



RESILIENT INDIVIDUALS AND RESILIENT WORKPLACES: TRANSLATING AND APPLYING THE RESEARCH

Nancy Spangler, PhD, OTR/L



Institute of Occupational Health Sciences

Portland, Oregon

November 30, 2017

TODAY'S AGENDA

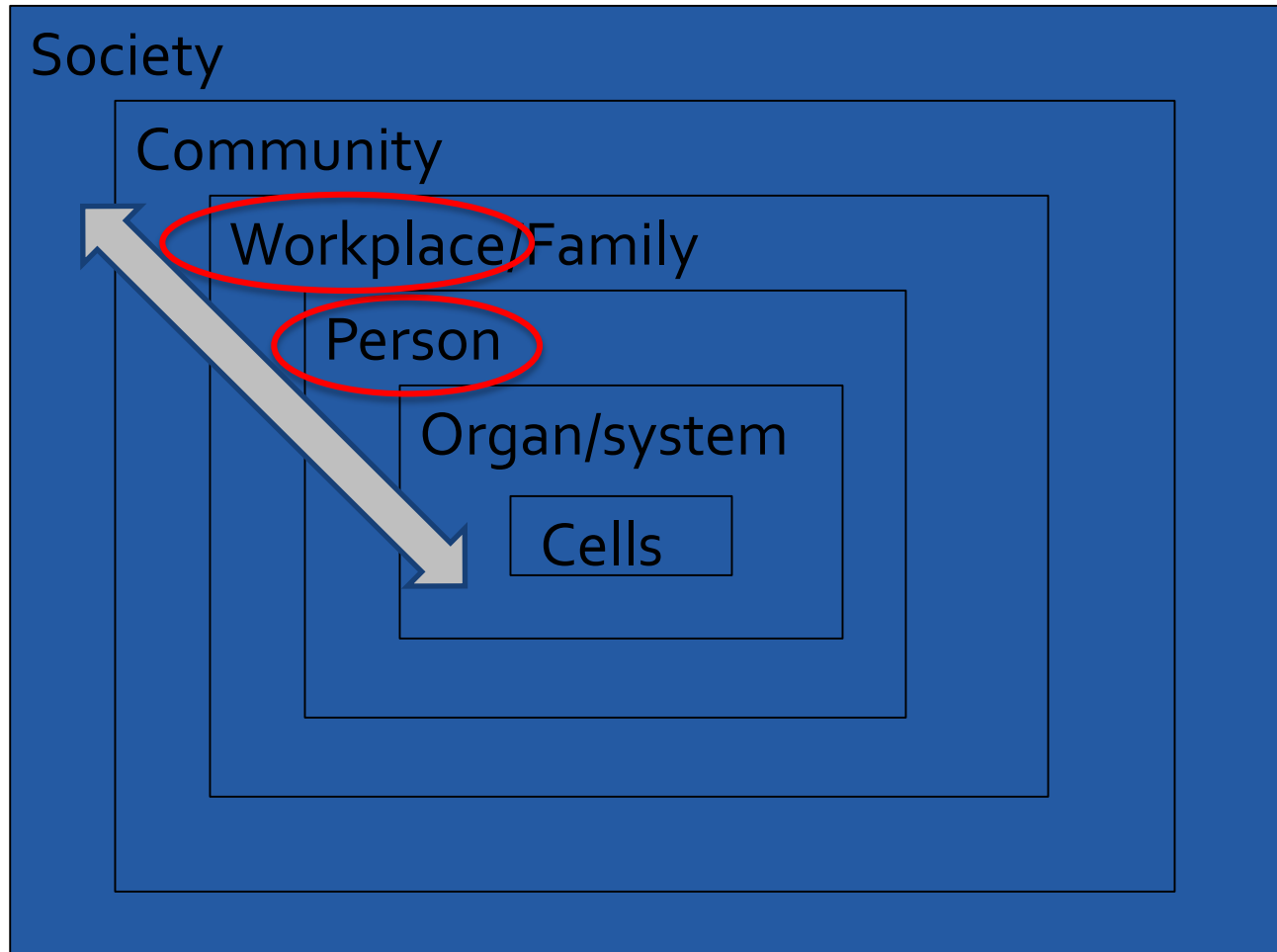
1. The paradox of stress and the possibilities for resilience
2. Why should employers care?
3. Can we enhance resilience – for workers? For workplaces? How?
4. Resources for tools and employer examples
5. Personal practice & discussion

MY EXPERIENCE:

- **Occupational Therapy:** Pediatrics, rehabilitation, and psychiatry (pain & stress management)
- **Workplace Health Promotion:** Health risk reduction and population health management
- **Organizational Change & Stress:** What drives adaptive capacity? Influence of leaders/managers.
- **Brain Research:** What supports individual and organizational health?

BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL SYSTEMS:

Complex Factors Affect Health & Performance



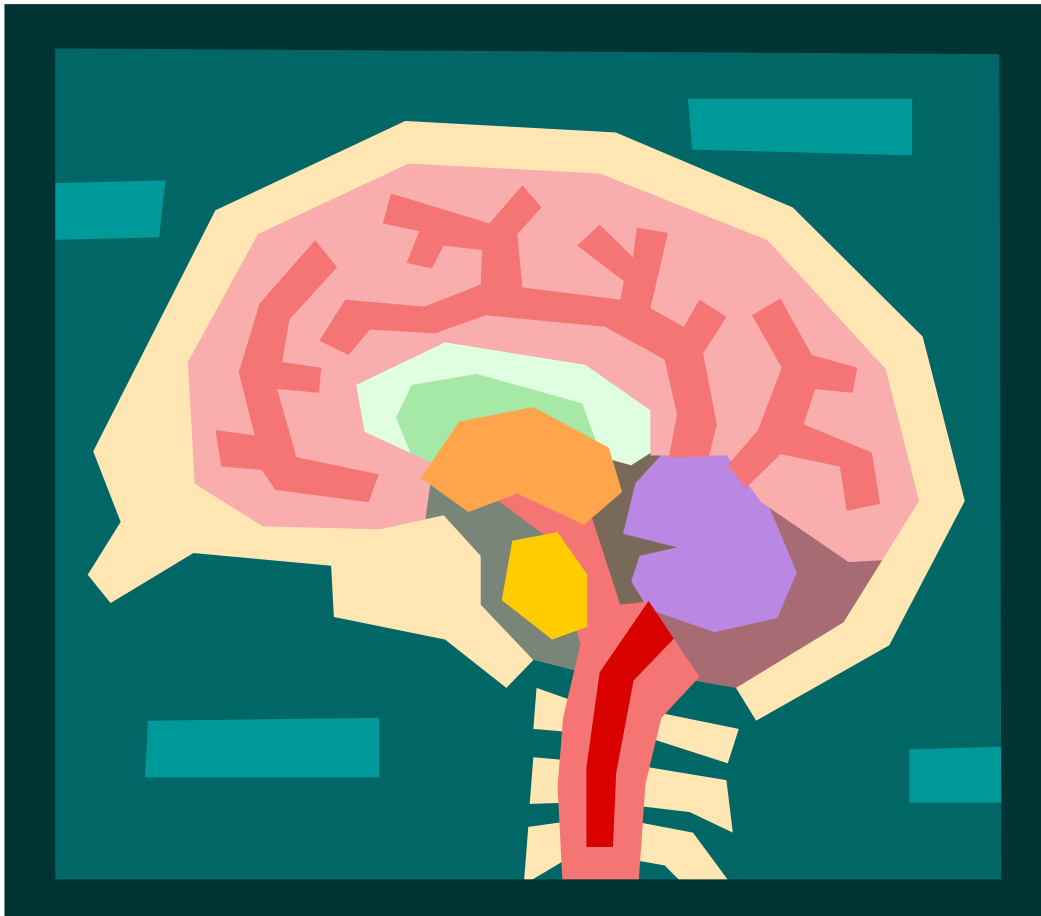
Engel, 1980

STRESS



STRESS

Stress Response = multisystem response to a perceived demand, threat, or challenge



Brain's limbic system and cortex set off the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis response to prepare the individual to:

- Fight
- Flight
- Freeze

STRESS =

“The nonspecific response of the body to any demand made on it.” (Selye, 1956)

- Distress = negative emotional state due to harmful stimuli or excessive demands
- Eustress = euphoric effect of positive adaptation to demands or challenges

UNMANAGED DISTRESS MAY CONTRIBUTE TO HEALTH PROBLEMS:

- Sleep disturbance
- May trigger depression, anxiety, and/or substance abuse
- Often co-occurs with physical conditions:
 - Chronic pain,
 - Cardiovascular disease,
 - Diabetes
 - Autoimmune disorders
 - Cancer

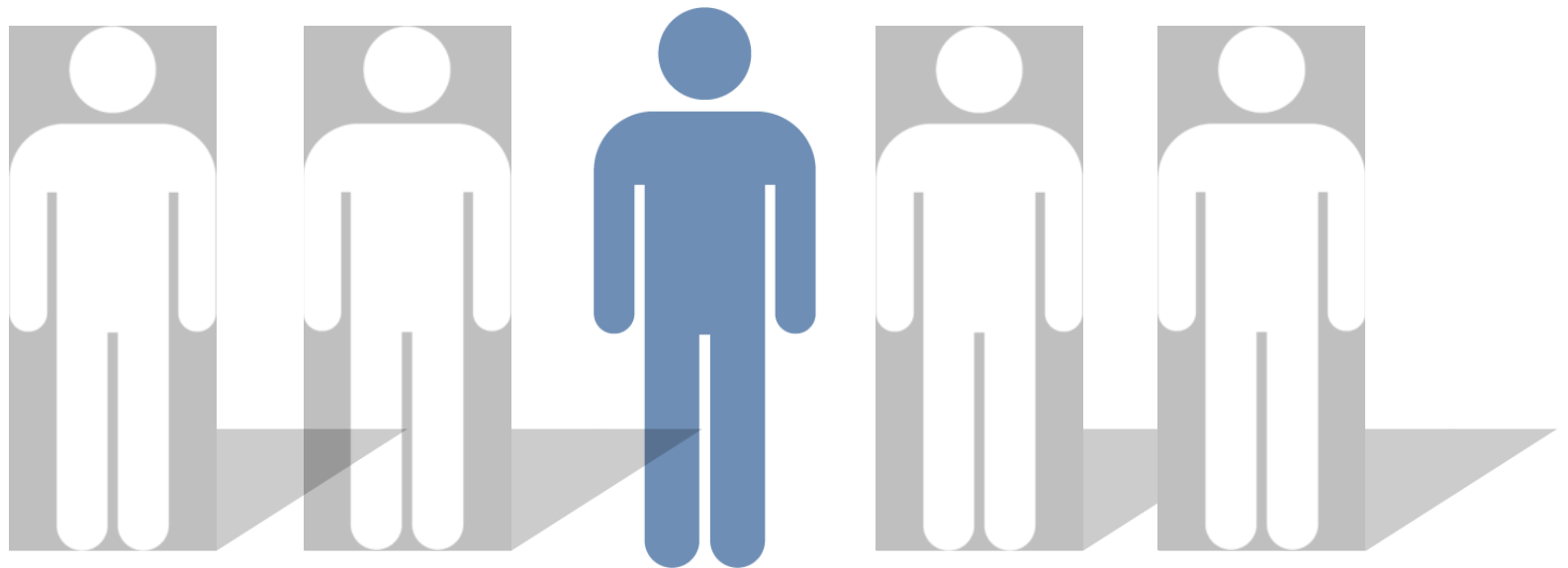
UNMANAGED STRESS IS COSTLY:

- Emotional fatigue and poor impulse control
- Eat, drink, and/or smoke too much
- Difficulty focusing, making decisions, managing work and life tasks
- 120,000 deaths and nearly \$190 billion in health care costs each year

(Goh, Pfeffer & Zenios, 2015)

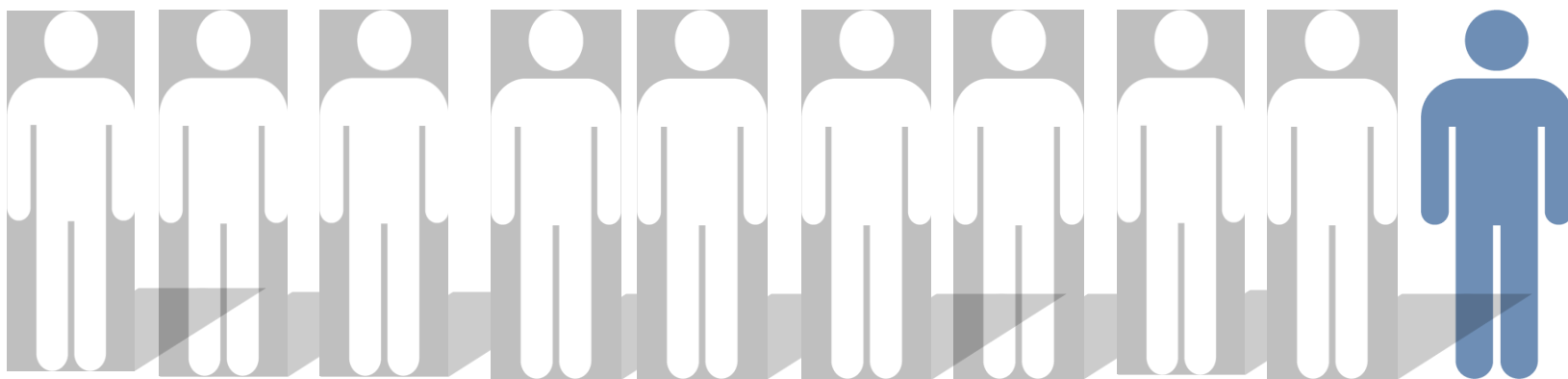
1 in 5 People

EXPERIENCES MENTAL ILLNESS EACH YEAR

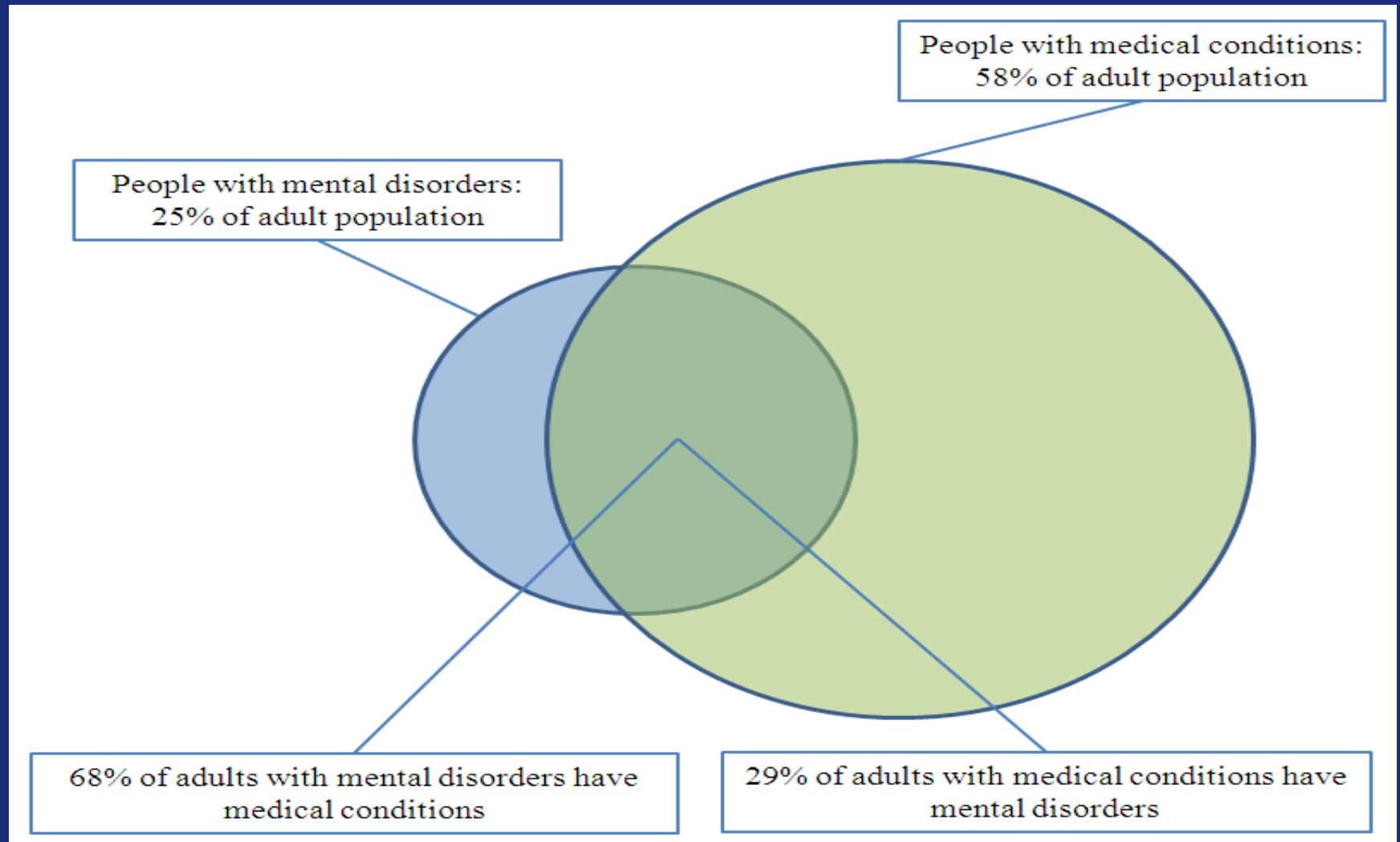


1 in 10

HAS A SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER EACH YEAR

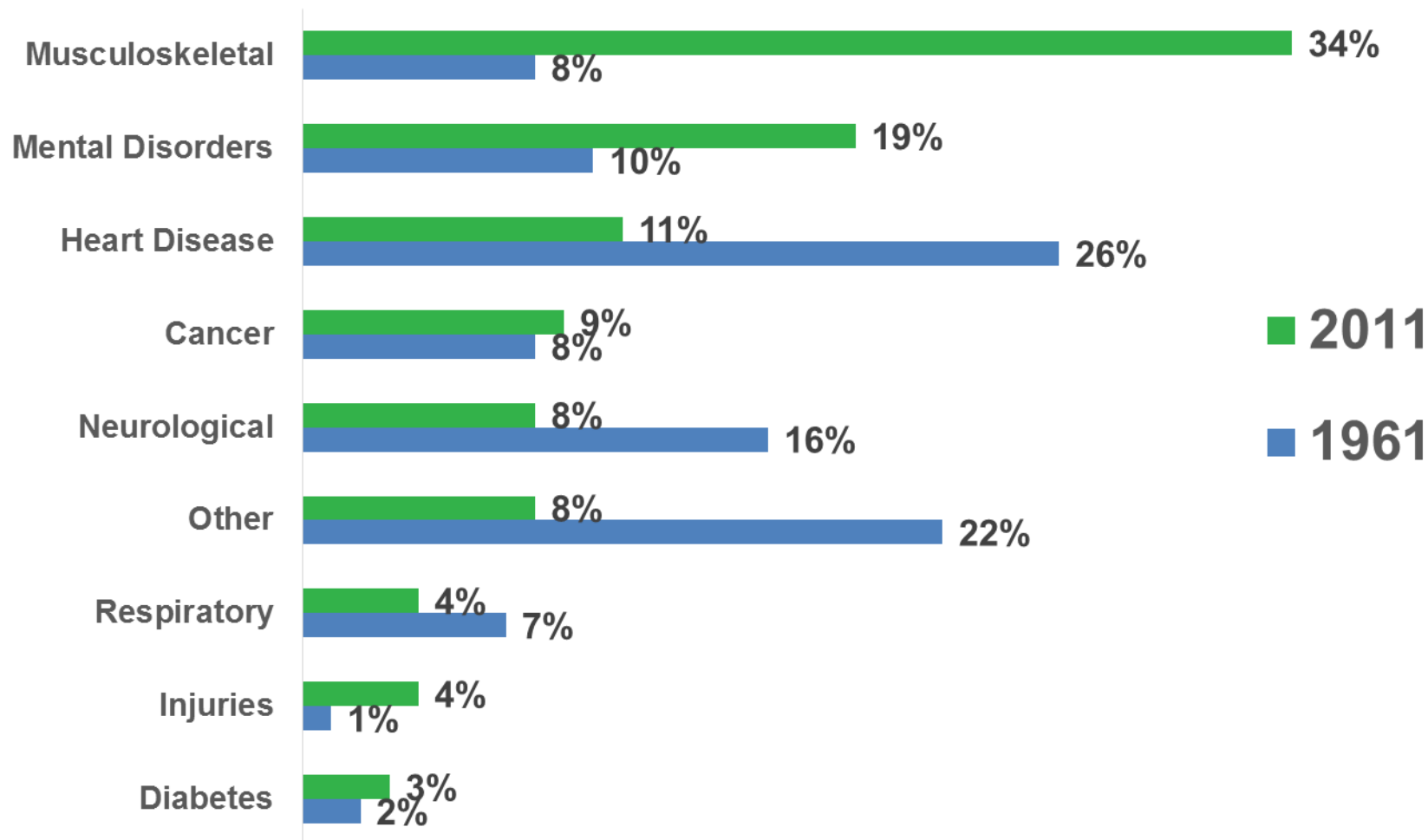


MANY HAVE BOTH A MEDICAL CONDITION AND MENTAL DISORDER



SHARE OF NEWLY DISABLED WORKERS BY DIAGNOSIS

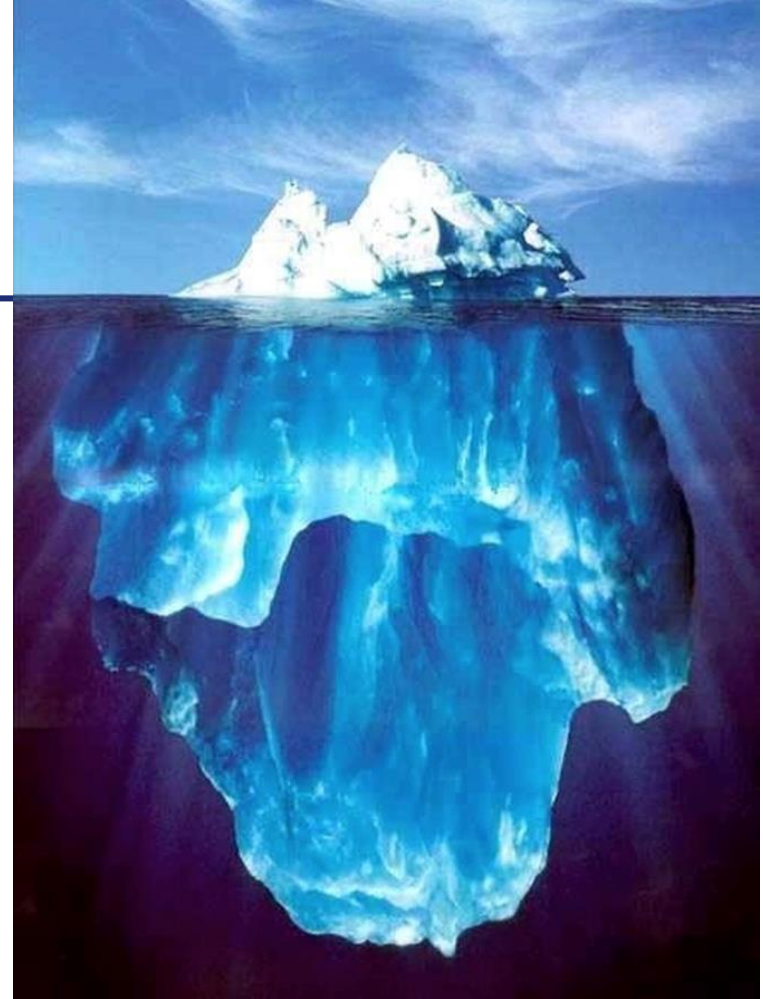
50-YEAR TREND



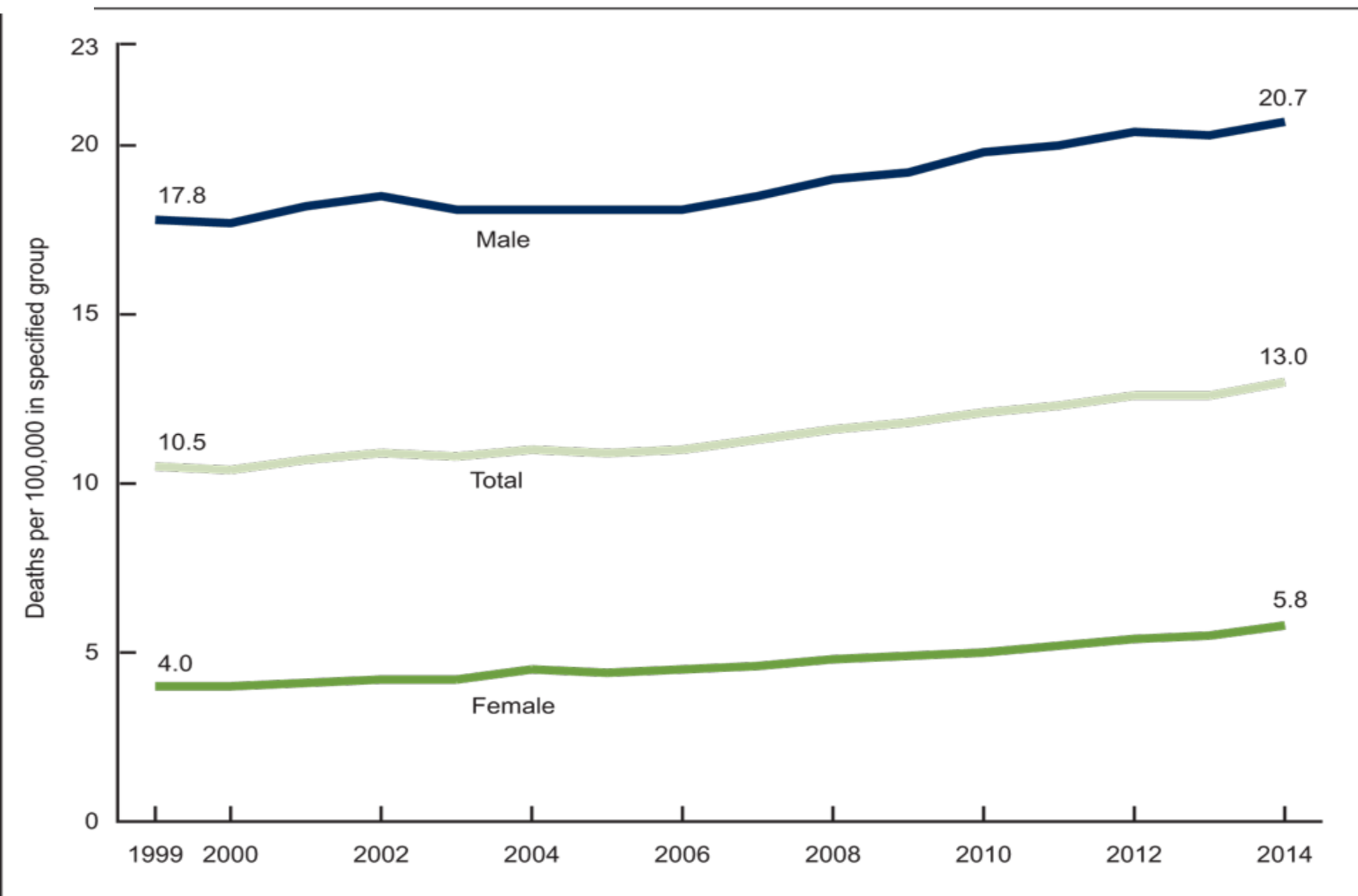
LOOK BENEATH THE SURFACE

Medical
Mental health/substance use disorders
Pharmacy

Disability
Presenteeism and lost productivity
Absenteeism
Unrealized output
Stress on team members
Overtime to cover sick-day absences
Overstaffing
Temporary workers
Recruitment
Hiring costs
Retraining



. Age-adjusted suicide rates, by sex: United States, 1999–2014



NOTES: Suicide deaths are identified with codes U03, X60–X84, and Y87.0 from the *International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, Tenth Revision*. Access data for Figure 1 at: http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db241_table.pdf#1.

SOURCE: NCHS, National Vital Statistics System, Mortality.

HEY, STRESS ISN'T ALL BAD!

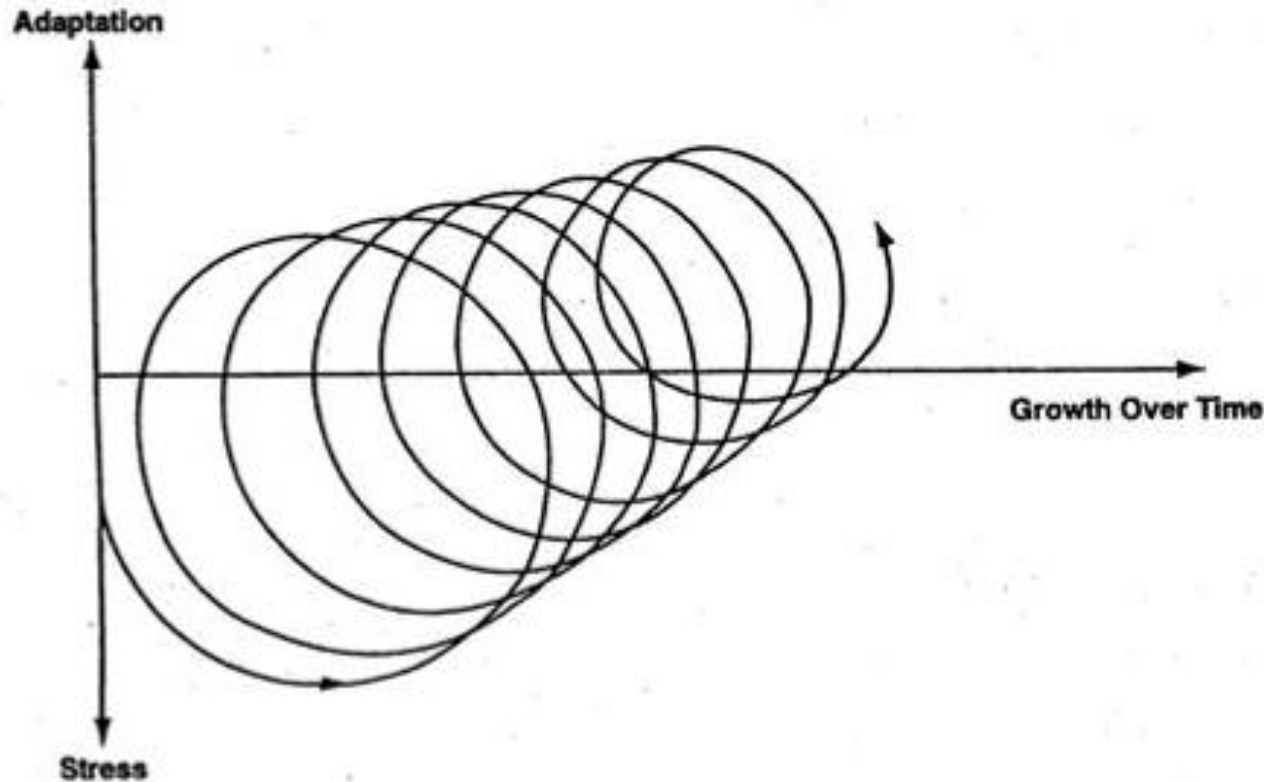
- Distress = negative emotional state due to harmful stimuli or excessive demand
- Eustress = euphoric effect of positive adaptation to demands or challenges



Adaptation = Resilience

- Resilience is . . . “A process linking a set of **adaptive capacities** to a positive trajectory of functioning and adaptation after a disturbance.”
- The ability to bounce back, to bend rather than break, to grow.

STRESS CAN STIMULATE GROWTH AND RESILIENCE:



Stress Adaptation Growth Dynamic
(Kim, Y.J., 2005)

Resilience factors:

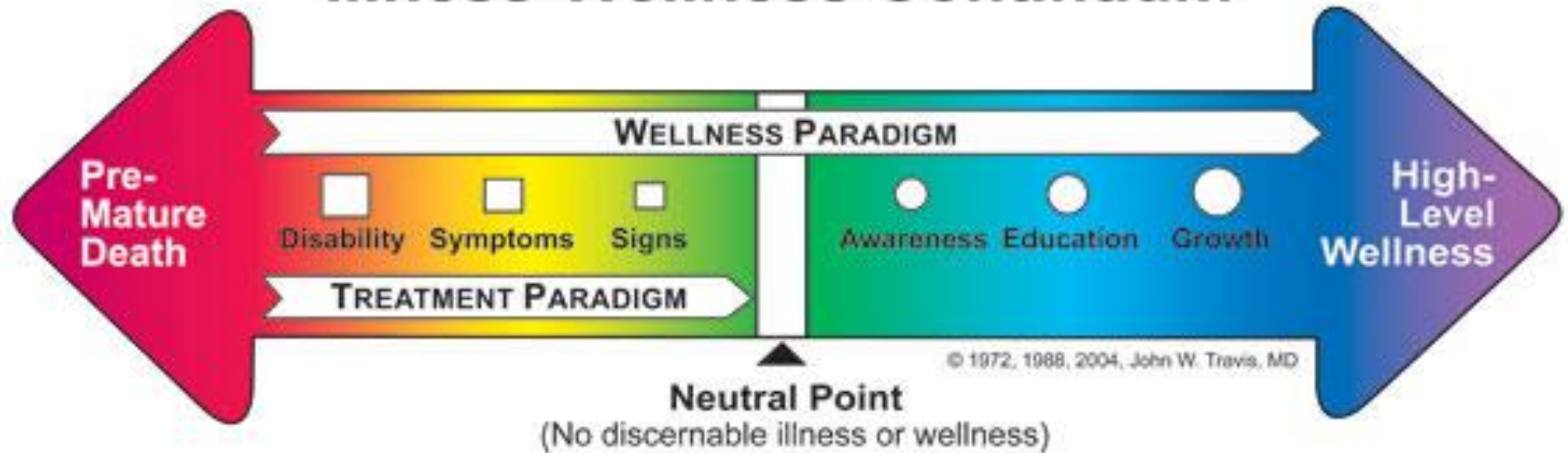
- Optimism/beliefs
- Emotion regulation
- Purpose/meaning
- Self reliance
- Connections
- Help - give/receive
- Replenishment



Begins with sense of awareness – of self and of others

From Managing Health to Supporting Thriving:

Illness-Wellness Continuum



Distress

Trauma
Burnout
Anxiety
Depression

Eustress

Resilience
Thriving
Well-being
Energy
Peak performance

CAN WE HELP WORKERS MANAGE STRESS & ENHANCE RESILIENCE?

- Deep bodies of research:
 - Demand/Control/Support
 - Effort-Reward Imbalance
 - Burnout vs Engagement
- Growing research:
 - Mindfulness
 - Resilience skill-building

MINDFULNESS:

“Paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally, to the unfolding of experience moment to moment.” (J. Kabat-Zinn)

- Multiple studies show mindfulness meditation helps with:
 - Pain and inflammation reduction
 - Emotion regulation
 - Anxiety
 - Hypertension
 - Insomnia
- Brain studies show mindfulness decreases the brain's alarm system and increases the size of regions associated with attending, memory, and decision-making. (S. Lazar)

RESILIENCE SKILL-BUILDING:

An October 2017 research synthesis commissioned by the American Heart Association's CEO Roundtable showed workplace resilience training programs have a significant effect on a broad range of physical, mental, and work performance outcomes.

Content areas included:

- Managing emotions
- Communication & dealing with difficult people
- Taking on challenges effectively
- Improving sleep
- Improving physical health

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH ON STRESS AND RESILIENCE

- 46 multidisciplinary employer representative
- Interviews and discussion groups
- Multiple industry sectors

“What are the greatest strengths in how your organization reduces stress and builds resilience?”

(Copies available upon request)



EMPLOYER BENEFITS AND PRACTICES:

Intensive Case management to reduce disability

Targeted. Early identification and intervention to
reduce risks and illness

Universal Prevention to keep people healthy and
high performing

EMPLOYER BENEFITS AND PRACTICES:

Active, outbound intervention *(Intensive)*

- Disease management/ Case management
 - Disability management (Return-to-work)
-

Screenings, information, resources, & benefits *(Targeted)*

- HRAs/Screenings & coaching
 - Information, webinars, education
 - Medical and mental health benefits
 - Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
-

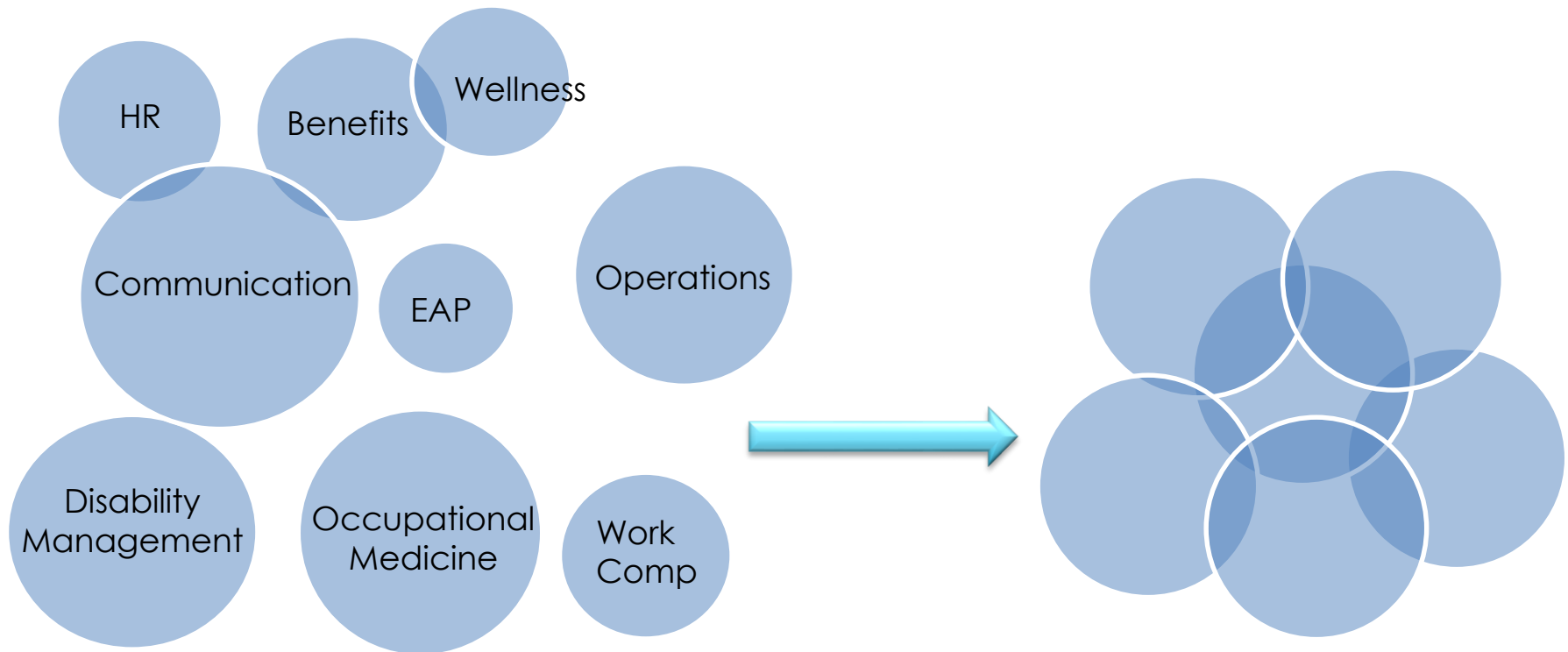
Organizational leadership, culture, & management practices *(Universal)*

- Values, ethics, & mission/role alignment
- Communication (face-to-face, at multiple levels, conflict resolution, predictable structure)
- Career & life development/balance
- Training (Manager/supervisor & employee)
- Health champions
- Connectedness, meaning, belonging & **trust**

COLLABORATING MATTERS:

Moving from
disparate
program silos. . .

. . . to integrated work
performance, total health
management, well-being,
and thriving



ORGANIZATIONAL RESEARCH:

Several areas of research suggest we can improve organizational resilience and effectiveness:

- Positive organizational scholarship
- Compassionate workplaces
- Organizational thriving
- Psychological capital (PsyCap)
- Psychologically-safe team environments

RESOURCES:



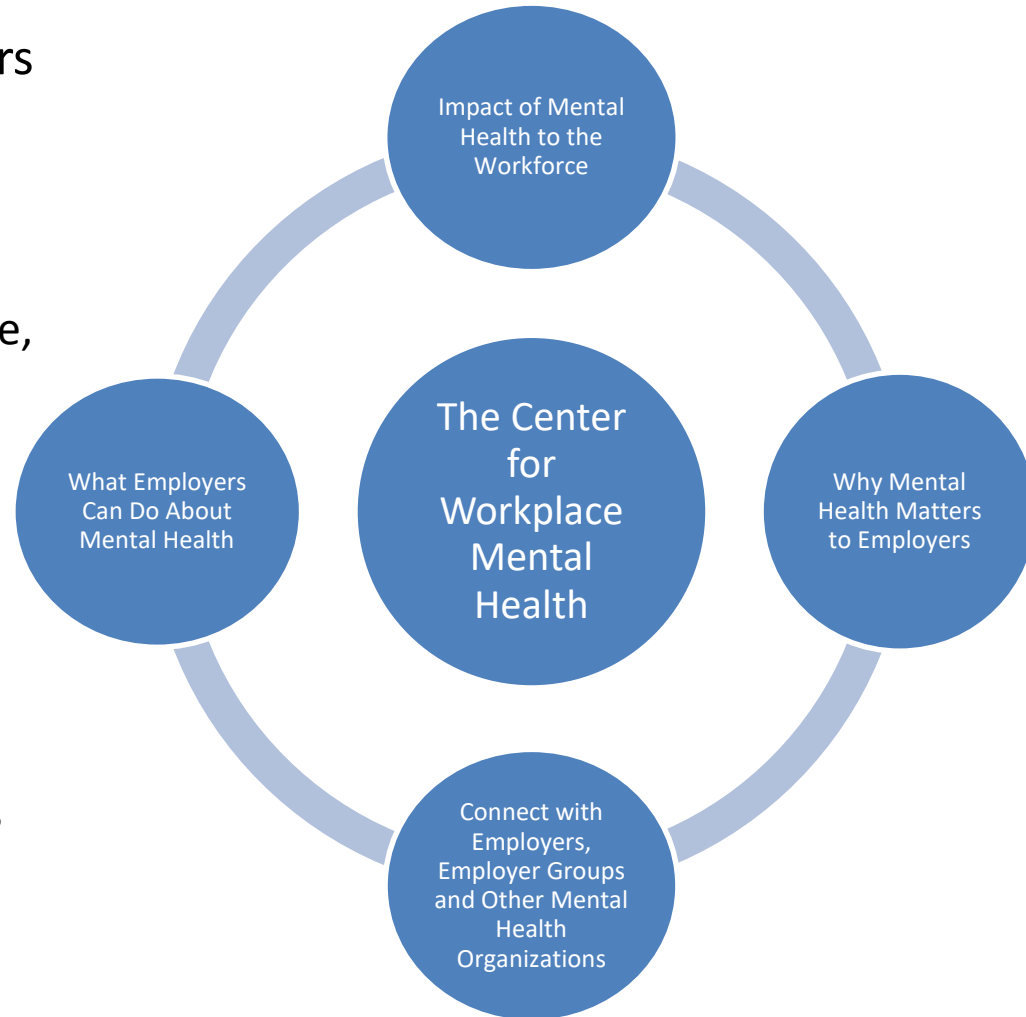
Purpose: Collaborate with employers to advance mental health.

1. Promote business case for early recognition, prevention, and effective, accessible treatment.

2. Highlight employer case examples.



3. Provide tools to increase awareness and help-seeking.



WORKSITE EDUCATION

ICU INITIATIVE

- Developed by DuPont, donated to Partnership to make it available to others
- Video-based program teaches employees to identify warning signs of emotional distress, respond and refer



RIGHT DIRECTION DEPRESSION INITIATIVE

- Website and turnkey materials raise awareness and increase help-seeking behaviors
- Ready to use posters, articles, PPT decks

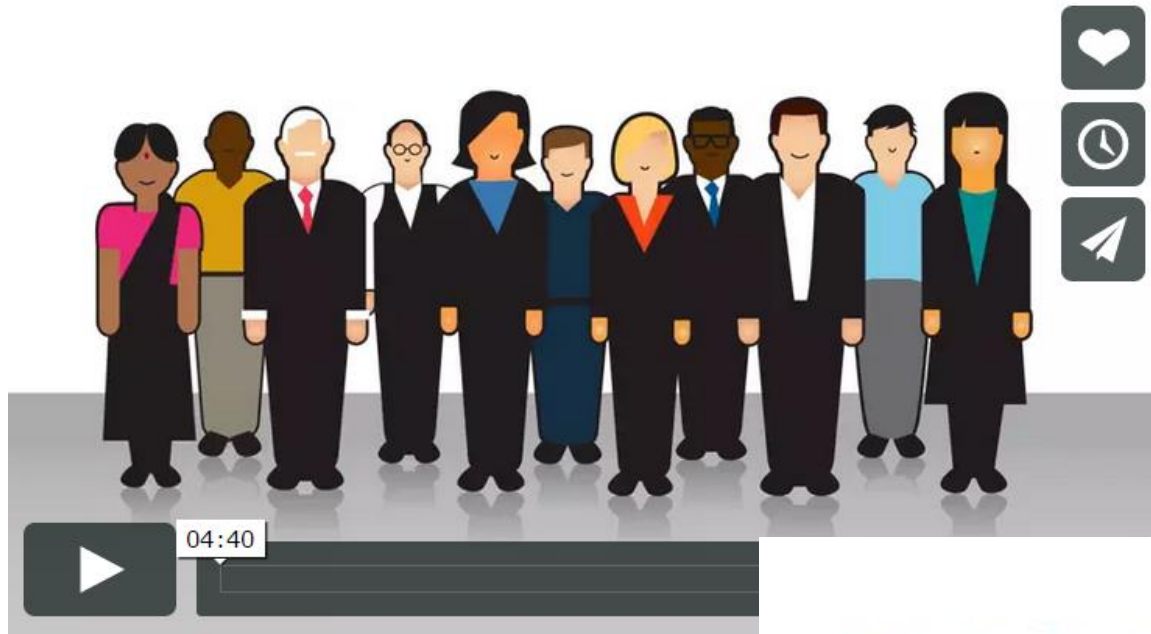


ICU PROGRAM

- 5-minute video teaches employees to identify warning signs, connect with colleague, and reach out for help.
- Originally developed by DuPont and delivered to their 70,000 employees worldwide, given to APAF to make available to other employers.
- Platform for promoting existing company benefits and programs.

| Physical Health | "I See You" | ICU Steps to Improve Emotional Health |
|-----------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| Intensive | I | Identify the signs |
| Care | C | Connect with the person |
| Unit | U | Understand the way forward together |

ICU PROGRAM



RIGHT DIRECTION

- 🐾 Depression awareness initiative for the workplace.
- 🐾 Collaboration with Employers Health.
- 🐾 **Goal:** increase awareness about depression, reduce stigma and encourage people who need help to seek it.
- 🐾 **How:** provide employers turnkey materials for worksite education to increase employee help-seeking behaviors.

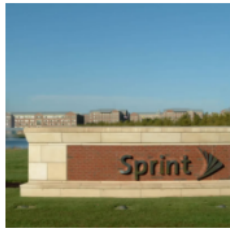


RIGHT DIRECTION

- 🐾 Depression can make you feel alone and lost in the woods.
- 🐾 There are many paths toward help.
- 🐾 The key is to take a step in the right direction – toward information and help.
- 🐾 Rightdirectionforme.com



EMPLOYER CASE STUDIES



U.S. Headquarters
Overland Park, KS

Number of Employees
31,000

Industry
Information



U.S. Headquarters
Covington, KY

Number of Employees
200

Industry
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services



U.S. Headquarters
New York, NY

Number of Employees
50,000

Industry
Finance and Insurance

Sprint Corporation 1

Sprint Charts New Course in Healthcare; Launches Depression Initiative

Sprint has raised the bar in employee healthcare. First it provided employees with an attractive environment in which to work and then it offered employees plenty of healthcare resources, especially for the diseases of most concern to the company and its employees: cancer, depression, asthma, COPD, low back pain, diabetes, and heart conditions. Now Sprint is extending its efforts to combat depression by launching a depression initiative that rolls out this Spring.

TiER1 Performance Solutions

Addressing mental health could be perceived as a huge and complex undertaking. It can be daunting to try to dispel the myths, reduce stigma, and solve the problem around mental health all at once. **TiER1 Performance Solutions**, on the other hand, said, "Let's just start a conversation about mental health." By starting the conversation, they helped demystify the

American Express

Embracing A Culture of Mental Health

American Express is providing "the next generation of health care for its employees," according to global corporate medical director Wayne Burton, MD. This means looking at physical health and emotional health holistically, connecting the pieces across a wide spectrum of services, and garnering visible support from senior leaders and line managers. As a result, Burton and his team are decreasing the incidence of medical and behavioral health claims.



U.S. Headquarters
New York, NY

Number of Employees
45,000

Industry
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services



U.S. Headquarters
Augusta, ME

Number of Employees
13,000

Industry
Public Administration



U.S. Headquarters
Arlington, VA

Number of Employees
200

Industry
Other Services (except Public Administration)

EY

"R U OK?": A Meaningful Question to Foster a Culture of Caring at EY

"r u ok?" signifies three simple words, but the meaning proves much greater for partners and staff at EY. The r u ok? campaign is a mental illness and addictions initiative that weaves together the organization's culture of caring and mental health values. The initiative

Maine State Government

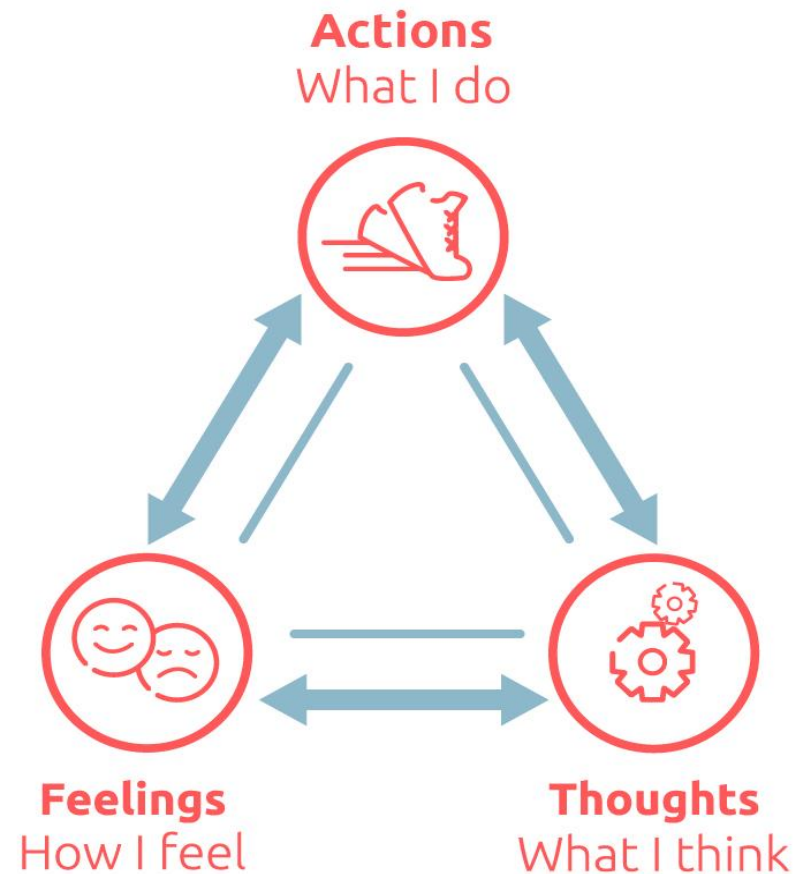
Maine State Government Participates in Depression Screening and Work-Focused Intervention

American Psychiatric Association

Right Direction 'Sets Up Camp' at the APA

The American Psychiatric Association (APA) works to ensure that individuals with mental health issues receive effective care. It found a creative way to bring workplace mental

PERSONAL PRACTICE:



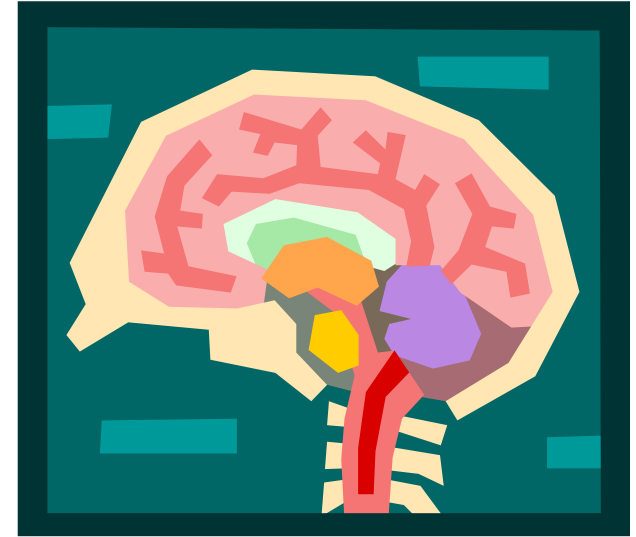
Because resilience has systemic factors,
we need multiple skillsets.

And we need to understand how our brain works:

| System 1 | System 2 | [System 3] |
|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| Reflexive | Reflective | Attentive |
| Automatic | Conscious | Mindful |
| Fast | Slow | Non-reactive |
| Intuitive | Rational | Observing |
| Spontaneous | Intentional | Non-judgmental |

Changing our thoughts:

- Reflexive brain
 - Automatic thoughts and actions
 - Distorted, self-defeating thoughts (*e.g.*, “*I really messed that up. I’m such a loser. Life sucks.*”)
- Reflective brain
 - Intentional re-framing
 - Change to rational, compassionate thoughts (*e.g.*, “*That wasn’t my best, but I can work at it.*”)



“Toxic
selfie”

Body Posture: The Power Pose

*“Not Fake it
until you make
it, but Fake it
until you
become it.”*

(Amy Cuddy, 2012)



Smiling reduces mortality:

- Baseball players with full (Duchenne) smiles lived seven years longer. (Able & Kruger, 2010)



Cultivating smiling . . .



Intentional Duchenne smilers showed lower heart rate during stressful tasks and faster heart rate recovery afterwards. (Kraft & Pressman, 2012, *Psychological Science*)

CONTACT ME FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR TO BE ADDED TO OUR MAILING LIST,

Nancy Spangler, PhD, OTR/L
Senior Consultant to
Center for Workplace Mental Health
nspangler@psych.org
President, Spangler Associates Inc.
nspangler@spanglerhealth.com
816-820-1870

AMERICAN
PSYCHIATRIC
ASSOCIATION
FOUNDATION



CENTER FOR
**WORKPLACE
MENTAL HEALTH**

www.workplacementalhealth.org

DISCUSSION