

Supplemental Material for
“Rethinking flourishing: Critical insights and qualitative perspectives from the U.S. Midwest” - (Willen, Williamson, Walsh, Hyman, & Tootle 2022)

APPENDIX A – INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR
ARCHES | THE AMERICANS’ CONCEPTIONS OF HEALTH EQUITY STUDY

(Community Member version)

[Bracketed text] = use at interviewer's discretion.

[Bracketed italicized text] = "stage directions."

GETTING STARTED

- *Thank interviewee for their time.*
- *Consent procedure, including final page re: follow-up.*
- *Explain interview will start with some personal questions, then move on to questions about their views and values, both in general and in relation to health.*
- *Ask if interviewee has any questions before getting started.*

I. PERSONAL BACKGROUND

To begin, I'd like to ask you a bit about yourself.

[I know some of these questions are personal, but again, everything you say is confidential, meaning your responses won't be linked to your name or anything else that could identify you personally].

1. Could you tell me a little bit about where were you **born and where you [grew/came up]**?
2. Can you tell about the **neighborhood where you [live/stay] now** and how you ended up living there?
 - How would you compare your neighborhood now to where you [grew/came] up?
3. [Do you work outside the home?] Can you tell me what you do [for **work/for a living**]?
 - If retired, what was your last role?
4. Are you involved with any **activities or groups** [outside of work/school]?
[Probe for involvement in:
 - *community organizations or activities?*
 - *religious groups?*
 - *groups or activities that focus on health?*

Let's talk a bit about your connections with other people.

SOURCE: Willen, S.S., Williamson, A.F., Walsh, C.C., Hyman, M., & Tootle, Jr., W. 2022. "Rethinking flourishing: Critical insights and qualitative perspectives from the U.S. Midwest." *Social Science & Medicine-Mental Health*. 100057. DOI: 10.1016/j.ssmmh.2021.100057.

5. What are your **most important relationships** at this point in your life?
 - If you were in a difficult situation, who would you turn to?
 - Is there anyone who'd probably turn to *you* if they were in a difficult situation? If so, why would they turn to you?
6. A different kind of question: In terms of **race and ethnicity**, how would you describe yourself?
7. In your everyday life, **do you interact mostly with people who share your racial or ethnic background, people whose background is different** -- or maybe some of each?
 - How about at work/ school?
 - How about when you go out socially?

II. VIEWS AND VALUES

I'd like to shift gears now to a different topic: the question of what people need to flourish, or thrive, in life. [IF NEEDED: Another way to talk about flourishing, or thriving, is: What does someone need to reach their full potential?]

8. Would you **describe yourself as someone who's flourishing [or thriving]** at this point in your life? Why/why not?

[IF NOT:]

 - Is there anything in particular that's stood in your way? [*Probe for 2-3 examples*]
 - What would have to change for you to [flourish/thrive]?

[IF SO:]

 - Is there anything in particular that's helped you [flourish/thrive]? [*Probe for 2-3 examples*]
9. **What would you say people in general need most in order to [flourish / thrive] – say, the top three things?** [*Probe for top three things: X, Y, and Z*]
 - Do you think everyone **deserves** access to [X, Y, and Z]? Why or why not?
 - Can you think of any **situations where someone would not deserve** access to [X, Y, or Z]? [*Probe for explanation*]
10. At this point in your life, **do you have access** to [X, Y, and Z]? [*Probe for explanation*]
 - Has this always been the case [or have your life circumstances changed at any point]?
11. When you think about what's available in our society, would you say people like yourself tend to get their **fair share**?
 - [*If not already clear*] In answering this question, **what group did you have in mind?** [i.e., When you think of "people like yourself," what group are you thinking of in particular?]
 - Can you think of anyone who gets more than their fair share? [*Probe for explanation*]
12. My next question is about feeling valued in society, or feeling like you matter. **Would you say you generally feel like you're valued as a member of society -- like you matter?** [*Probe for explanation & specific details*]

- How about [people like you/members of named group]? Would you say [members of this group] are generally valued in society? [*Probe for reasoning/specifics*]

III. HEALTH

Let's shift gears to talk about health.

13. **Would you describe yourself as a healthy person** at this point in your life? Why or why not?
 - Was there ever a time when you were either a lot healthier than you are now, or a lot less healthy? [Can you tell me a bit about that time?]

[IF ONCE LESS HEALTHY:]

 - At that time, were you able to get everything you needed to take care of your health? [*Probe: why/why not?*]
14. Other than eating right and taking care of their bodies, **what would you say people in general need to live a healthy life** – again, listing your top three things? [*Probe for A, B, and C.*]
15. Do you feel like **you have access to everything you need to live a healthy life**? Why or why not?
 - Can you think of anything in particular that's made it hard to be healthy? For instance, anything about where you've lived, or worked? [*Probe for details.*]
 - Is there anything in particular that's helped? [*Probe for details.*]
16. You mentioned that [A,B, and C] are things we all need in order to be healthy. In your view, **is anyone responsible** for making sure people have access to these things? [*Probe: For instance, would you say it's up to people themselves -- or are families, communities, government, or someone else responsible?*]
 - **Would you say that everyone deserves access** to [A,B, and C], or just some people and groups? [*Probe for details.*]
 - Can you think of any **reasons why someone might not deserve access** to the things they need to be healthy, like [A, B, and C]? [*Probe for specific examples*]
17. In your mind, are there **certain kinds of health situations where people do deserve care and support, and others where they don't?** [*Probe for explanation.*]
 - **Is there anything that would disqualify people** from deserving this kind of help?
 - For people who do deserve help, who's responsible for making sure they get it?

IV. HEALTH DISPARITIES

In the next part of our conversation, I'd like to talk about some health issues facing the U.S. in general, and Cleveland in particular.

18. The first issue is **life expectancy**, or the average number of years people can expect to live. As you [may] know, there are significant differences among different groups in the U.S. In Cuyahoga County, for example, there's a **five** year gap in life expectancy

between white Americans and African Americans: on average, African Americans live **five** years less than their white counterparts [Source: *HIP-Cuyahoga 2013*].

- [Have you heard about this difference in life expectancy before?]
- What do you think can explain this difference?
- What should be done about it?
- Who's responsible for dealing with it?
- Is this an issue that's affected you personally? If so, how? [*if this hasn't already come up*]

19. The next issue I'd like to talk about is **exposure to lead**. As you may know, lead was used in house paint until the late 1970s, and many older homes still have lead-based paint in them. We now know that exposure to lead can be toxic, and that it's especially harmful to children since their bodies are still developing. Children can be exposed to lead when they put things in their mouth, like paint chips, dust, or soil containing lead. Over time, lead exposure can damage the brain, heart, lungs, and kidneys. Lead poisoning can cause severe problems in cognitive development resulting in learning difficulties and behavioral disorders. Today about half a million U.S. children age 5 and under have blood lead levels considered dangerous. African American children are twice as likely as white children to have lead poisoning. As these maps show [*show Figure 1 – Local Maps*], lead exposure in Cleveland is highest in neighborhoods where most residents are African American. The top map shows the pattern of lead exposure in Cuyahoga County. The bottom map shows areas with the highest percentage of African American residents in the county. [*Make sure interviewee understands what they're seeing*].

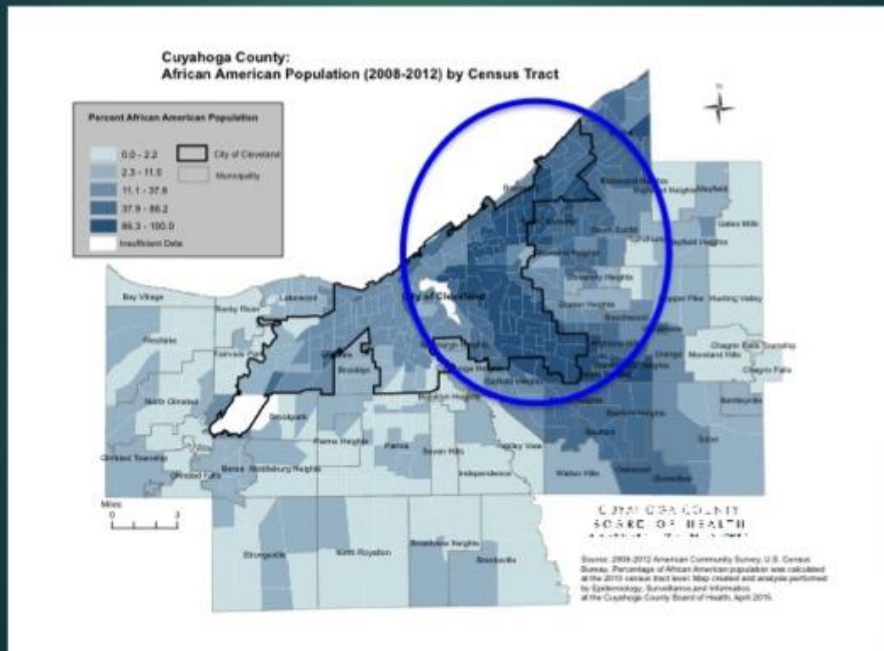
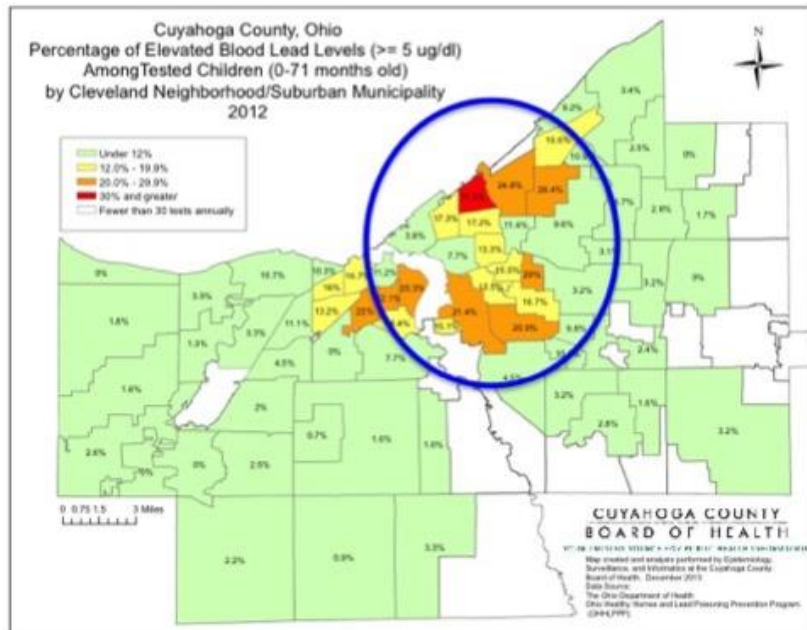


Figure 1 - Local Maps

- [Have you heard about the health effects of lead exposure before?]
- What do you think can explain the difference between black and white children in terms of their chance of exposure to lead?
- What should be done about it?
- Who's responsible for dealing with it?
- Is this an issue that has affected you personally? If so, how? [*if this hasn't already come up*]

Let's take a step back to think about the big picture.

20. In your view, what are the most important things **we as a country** should be doing to help people be healthy? [*Probe for top 2-3*]
- Is there anything else you think communities should be doing?
 - In your view, who should take the lead on these efforts? [*PROBE*]
21. Do you see a role for **government** in this area?
- What level of government would you like to see taking responsibility?
 - local government,
 - state government, or
 - the federal government?
 - What do you see the government currently doing along these lines?
 - Is there anything they should be doing differently?
 - **IF SO**, what are the top 2-3 things that should be done differently?

V. CHANGING VIEWS

In the last part of our conversation, I'd like to talk about how your views and values might have changed over the course of your life thus far.

22. Thinking back, can you think of any specific moments or experiences that led to a major change in your views on **what people deserve in terms of their health**? [*Probe for description.*]
- Was there anything, or anyone, in particular that sparked the change? [*Probe: A person? An encounter? A life event? Something else?*]
23. We've talked a bit about race and racial disparities. Can you point to any specific experiences that led to a major change in your views on **whether different racial groups in this country are treated fairly**? [*Probe.*]
- Is there anything, or anyone, in particular who sparked that change? [*Probe: Was the trigger a person? An encounter? A life event? Something else.*]
24. Have you ever participated in any **workshops, trainings, or classes that deal specifically with race and equity, either in general or involving health in particular**? If you've participated in more than one, let's talk about the one that's made the strongest impression on you.
- IF SO,**
- Can you describe that experience for me? [*Probe: where / when / by whom / elective or required / for what purpose*]
 - What are some of the things you remember most about that experience?

- How useful was that experience for you? [*Probe for details*]
- How did the experience affect the way you:
 - view society?
 - interact with others?
 - [*if relevant:*] do your job?

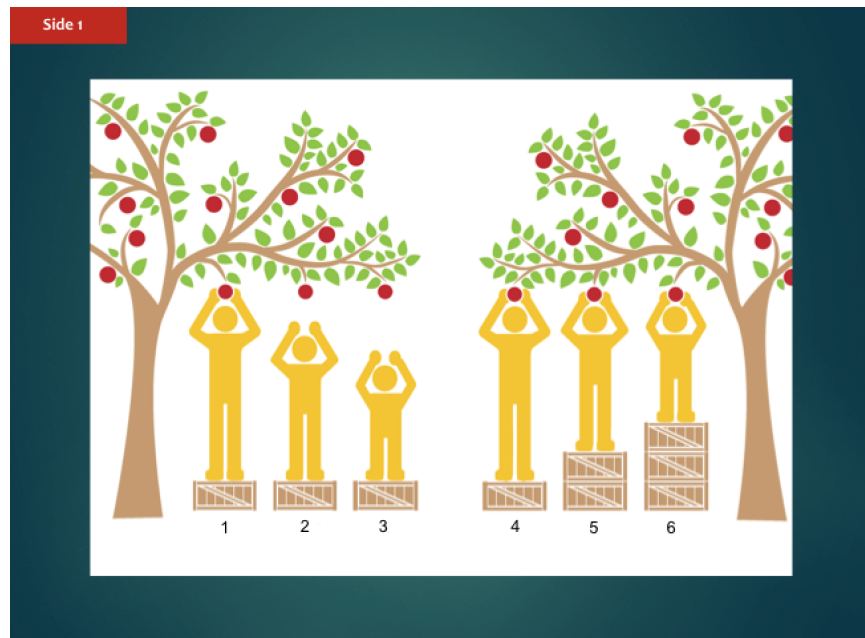
IF NOT,

- If you were going to participate in a training on issues of race and equity, what would you most want to talk about or learn?

25. One interest of our project is the idea of **health equity**. [Is this a term you've heard before?]

- [**IF YES:**] What would you say "health equity" means?
- [**IF NO:**] What do you think "health equity" might mean?

I'd like to show you an image that's often used to talk about some of the issues we've been discussing. [**SHOW SIDE A.** Give interviewee time to look at and think about it.]



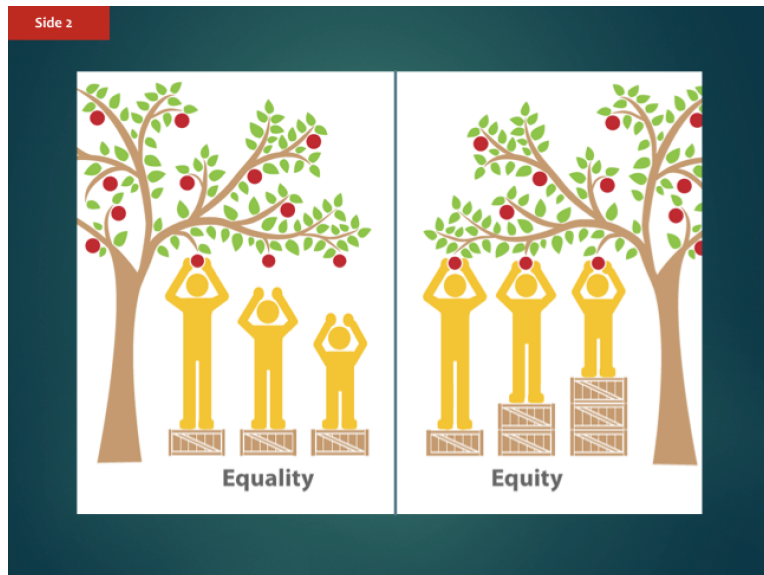
Adapted from © 2014, Saskatoon Health Region; used with permission.

Figure 2 - Equity image (side A)

26. When you look at this **image**, what's the first thing -- maybe even the first word -- that comes to mind? [There's no right or wrong answer.]

- Does anything else come to mind?
- When you look at the different people in the image, is there one in particular that you identify with [-- one that captures your own life experience]? [*Probe for explanation*]

[**SHOW SIDE B.** Give interviewee time to look at and think about it.]



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Figure 3 - Equity image (side B)

27. [As you may know,] This image is often used to talk about the difference between equality (on the left) and equity (on the right). What do you think: **Does the image help make these ideas clear?**

- Would you say it makes these ideas clearer, or less clear, or no difference?
[Probe for details/thought process.]

28. Any additional thoughts or reactions to this image?

Wrap-up

29. Is there anything else I should have asked but didn't?

30. Do you think the people closest to you would have answered these questions in the same way or differently? [Probe]

31. Is there anyone else you'd suggest we approach about a possible interview? [If so, why?]

Thank you!

Part II - Online demographic survey

- Thank interviewee for their time.
- Ask interviewee to complete post-interview demographic survey on project iPad.