

Meanings of Aging in the Right Place for Housing Insecure Older Adults in Temporary Housing

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SYMPOSIUM:

Aging in the Right Place: Housing and Social Supports for Older Adults with Experiencing Homelessness

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Agenda:



AIRP Project
Background



Conceptual
Framework



Photovoice



Themes



Conclusion

What is Housing Instability?

- Housing instability is an umbrella term for the continuum between homelessness and a totally stable, secure housing situation
- Takes many forms:
 1. physical conditions like poor sanitation
 2. inadequate heating and cooling
 3. compromised structural integrity
 4. exposure to allergens or pests
 5. homelessness and
 6. unstable access to housing or severe rent burden¹



What is AIRP?

- Aging in Place (AIP) with the lens of “equity”



The ‘right’ set of housing, health, and social supports can enable older people to age optimally, including those with limited income and/or chronic complex health conditions – matching their unique lifestyles and vulnerabilities. ^{2,3}

Older Persons Experiencing Homelessness (OPEH)

- **Accelerated Aging:** Age 50 is used to characterize OPEH, as mental and physical health of OPEH most closely typifies those of persons 10 years older ¹
- **In Metro Vancouver,** older people (age 55+) experiencing homelessness has ↑ 18% -22% in the last 10 years.
 - 2023 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count
- **Community Engaged Research:**
 - It's time to include OPEH in research efforts to better meet their shelter/housing needs.



Objectives of the AIRP Project

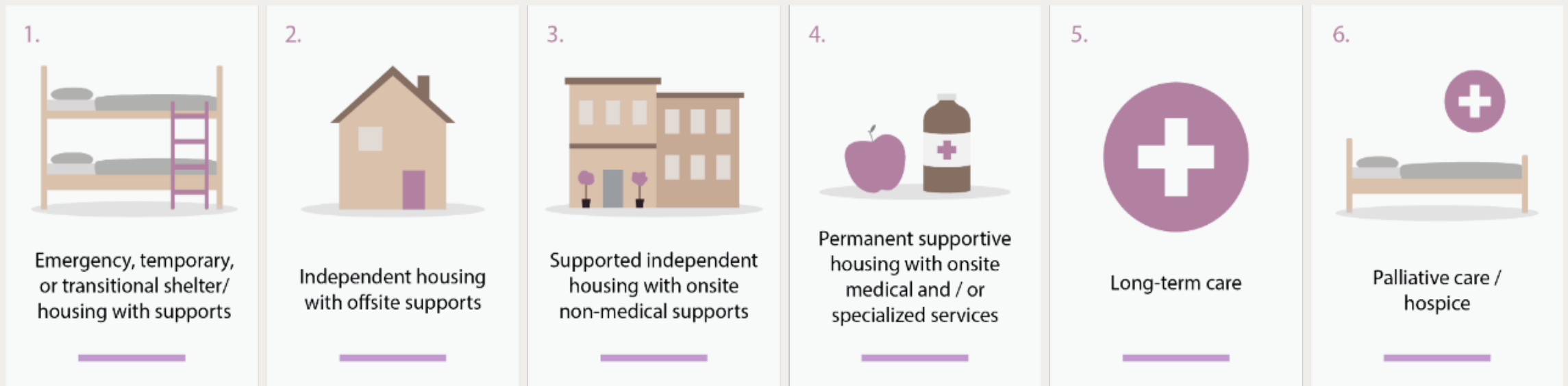
To **evaluate promising practices** for the ‘right’ aspects of housing & supports for older persons with lived experience of homelessness (OPEH)

To **identify concepts of AIRP** important to OPEH in different types of housing

To **facilitate knowledge mobilization** and increase public awareness of OPEH and their housing options

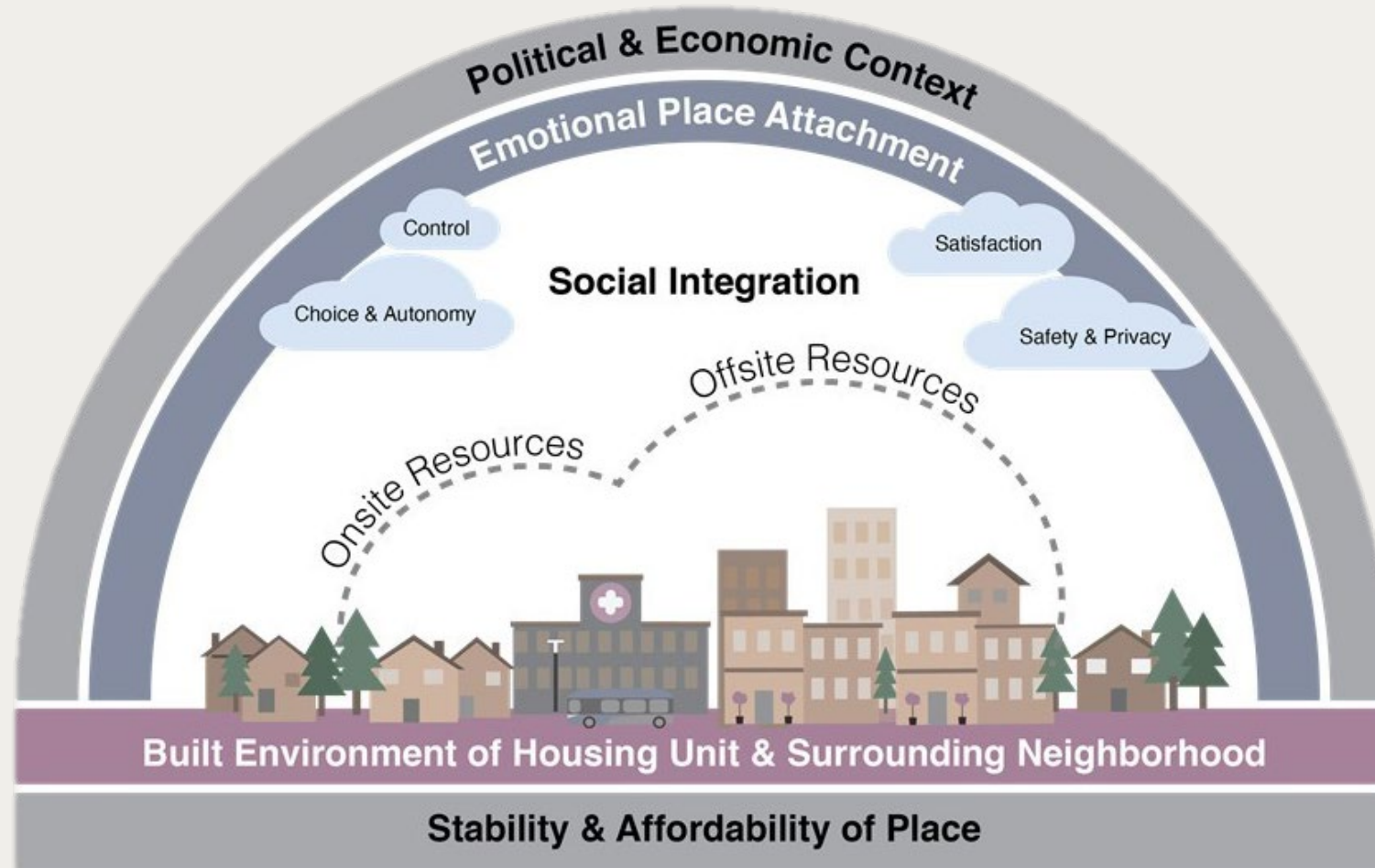
To **improve the housing + support options** for OPEH to meet their unique and complex health and social needs

Promising Practices Across the Housing Continuum



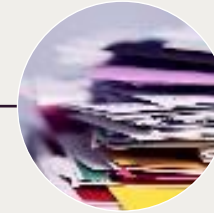
(Canham, Walsh, Humphries, Nixon, & Burns, 2022)⁴

AIRP Conceptual Framework

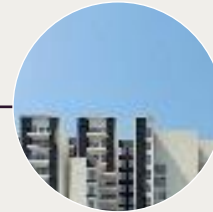


Methods: Data Collection Tools

Aging in the
Right Place



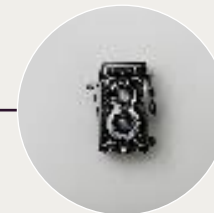
Document review



Environmental audit



Provider interviews

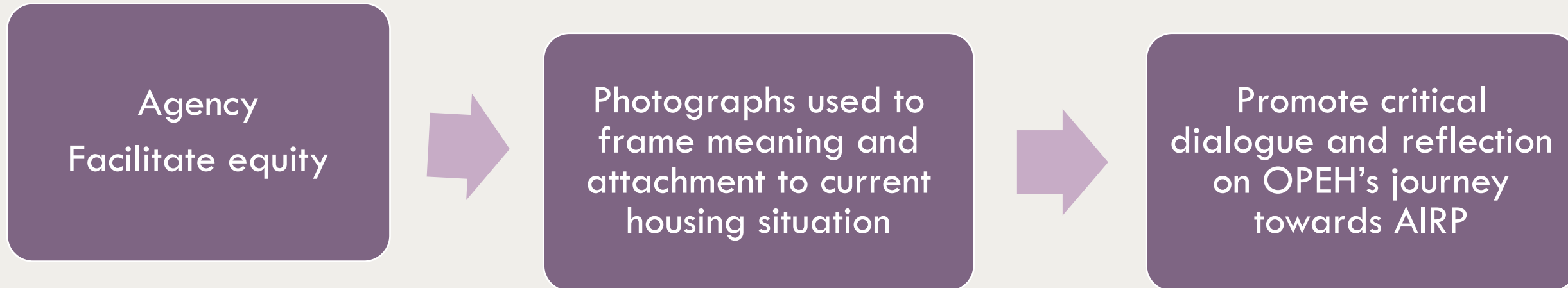


**Client photovoice
interviews**

Photovoice as Community Engaged Research Strategy



- Photovoice ^{7,8} used as a **community engaged research strategy** where participants document and reflect on the socio-spatial context of their life-stories.
- AIRP Project – Exploration of the relationship between housing and aging for OPEH.



- ❖ Participants (co-researchers) took photos that represent ***aging in the right place***.
- ❖ To visually illustrate aspects of their lived experiences as they transition towards permanent housing.

Methods: Photovoice Interviews Temporary Housing Program (THP)

Photovoice: A community-engaged research strategy

Semi-structured interviews
on life-course

Interviews focused on
photographs

11 Clients

2 Sessions

45-to-60-minute
sessions

In-person

Sample of Participants in THP – Seniors Service Society (SSS)

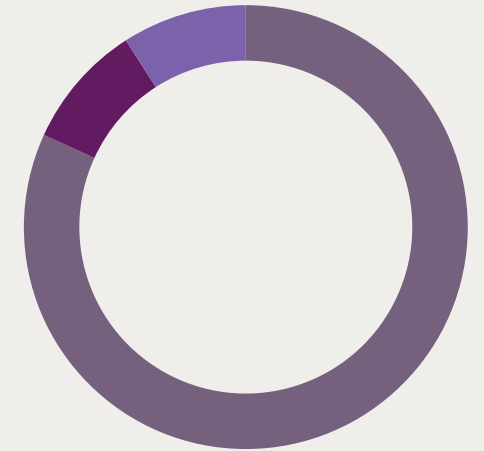
Demographics

of participants
(n=11)

Female (n=6)
Male (n=5)

Age range: 58-75
years old

Ethnicity: 9
Caucasian, 1 Iranian, 1
Filipino

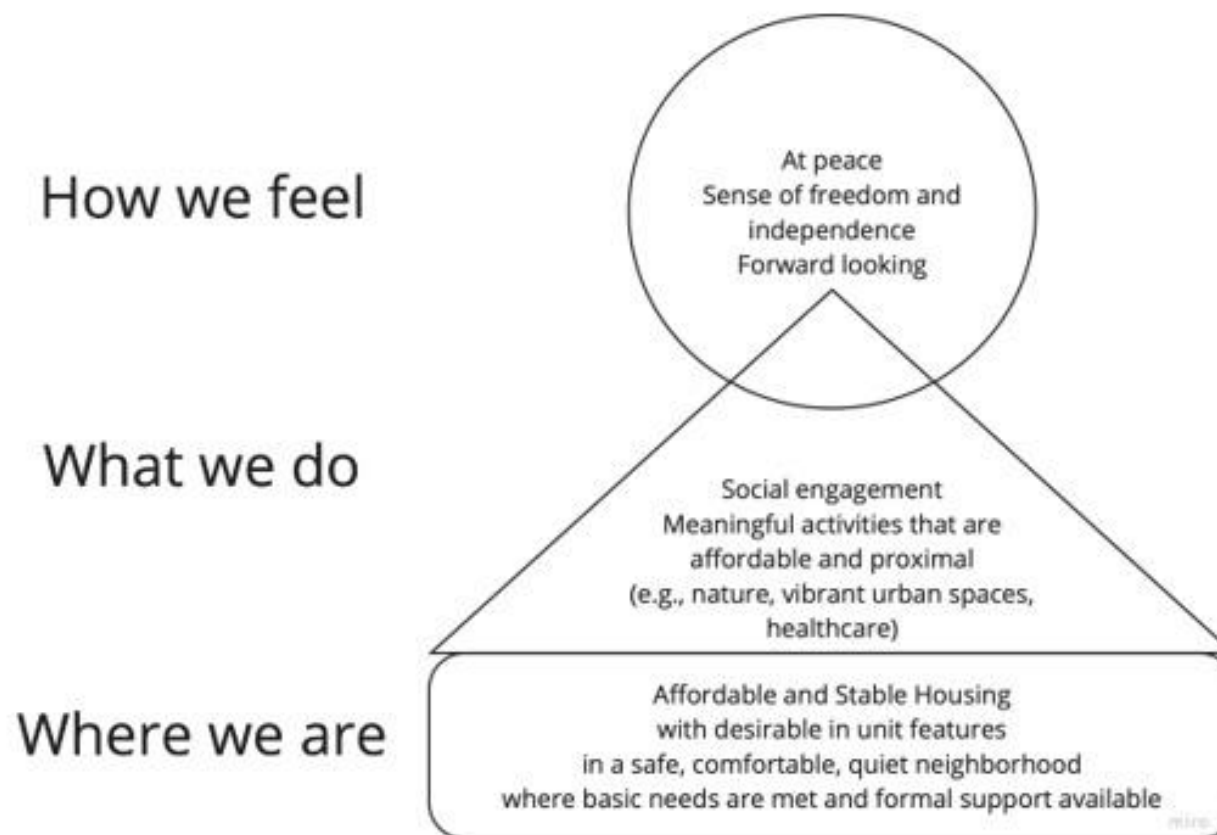


■ Caucasian ■ Iranian ■ Filipino



55% Female and 45% Male

FINAL CODING STRUCTURE (MIRO BOARD)



Themes : Meaning of AIRP



Where One Lives



**Where One Goes and
What One Does**



How One Feels

Where One Lives

- The Physical and Social Environment



““ I just think it is nice to have a gazebo. And it is nice to have a place for people to meet and chat. You know, there are seats all over — or all the way around. So, people can chat. Especially that people can’t come together in the community room [because of the pandemic] It kind of became a place for people to hang out.” VPP1-C3.



Aging in the right place... with the window there and the patio was also right beside there. So, you had the double whammy of having nice fresh air...we are fresh air people. ...It was just very nice to have that “...V1-P08

Where One Goes and What One Does



To show people, 'Hey, there is a bus stop, right? Near you. You don't have to walk very far.' That's why I took that photo. To say, well, if you're living at where I am right now you don't have that far to go, right? ...It means to me, 'Hey, I get to go somewhere [laughter].'

V1- P01



To get out of the home, out [in] the sun, that's it. Just get out [of] the house for a while... If you stay in the house all the time you get depressed, you need to get out. I need to get out to not be depressed.

V1- P04

How One Feels in “The Right Place”



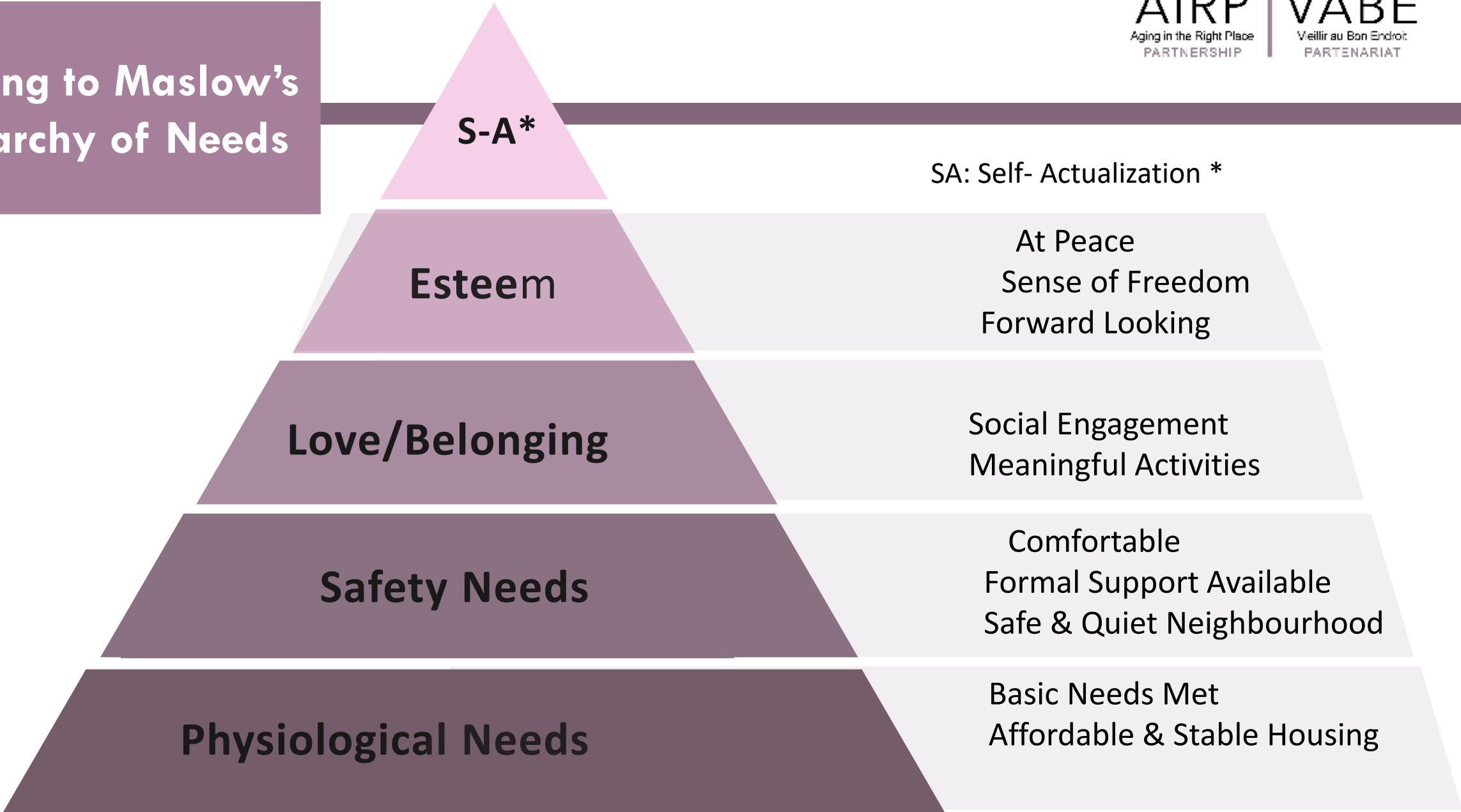
It's lovely to be able to have your own space when you're cooking... It's the sense of independence of course, when you can supply your own meals cook your own food. For example, I made sauerkraut for the first time ...so you can have more control over your health and more control over your life and the sense of independence” V1-P05.



“...you just want to have a sense of safety, because... if you are scared every time, ... it really messes you up a little bit in your mind... so when you have that security there - you know the lighting, the key fobs, and just people around the area... I think that sense of security is so vital, especially for seniors...”

V1 C06

**Linking to Maslow's
Hierarchy of Needs**



Conclusion

Photovoice showcasing lived experiences can inform development and adaptation of program practices related to housing for OPEH.

AIRP & 'Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs':

Stable housing provides foundation to explore other levels of needs - safety, comfort, meaningful engagement

Comprehensive understanding of what AIRP means to OPEH helps diverse groups of older adults to thrive in housing that is more than a shelter.



Twitter/ X



Website <https://www.sfu.ca/airp.html>

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Thank you!

Canham, S. L., Weldrick, R., Mahmood, A., Patille, R. & Cruz Erisman, M. (May, 2024). Meanings of aging in the right place for older clients of a temporary housing program. *The Gerontologist*, 64 (5), gnad151.

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10. Maslow, A. (1970). *Motivation and Personality* (2nd ed.). Harper & Row.