

Trauma-Informed Leadership for Current & Aspiring Leaders

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Before we start

- Leadership is a journey
- Acknowledging trauma
- Take care of yourself
- Mindset of recovery

Format and activities

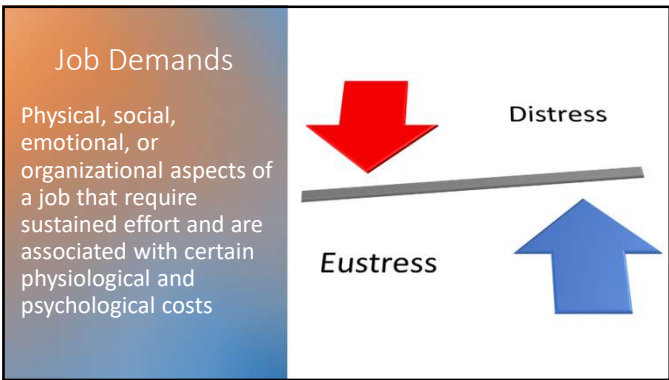
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The Pillars of a Trauma-Informed Organization/System			
Trauma-Informed Leadership	Staff Wellness	Trauma-Informed Strategies	Trauma Treatment

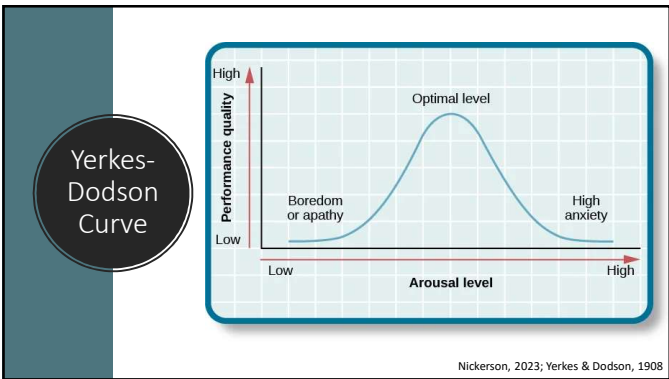
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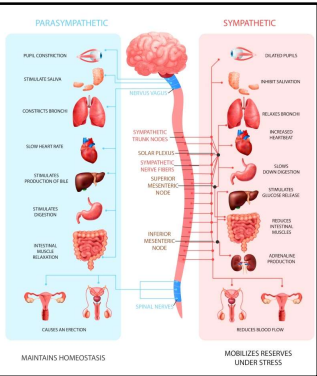


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Stress, Trauma, & the Autonomic Nervous System

Stress Ladder

- Ventral vagal – strong connection to prefrontal cortex and executive functioning
- Sympathetic – strong connection to amygdala and flight/fight response



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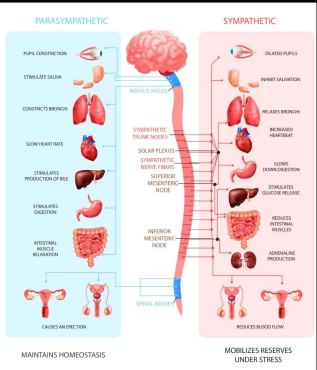
Stress, Trauma, & the Autonomic Nervous System

Stress Ladder

- Ventral vagal – strong connection to prefrontal cortex and executive functioning
- Sympathetic – strong connection to amygdala and flight/fight response
- Dorsal vagal – shut down and freeze response

Quantifying Post-Traumatic Growth

- Respiratory Sinus Arrhythmia
- Heart Rate Variability



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The Dangers of Stress - Inflammation

- Cytokines: Friends and Foes
- Inflammation
 - Gut
 - Leaky Gut Syndrome
 - Immune functioning
 - Brain
 - Mental health
 - Cognitive functioning



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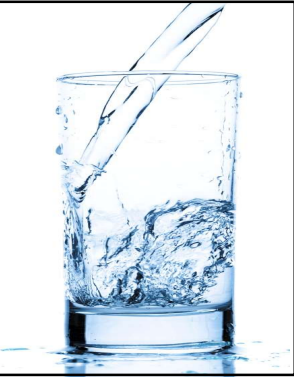
How big is your cup?

Traits of Resiliency

Nerd Definitions of Resiliency

- Prefrontal cortex and amygdala
- Ventral vagal and sympathetic

Water in your cup: Allostastic load



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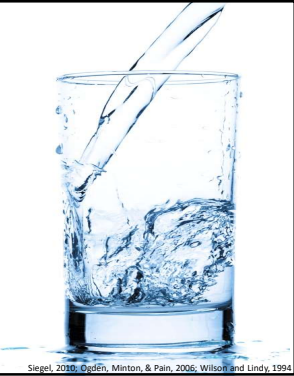
How full is your cup?

Stress Intensifiers

- Duration
- Uncertainty
- Importance

Trauma Response:

- Cup overflows
- High levels of stress for extended periods of time



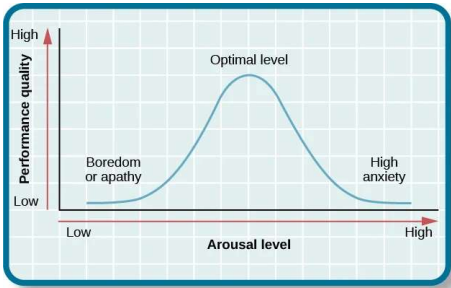
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HOW HAS THE STRESS AND TRAUMA OF THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS IMPACTED THE HEALTH OF YOUR TEAM AND ORGANIZATION

Small Group Question

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Yerkes-Dodson Curve



Nickerson, 2023; Yerkes & Dodson, 1908

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Complexity of Helping Fatigue

Distress	Trauma Response
Workload	
Lack of resources	Burnout – No longer able to handle the amount of distress inherent to the job
Team/organization dysfunction	
	Compassion fatigue - Exhausted by trauma exposure
Empathetic intensity – Transfer of pain and suffering from one person to another	Vicarious trauma - Trauma resulting from exposure to another's traumatic pain and suffering
	Secondary trauma – Exposure to trauma or work situation that is retraumatizing
Moral distress – Asked to act or watch others violate safety, values, morals, and ethics	Moral injury – Mental health crisis resulting from moral distress

www.euroint.org, 2018; Bloom & Farragher, 2011; Wilson and Lindy, 1994; Hirsch, Hurley, & Taber, 2019; Jameton, 1994

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An illustration of a hand reaching up from a blue pool of water. A speech bubble coming from the hand says "HELP!". The background is a blue gradient with a halftone dot pattern.

Our Systems and Society is Failing Us

- While surveys vary, these professions seem always to make the top 5 for most burned out:
 - Health care
 - Social services
 - Education
- How we work is not working (Gallup, 2023)
 - 59% of workers are burnt out
 - Workplace stress was at a historic all-time high in 2023
 - 55% of workers are unable to establish a work-life balance

Gallup, 2023; Yerkes & Dodson, 1908

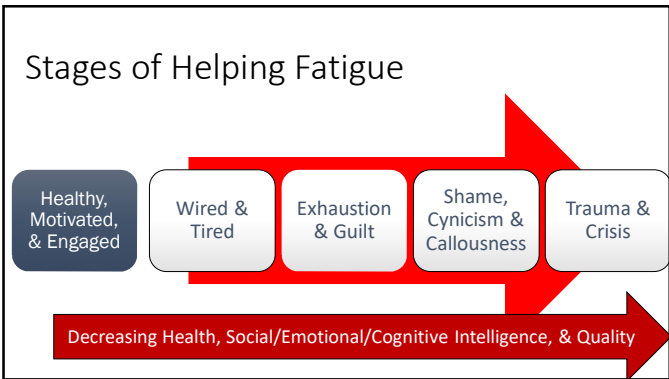
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The Death Nail of Self-care

- It is unfair (not backed by research) to burnout and traumatize people at work and expect them to take personal time to recover
- The failures of the “employee” depends on their self-care and ignores organizational factors
- We sit with the dilemma
 - Personal behavior improves resiliency and performance
 - Organizational factors can either destroy or support resiliency and performance

A pink sticky note with the words "TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF" written in black marker. The note is slightly torn at the edges and is placed over a background of orange and yellow papers.

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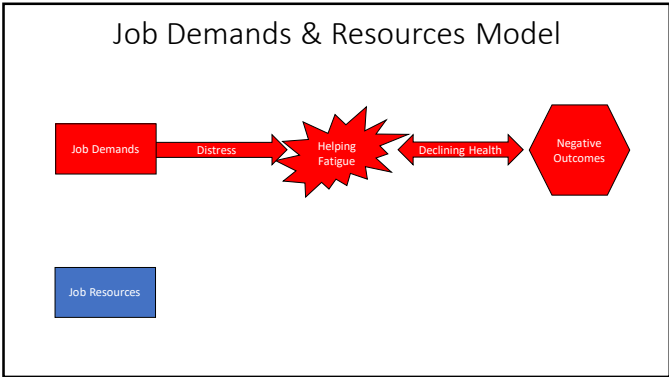


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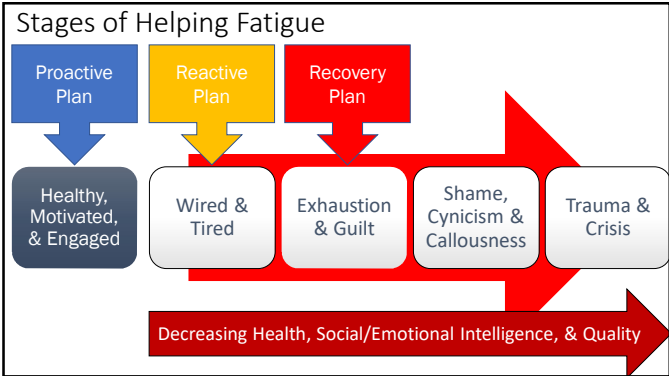
CRISIS AND TRAUMA		
Physical Health	Social/Work Health	Mental Health
Cardiovascular Disease	Social Isolation	PTSD
Stroke	Relationship Issues	Memory Loss & Cognitive Decline
Type II Diabetes	Poor Performance	Sleep Problems
Musculoskeletal Disorder	Absenteeism	Headaches
Cancer	Tardiness	Mental Fatigue
Immune Issues	Theft	Anxiety & Irritability
Physical Fatigue	Dehumanization of People	Depression
Sexual Issues	Turnover (at least 40% is stress related)	Aggression
Gastrointestinal Problems	Filed Grievances	Defensiveness
Headaches	Litigation	Negative World View & Hopelessness
Physical Illness	Low Job Satisfaction	Negative attitude
Back Problems		

Fernandez, 2006; Anchor, 2010; Siebert, 2005; Hoopers & Kelly, 2004; Mastlach & Leiter 1997

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MAXIMIZING WELLNESS & QUALITY: WWW.OPTIMALHRV.COM/HANDOUTS

Personal Wellness

- Foundations of wellness
 - Sleep
 - Nutrition
 - Movement/Exercise
- Passion
- Mindfulness
- Therapy
- Social network

Professional Performance

- Recovery time
- Hyper-efficiency
- Deliberate Practice
- Organizational/Team culture

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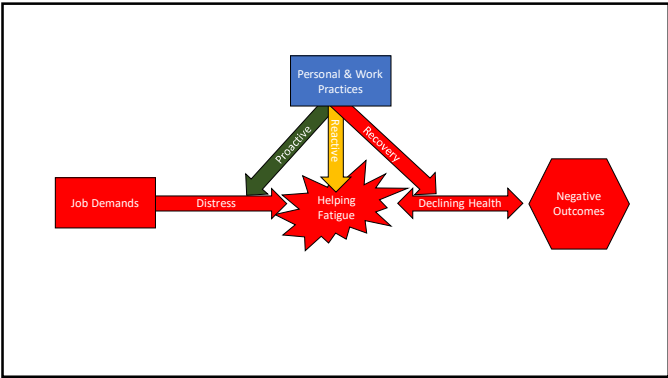
YOU ARE THE
ROLE MODEL
FOR STAFF
RESILIENCY
AND
WELLNESS



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Managing Job Demands

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- Expectations During Recovery
- Changing priorities
 - Help reestablish work/life balance
 - Support the creation and implementation of a plan
 - Focus on the Shared in Shared Expectations!



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- Assessing Organization & Job Match
- Only 20% of people give a strong “yes” to the question: “Do you like what you do each day?”
 - The crucial question
 - Addressing lack of organizational/job attribute match
 - Start an honest dialog
 - Finding a better fit internally
 - Helping find better situation outside the organization



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The Bigger Issue

- Amount of work people give is directly related to their perception of whether others are pulling their weight
- An underperformer will dramatically pull down the productivity of the entire group
- Though a little less detrimental, people who try, but do not have the ability to pull their weight will also bring down productivity




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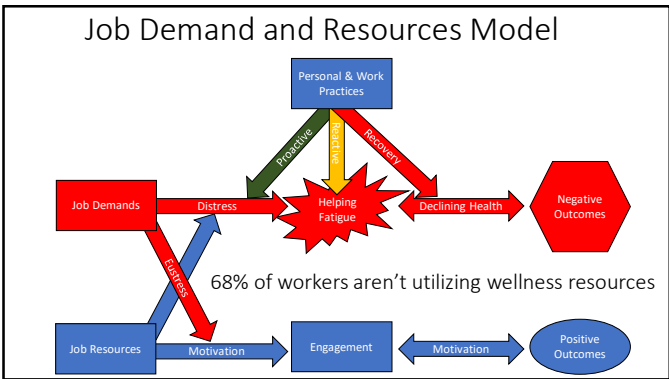
Job Resources

Physical, social, emotional, or organizational aspects of the job that may do any of the following

- Reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs
- Be functional in achieving work goals
- Stimulate personal growth and development



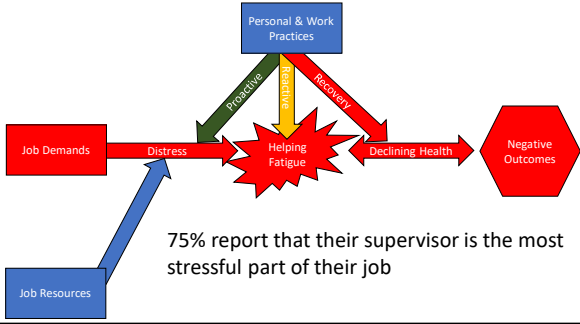
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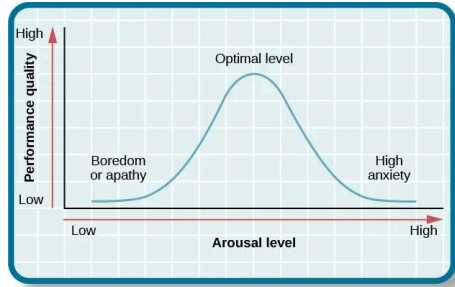
Positioning Supportive Supervision to Counter Helping Fatigue

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Yerkes-Dodson Curve




Nickerson, 2023; Yerkes & Dodson, 1908

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Supportive Supervision

Co-regulation

- Relational support and staff health
- Understand stress level and helping fatigue
- Time to build trust and safety
- Dedicated time to connect




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Supportive Supervision

Structure

- Wellness
- Professional development
- Administrative



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Trauma-Informed Human
Resource Strategies

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HOW CAN YOU HELP SUPPORT STAFF RESILIENCY WITH JOB RESOURCES?
ARE PEOPLE UTILIZING THESE RESOURCES?

Breakout Group Question

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Recovery

- Encourage disconnecting from work communications after hours and vacations
- Celebrate those who use their paid time off – be the role model
- Power of 2-week vacations
- Transitioning folks back from vacation



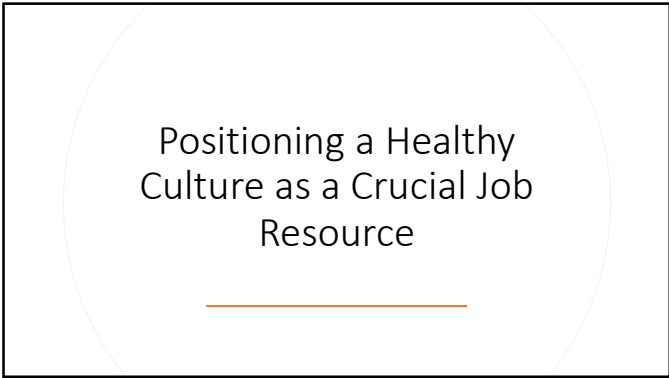
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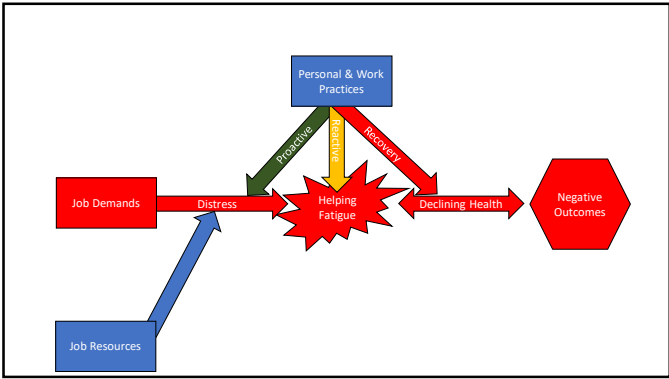
Therapy

- Access to free therapy
- Leadership needs to role model the use of therapy and be able to discuss the process

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Program/Organizational Climate

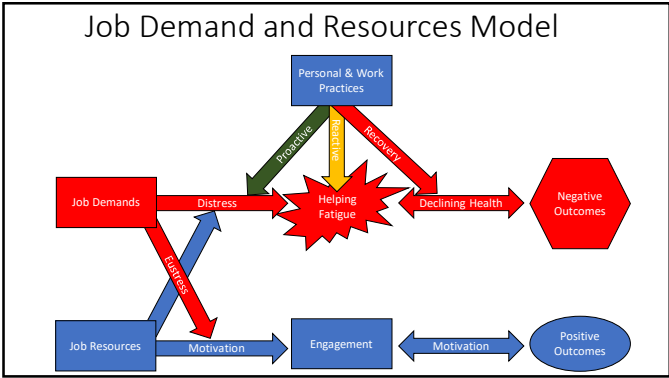
How the people experience the program or organization including the physical space, processes, and staff



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Promoting Engagement to Improve Outcomes

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Engagement

Positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by grit (passion and perseverance) and dedication (importance, pride, and challenge)

The diagram illustrates the Engagement Model. It shows a flow from Job Demands (red box) and Job Resources (blue box) to Engagement (blue box). Job Demands lead to Distress (red arrow), which leads to Helping Fatigue (red starburst). Job Resources lead to Motivation (blue arrow), which leads to Engagement. Personal & Work Practices (blue box) influence both Distress and Helping Fatigue. Helping Fatigue leads to Declining Health (red arrow), which leads to Negative Outcomes (red hexagon). Engagement leads to Positive Outcomes (blue oval) via Motivation (blue arrow).

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Lack of Engagement

"Actively disengaged employees erode an organization's bottom line while breaking the spirits of colleagues in the process. Within the U.S. workforce, Gallup estimates this cost to be more than \$300 billion in lost productivity alone. In stark contrast, world-class organizations with an engagement ratio near 8:1 have built a sustainable model...As organizations move toward this benchmark, they greatly reduce the negative impact of actively disengaged employees while unleashing the organization's potential for rapid growth." – Gallup

This diagram is identical to the one on slide 46, showing the Engagement Model. It highlights the negative path from Job Demands to Distress, Helping Fatigue, and Declining Health, leading to Negative Outcomes, contrasting it with the positive path to Engagement and Positive Outcomes.

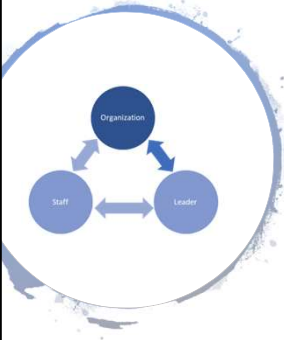
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Key to Engagement

- Whether or not staff feel that **leaders care about their well-being** is the **#1 predictor** of organizational engagement
 - Only 38% of workers feel this is true of their leaders
 - 50% felt their well-being didn't matter at all to their leaders
 - Only 10% felt like they were a vital asset to the organization

An image showing two hands holding a small tree with a green canopy, symbolizing care and growth.

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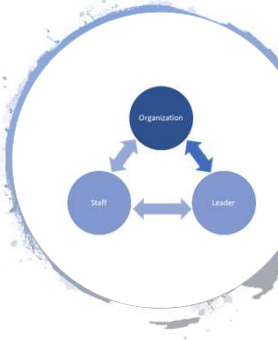
Shared Values

- “Deeply held values help us to avoid being whipsawed by whatever winds happen to be blowing around us. Values provide an internal source of direction for our behaviors.” Tony Schwartz
- Leader’s job
 - Connect their values to that of the organization
 - Help staff identify their personal values
 - Connect staff’s personal values to that of the organization
- When values conflict moral distress and injury occur

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Impact of Shared Values


- Revenues increased 4X
- Stock prices grew five times faster
- Profit performance was 750% higher
- Job creation increased by 7X
- Increased engagement
- Facilitate consensus on key organizational goals
- Better understanding of job expectations
- Increased personal and team effectiveness
- High levels of organizational loyalty and pride
- Decrease in turnover and burnout




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Shared Vision

- The leader connects the future direction of the organization to the passion of the staff and the mission of the organization
- Shared values are the means-the shared vision is the end
- When futures are shared:
 - Attracts more people
 - Sustain higher levels of motivation
 - Withstand more challenges



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Impact of Recognition

- High performers (individuals and teams) are shown to get 5.6 times more positive feedback than negative
- Low performers get 2.8 times more negative feedback than positive
- High Recognition Environment
 - 39% Increase in staff satisfaction
 - 73% Increase in morale
 - 64% Increase in engagement
 - 45% Increase in loyalty
 - 20% increase in productivity
 - 20% increase in revenue

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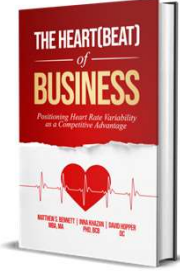
Impact of Recognition

- Alignment with Shared Values and Vision.
- Reinforce growth mindset by recognizing behaviors
- Make it meaningful
 - Invite important people
 - Customize it to the staff
 - Make it timely
- Let employees recognize employees

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- Assessments
 - Professional Quality of Life: <https://proqol.org/>
 - Gallup 12: <https://www.gallup.com/access/323333/q12-employee-engagement-survey.aspx>
- Keep Learning: Get a free book at optimalhrv.com
- Thank you for all your work!



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Leadership Activity

How do you measure organizational & job fit?

- For new employees
- For current staff

How do you handle lack:

- Organization fit?
- Job fit?

Have you established shared expectations?

- Write down the expectations you have of each position you supervise
- Have a conversation or have those you supervise write down what they think is expected from them in their position.

```
graph LR; JD[Job Demands] -->|Stressor| CS[Coping Strategies]; CS -->|Moderator| PW[Personal & Work Practices]; PW -->|Outcome| NO[Negative Outcomes];
```

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Leadership Activity

For your position

- List the job demands
- List the job resources

For each position you supervise

- List the job demands
- List the job resources

```
graph LR; JD[Job Demands] -->|Stressor| CS[Coping Strategies]; CS -->|Moderator| PW[Personal & Work Practices]; PW -->|Outcome| NO[Negative Outcomes];
```

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Leadership Activity

Chart out how-to best position supervision as a job resource to counteract the stress and trauma of job demands

Create your own resiliency plan and share with those you supervise and teammate

Ensure all staff have resiliency plans

```
graph LR; JD[Job Demands] -->|Stressor| CS[Coping Strategies]; CS -->|Moderator| PW[Personal & Work Practices]; PW -->|Outcome| NO[Negative Outcomes];
```

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Leadership Activity

Identify ways to position HR policies and benefits as part of your recovery plan

Are there any new benefits you could offer for recovery?

```
graph TD; JD[Job Demands] --> SR[Strain Response]; JR[Job Resources] --> SR; JR --> E[Engagement]; PWF[Personal & Work Factors] --> SR; PWF --> E; SR --> RO[Recovery Outcomes]; E --> RO; RO --> PD[Positive Outcomes];
```

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Leadership Activity

- Identify areas for improvement to increase positive and growth mindsets in teams and the organization
- Assess current strategies for accountability and identify areas for improvement
- Test your shared vision and shared values (can your staff state them)
- Focus on creating or strengthening vision and values
- Ensure a well-structured formal recognition structure
- Access your use of democratic collaborative decision making
 - Identify areas for improvement
 - Create a structure for staff involvement
 - Create a structure to allow staff to identify and work on crucial problems and areas for improvement

```
graph TD; JD[Job Demands] --> SR[Strain Response]; JR[Job Resources] --> SR; JR --> E[Engagement]; PWF[Personal & Work Factors] --> SR; PWF --> E; SR --> RO[Recovery Outcomes]; E --> RO; RO --> PD[Positive Outcomes];
```

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