KNOWING WHAT’S GOOD FOR US:
LESSONS FROM HEALTH COMMUNICATION, PUBLIC HEALTH,
AND SOCIAL MARKETING TO ADDRESS
HEALTH INEQUALITIES

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THE CHALLENGE

- In theory, educating people about health risks and how to protect themselves against these risks should be sufficient to motivate behavior change.

- Despite closing gaps in information reach, too many people are still ignoring or resisting evidence-based recommendations.

- In the health promotion context, hard-to-reach really means difficult-to-engage.
WHY DON’T AUDIENCES ENGAGE?

- Lack of capacity (e.g., health literacy)
- Lack of motivation (e.g., perceived risk, expectancies, self-efficacy, norms/stigma, motivated reasoning)
- Lack of opportunity (barriers such as lack of access to reliable information, distractions, etc.)
THE AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT CONTINUUM

**TRANSLATION**
- Plain language
- Translators / brokers
- Visualizations / analogies
- Storytelling
- Interactive IT tools (apps)

**PERSUASION**
- Logical / emotional appeals
- Benchmarking (norms)
- Conditioning
- Framing / priming
- Correcting misperceptions
- Compliance-gaining
- Persuasive technologies

**COACHING**
- Goal-setting
- Decision maps/aids
- Feedback / troubleshooting
- Social support / advice
- Motivational interviewing

**PARTNERSHIPS**
- Co-learning / co-design
- Shared decision-making
- Research collaboration
- Data access (portals)
- Transparency / trust (key to fighting misinformation)
Engagement science refers to the practice of including non-professional researchers in all aspects of scientific investigation.

The idea is to better align scientific research with the goals, needs, preferences, and values of those affected by this research for having greater impact on real-world problems and enhance the public’s esteem of science.

Since communication is integral to engagement science and vice versa, the potential for cross-fertilization is significant.
TOWARD ENGAGED SCIENCE

How do we build relationships with the public?

How do we build engagement into our daily routines?
THANK YOU

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