



Learning with Purpose



A Research and Innovation Center for a Healthier Workforce

Beyond Breathing:

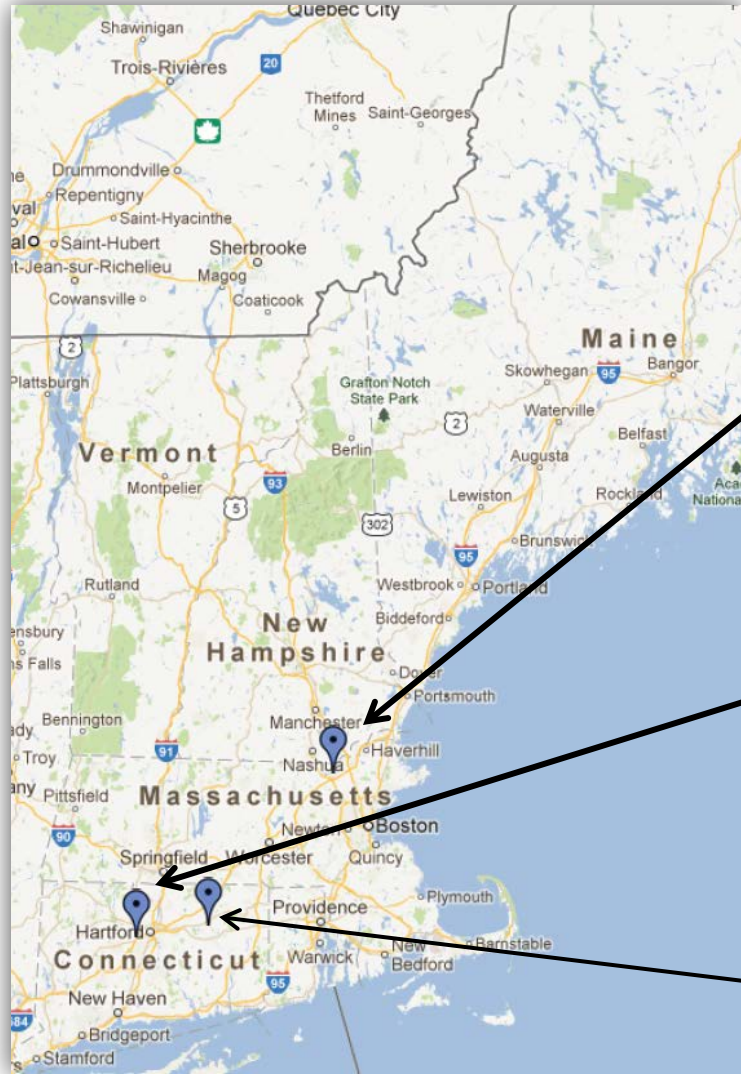
Controlling workplace stressors and taking care of your health & well-being

Gretchen (Gigi) Petery, MA and Lauren Gannon, BS

University of CT Storrs
Department of Psychological Sciences



CPH-NEW: Who We Are



- University of MA Lowell
- Occ. Health & Safety
- Epidemiology
- Biostatistics
- Economics
- Nursing



- University of CT Health Center
- Ergonomics
- Medicine
- Health Policy



- University of CT Storrs
- Psychology
- Health Promotion



What is Total Worker Health?

TWH™ | **TOTAL WORKER HEALTH™**
INTEGRATING HEALTH PROTECTION AND HEALTH PROMOTION



Funding Support

CPH-NEW is supported by Grant Number 1 U19 OH008857 from the U.S. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.



This material is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of NIOSH.



Training Objectives

- Explain the pathways from work stressors to symptoms to illness.
- Understand the range of workplace features that can contribute to job stress.
- Understand root causes contributing to key work-related stressors impacting their health and well-being.
- List three strategies for controlling and preventing work stressors.



Before we begin

- How is this topic relevant to you and your workplace?
- What are you hoping to get out of the session today?

Join our mail list!

www.uml.edu/research/centers/cph-new



Part 1

STRESS IN OUR LIVES

Survival skill or survival threat? Or both?



Stress Terminology

- Eustress (good stress)
 - Not all stress is bad. Mild stress levels can act as motivation needed to overcome a task, such as meeting a work deadline.
- Distress (bad stress)
 - Chronic or ongoing stress that can affect your everyday life and hinder you from completing tasks. Can harm health if not relieved.



Stress Vs. Stressor

Stress is how our bodies react to demands and change. Stress is an automatic physical reaction to a danger or demand (whether real or perceived).

Stressors are the things in our environment that we are responding to, such as noise or going on an interview.



What is Job Stress?

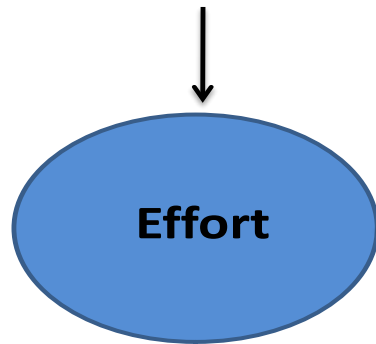
- “The harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when requirements of the job **do not match** the capabilities, resources or needs of the worker.”
(CDC, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health)
- **Mismatch** of the demands and control (with decision-making, skill level) of the worker. (Robert Karasek, Job Demand-Control model)
- **Imbalance** between efforts and rewards
(Johannes Siegrist, Effort-Reward Imbalance Model)



The model of effort-reward imbalance (J. Siegrist 1996)

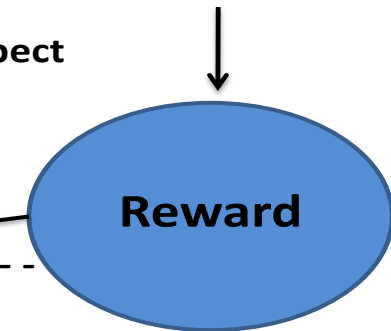
Extrinsic components

Demands/obligations



Motivation

- Job income
- Job stability
- Esteem, respect



Motivation

Intrinsic component



Job Stress Vs. Job Strain

Job stress generally refers to the demands at work that we experience as stressful.

Job strain refers to the negative physical and psychological toll that job stress takes on us when our jobs involve high demands and we have little decision-making power.



Job stress matters to health

Job strain can lead to:

- Cardiovascular disease (CVD)
- Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs)
- Psychological disorders
- Injury

Reducing job strain can lower the risk for CVD and other chronic diseases!



Ripped from the Headlines...

- **Stress Is Linked To Heart Attack And Such Problems As Diabetes And Depression**

Study finds women with high-stress jobs were 67% more likely to have a heart attack

Washington Post, Dec. 2012

- **Stress 'damages health as much as secondhand smoke exposure'**

60% of Americans reporting work as a main cause of stress.

Medical News Today, Sept. 2015

- **Study Sees Job Stress as Heart Risk to Women**

Women equal to men in an area they wish they weren't,

AP, Nov. 2010



The Changing World of Work

- Increased use of technology
 - 24/7 phenomenon
- Increased demands
- Job insecurity
- Downsizing
- Aging Workforce
 - Retirement concerns
- Health status of workers
- Healthcare costs
- Work-family-recreation balance

Nearly 60% of employees report work as their main source of stress
APA, 2015





*"On the bright side, ever since the layoff and my divorce
it's been much easier to balance work and family."*



Workload in America 2010

Workload Trends	Decreased	Stayed About the Same	Increased
Managers' workloads	0%	4%	96%
Employees' workloads	0%	13%	87%
Employee stress	11%	9%	80%
The speed at which tasks are expected to be completed	2%	24%	74%
The demands of managing globally	1%	39%	60%
Innovation	14%	38%	48%
Employee productivity	14%	38%	48%
Quality of products and services	13%	59%	28%
The size of the organization's workforce	45%	32%	23%
Employee motivation	43%	28%	19%
Employee morale	77%	13%	10%
Employee energy and endurance	50%	41%	9%

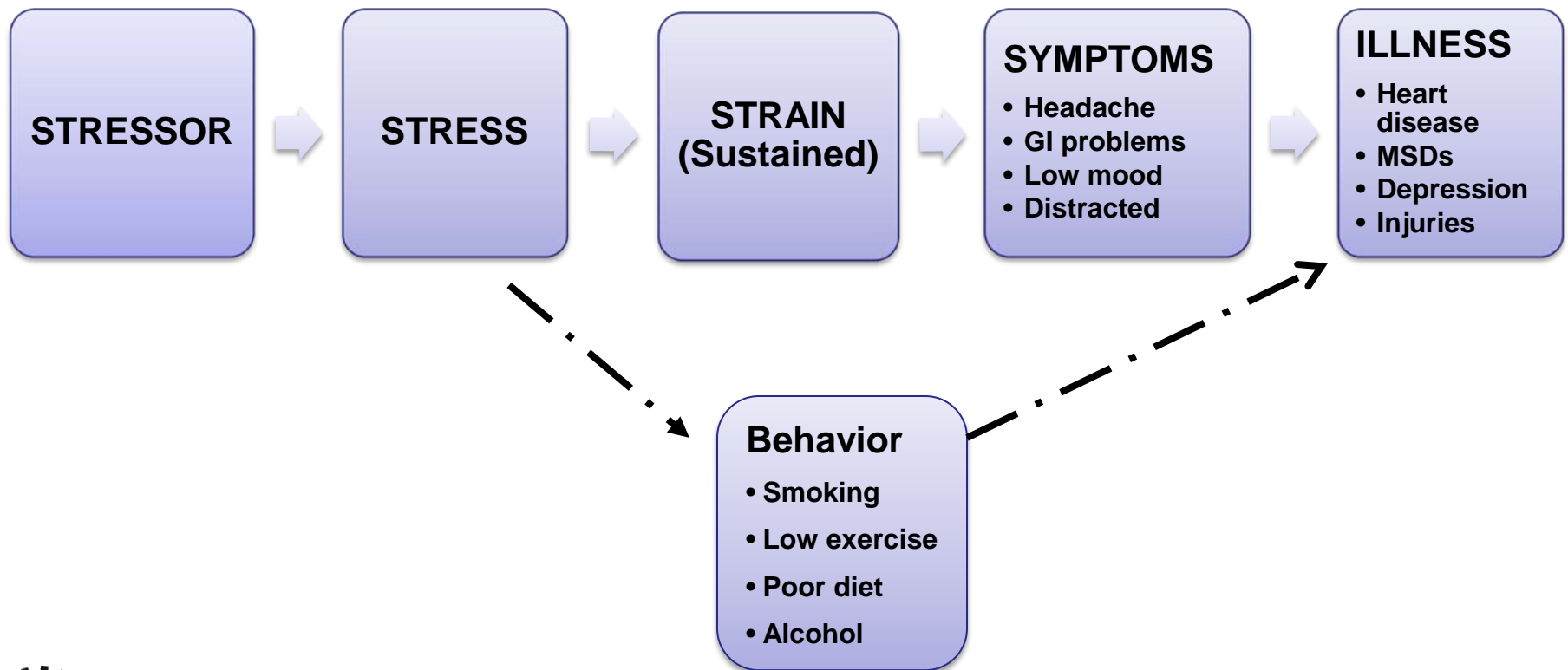


Part 2

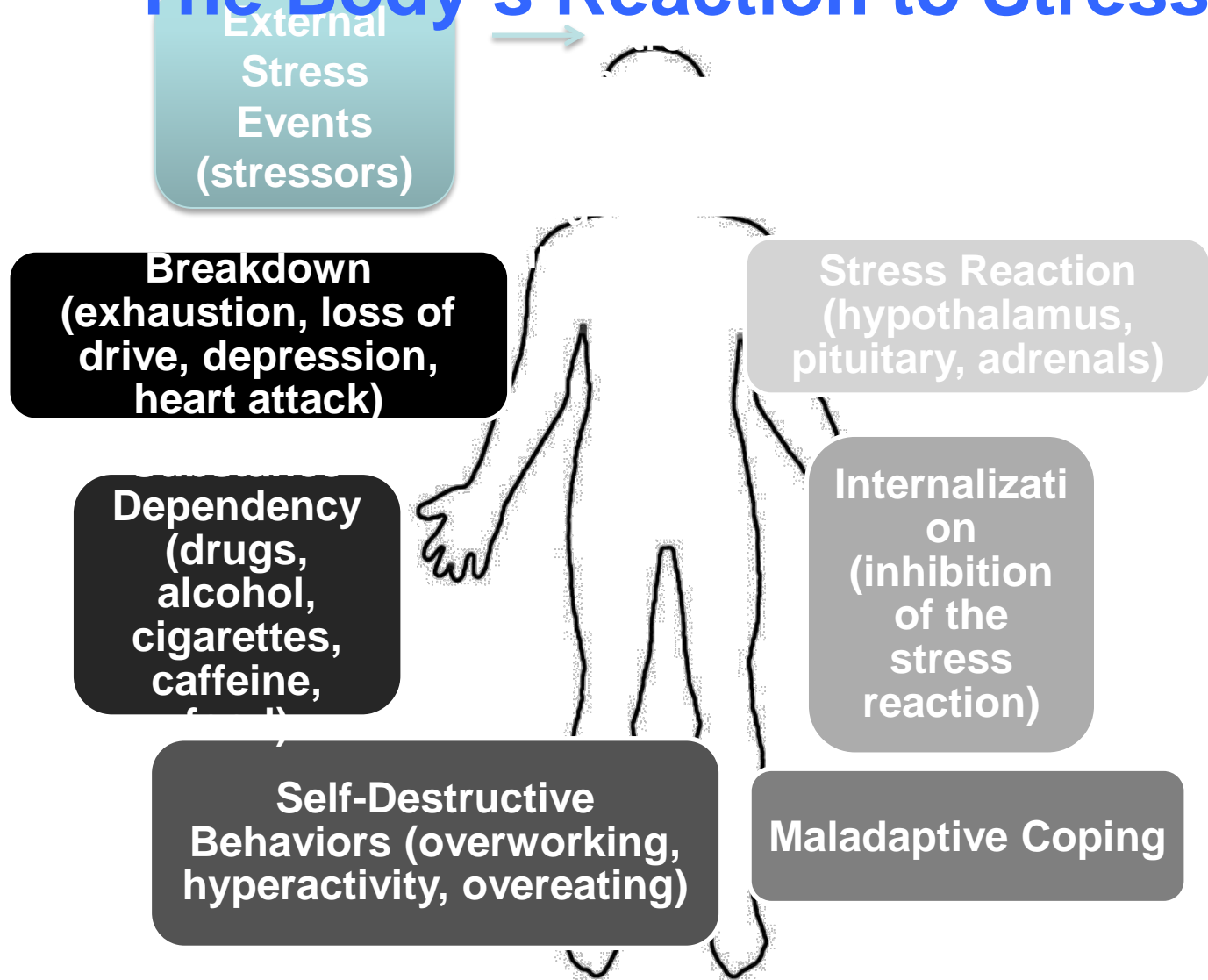
IMPACT OF WORK STRESS ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Job Stress Pathway



The Body's Reaction to Stress





How Does Job Stress Affect Our Health?

Early warning signs of job stress

- Headache, sleep disturbances, upset stomach,
- difficulty concentrating, short temper, job dissatisfaction, and low morale

Long-term risks for sustained job stress:

- **Cardiovascular diseases**, diabetes, weakened immune function,
- musculoskeletal disorders, and depression.



The Road We're On....

- 31.7% has high blood cholesterol levels
- 29% have hypertension
- 34.9% are obese
- 49% do not meet physical activity guidelines
- 17.9% smoke
- In the next 20 years, the proportion of the population ages 65 and older will increase from 13% to 19.6%.

Healthy People (2013)

CDC (2015)



Part 3

UNDERSTANDING THE WORKPLACE INFLUENCE ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



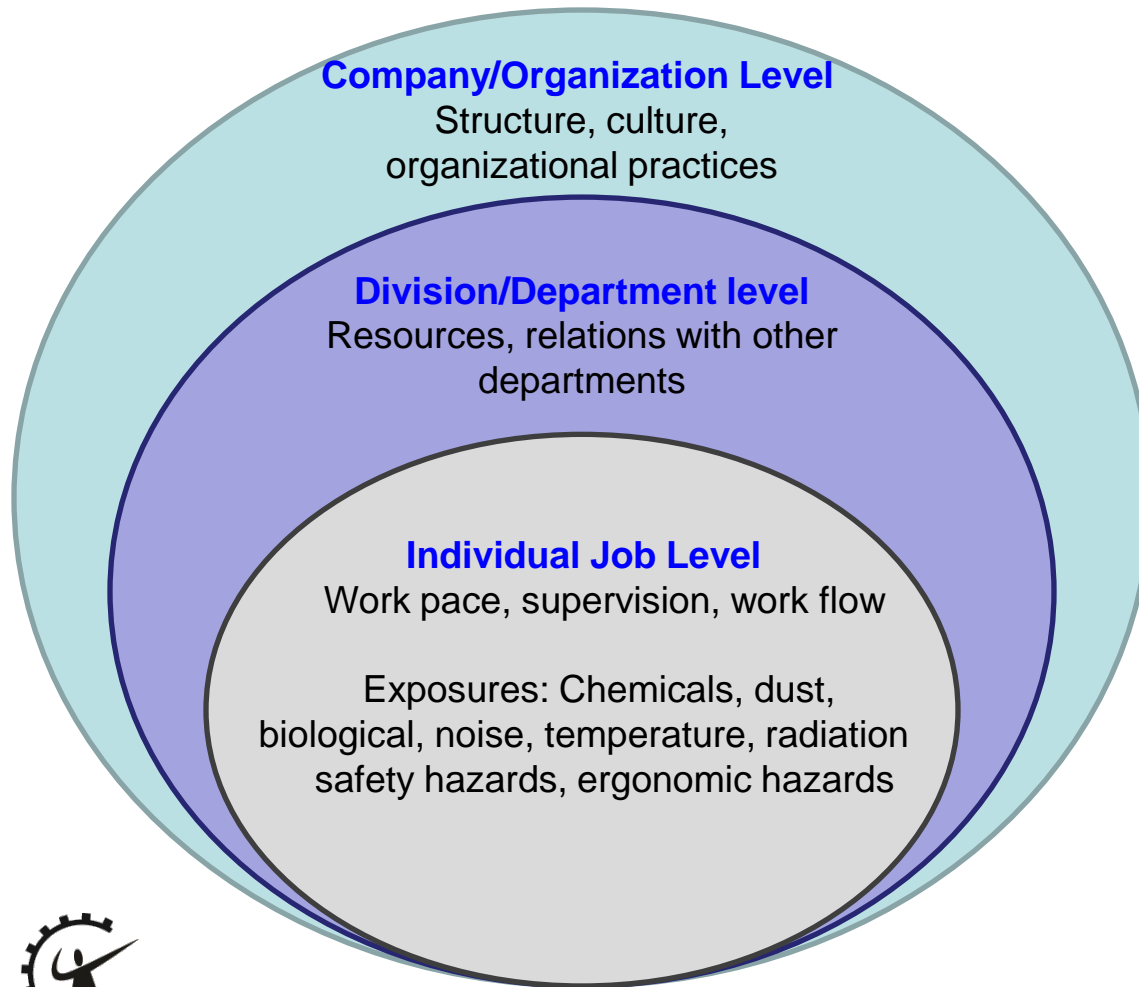
Work-life Balance

- 42% of working Americans say they take care of personal or family needs during work.
- 26% regularly bring work home with them.
- 25% allow work to interfere with time spent with family and friends.
- 25% work during vacations.

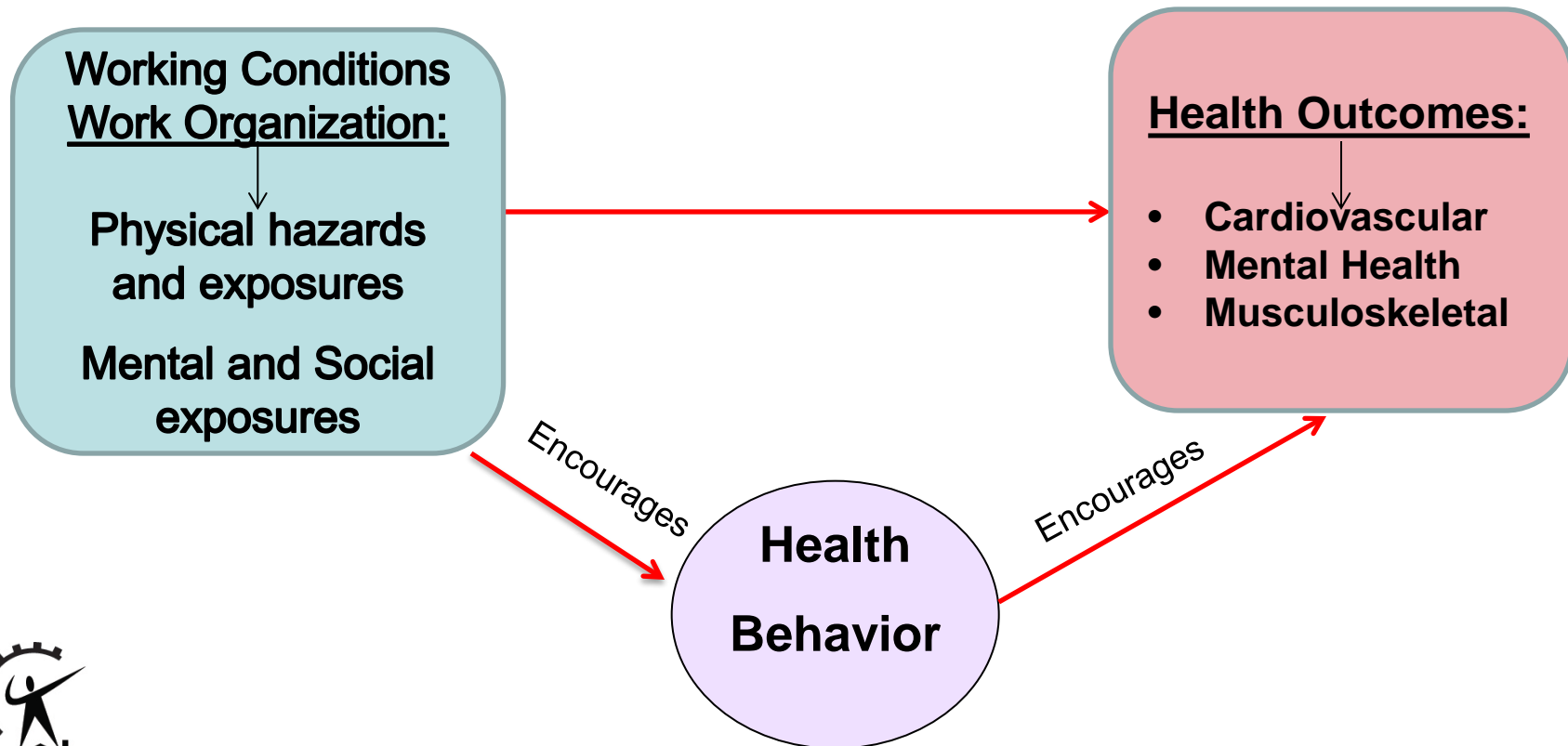


Work-life Survey, APA 2015

Work organization and stress



How does work organization affect health and behavior?



Coping with Stress

- ⚙️ Jobs in human services can be stressful!
You are “human” too!
- ⚙️ Managing stressors from work and your personal life is essential for your health.
- ⚙️ Being aware of the sources of key stress is a first step to deal with them.



What is an integrated approach to Total Worker Health?

Well-being

Safety

On the Job

Off the Job



Workers

Management





EAP

**Family
Balance**

**Compensation
Programs**

**Personal
Life**

**Occupational
Safety
and Health**

Disability

**Workers'
Compensation**

**Health
Promotion**

**Demand
and Disease
Management**

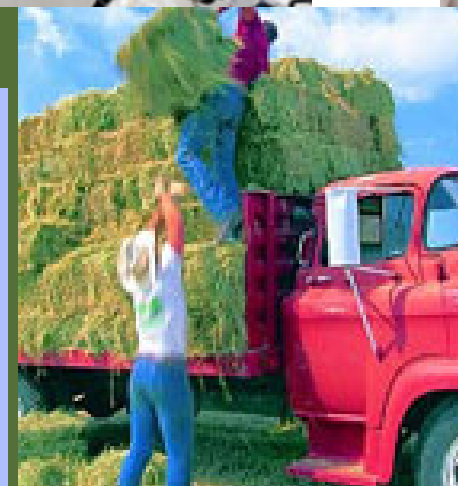
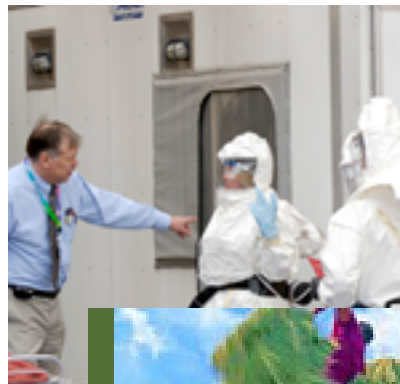




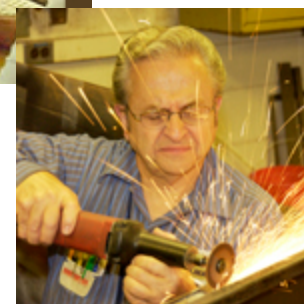
Adapted from: Liberty Mutual, 2010, Webinar, The Wellness-Work Comp Connection.

Goetzel R. Examining the Value of Integrating Occupational Health and Safety and Health Promotion Programs in the Workplace. The NIOSH Total Worker Health™ Program: Seminal Research Papers 2012. DHHS (NIOSH) 2012-146.





ERGONOMICS



Types of Job Stressors: Physical

Poor indoor air quality

Ergonomic stressors

Hazardous waste exposure

Inadequate equipment



Types of Job Stressors: High Demand

Heavy workload

Unrealistic deadlines

Conflicting demands

Inadequate amount of time to complete tasks

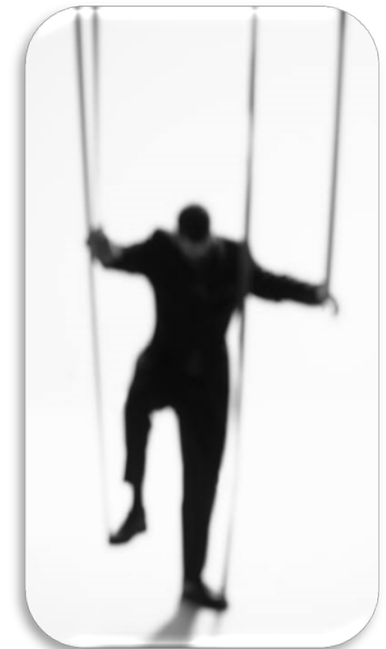
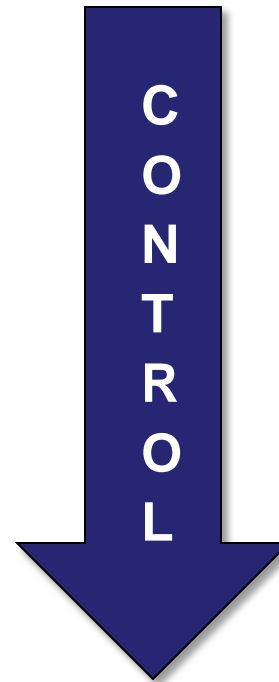
Repetitive Tasks

Excessive/mandatory overtime

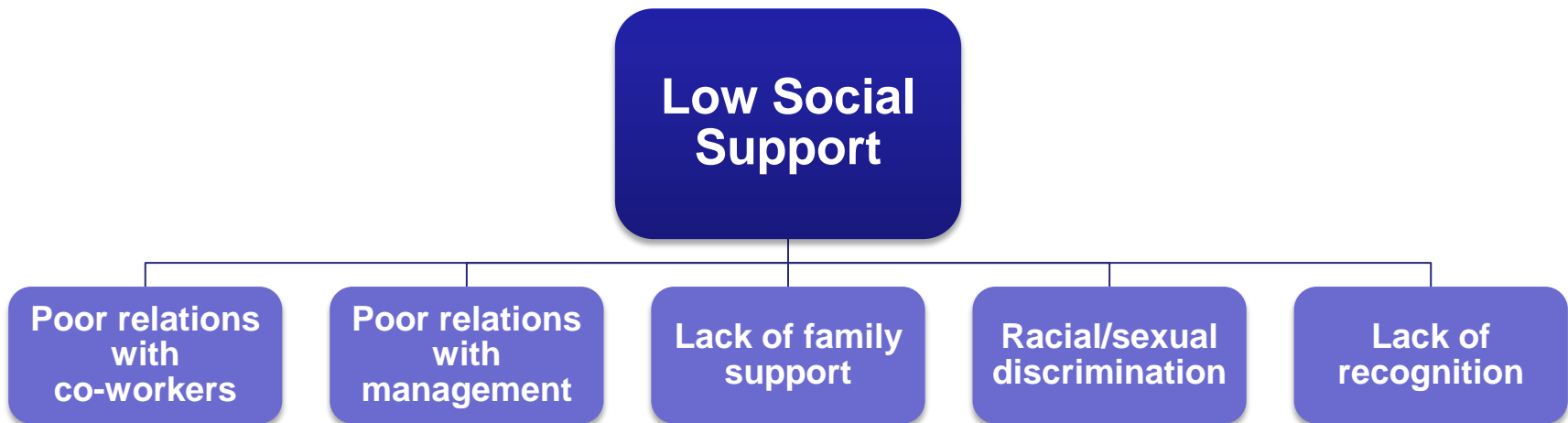
D
E
M
A
N
D



Types of Job Stressors: Low Control



Types of Job Stressors: Low Social Support



Reflection

**What are the
main stressors in
your job?**



Part 4

HOW DO WE INTERVENE?



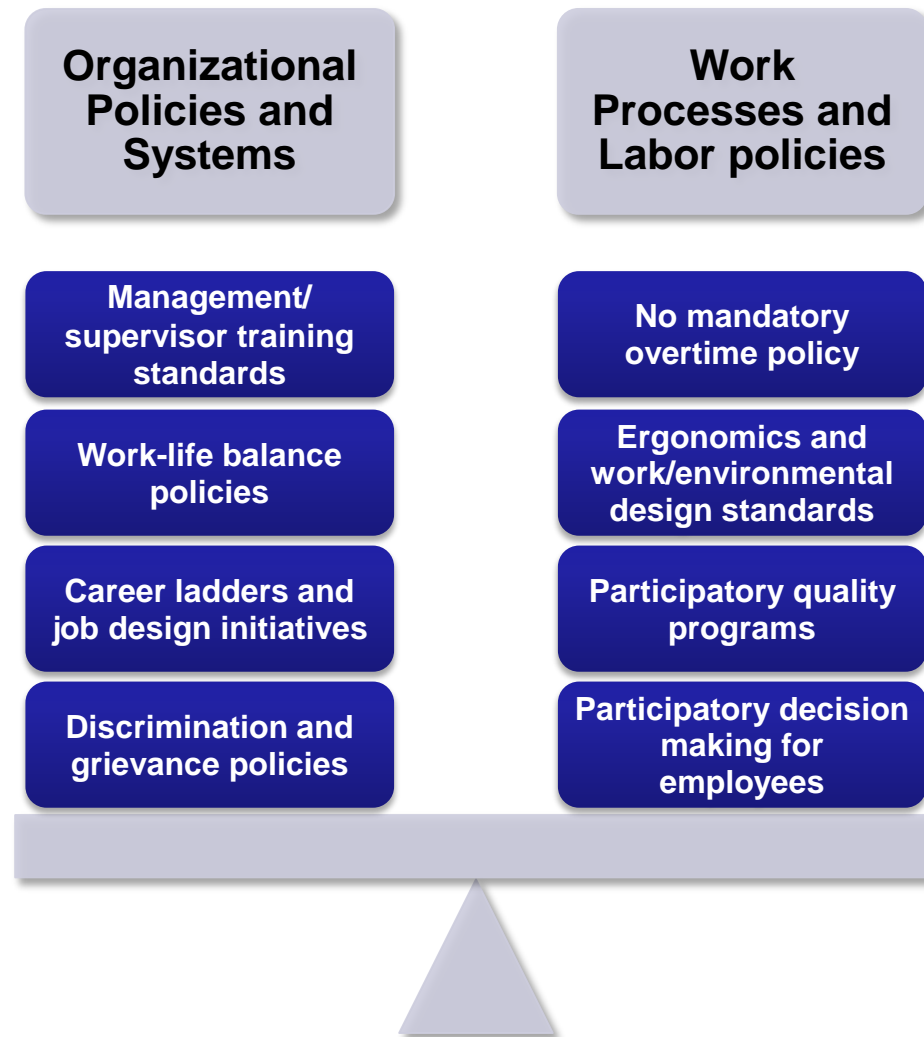
Levels of Prevention

- *Primary prevention* seeks to prevent the onset of stress from occurring by targeting the source of stress.
- *Secondary prevention* aims to help individuals develop the knowledge and skills to better recognize and manage their reactions to stress.
- *Tertiary prevention* strategies aim to treat workers after they have experienced adverse health outcomes related to stress.



Examples of Primary Prevention

Eliminate or reduce job stressors



Examples of Secondary Prevention

Change how individuals respond to job stressors

Screen for early symptoms



Examples of Tertiary Prevention

Treat and rehabilitate employees with stress-related illness



Personal Stress Management

- Engage in regular exercise.
- Reach out to friends and family.
- Avoid any unnecessary stress.
- Alter the situation if possible.
- Make time for fun and relaxation.
- Accept the things you cannot change.
- Practice mindfulness.



Organizational vs. Individual

- Organizational changes -- TOP priority!
- Also offer programs for individuals– we cannot eliminate stressors *completely* for all workers.

- **GOLD STANDARD**

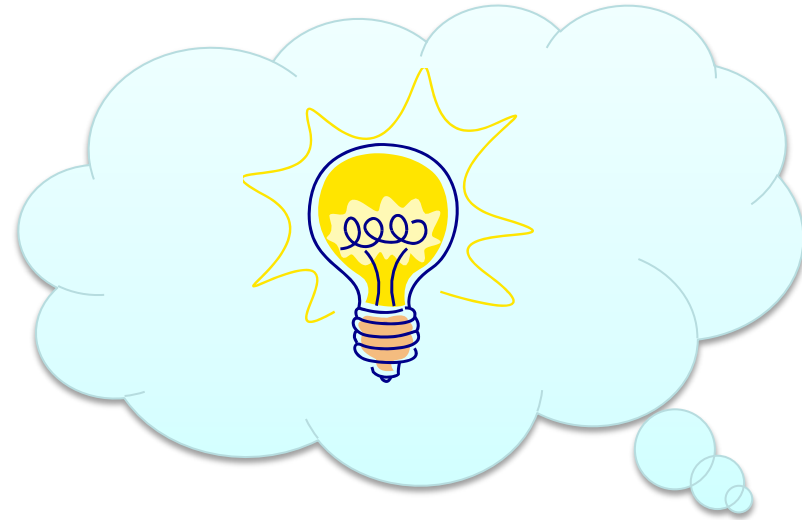
Combining organizational AND individual stress management approaches for best results.



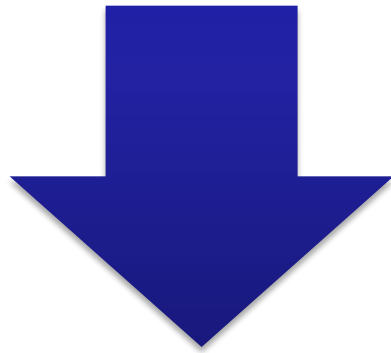
Part 5

ACTION PLANNING

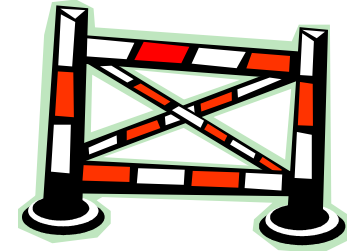
WHAT STRATEGIES MIGHT BE EFFECTIVE IN
YOUR WORKPLACE?



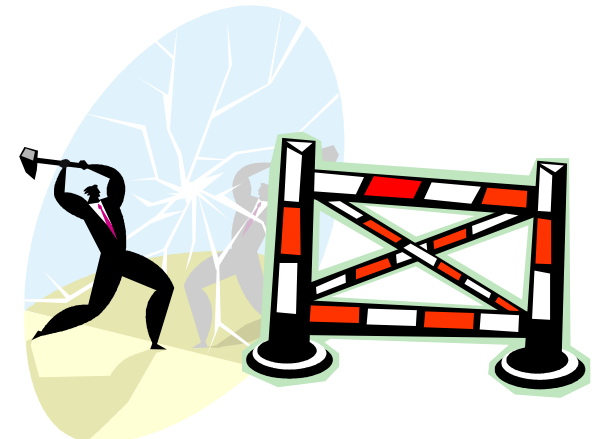
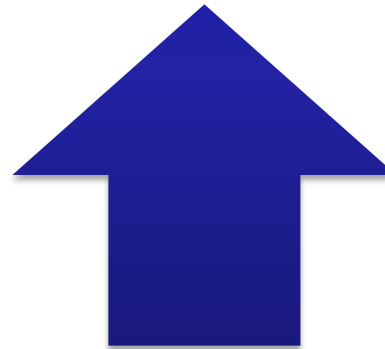
Barriers



What barriers do you anticipate?



How can you overcome them?



What can a wellness champion do?

- Support stress management:
 - Consider designating an unused space for relaxation or de-stressing.
- Host wellness related events:
 - Health fairs, educational seminars, fitness campaigns, “lunch and learn” seminars.
- Help gain management support:
 - Talk with management about the importance of supporting employee health and well-being.



Conclusion

- Job stress is an important factor in chronic diseases, mental health, and work performance.
- Organizational approaches coupled with individual strategies are the most effective way to address job stress.
- Try to introduce one idea you thought of today when you go back to work.



References

Burton, J. (2008). IAPA (Industrial Accident Prevention Association): The business case for a healthy workplace.
http://www.iapa.ca/Main/documents/pdf/fd_business_case_healthy_workplace.pdf

General Social Survey (2010)

Karasek, R.A., Brisson, C., Kawakami, N., Houtman, I.L.D., Bongers, P.M., & Amick, B.C. (1998). The job content questionnaire (JCQ): An instrument for internationally comparative assessments of psychosocial job characteristics. *J Occ Health Psych*, 3(4), 322-355.

Karasek R. & Theorell T. (1990). *Healthy work: Stress, productivity, and the reconstruction of working life*. New York: Basic Books.

NIOSH. (1999). STRESS...at work. DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 99-101. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/99-101/#c>

Siegrist, J. (1996). Adverse health effects of high-effort/low-reward conditions. *J Occup Health Psychol*, 1(1), 27-41.



CPH-NEW Website

www.uml.edu/cph-new

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Center for the Promotion of Health in the New England Workplace (CPH-NEW) website. The browser address bar displays www.uml.edu/Research/centers/CPH-NEW/default.aspx. The website features a blue header with navigation links: Home, Directory, Calendar, Libraries, Offices/Services, Maps/Directions, Plan an Event, Jobs, Email, and iSIS Login. Below the header is a search bar and a navigation menu with categories: ABOUT, ACADEMICS, RESEARCH, ADMISSIONS & AID, STUDENT LIFE, and ATHLETICS & RECREATION. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- CPH-NEW**: A sidebar menu with links for About, Projects, Services, Our Team, In the Spotlight, News & Views, Publications, Resources, Stress@Work, and Contact Us.
- Center for the Promotion of Health in the New England Workplace**: A featured article with a photo of a woman in a colorful patterned shirt. The text states: "The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has renewed funding for a collaborative research-to-practice program led by UMass Lowell Prof. Laura Punnett. Learn more."
- The UMass Lowell Edge**: A section featuring a photo of Edwin Aguirre with a quote: "I learn new things practically every day. more > Edwin Aguirre".
- News**: A list of recent news items, including "Job Stress Prevention & Control: Developing Best Practice", "CPH-NEW Announces Pilot Grant", and "NIOSH Approves \$4.5 Million to Improve Employee Health".
- What's Happening**: A list of recent eNews issues: "CPH-NEW Select eNews, Issue 3", "CPH-NEW Select eNews, Issue 2", and "CPH-NEW Select eNews, Issue 1".

At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with contact information: "Center for the Promotion of Health in the New England Workplace - One University Avenue, Kitson 200, Lowell, MA 01854. Phone: 978-934-3268 Fax: 978-452-5711 Contact Us".



CPH-NEW Tools You Can Use...

- All Employee Survey and Focus Group
- Participatory Health Promotion Toolkit
- CPH-News and Views

www.uml.edu/research/centers/cph-new

Please join our mail list!



Stress@Work Contacts

Suzanne_Nobrega@uml.edu

Co-Principal Investigator

UMass Lowell, Department of Work Environment
(978) 934-4640

www.uml.edu/Research/centers/CPH-NEW/stress-at-work/default.aspx

