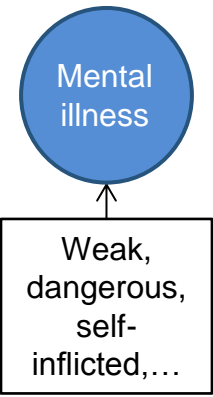
Mental illness stigma



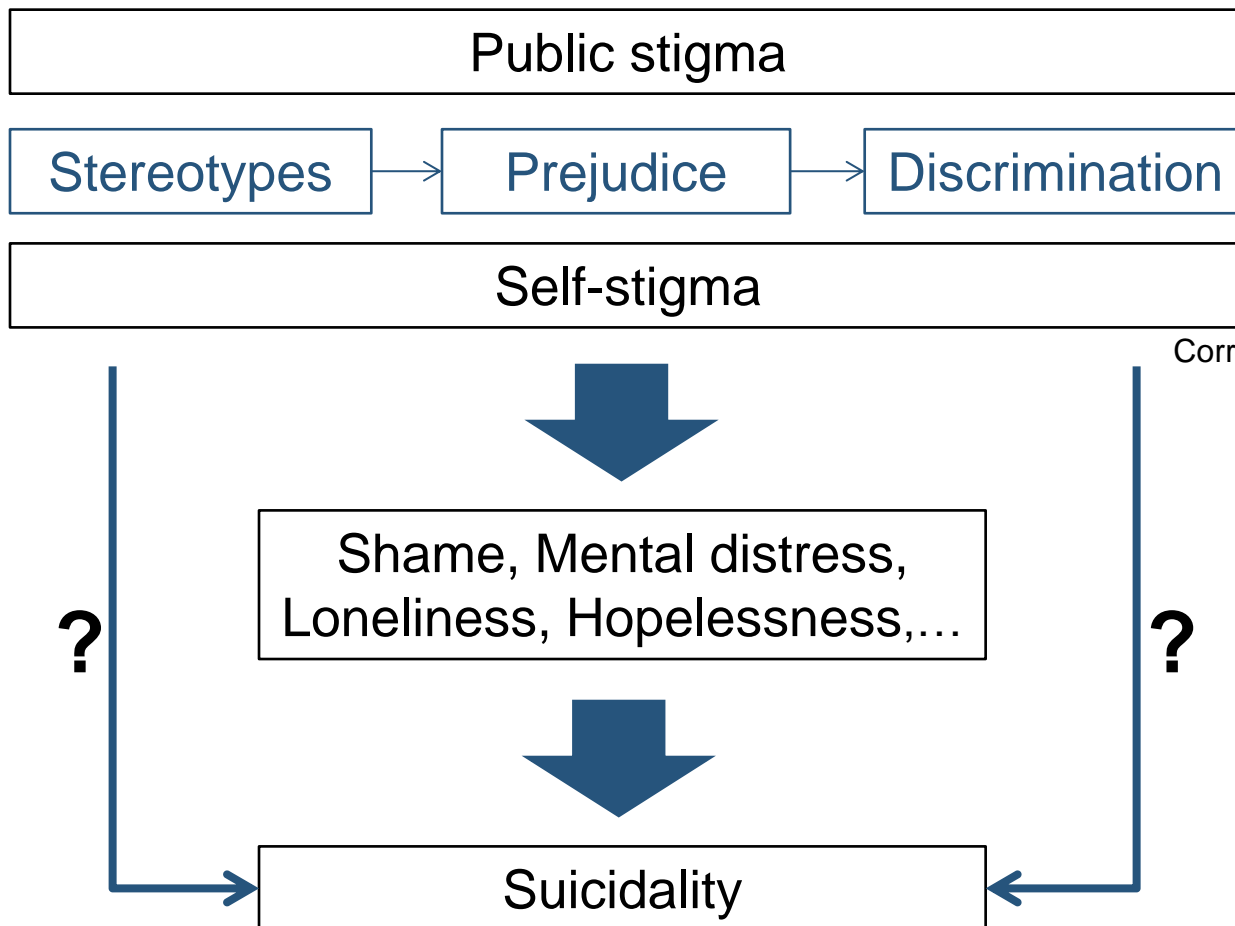
Corrigan & Watson, 2002



Shame, Mental distress,
Loneliness, Hopelessness,...

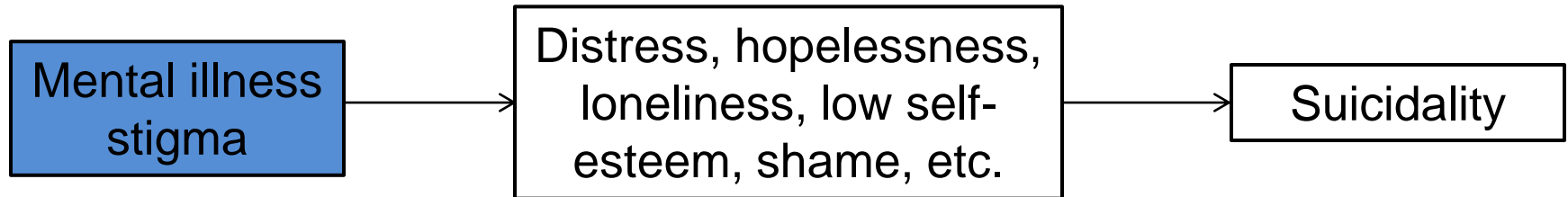


Mental illness stigma



Corrigan & Watson, 2002

Does mental illness stigma contribute to suicidality?



Schomerus, G., Evans-Lacko, S., Rüsch, N., Mojtabai, R., Angermeyer, M. C., & Thornicroft, G. (2015). Collective levels of stigma and national suicide rates in 25 European countries. *Epidemiology and psychiatric sciences*, 24(2), 166-171.

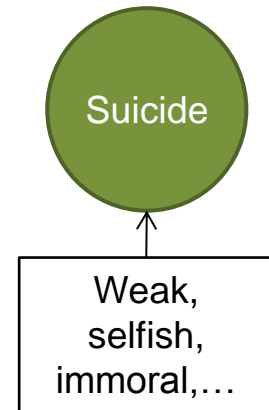
Oexle, N., Rüsch, N., Viering, S., Wyss, C., Seifritz, E., Xu, Z., & Kawohl, W. (2017). Self-stigma and suicidality: a longitudinal study. *European Archives of Psychiatry and Clinical Neuroscience*, 267(4), 359-361.

Oexle, N., Waldmann, T., Staiger, T., Xu, Z., & Rüsch, N. (2016). Mental illness stigma and suicidality: the role of public and individual stigma. *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences*, published online.

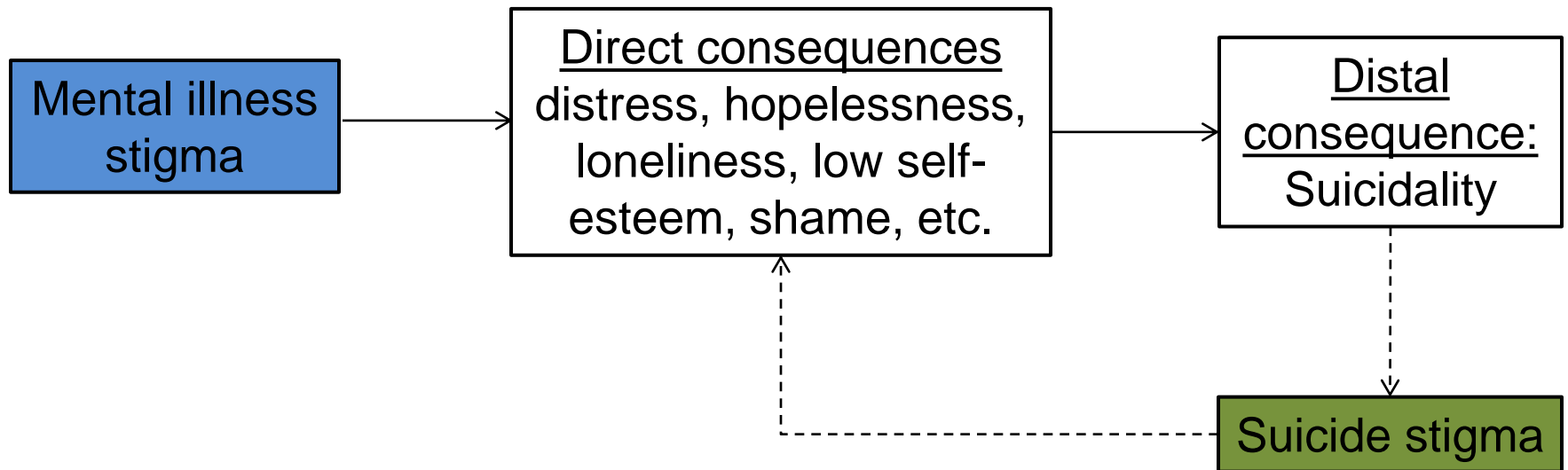
Xu, Z., Müller, M., Heekeren, K., Theodoridou, A., Metzler, S., Dvorsky, D., Oexle N., Walitza S., Rössler W., & Rüsch, N. (2016). Pathways between stigma and suicidal ideation among people at risk of psychosis. *Schizophrenia Research*, 172(1), 184-188.

Suicide stigma

- Conceptually similar to mental illness stigma (SPD, Sheehan et al. 2016)
- Consequences:
 - Self-stigma
 - Secrecy and low help-seeking
 - Loneliness, hopelessness



Does suicide stigma contribute to suicidality?



Qualitative study

- Individual interviews with 13 suicide attempt survivors with mental illness
- Narration and pre-developed interview guide
- Qualitative content analysis
- Participants: aged 23-65, 54% female, 77% affective disorders, 70% reported more than one previous attempt

Qualitative study

Core themes

- External:

- (1) stereotype awareness

- (2) lack of understanding from others

- Internal:

- (3) avoidant behavior

- (4) internalization of stereotypes

- (5) emotional strain

Qualitative study

“It makes you feel lonely, like you are already far away from everyone else. No one would notice when you are gone, and no one would care”
(#2, ♀, 45y).

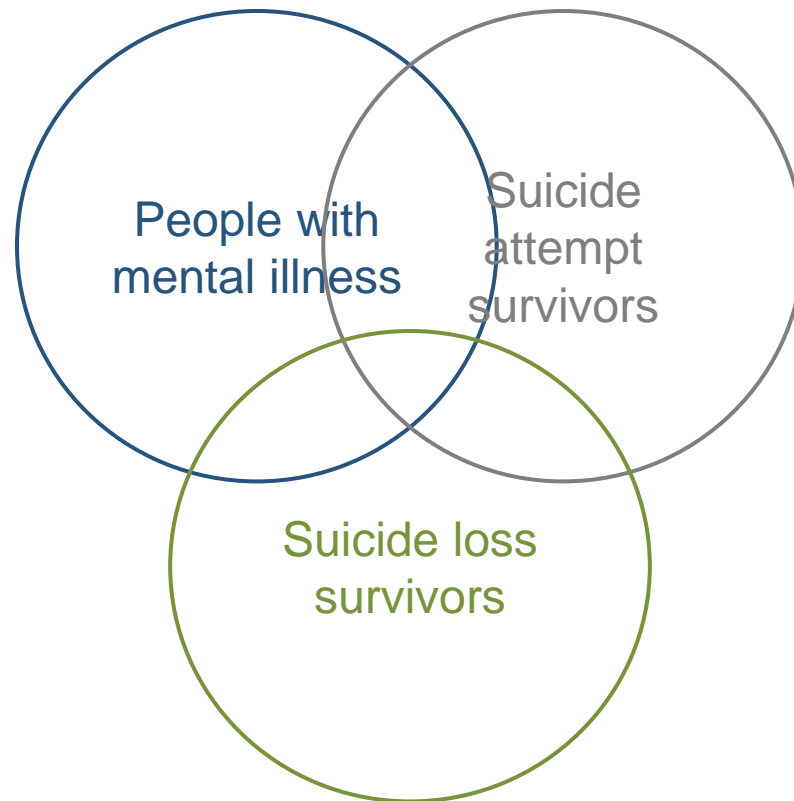
Summary:

- Both mental illness stigma and suicide stigma can contribute to suicidality among people with mental illness
- Suicide stigma increases distress before and after a suicide attempt

Summary: Implications for suicide prevention

- Interventions to reduce mental illness stigma and suicide stigma have great potential for suicide prevention
- More research needed
 - Suicide stigma ↔ suicidality
 - Suicide stigma ↔ disclosure (past/current experiences)
 - Suicide loss survivors
- Goal: Intervention development

Summary: Intersectionality?





Thank you!



References

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