



## Some Key Points on Theory

### Theoretical Framework Selection and Intervention Planning

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## Theory Session Wrap-Up

- Discuss yesterday's exercises
  - Questions and observations from trainees
  - From faculty
- Summary of some key points

All models are wrong...  
some are useful.  
~J. Sterman

## Why use theory?

- To open the lid on the black box
  - Avoid bias
    - Surface implicit hypotheses
    - Avoid pitfalls and better identify knowable confounders
    - Efficiency : Prioritize among nearly infinite variables
  - Accumulate knowledge
    - More efficiently / effectively transmit knowledge by
      - Shared understanding of constructs underlying empirical observations
    - Help people to replicate your work

## Selecting a theory

- Variety of factors to consider, e.g., types of theories, context, level
- There is no one right theory
  - Don't make it too precious
  - Be pragmatic, adapt & explain

## Selecting an implementation strategy

- There is no one way
  - Be systematic and explicitly link to theory
  - Be pragmatic

## Making theory work

- Don't reinvent the wheel
- But change the tires: Tailor & adapt
  - The theory
  - The implementation strategy
- Importance of feeding theory to refine & improve it