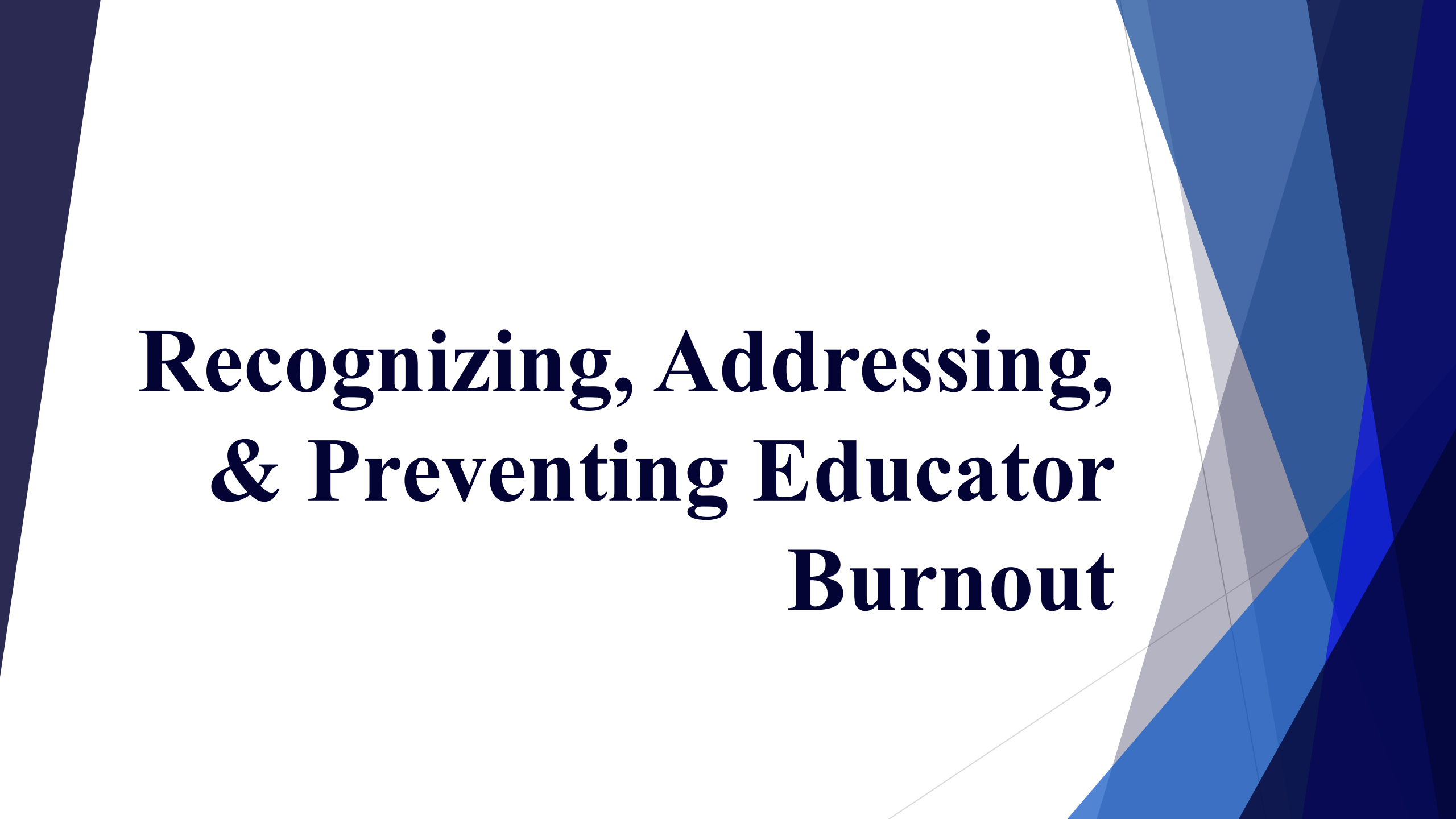




Recognizing, Addressing, & Preventing Educator Burnout

Thank You



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Speaker Disclosure

- ▶ **Financial:** Margaret Light is in private practice & is contracted with a group practice.
- ▶ **Professional:** Margaret Light is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin and may utilize professional knowledge within consultation and education services; however, these services **are not** therapeutic in nature, **do not** represent a therapeutic relationship, and **will not** involve any assessment, diagnosis, or treatment of any emotional or mental health concern of any course participant or organization member.
- ▶ **All information provided in the course, in course materials, and in subsequent discussions are solely consultation and educational in nature and do not represent a therapeutic relationship or therapeutic advice.**

Effective Learning

- ▶ More likely to retain new information if:
 - ▶ New info can be integrated with previous info or related to personal experiences
 - ▶ Your brain is forced to form new connections → do or experience the skill
 - ▶ Reflection on learning increases strength of new information
- ▶ What can you do to increase learning?
 - ▶ Active engagement & participation → share, self-disclose, ask questions
 - ▶ Reflect & apply to current situations
 - ▶ Returning to the same information results in more advanced understanding, questions, etc.

Learning Objectives

1. Define & differentiate between stress, employment stress, burnout, & mental illness
2. Identify the effects of stress, employment stress, & burnout on educators
3. Identify the warning signs of stress, burnout, & mental illness
4. Identify how to address stress & burnout
5. Identify how to prevent burnout



**What is most
important to you?**

Conceptualizing Stress

What is Stress?

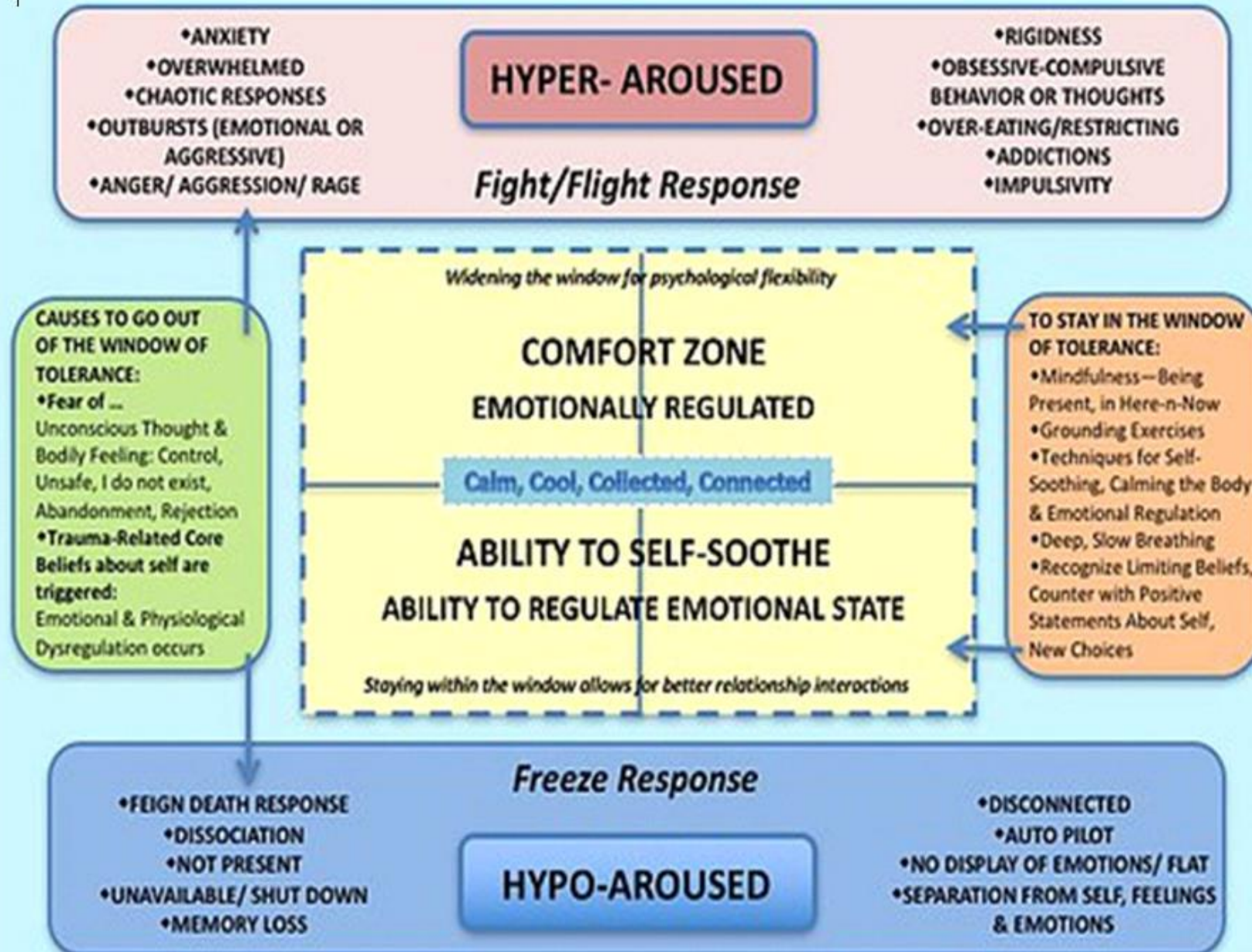
- ▶ The physiological & psychological responses to life demands
 - ▶ Biological: physical reactions to stress
 - ▶ Psychological: how the mind processes & manages stress
 - ▶ Social: how relationships & environment influence the stress response
- ▶ Stress-related changes impact nearly every system of the body
- ▶ The stress response is an innate & necessary process
 - ▶ Every living creature has a stress response
 - ▶ Not inherently good or bad

Types of Stress

- ▶ Distress: negative stress that results in discomfort or harm
 - ▶ Physical, mental, or emotional strain or tension
 - ▶ Feeling experienced when the perceived demands exceed available personal & social resources
 - ▶ Divorce, punishment, injury, financial stress, work difficulties
- ▶ Eustress: positive stress that improves performance
 - ▶ Prepares body to respond optimally to challenges
 - ▶ Helps you become alert, motivated, & achieve goals
 - ▶ Getting married, promotions, graduating, having a baby

WINDOW OF TOLERANCE- TRAUMA/ANXIETY RELATED RESPONSES:

Widening the Comfort Zone for Increased Flexibility



Types of Stress

- ▶ Acute stress: the body's stress response is activated & then returns to baseline
 - ▶ Temporary
 - ▶ Fight or flight
 - ▶ 90 minutes to return to baseline
- ▶ Episodic acute stress: acute stress that occurs repeatedly without time to return to baseline
 - ▶ Common in certain professions
 - ▶ Can lead to chronic stress

Types of Stress

- ▶ Chronic stress: the body's stress response is activated & does not return to baseline
 - ▶ Long-term
 - ▶ Can last weeks, months, or years
 - ▶ Causes harm

Acute Stress & the Body

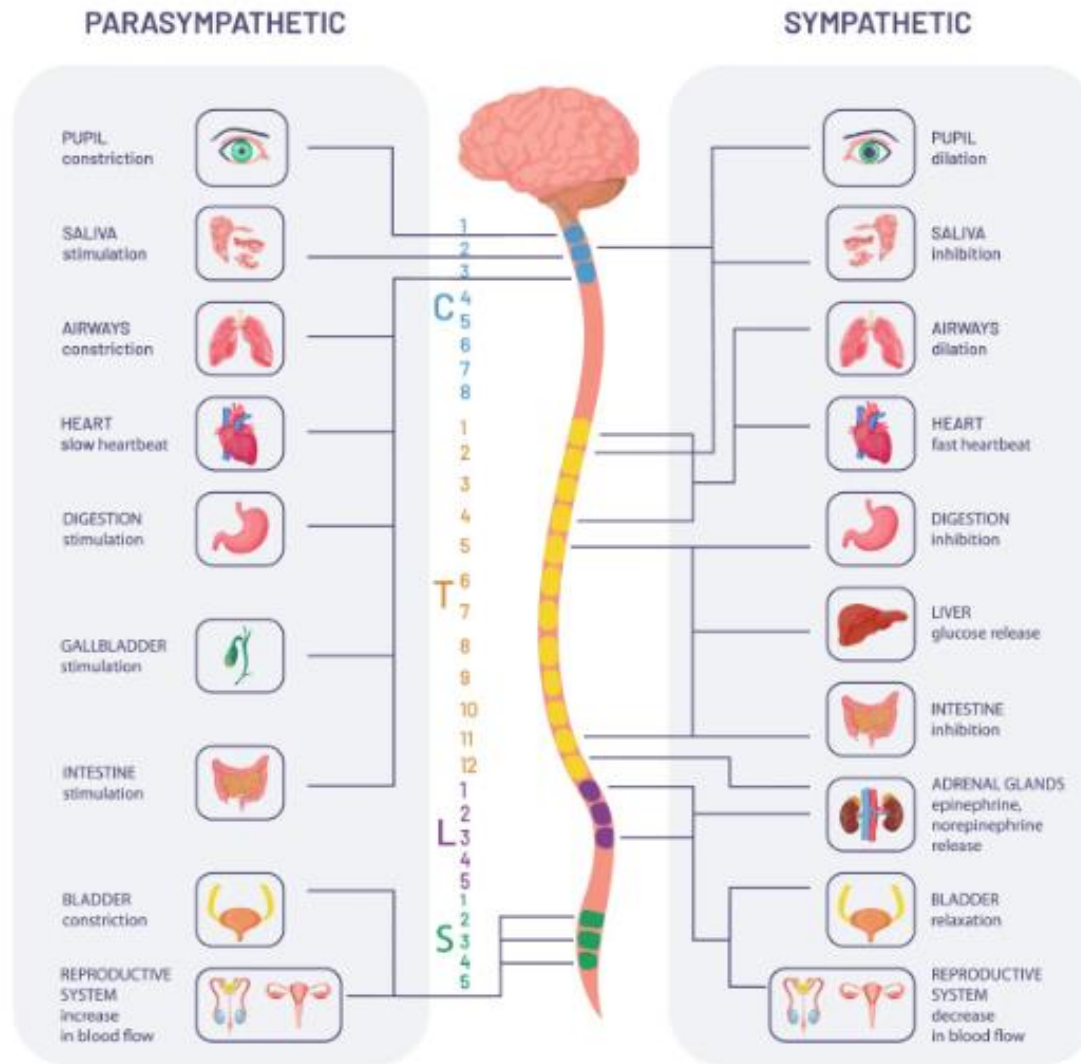
- ▶ Central Nervous & Endocrine System
 - ▶ Hypothalamus signals adrenal glands to release adrenaline & cortisol
- ▶ Respiratory & Cardiovascular System
 - ▶ Adrenaline & cortisol increase heart rate, breathing rate, & constrict blood vessels
- ▶ Digestive System
 - ▶ Liver produces extra glucose to increase energy

Acute Stress & the Body

- ▶ Muscular System
 - ▶ Increased blood flow is sent to the muscles & muscles prepare to act (tense up)
- ▶ Sexuality & Reproductive System
 - ▶ Increases testosterone levels temporarily
- ▶ Immune System
 - ▶ Stimulates immune system to heal wounds & defend against infection

Autonomic Nervous System

Rest & Digest



Fight/Flight

Chronic Stress & the Body

- ▶ Central Nervous & Endocrine System
 - ▶ Hypothalamus doesn't signal the body to return to baseline & hormone levels remain elevated
- ▶ Respiratory & Cardiovascular System
 - ▶ Increased hormone levels can aggravate breathing problems & can trigger high blood pressure & increased risk of heart attack or stroke
- ▶ Digestive System
 - ▶ Body can't keep up with increased glucose levels & increases risk of Type 2 Diabetes

Chronic Stress & the Body

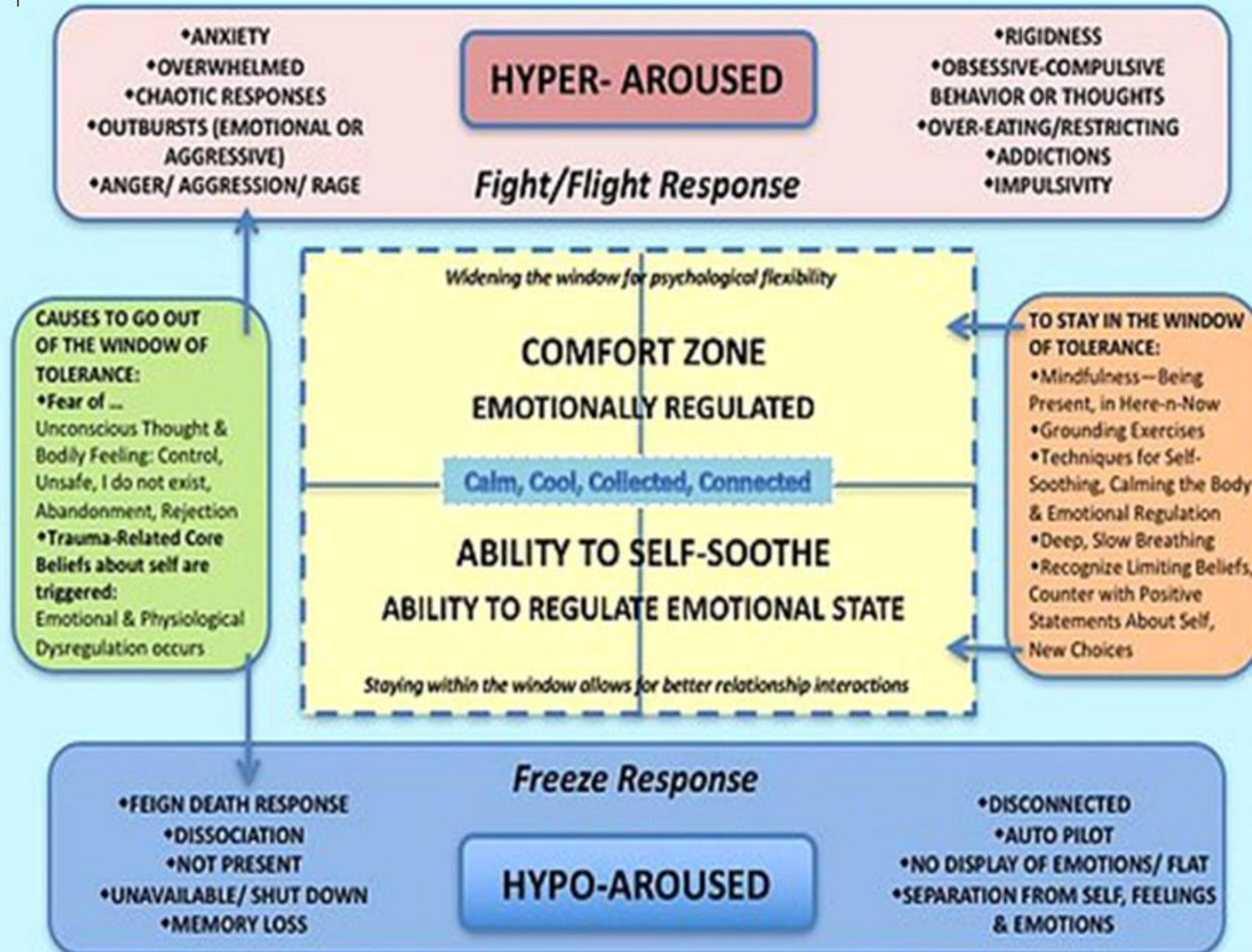
- ▶ Muscular System
 - ▶ Muscles don't relax causing body aches & generalized pain
- ▶ Sexuality & Reproductive System
 - ▶ Men: reduce testosterone levels, decreasing sex drive & fertility, increasing risk of ED & increasing risk of infection
 - ▶ Women: irregular, heavy, or more painful menstrual cycles, decreased fertility, & increased menopause symptoms
- ▶ Immune System
 - ▶ Weakens immune system, increases risk of infection & lengthens recovery time for illness & injuries

Stressors

- ▶ Any event, situation, or stimulus that causes a stress response in the body
 - ▶ External: external cues or events
 - ▶ Interpersonal conflict, job loss, financial changes
 - ▶ Internal: emotions, thoughts, or beliefs related to an external stimulus
 - ▶ Shame, blamed
 - ▶ No one cares about me
 - ▶ I'm all alone
- ▶ Different people have different stressors & different severity of stress response
- ▶ Our internal reactions to external events can be more stressful than the event itself

WINDOW OF TOLERANCE- TRAUMA/ANXIETY RELATED RESPONSES:

Widening the Comfort Zone for Increased Flexibility



Signs of Stress

- ▶ Frequent headaches or jaw clenching
- ▶ Tremors or trembling of lips/hands
- ▶ Neck ache, back pain, muscle spasms
- ▶ Light headedness, faintness, dizziness
- ▶ Cold or sweaty hands and feet
- ▶ Dry mouth, problems swallowing
- ▶ Frequent colds, infections, herpes sores

Signs of Stress

- ▶ Increased or decreased appetite
- ▶ Insomnia, nightmares, disturbing dreams
- ▶ Difficulty concentrating, racing thoughts
- ▶ Forgetfulness, disorganization, confusion
- ▶ Frequent crying spells or suicidal thoughts
- ▶ Feelings of loneliness or worthlessness
- ▶ Overreaction to petty annoyances

Signs of Stress

- ▶ Rashes, itching, hives, goose bumps
- ▶ Heartburn, stomach pain, diarrhea
- ▶ Difficulty breathing, frequent sighing
- ▶ Chest pain, palpitations, rapid pulse
- ▶ Diminished sexual desire or performance
- ▶ Excess anxiety, worry, guilt, nervousness
- ▶ Increased anger, frustration, hostility
- ▶ Depression, frequent or wild mood swings

Signs of Stress

- ▶ Obsessive or compulsive behavior
- ▶ Reduced work efficiency or productivity
- ▶ Excessive defensiveness or suspiciousness
- ▶ Social withdrawal and isolation
- ▶ Constant fatigue and weakness
- ▶ Frequent use of nonprescription drugs
- ▶ Weight gain or loss without diet
- ▶ Increased smoking or drug/alcohol use

Employment Stress & Burnout

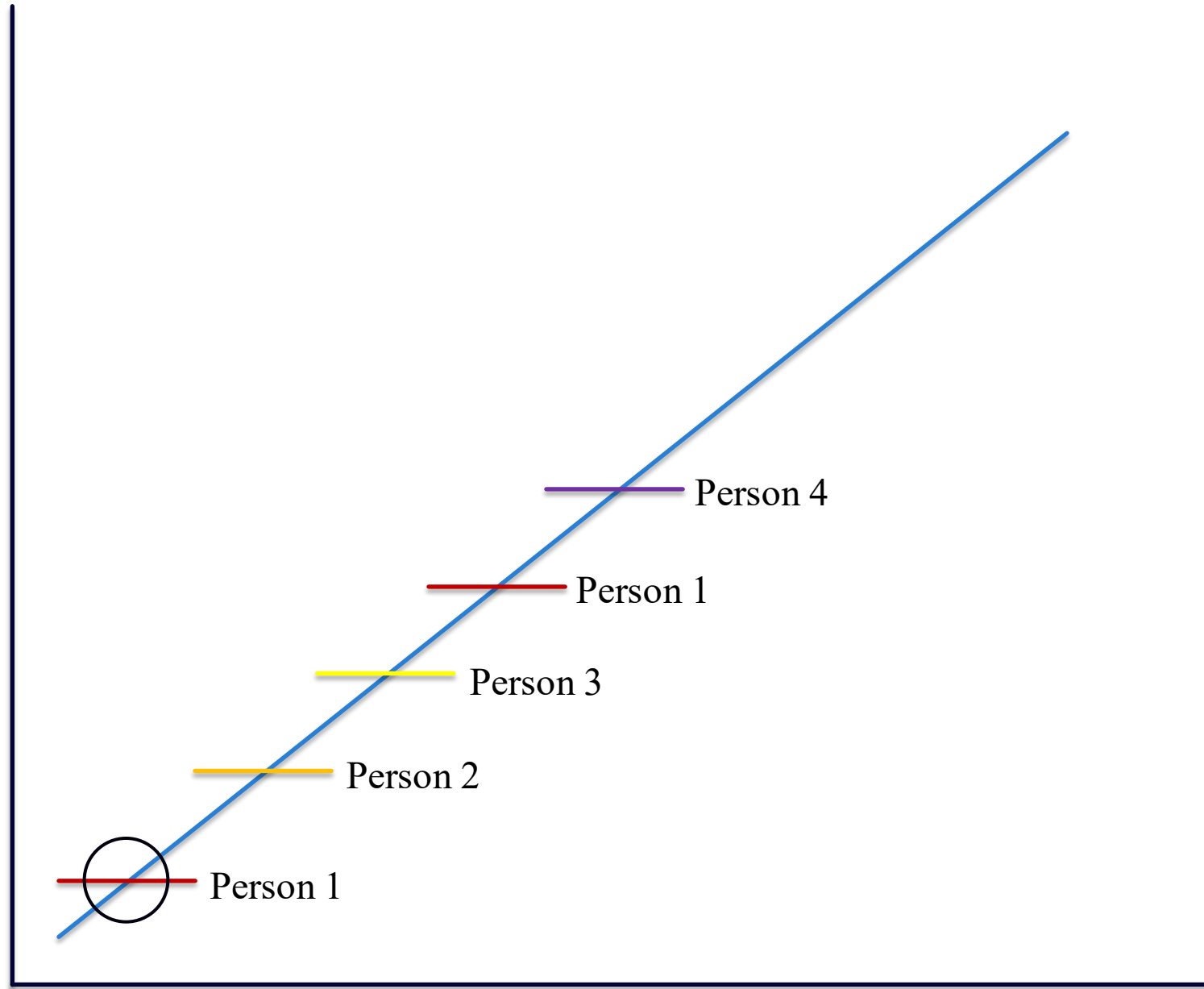
Employment Stress

- ▶ The harmful physical & emotional responses that occur when the requirements of a job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker
- ▶ 83% of US workers experience work related stress
- ▶ 54% of workers report work stress impacts their home life

Employment Stress

- ▶ Depends upon worker characteristics & working conditions
- ▶ Worker characteristics
 - ▶ Differences in individual characteristics influence reactions to work
 - ▶ Personality, coping style
- ▶ Working conditions
 - ▶ Certain working conditions are stressful to most people
 - ▶ Excessive workload, conflicting expectations, unattainable goals

Workers' Ability to Cope with Stress



Stress Level of Working Conditions

Challenge vs Stress

- ▶ Job challenge
 - ▶ Energizes people psychologically & physically
 - ▶ Motivates them to learn new skills & develop mastery
 - ▶ When the challenge is met people feel relaxed & satisfied
- ▶ Job stress
 - ▶ Results in people feeling exhausted & stressed
 - ▶ People believe job demands cannot be met

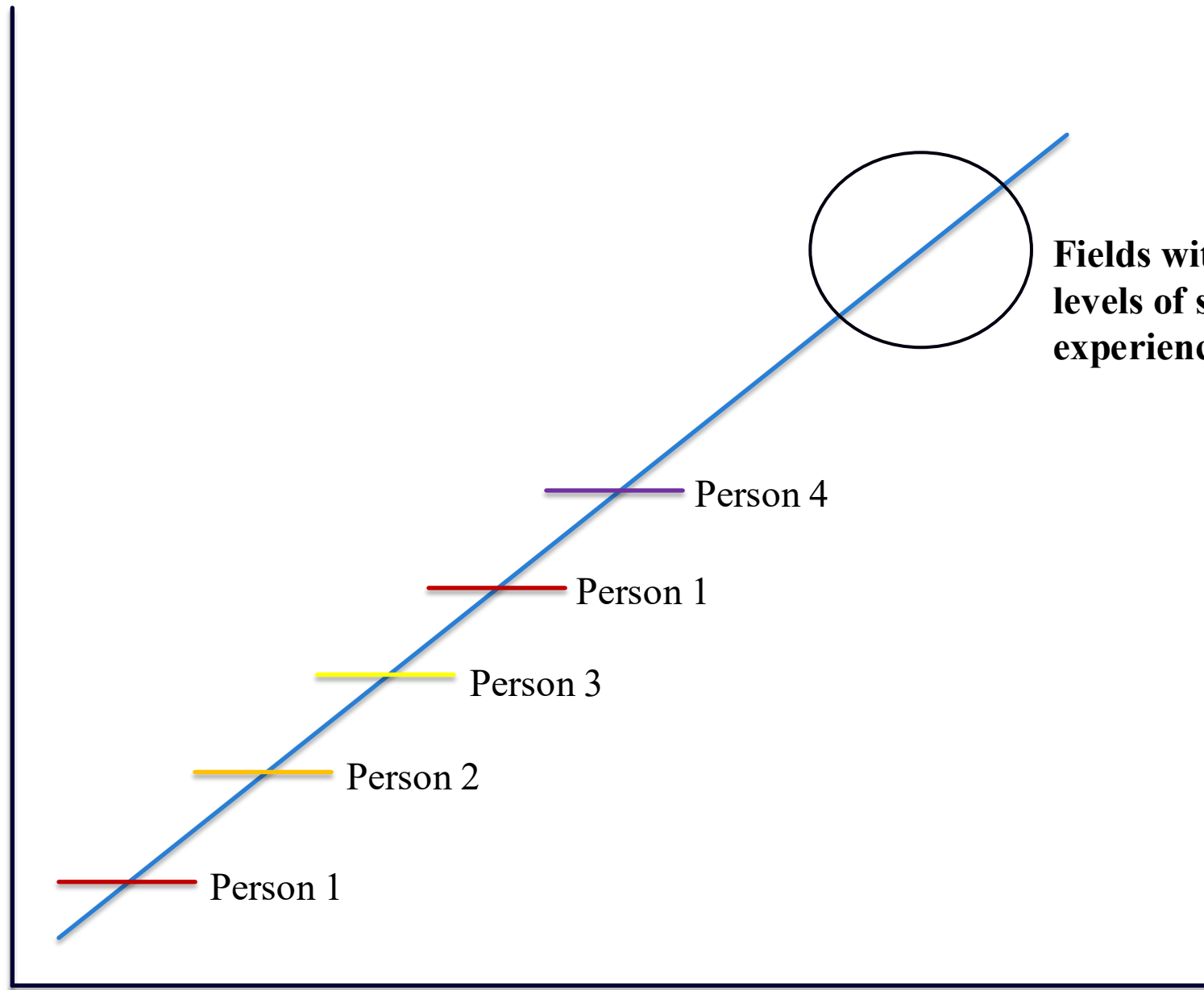
Working Conditions & Stress

- ▶ Design of tasks
 - ▶ Long hours & infrequent breaks
 - ▶ Tasks that have little inherent meaning & provide little sense of control
- ▶ Management style
 - ▶ Poor communication
 - ▶ Lack of participation of workers in decision making
- ▶ Interpersonal relationships
 - ▶ Lack of support from coworkers & supervisors
 - ▶ Poor social environment

Working Conditions & Stress

- ▶ Work roles
 - ▶ Too much responsibility or too many “hats”
 - ▶ Conflicting expectations
- ▶ Career concerns
 - ▶ Rapid changes
 - ▶ Lack of opportunity for growth or advancement
- ▶ Environmental concerns
 - ▶ Exposure to physical harm
 - ▶ Exposure to unpleasant physical conditions

Workers' Ability to Cope with Stress



Stress Level of Working Conditions

Fields with higher baseline levels of stress = more people experiencing stress

Impacts of Employment Stress

- ▶ Increased risk of
 - ▶ Cardiovascular disease
 - ▶ Musculoskeletal disorders
 - ▶ Psychological disorders
 - ▶ Workplace injury
 - ▶ Suicide
 - ▶ Cancer
 - ▶ Ulcers
 - ▶ Impaired immune function

Impacts of Employment Stress

- ▶ Increased incidence of
 - ▶ Absenteeism
 - ▶ Tardiness
 - ▶ Intentions to quit
 - ▶ Mistakes
 - ▶ Decreased motivation
 - ▶ Decreased productivity

Signs of Employment Stress

- ▶ Feeling on edge
- ▶ Regular fatigue
- ▶ Aches and pains
- ▶ Lack of satisfaction or sense of accomplishment
- ▶ Changes to sleep or appetite
- ▶ Mood issues
- ▶ Increased substance use
- ▶ Social withdrawal and isolation

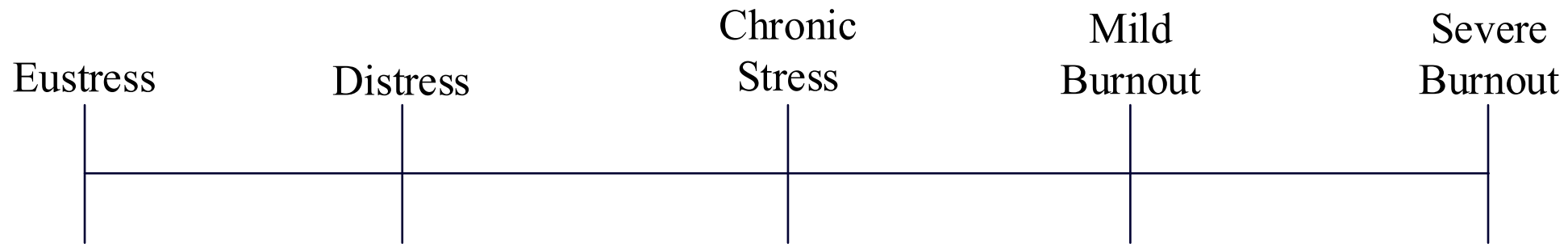
Signs of Employment Stress

- ▶ Upset stomach
- ▶ Diarrhea or constipation
- ▶ Headaches
- ▶ Heart palpitations
- ▶ Skin rash
- ▶ Neck tension & teeth grinding
- ▶ Dizzy spells
- ▶ Forgetfulness
- ▶ Lack of focus

What is Burnout?

- ▶ A state of emotional, mental, & physical exhaustion caused by prolonged or repeated stress
 - ▶ Negative form of stress
 - ▶ Prolonged form of distress
- ▶ Response to long-term emotional and interpersonal stressors
- ▶ Isn't only related to job stress
 - ▶ Caregiving

Stress & Burnout Continuum



What is Burnout?

- ▶ Overwhelming exhaustion
 - ▶ Out of gas or nothing left
 - ▶ Given up hope of overcoming obstacles
 - ▶ Small tasks feel impossible
- ▶ Cynicism & detachment from the job or task
 - ▶ Lack of purpose or disillusionment
 - ▶ Disinterest & withdrawal

What is Burnout?

- ▶ Reduced personal efficacy
 - ▶ Sense of not being productive, accomplished, or effective
 - ▶ Hopelessness – “nothing I do matters”
 - ▶ Failure to meet even small obligations

What is Burnout?

- ▶ Creates a downward spiral of more burnout
- ▶ Once it begins it builds over time
- ▶ Ability to cope with stressors continues to decline
- ▶ Burnout is **not** a personal failing
- ▶ It **is** a sign you've been exposed to stressors that exceed your emotional resources to cope
- ▶ Structural Issue

Who is at risk?

- ▶ Individuals who
 - ▶ Personalize work
 - ▶ Overly perfectionistic & idealistic
 - ▶ Feel guilty about own needs or limits
 - ▶ Have or face unrealistic goals
 - ▶ Experience a lack of appreciation
 - ▶ Work with others suffering burnout

Who is at risk?

- ▶ Working environments
 - ▶ Cause job stress
- ▶ Careers most prone to burnout
 - ▶ Healthcare
 - ▶ Community & Social Services
 - ▶ Education
- ▶ Interaction between personal & employment factors

Protective Factors

- ▶ Individuals who
 - ▶ More extroverted
 - ▶ More emotional or coping resources
 - ▶ More emotional stability
 - ▶ Stress management skills
- ▶ Working environments
 - ▶ Promote work-life balance
 - ▶ Support workers

Impacts of Burnout

- ▶ Psychological
 - ▶ Concentration & memory issues
 - ▶ Difficulty making decisions
 - ▶ Dissatisfaction & low self-esteem
 - ▶ Insomnia & irritability
 - ▶ Suicide

Impacts of Burnout

- ▶ Physical
 - ▶ Musculoskeletal pain
 - ▶ Chronic pain
 - ▶ GI issues
 - ▶ Infections
 - ▶ Cardiovascular disease

Impacts of Burnout

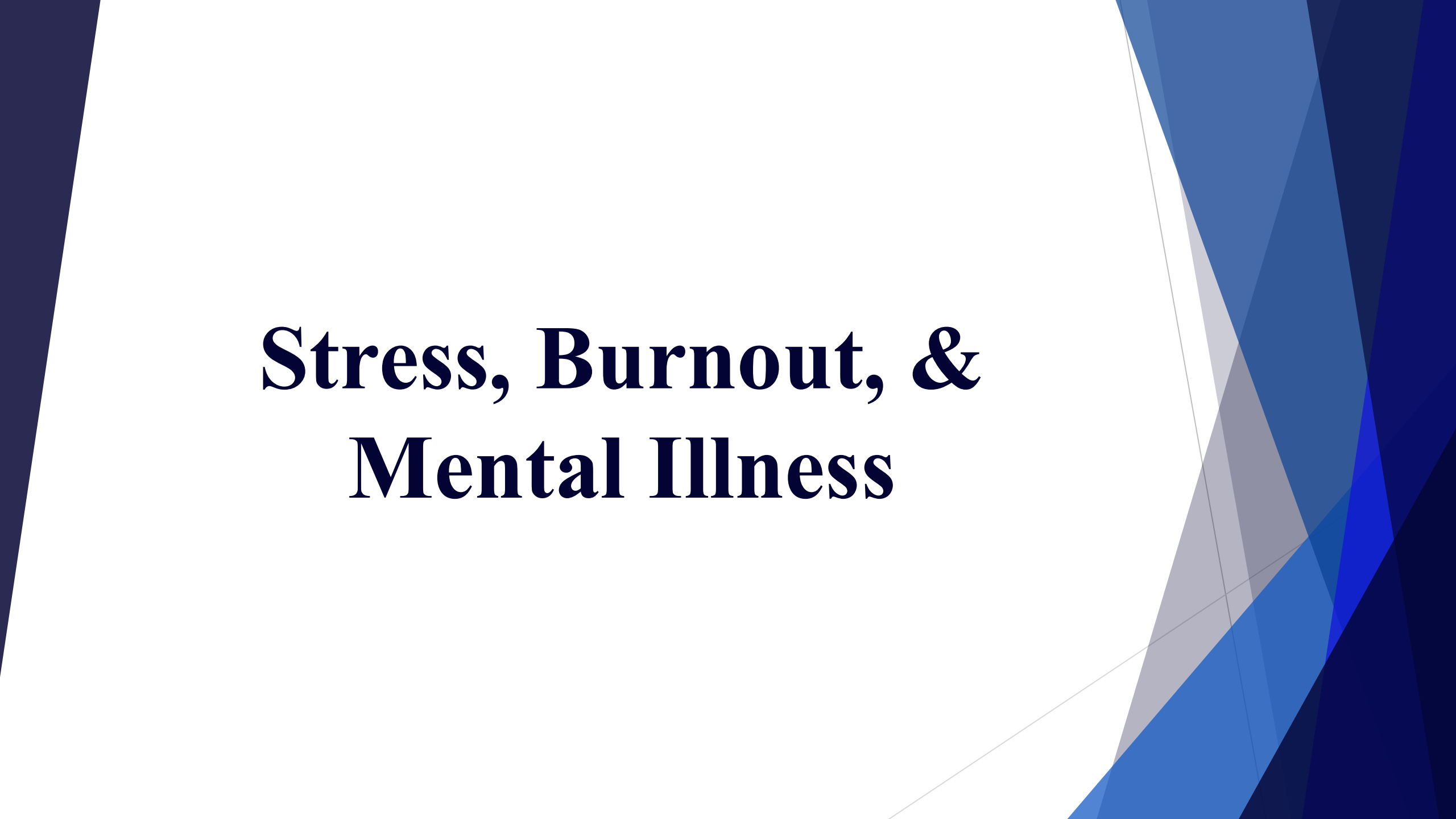
- ▶ Behavioral
 - ▶ Absenteeism
 - ▶ Aggressiveness
 - ▶ Alcohol & drug use
 - ▶ Theft or misuse of employer material

Signs of Burnout

- ▶ Feelings of
 - ▶ Dread to go to work
 - ▶ Disconnection from others
 - ▶ Dissatisfaction with work
 - ▶ Doubt in your abilities
 - ▶ Limited patience with others
 - ▶ Difficulty focusing on work
 - ▶ Low energy & motivation related to work
 - ▶ Hopelessness or purposelessness

Signs of Burnout

- ▶ Increased
 - ▶ Conflict with others
 - ▶ Food, drug, or alcohol use
 - ▶ Physical complaints
 - ▶ Impulsive or reckless behavior
 - ▶ Sleep issues
 - ▶ Irritability
 - ▶ Avoidance
 - ▶ Fatigue



Stress, Burnout, & Mental Illness

Stress vs Burnout

- ▶ Burnout is
 - ▶ On the far end of the stress continuum
 - ▶ A form of chronic stress
- ▶ Not all stress becomes burnout
- ▶ Unmanaged stress increases risk of burnout

Burnout vs Mental Illness

- ▶ Burnout can share symptoms with
 - ▶ Depressive Disorders
 - ▶ Hopelessness, fatigue/exhaustion, feelings of detachment
 - ▶ Anxiety Disorders
 - ▶ Irritability, worry, low self-esteem, insomnia
- ▶ Untreated burnout can progress into a diagnosable mental illness
 - ▶ Most likely depression
- ▶ Burnout is situation specific whereas diagnosable mental illnesses are more pervasive & context free

They're related!

- ▶ Burnout & mental illness frequently co-occur but are separate constructs
 - ▶ Burnout is classified as an occupational phenomena in ICD-11
- ▶ Burnout & mental illness have a reciprocal relationship
 - ▶ Burnout tends to worsen symptoms of mental illness
 - ▶ Certain mental illnesses increase risk of burnout

When to be Concerned

- ▶ Feelings of overwhelm
- ▶ Pervasive impact
- ▶ Worsening symptoms
- ▶ Thoughts of suicide

When to be Concerned

- ▶ Decreases in activities of daily living (ADLs)
- ▶ Functional impairments
 - ▶ Social, familial, education, occupation, legal, transportation, inter- or intra-personal
- ▶ No improvement with increased coping skills
- ▶ A mental health professional can help you determine what you are experiencing & how to address it

Depressive Disorders

- ▶ Symptoms include
 - ▶ Depressed mood or tearfulness
 - ▶ Diminished interest or pleasure in activities
 - ▶ Decrease or increase in appetite or decrease or increase in weight
 - ▶ Insomnia or hypersomnia
 - ▶ Psychomotor agitation or retardation
 - ▶ Fatigue or loss of energy
 - ▶ Feelings of worthlessness or inappropriate guilt
 - ▶ Diminished ability to think or concentrate or indecisiveness
 - ▶ Thoughts of death, suicide, or suicide attempt

Anxiety Disorders

- ▶ Symptoms include
 - ▶ Excessive anxiety & worry
 - ▶ Difficult to control the worry
 - ▶ Anxiety & worry are associated with
 - ▶ Restlessness or feeling on edge
 - ▶ Easily fatigued
 - ▶ Difficult concentrating or mind going blank
 - ▶ Irritability
 - ▶ Muscle tension
 - ▶ Sleep disturbance

Interventions

- ▶ Stress
 - ▶ Time off
 - ▶ Increased stress management or relaxation skills
 - ▶ Delegate or remove tasks/ Ask for help
- ▶ Burnout
 - ▶ Structural changes related to employment
 - ▶ Increased stress management skills
 - ▶ Change relationship to work

Interventions

- ▶ Mental illness
 - ▶ Individual Therapy
 - ▶ Family or Couples Therapy
 - ▶ Group Therapy
 - ▶ Medication
 - ▶ Intensive Outpatient Programs (IOP)
 - ▶ Psychiatric Hospitalization

Stress Management & Burnout Prevention

Stress Management

- ▶ Eliminate external stressors
 - ▶ What, if anything, can you eliminate or reduce?
 - ▶ Not all stressors can be eliminated!
- ▶ Change your relationship to stressors
 - ▶ Reframe automatic thoughts
 - ▶ Address negative beliefs
 - ▶ Practice radical acceptance
- ▶ Address internal stressors
 - ▶ Resolve intrusive experiences
 - ▶ Desensitize reactive points

External Stressors

Actions

Thoughts

**Internal
Stressors**



Beliefs

Emotions



Stress Management

- ▶ Cultivate social support
 - ▶ Improves resilience
 - ▶ Friends, support groups, mentors
- ▶ Improve nutrition
 - ▶ Food influences mood & stabilizes energy levels
 - ▶ Cortisol creates carb & sugar cravings
- ▶ Practice physical relaxation
 - ▶ Decreases pain & tension
 - ▶ Massage, yoga, progressive muscle relaxation

Stress Management

- ▶ Meditate
 - ▶ Reduces stress & anxiety
 - ▶ As little as 5 minutes per day
 - ▶ Self-compassion, Loving Kindness, Acceptance, Prayer
- ▶ Improve your sleep
 - ▶ Minimum of 6 hours
 - ▶ Decrease exposure to blue light
 - ▶ Avoid caffeine & alcohol in PM

Stress Management

- ▶ Increase physical activity
 - ▶ Can cut perception of stress by 50%
 - ▶ Can minimize impact of stress on the immune system
 - ▶ Improves sleep
 - ▶ 30-minute walk
- ▶ Spend time in nature
 - ▶ Green spaces improve mood
 - ▶ Nature videos

Stress Management

- ▶ Maintain hobbies
 - ▶ Humor & laughter
 - ▶ Increases overall enjoyment of laugh
 - ▶ Focus on using different skills/abilities
- ▶ Seek professional help
 - ▶ If self-help doesn't work
 - ▶ Feelings of hopelessness, overwhelm, or of being stuck

Burnout Management

- ▶ Keep a log of stressors & your reactions
 - ▶ Builds awareness
 - ▶ Tracks patterns
 - ▶ Can be used to develop insight
- ▶ Ask for support or change
 - ▶ Increases self-efficacy
 - ▶ Can help reframe thinking
 - ▶ Increases social connection & co-regulation

Burnout Management

- ▶ Set boundaries
 - ▶ Say no
 - ▶ Schedule regular breaks
 - ▶ Minimize multi-tasking
 - ▶ Start & stop at set times
- ▶ Develop mindfulness skills
 - ▶ Yoga, meditation
 - ▶ Increases awareness of self & early signs of stress
 - ▶ Increases ability to self-regulate

Burnout Management

- ▶ Nurture outside relationships & interests
 - ▶ Restores sense of self
 - ▶ Builds sense of competence & value
 - ▶ Expands perspective
- ▶ Start a stress management practice
 - ▶ Creates a structure for managing stress
- ▶ Consider therapy
 - ▶ Burnout has real consequences & is a very good reason to seek therapy!
 - ▶ Therapy can help you shift your relationship to work & stress

Burnout Prevention

- ▶ Manage stress early
 - ▶ Create a plan
 - ▶ Focus on activities that utilize different skills
 - ▶ Ensure adequate rest
 - ▶ Monitor warning signs

Burnout Prevention

- ▶ Assess structural or organizational factors
 - ▶ Welcome programs
 - ▶ Work-life balance plans
 - ▶ Burnout monitoring programs
 - ▶ Coaching & guidance
 - ▶ Managerial modeling & support

Burnout Prevention

- ▶ Recognize limitations
 - ▶ Individual capacity varies depending on internal & external factors
 - ▶ Individual capacity can change over time
 - ▶ Know your stress responses
- ▶ Set realistic expectations
 - ▶ Practice noticing unreasonable expectations
 - ▶ State, out loud, when expectations are unreasonable

Burnout Prevention

- ▶ Give self permission to “fail”
 - ▶ Failure $\neq$ bad
 - ▶ Re-define failure
- ▶ Practice letting go
 - ▶ Compulsive helping
 - ▶ Savior complex
 - ▶ Practice imperfection
 - ▶ Differentiation

Burnout Prevention

- ▶ Address individual risk factors
 - ▶ Personality characteristics: personalization, type A, perfectionistic, or idealistic
 - ▶ Self-worth based on work or outcomes
 - ▶ Feelings of guilt or shame related to own needs or limits
 - ▶ Beliefs of not being good enough or never doing enough



Questions?

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