Martina Gjermeni

Balancing Minds, Transforming Spaces

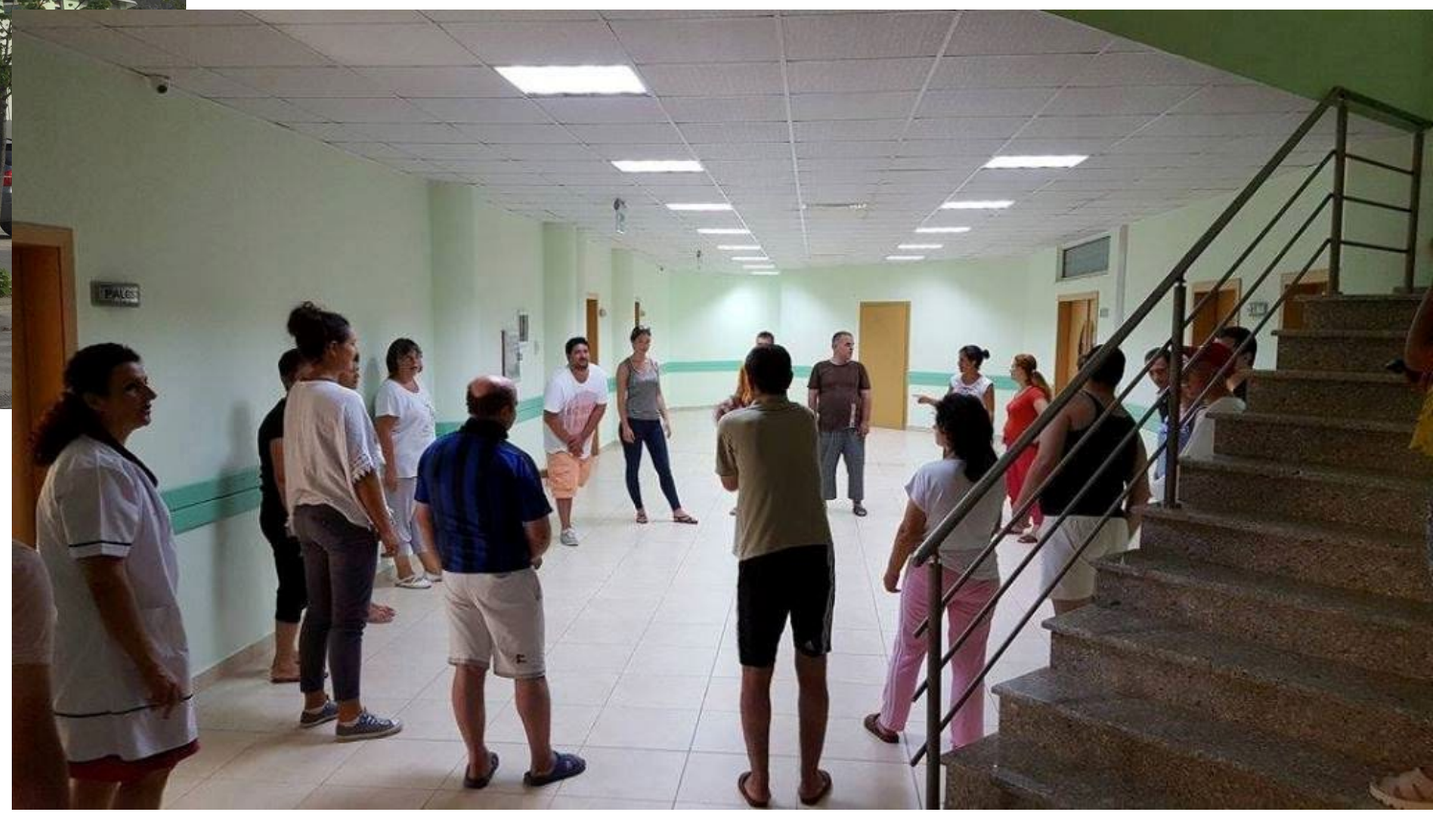
Exploring the role of architecture in destigmatizing psychiatric care facilities in Albania.

MSc Graduation Studio: Designing for health and care
2023-2024

Why Albania?

The current situation of psychiatric hospitals:

The ‘best’ one is in Vlora…



Source: Official facebook page of the hospital

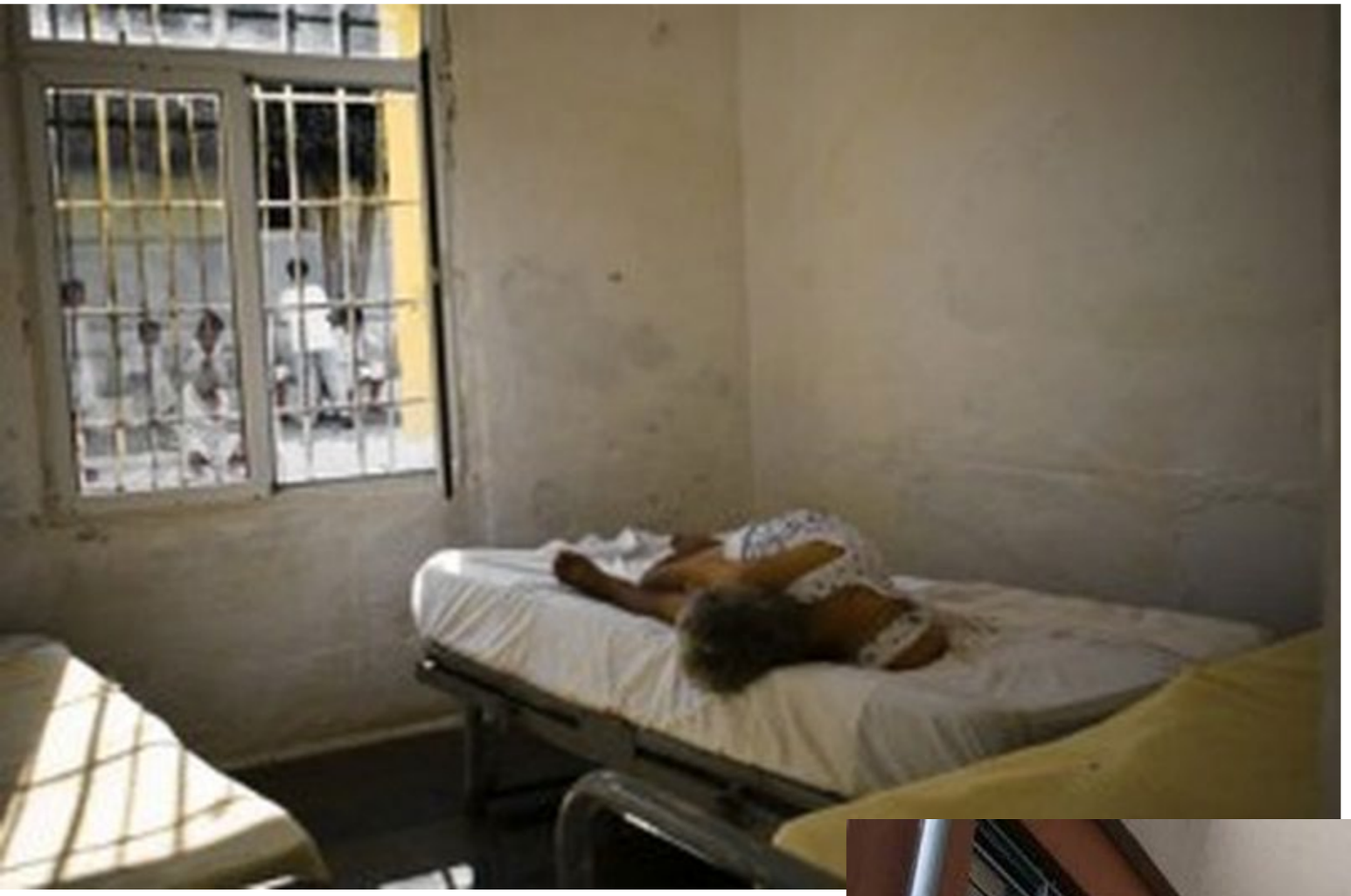
People expressed annoyance over the used color.

Institutional Atmosphere

I have no privacy and little personal space.
My family has to visit me here, but my roomates may hear...

Tirana, on the other hand…

Source: JOQ Albania



Source: Unknown

Is it a place of healing or restriction?

Source: Unknown

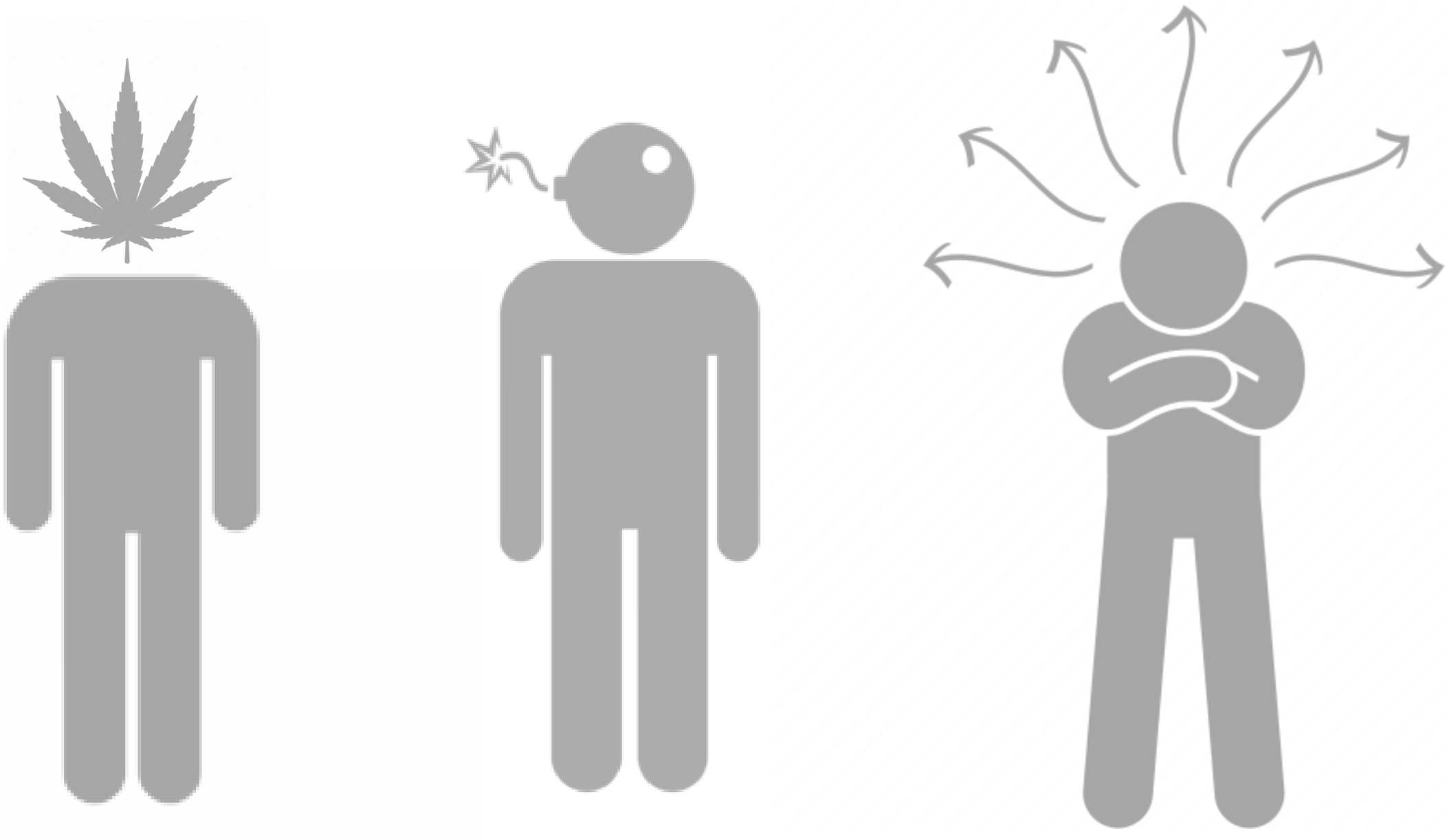
Elbasan

Source: Hoop voor Albania

Not everything is so bad…

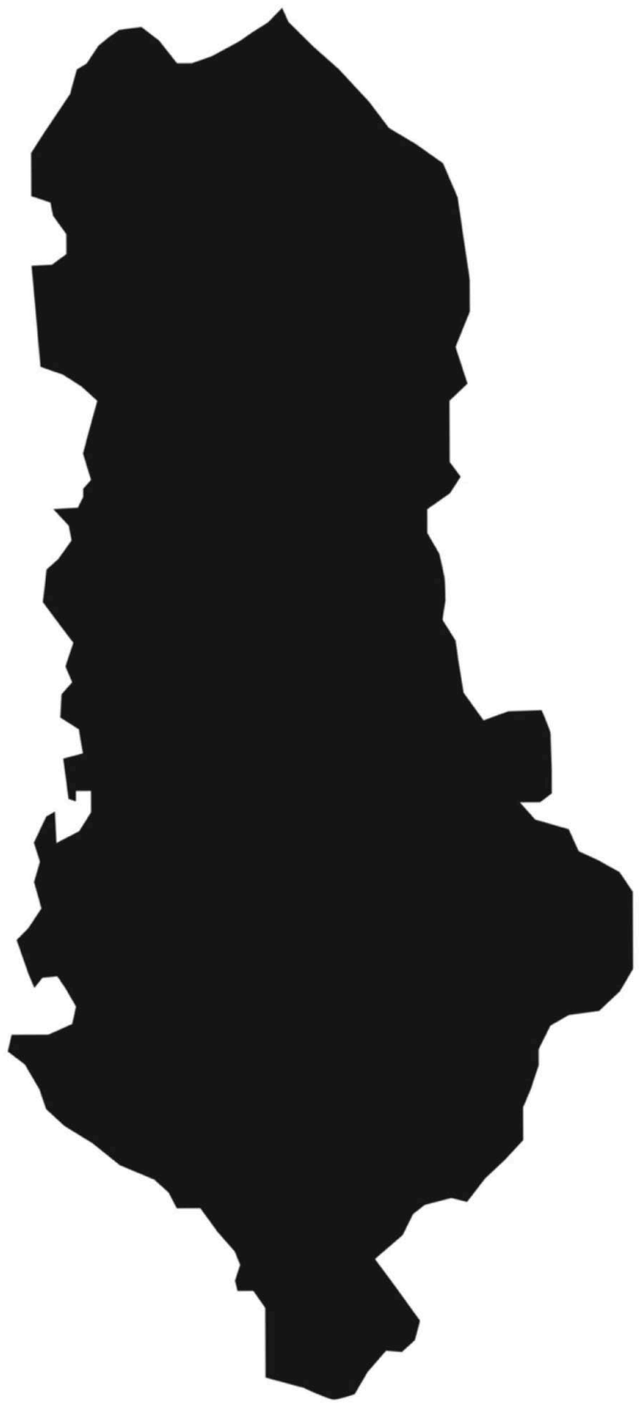
There were some positives aspects observed!

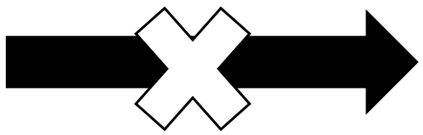
Lack of differentiation in care.

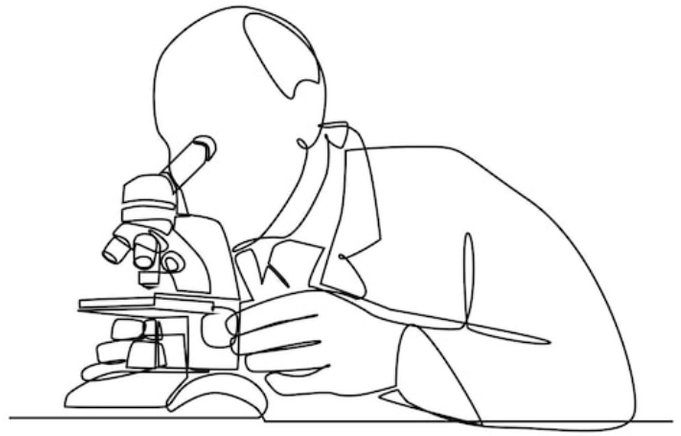


Source: Caregivers and Family members

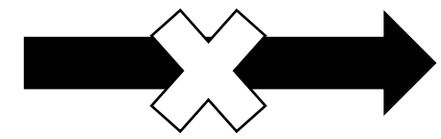
What causes this?

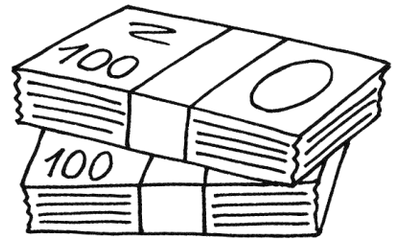




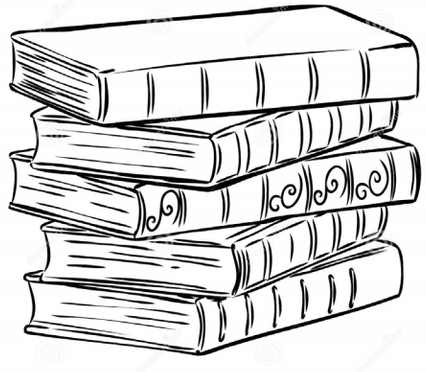


Research.

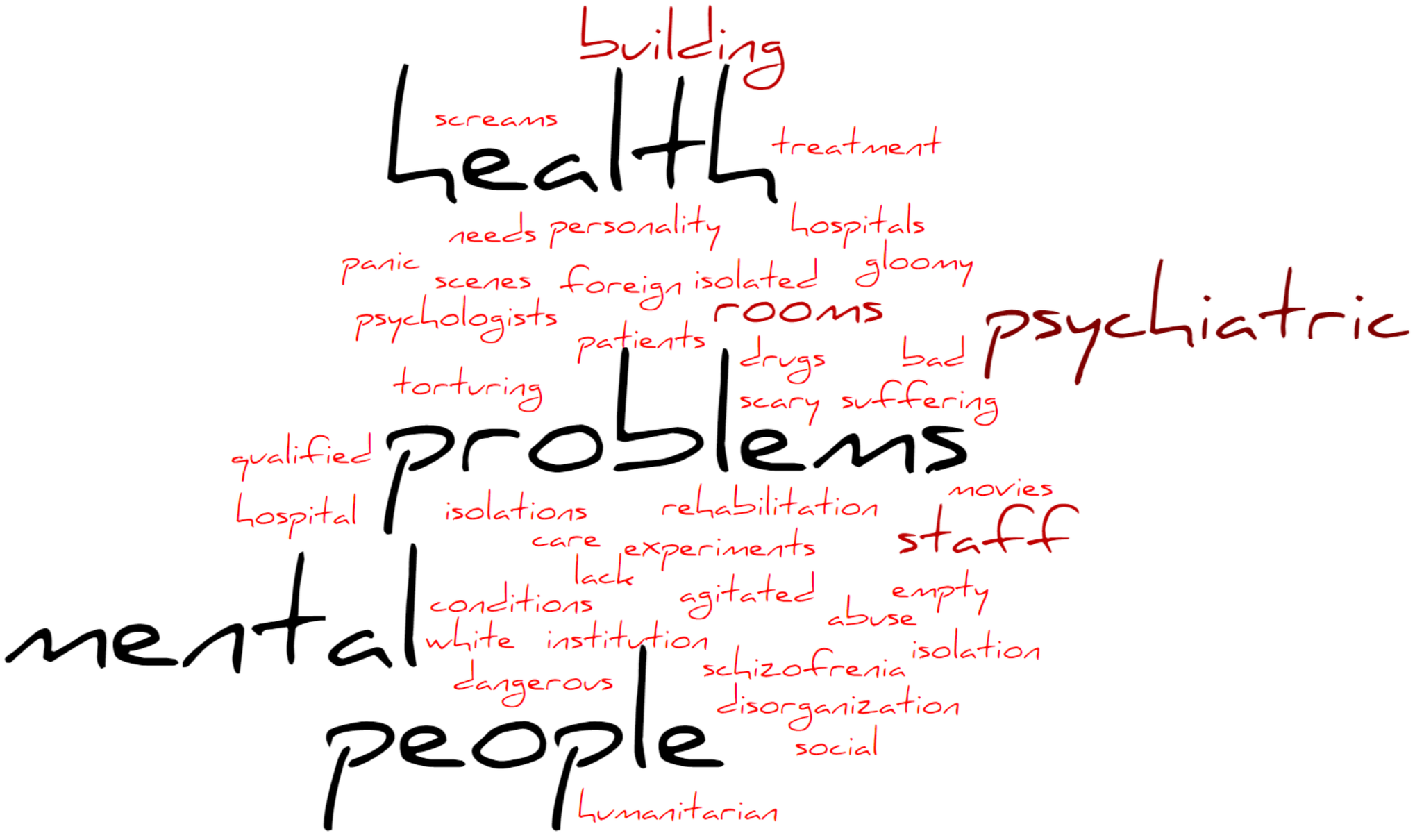




Funding

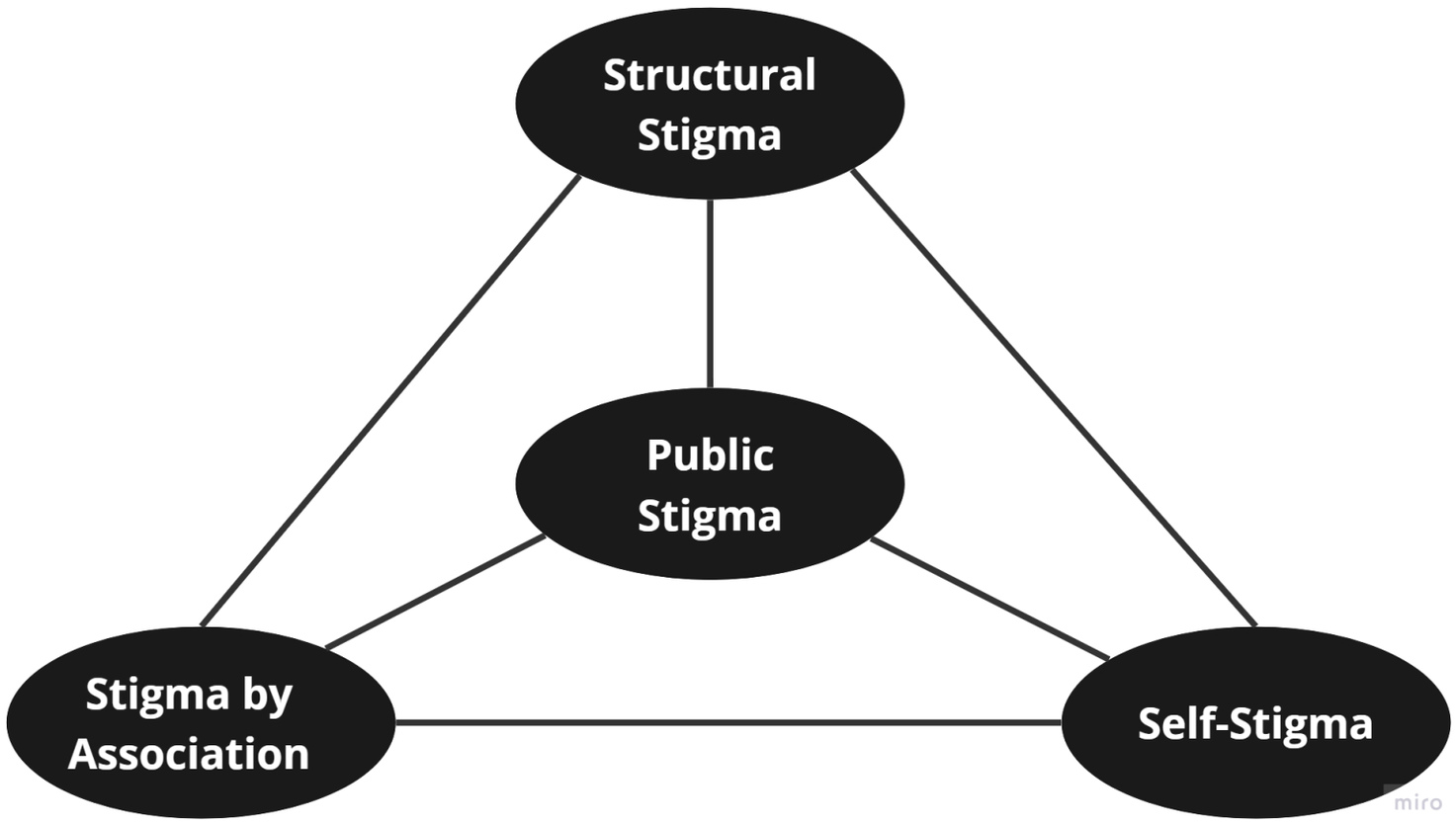


Knowledge



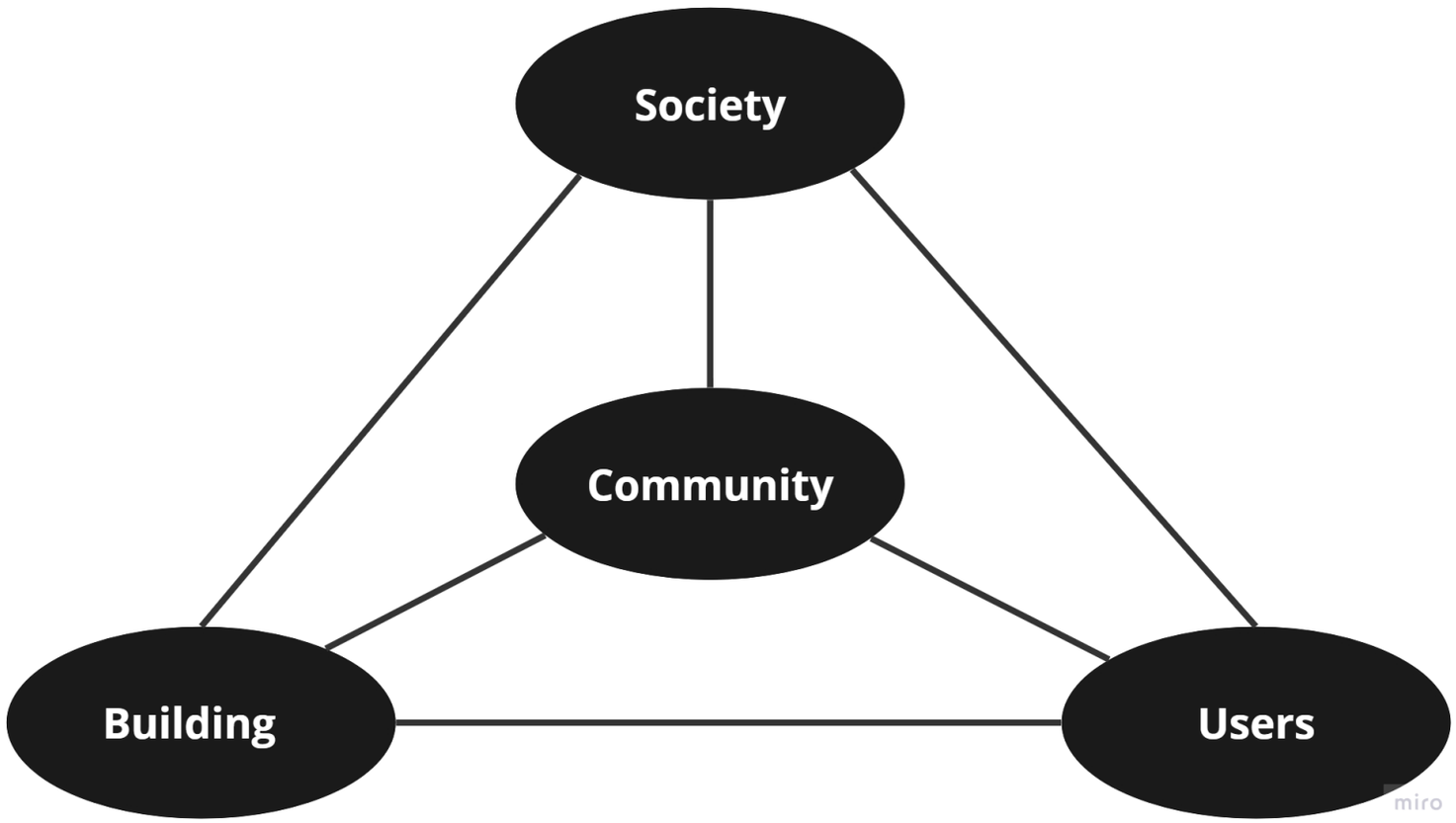
Word cloud of the words used by 100 Albanian participants regarding psychiatric hospitals.

Theoretical Framework
Understanding Stigmatization



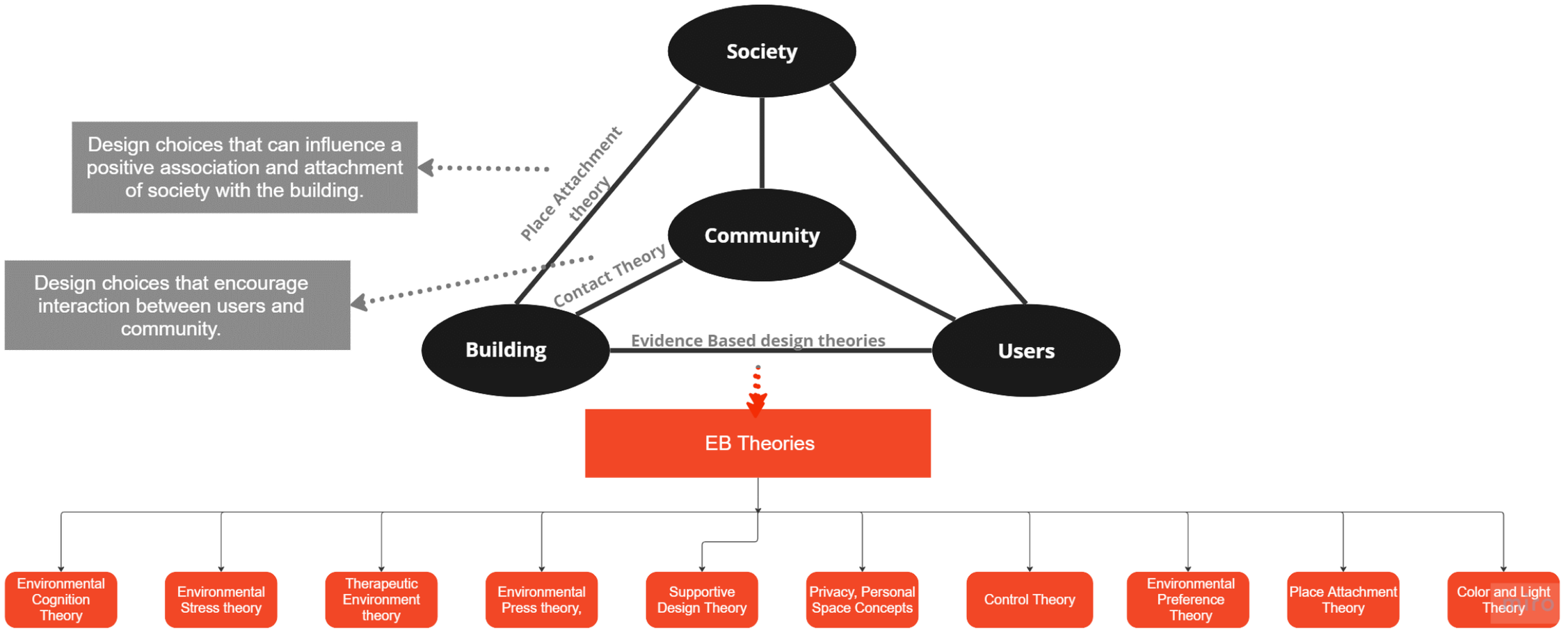
Source: Theory by Erwin Godman, 1963

In the language of architects:



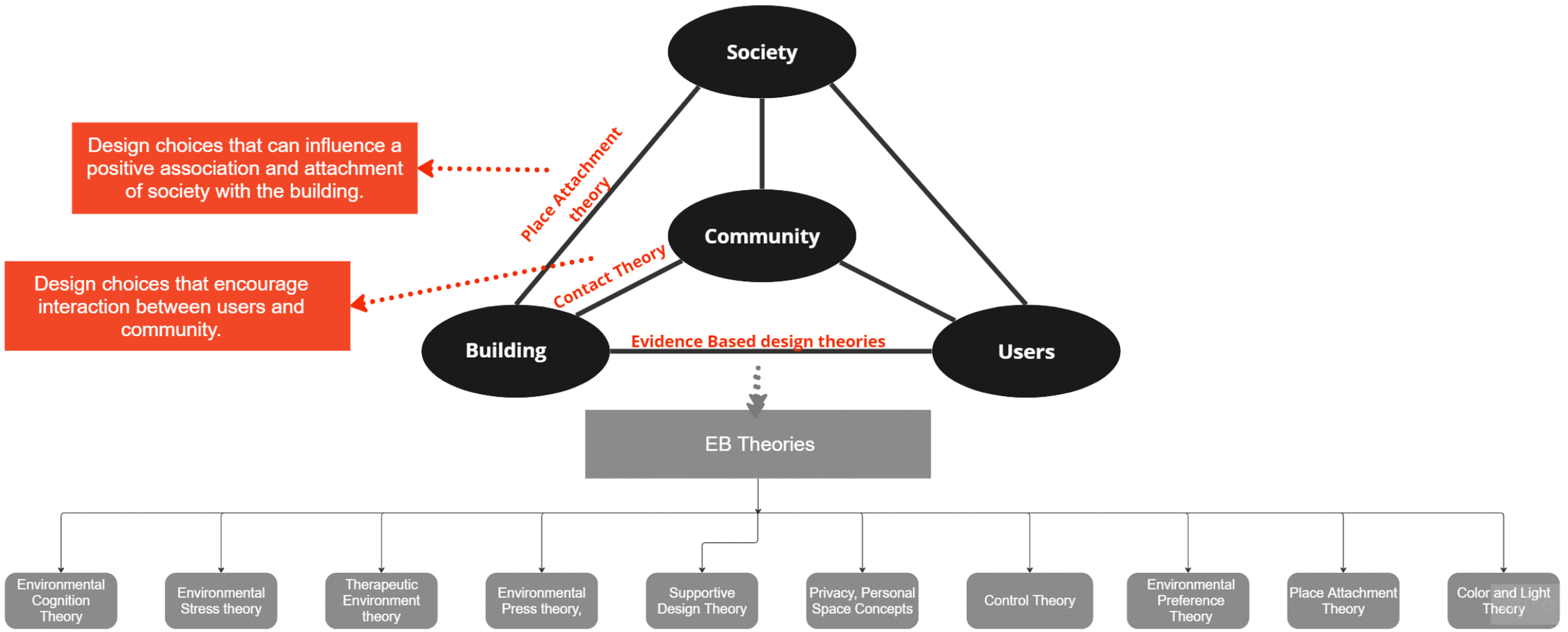
Source: Theory by Erwin Godman, 1963

Sub Theories: User Perception



Based on the book of Suining Ding and Environmental Based Theories

Sub Theories: Society and Community



Based on Contact Theory created by Gordon A. Allport, 1954 and
Source: Various, J. Douglas, R. Ulrich, Yi-Fu Tuan

Methodology

Methodology

Literature Research

- Target: Self-Stigma
- Evidence Based Design Theories

- Guidelines for designing a healing/ therapeutic environment in healthcare

Fieldwork

Survey

Combining Insights

Methodology

Literature Research

Fieldwork

- Target: Self-Stigma

- Observation and Practical information
- Discussing the extent to which EB theories are applicable in a psychiatric environment.

- Practical guidelines for designing a psychiatric environment

Survey

Combining Insights

Methodology

Literature Research

Fieldwork

Survey

- Target: Public and Structural Stigma

- Gaining insight on what are the possible scenarios in which individuals would interact with a psychiatric facility or find a liking of it.

- Guidelines for improving society's perception for these facilities and include them into the community.

Combining Insights

Methodology

- Target: Stigma in General

- Discussing and integrating the guidelines together in order to tackle stigma.

- Integrated guidelines to help combat stigma in psychiatric facilties.

Literature Research

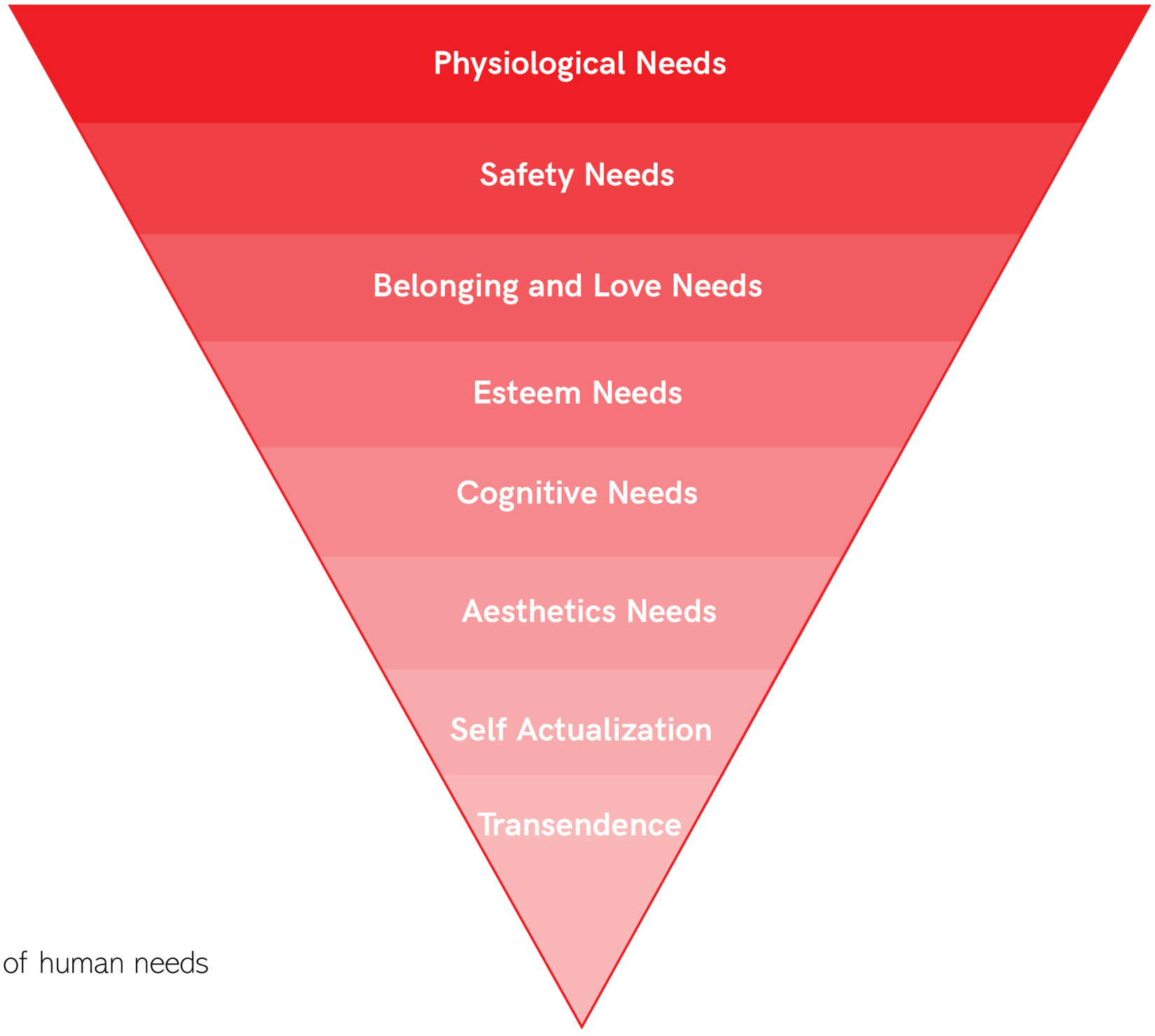
Fieldwork

Survey

Combining Insights

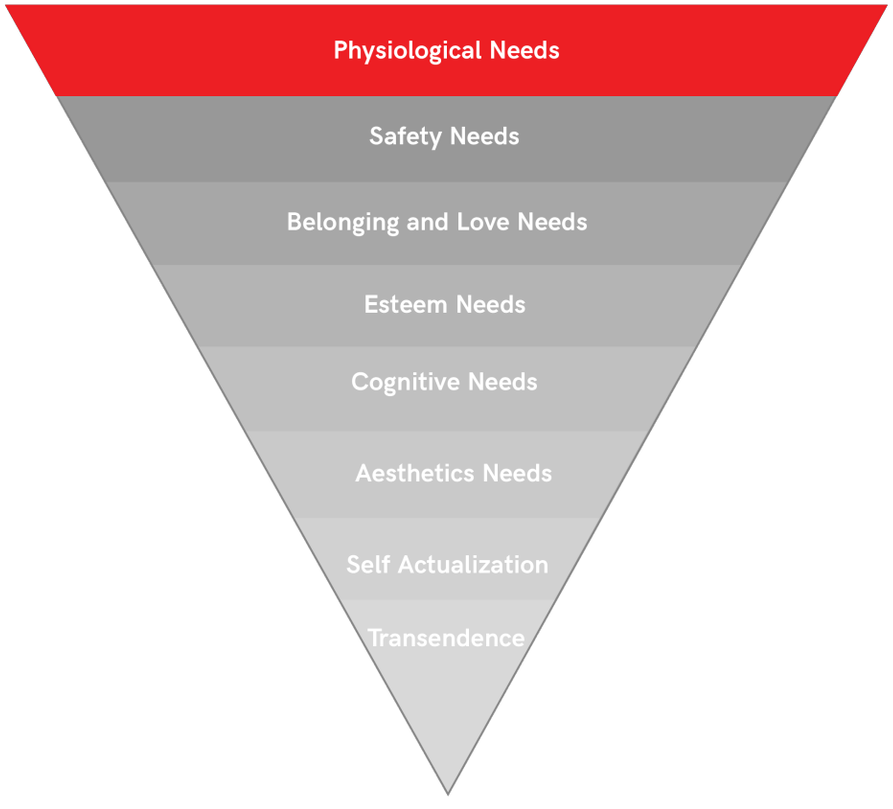
Methodology

Pyramid of User Needs

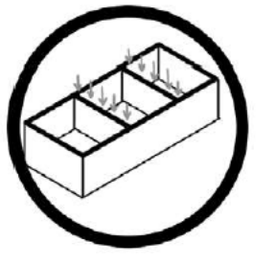


Maslow's hierarchy of human needs

Guidelines



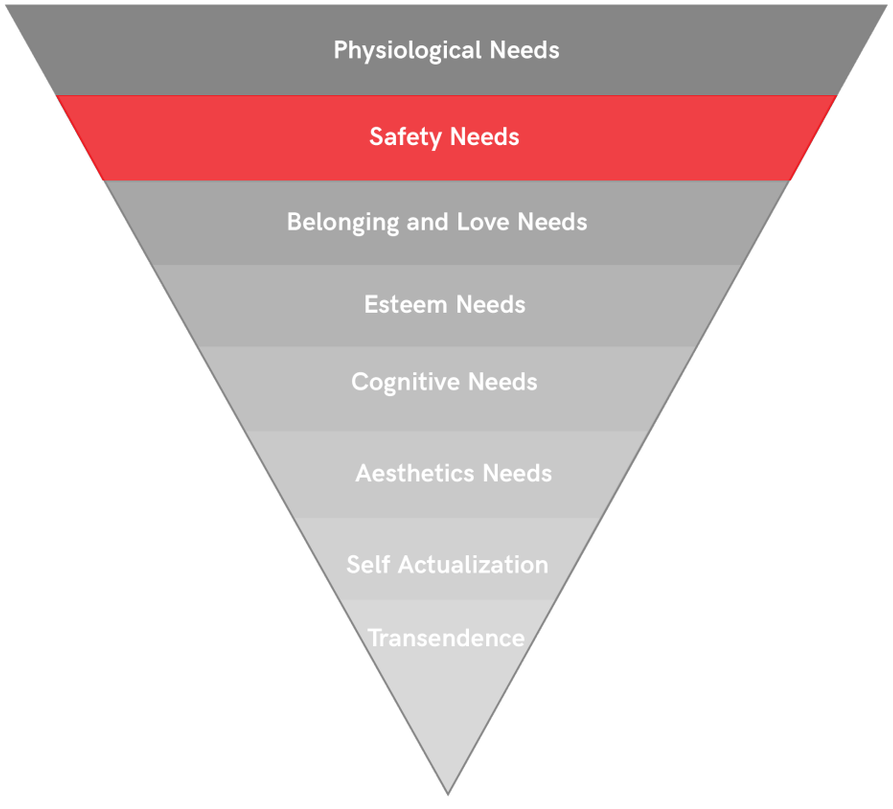
Private patient rooms and Bathrooms



Noise Control Walls

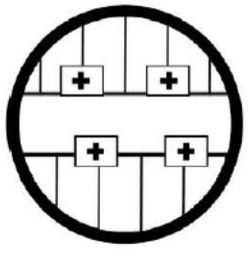
Greenery and Nature

Guidelines



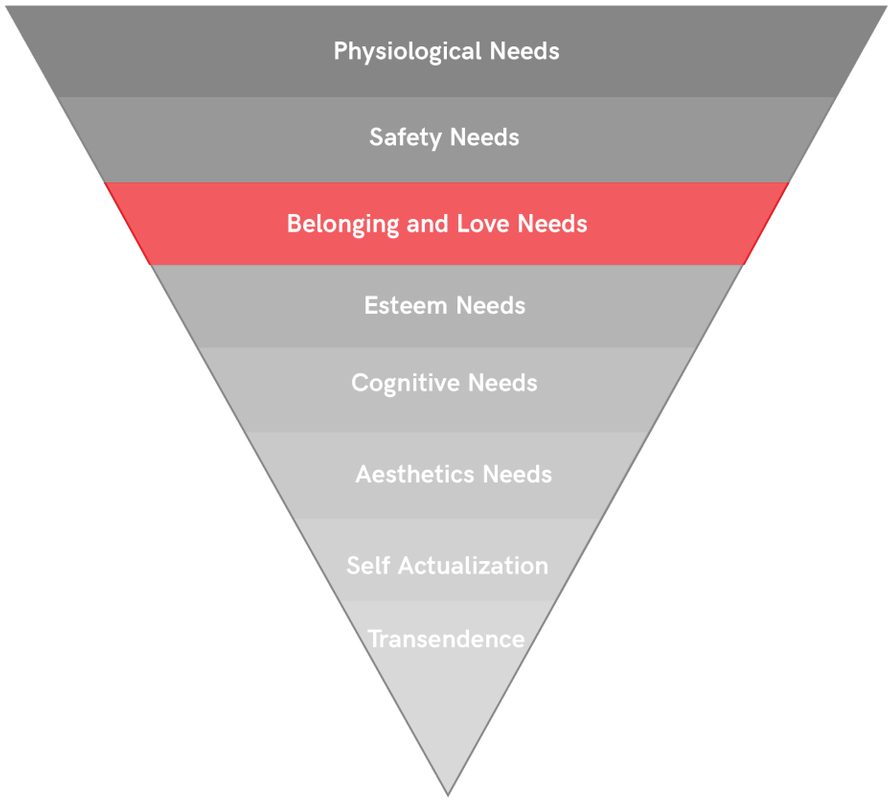
Safety Measures

Multiple Levels of Restriction



Decentralized Caregiver Stations

Guidelines



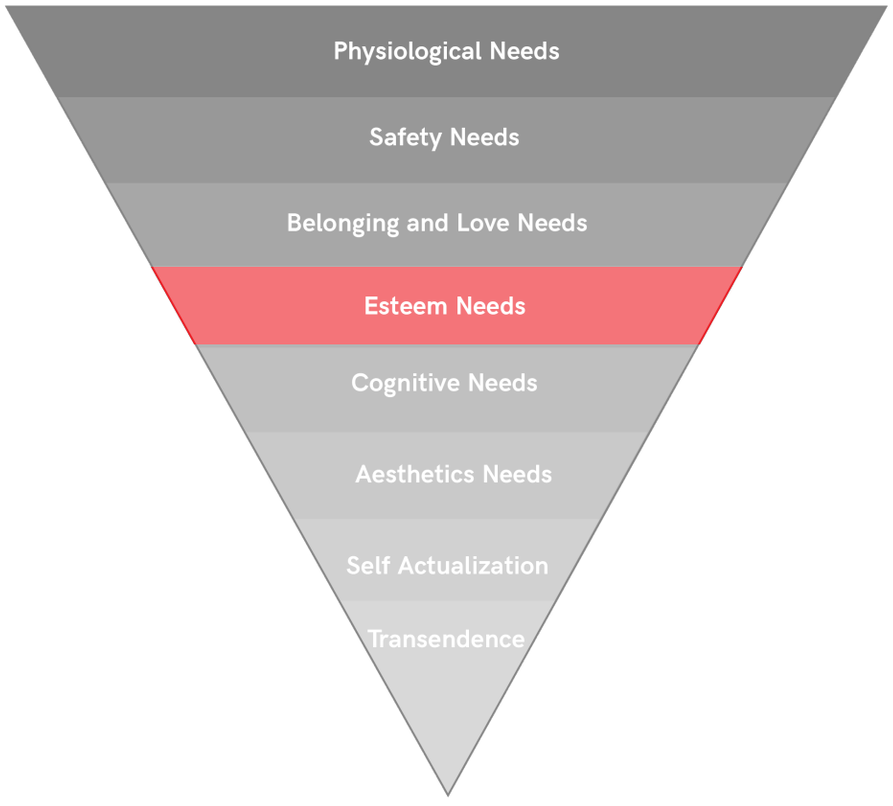
Inclusive Design

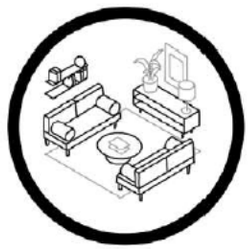
Family Zones

Community Centers and Public Gardens

Volunteering Programs

Guidelines





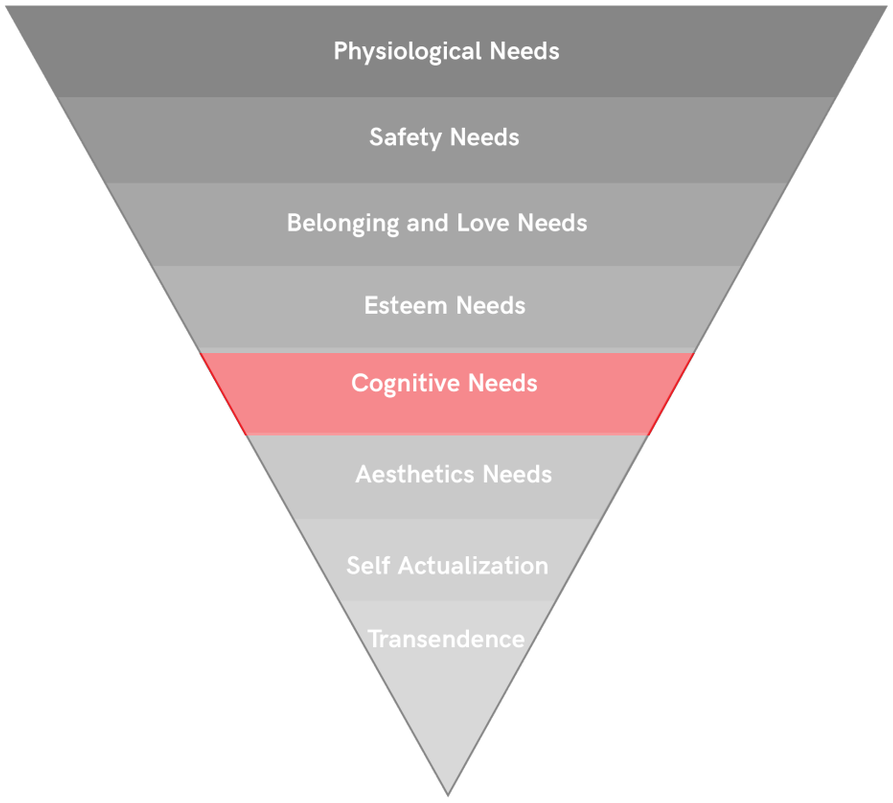
Home-like Furnishings

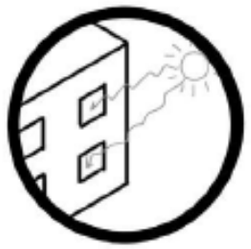
Respite Spaces for Caregivers

Control and Autonomy Options

Multiple Layers of Privacy

Guidelines





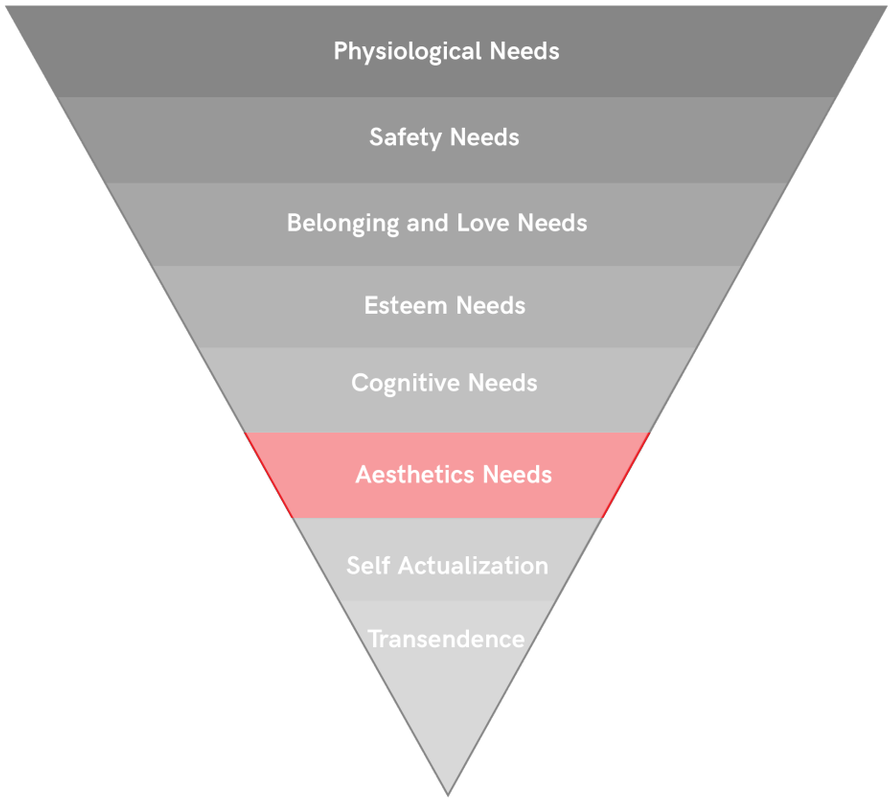
Abundant Daylight

Also important from the Self-Stigma research:

Wayfinding System

Intuitive Design/Circu-lation

Guidelines



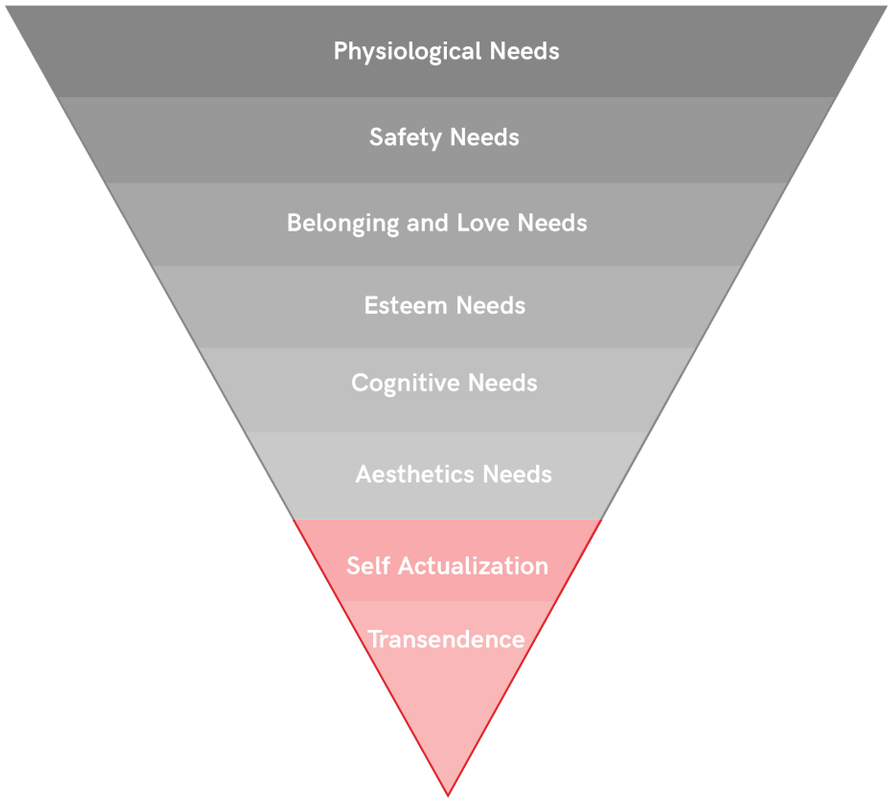
Natural Materials and Colors

Traditional Architectur-al style and technique

Cultural Motifs

Non-Institutional Design and Atmosphere

Guidelines



Mental Health Education Classes

Patient Creativity Exhibitions

Artwork and Positive Distractions

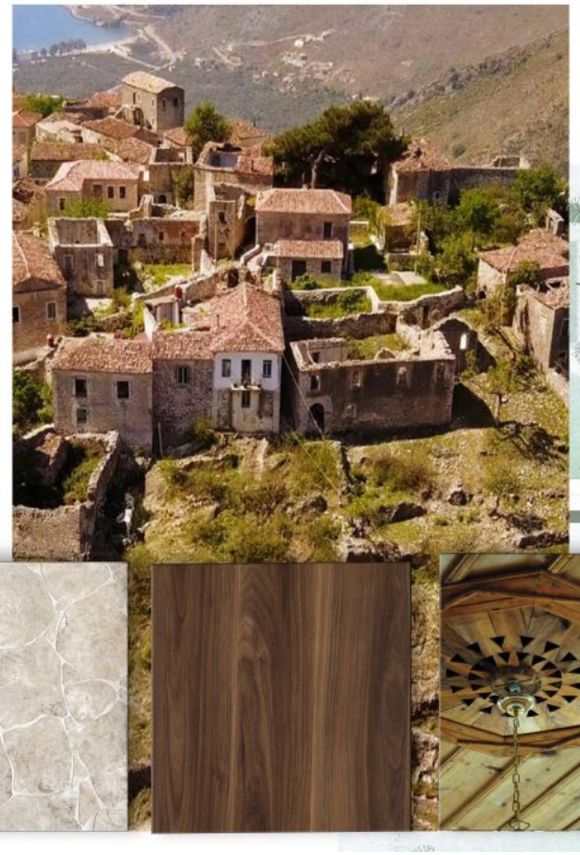
Design proposal

Village of the mind
‘Fshati I mendjes’

Moodboard

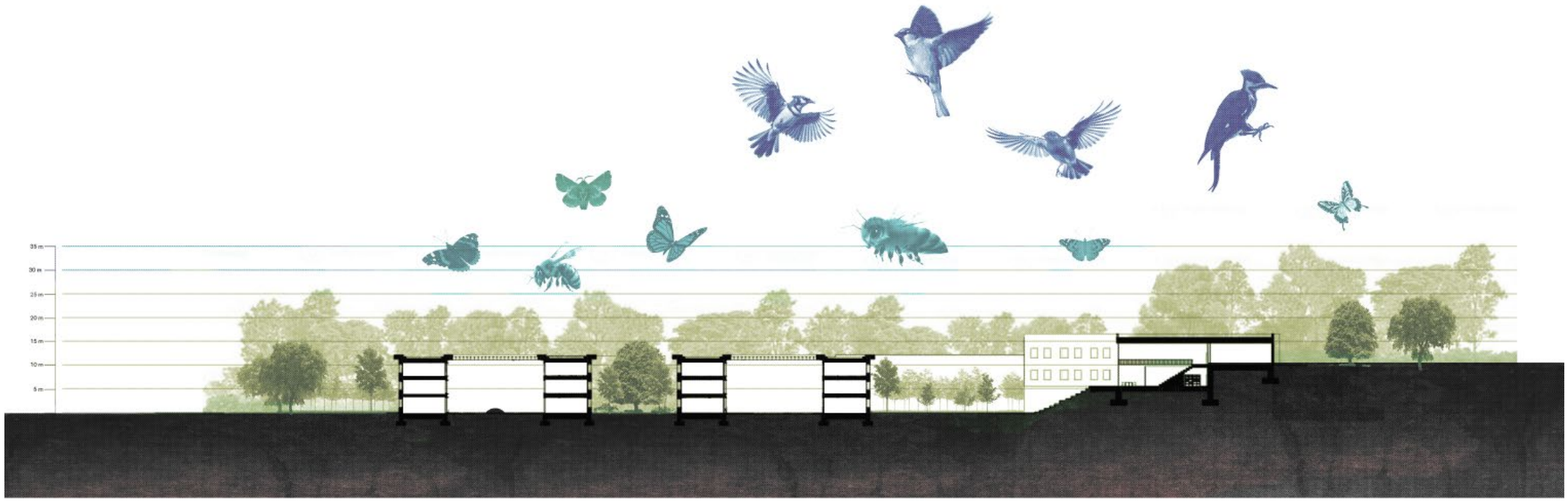
Public Space

Greenery
Vegetation



Facade

3
1
4
2
5


35 m
30 m
25 m
20 m
15 m
10 m
5 m

SEASONAL TREES provide shade during the warm spring and summer days.

EVERGREEN BUSHES provide privacy for the ground floor, blocking the field of vision from the street.

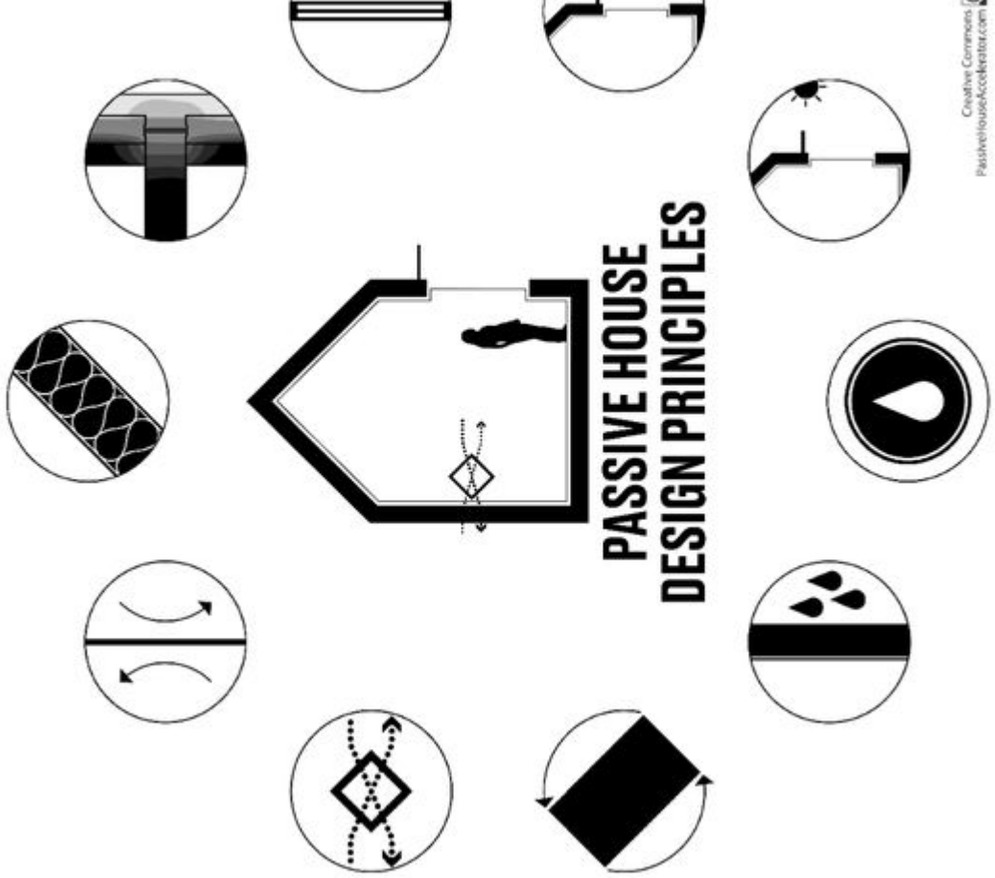
SESONAL TREES lose their leaves during autumn and winter, allowing or more sun to enter into the wards during cooler days.

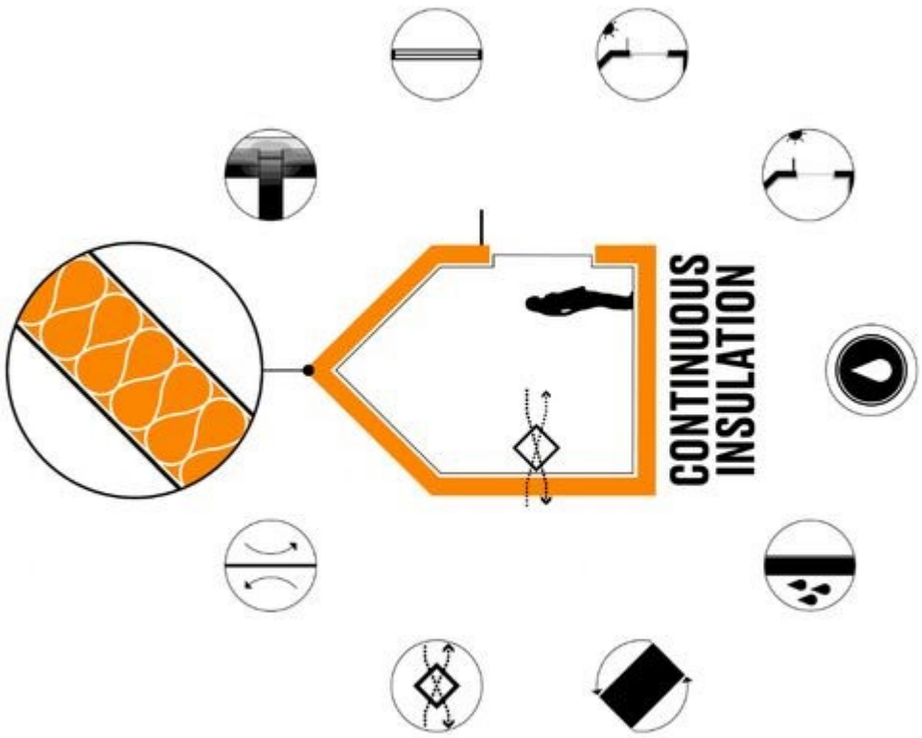
EVERGREEN busher keep their leaves during winter, continuing to maintain privacy in the ground floor.

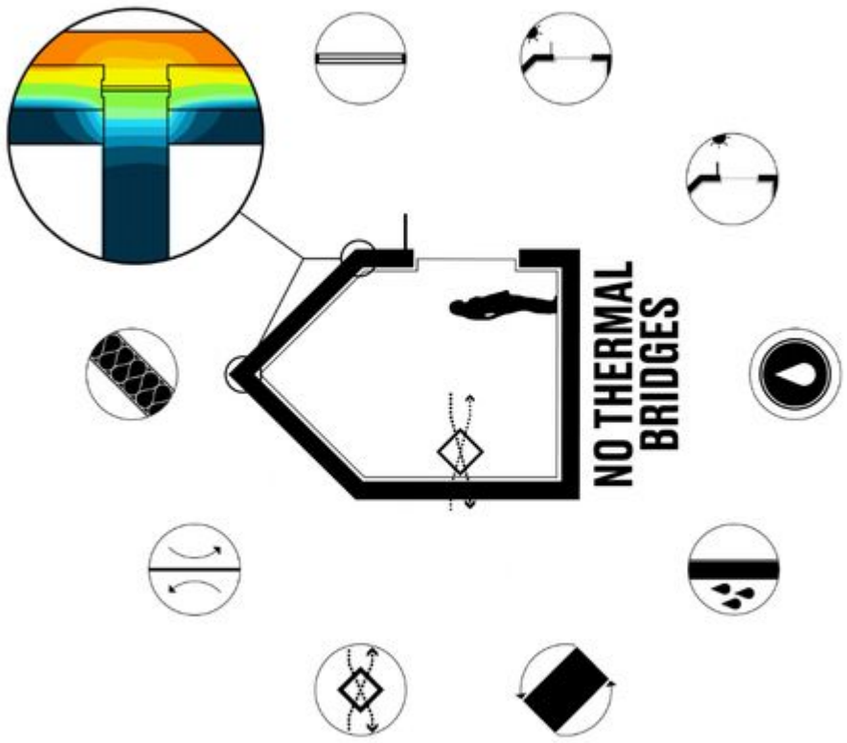
BUSHES and **TREES** providing privacy and shade into the wards.

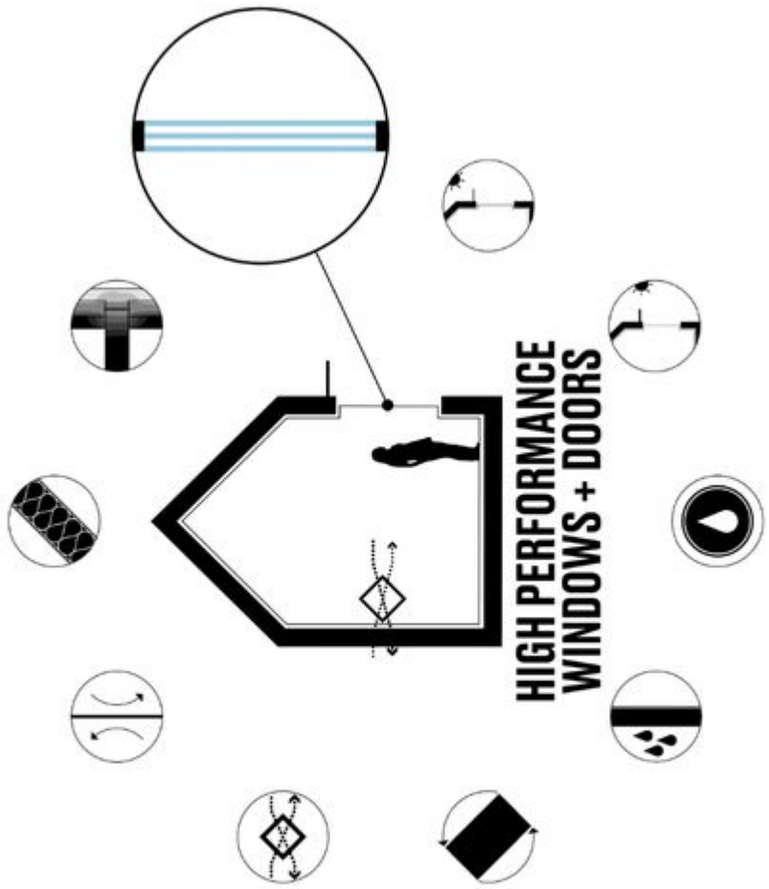
BENCHES placed near trees so that users can sit into the shade.

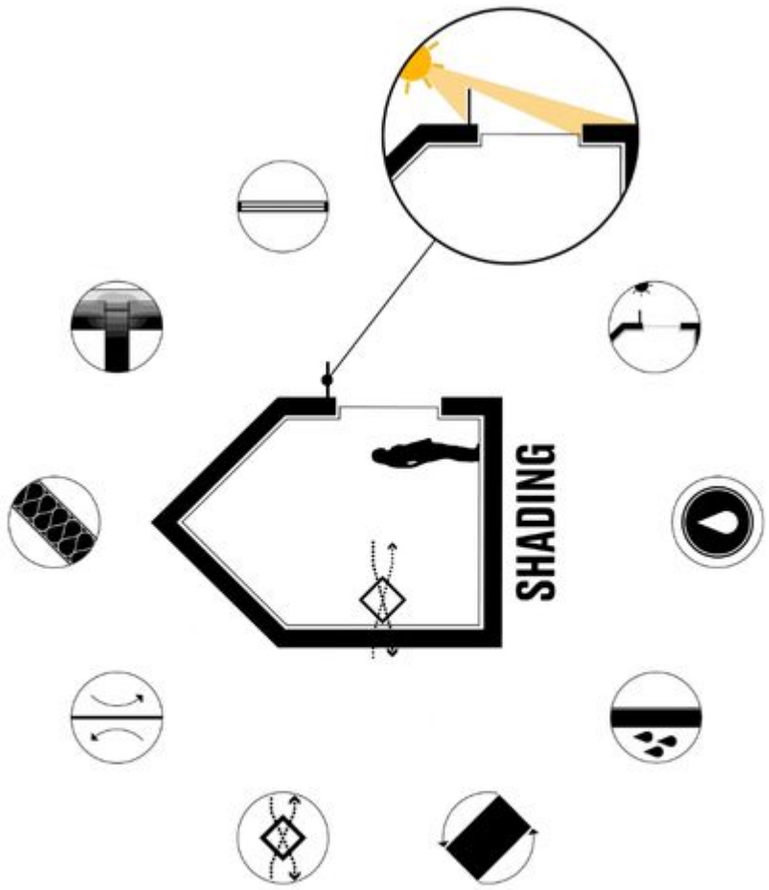
EVERGREEN TREES placed around the plot to buffer the noise from the surrounding area and provide more privacy into the park.

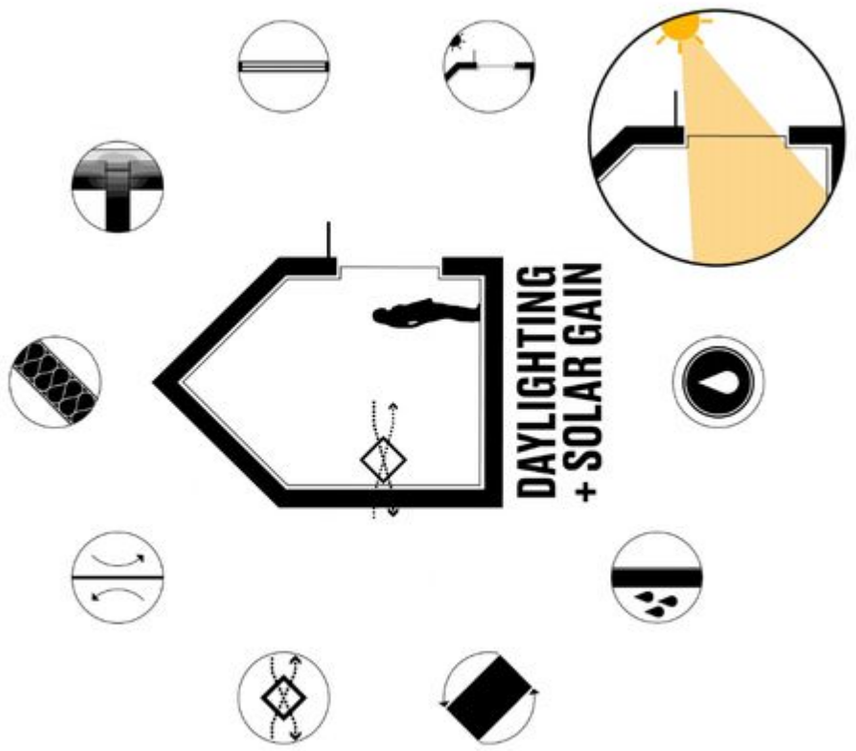

PASSIVE HOUSE
DESIGN PRINCIPLES
Creative Commons
PassiveHouseAccelerator.com

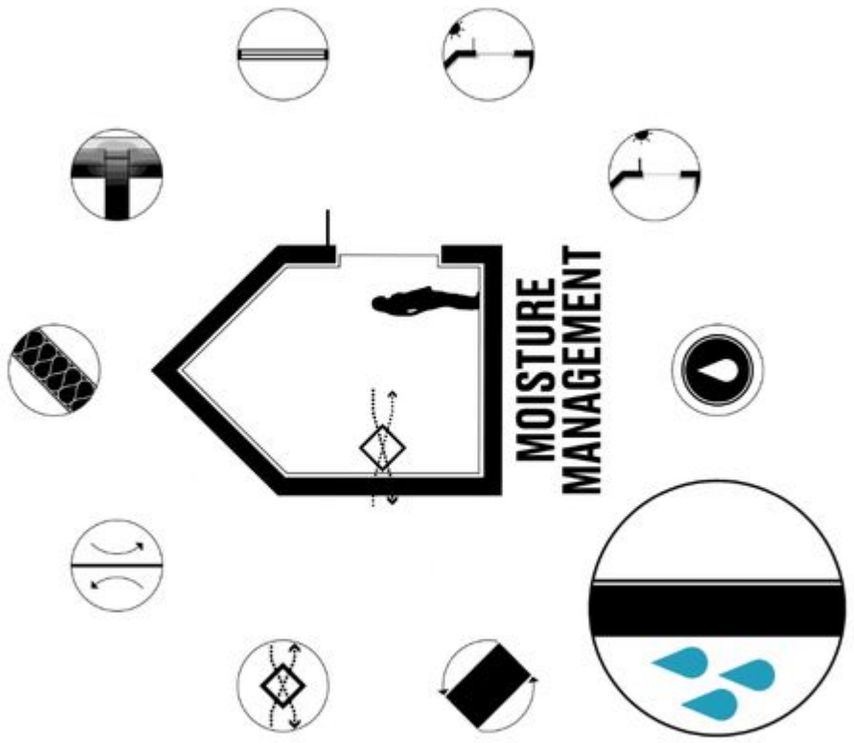

CONTINUOUS
INSULATION

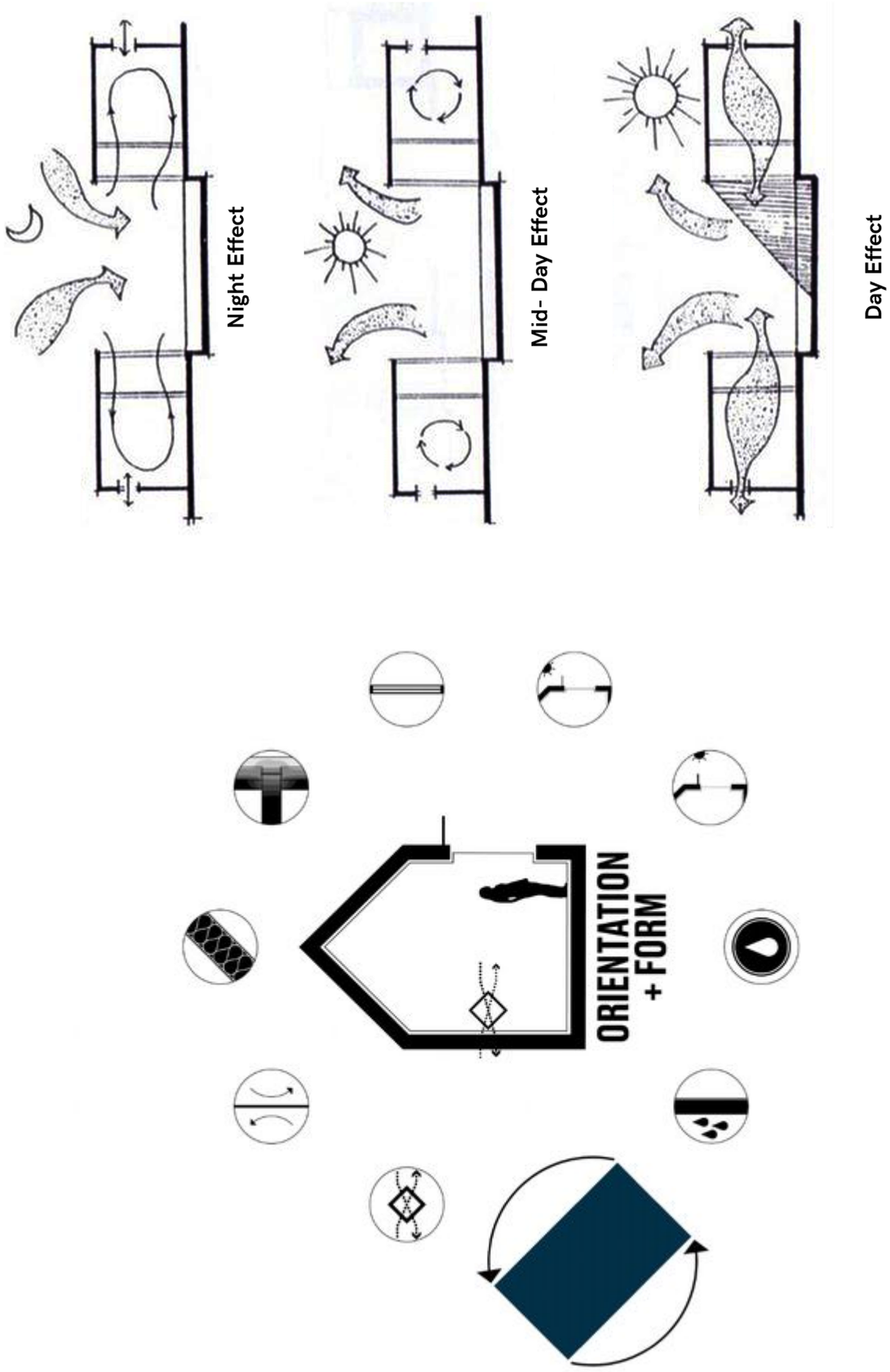

NO THERMAL
BRIDGES

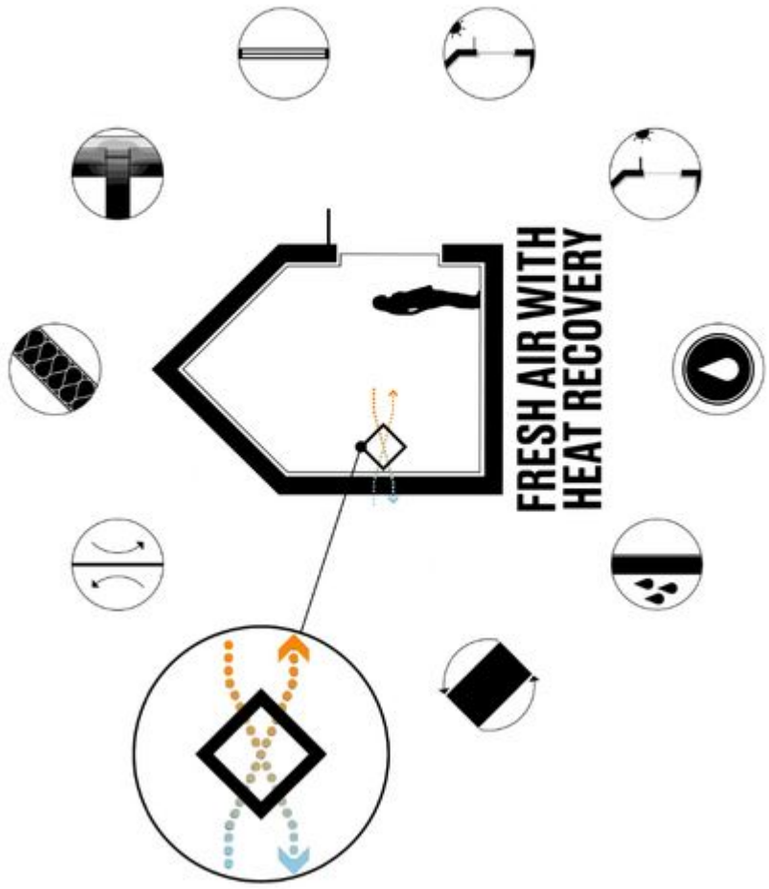

HIGH PERFORMANCE
WINDOWS + DOORS

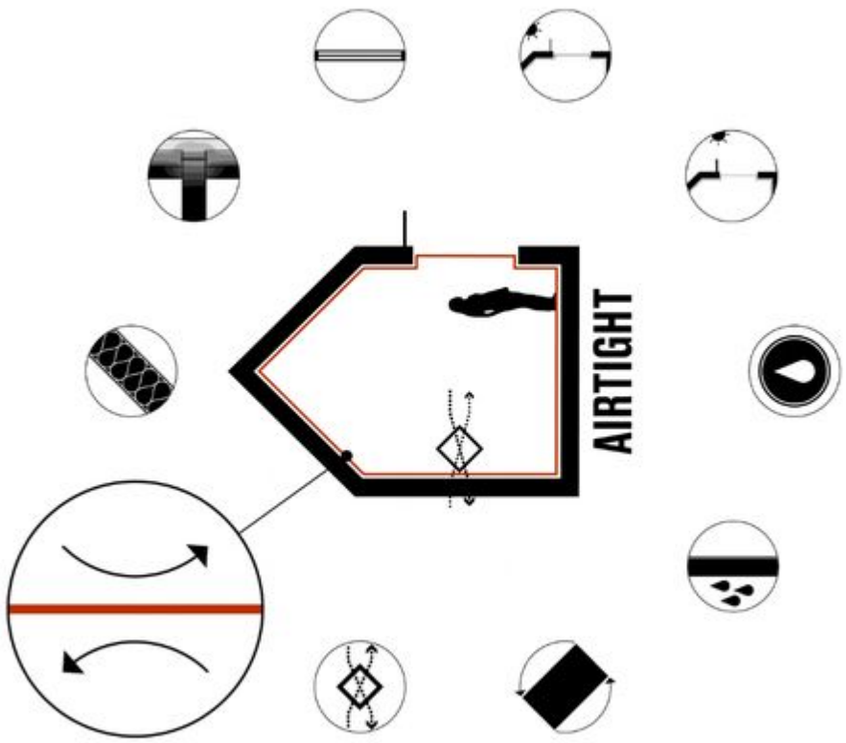

SHADING


DAYLIGHTING
+ SOLAR GAIN


MOISTURE
MANAGEMENT


Night Effect
Mid- Day Effect
Day Effect
ORIENTATION
+ FORM


FRESH AIR WITH
HEAT RECOVERY


AIRTIGHT

Conclusion

•**Overview:** Exploring hos architectural design choices can help diminish stigma.

•**Current Issues:** Lack of guidelines and outdated facilities cause problems.

•**Methodology:** Mixed-methods approach combining literature review, fieldwork, and surveys.

•**Research Findings:** Identified needs for private spaces, noise control, access to nature, and improved safety.

•**Design Proposals:** Design based on the provided guidelines and a attempt to cater to socio-economical situation of Albania.

•**Feasibility:** Guidelines and such solutions can be practical but require political support and funding for implementation.

•**Final Thoughts:** Transforming facilities to support recovery and reduce stigma.

•**Thank You:** Thank you for listening. Any questions?