



Compassion Fatigue, Burnout, & The Strengths-Based Workplace

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Why this workshop?

Objectives for this Presentation...

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Define, recognize and distinguish the professional health-risks of compassion fatigue and burnout(CFBT).
- Understand the most common risk factors for the development of compassion fatigue and burnout (CFBT) among helping professionals; and assess one's own personal level of risk.
- Describe the elements of an effective approach to recovery from compassion fatigue and burnout (CFBT).
- Understand and cultivate a variety of research-supported protective factors against CFBT within ourselves, and within our work settings.

Defining Burnout



Defining Burnout

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- **Burnout** is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion acquired through involvement in emotionally demanding situations.
 - A “**process**”, not a fixed condition which typically includes:
 - gradual exposure to job strain
 - erosion of idealism
 - a void of achievement
 - an accumulation of intensive contact with clients
 - **Symptom categories** →
- **Physical** (fatigue, depletion, sleep difficulty, somatic problems)
 - **Emotional** (irritability, anxiety, depression, guilt, sense of helplessness)
 - **Behavioral** (aggression, callousness, pessimism, defensiveness, cynicism, substance abuse)
 - **Work-related symptoms** (quitting the job, poor work performance, absenteeism, tardiness, misuse of work breaks, thefts)
 - **Interpersonal symptoms** (perfunctory communication, inability to concentrate or focus, withdrawal from colleagues/students/clients, dehumanizing students/clients)



Defining Compassion Fatigue

Defining Compassion Fatigue

- People can be traumatized either directly or indirectly
- The essential feature of traumatic stress is the development of symptoms following exposure to an event that involves threatened death, injury, or other threat to one's physical integrity; or witnessing such events occurring to others; or *learning about unexpected or violent death, serious harm, or threat of death or injury experienced by a family member or other close associates.*
- **Secondary Traumatic Stress**
Symptoms: 

Stressor

Serious threat to traumatized person
Sudden destruction of TP's environs

Reexperiencing the Traumatic Event

Recollections of the event/TP
Dreams of event/TP
Sudden reexperiencing of event/TP
Reminders of the TP/event distressing

Avoidance/Numbing of Reminders

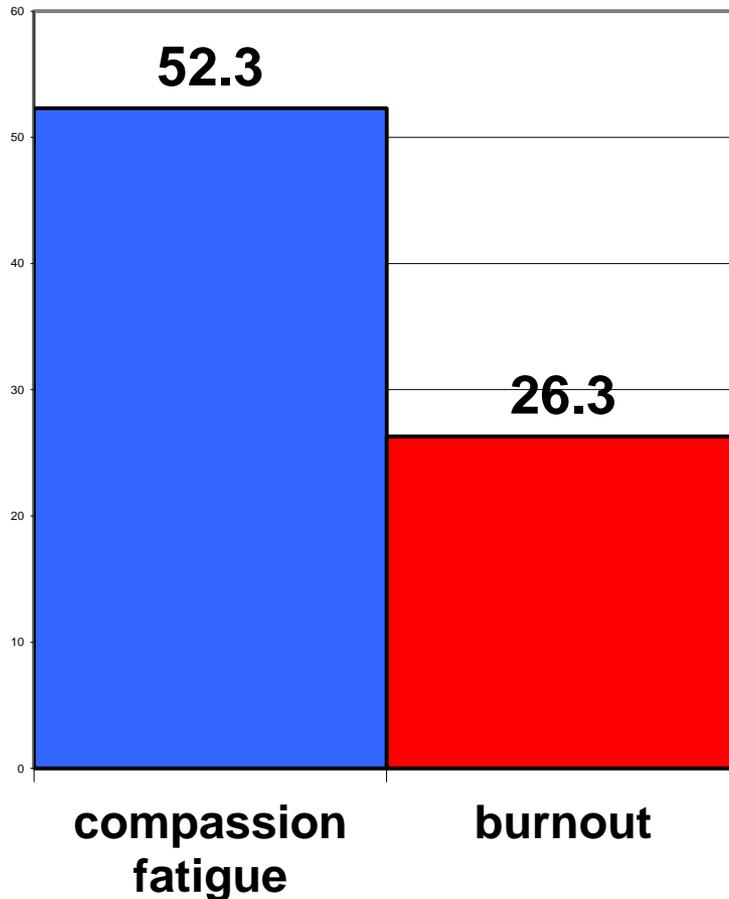
Efforts to avoid thoughts/feelings
Efforts to avoid activities/situations
Psychogenic amnesia
Diminished interest in activities
Detachment/estrangement from others
Diminished affect
Sense of foreshortened future

Persistent Arousal

Difficulty falling or staying asleep
Difficulty concentrating
Hypervigilance for the TP
Exaggerated startle response
Physiologic reactivity to cues

The Nature of Risks for Compassion Fatigue & Burnout

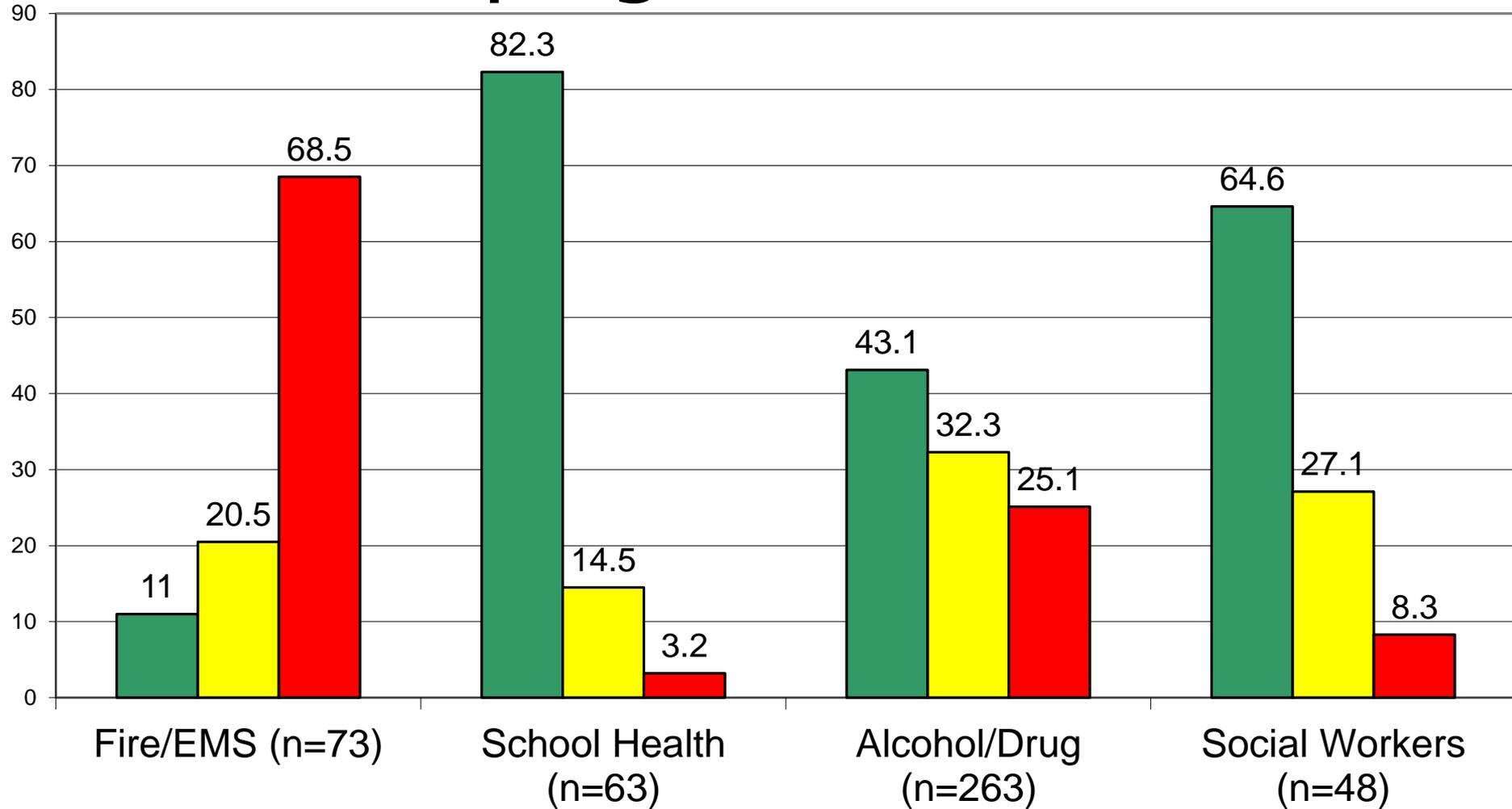
Average % of professional helpers at high risk



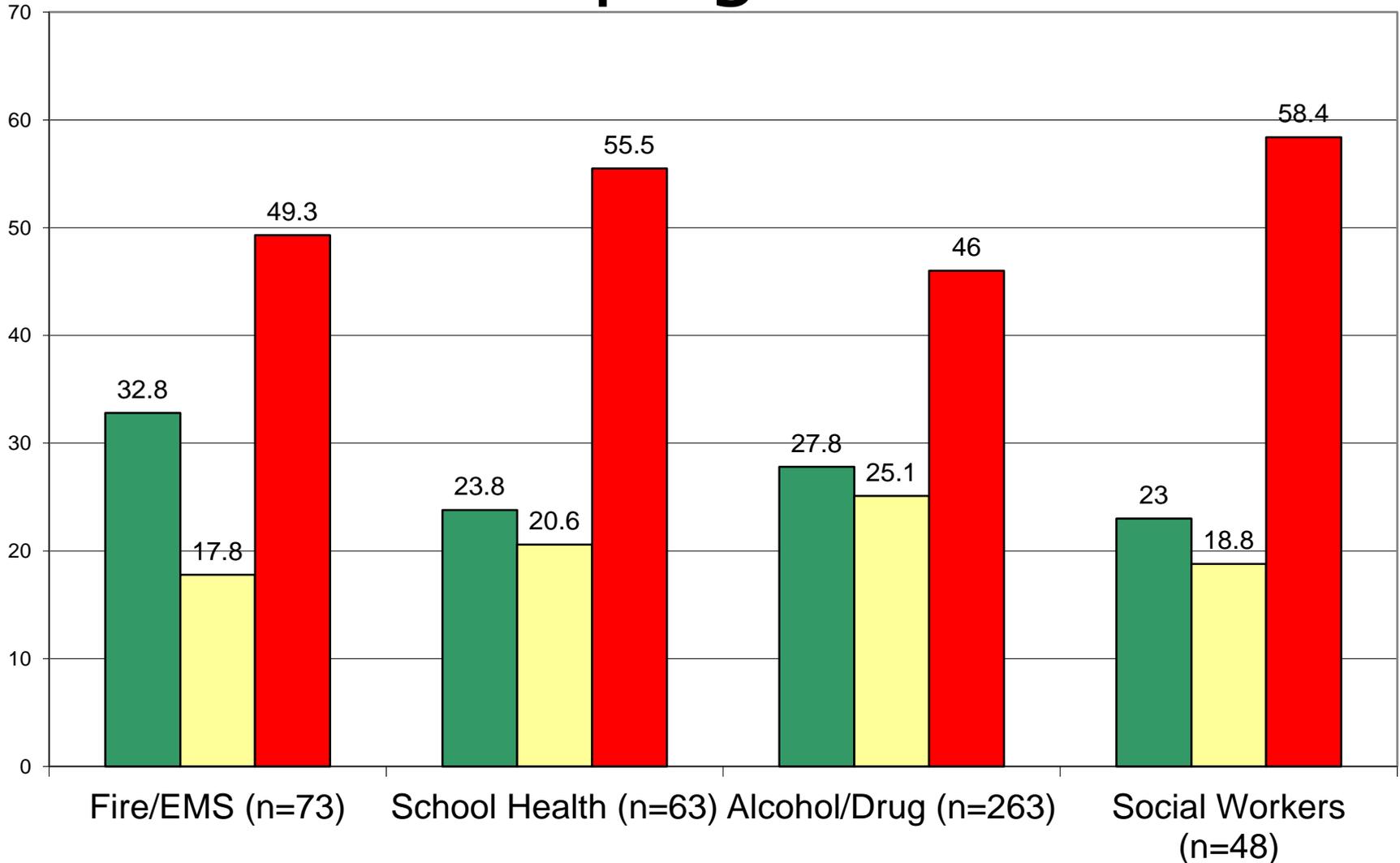
The same qualities that make effective counselors and helpers also place them at highest risk:

1. The constant presence of trauma-inducing factors.
2. Empathy is a major resource for helping but also a key factor in the induction of traumatic material.
3. Most people have experienced some trauma in their own lives, and there is risk of overgeneralizing one's experience to the student/client, and overpromoting one's own coping/recovery methods.
4. Unresolved issues of the helper will be activated by reports of similar issues in clients.
5. Childhood trauma is especially provocative for helpers; from reports of childhood trauma by adults, or exposure to traumatized children.

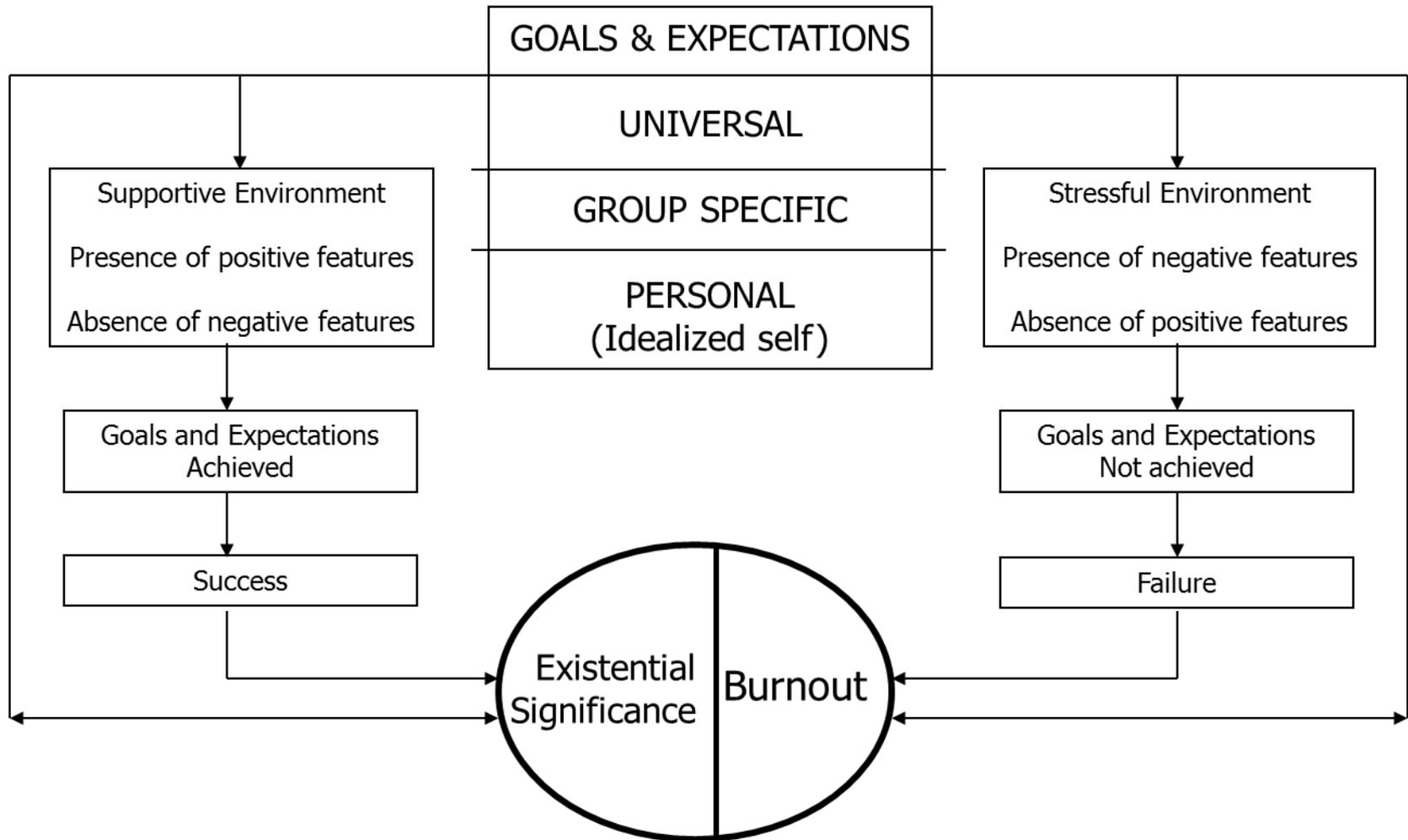
Rates of Burnout Risk across Helping Professions



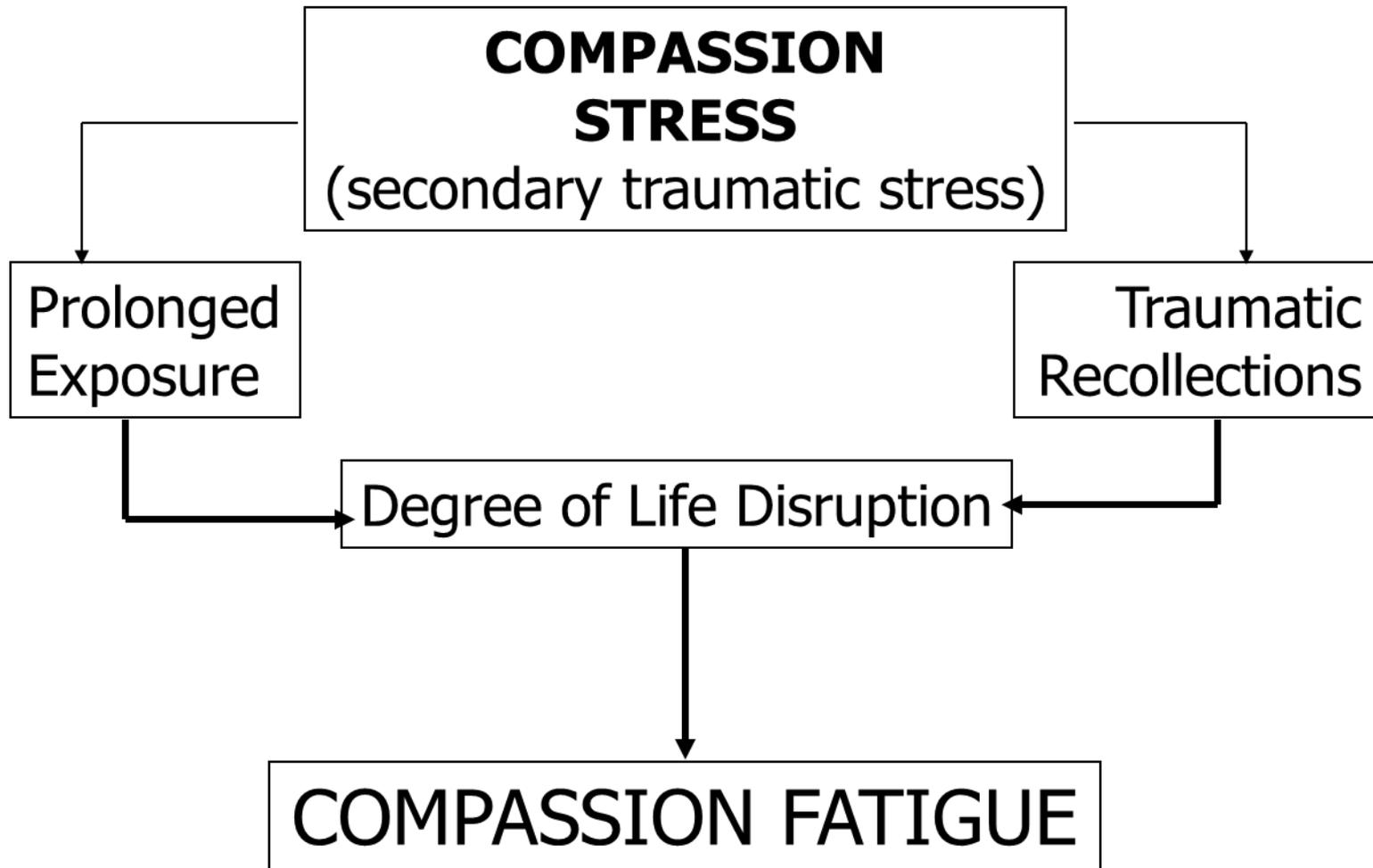
Rates of Compassion Fatigue Risk across Helping Professions



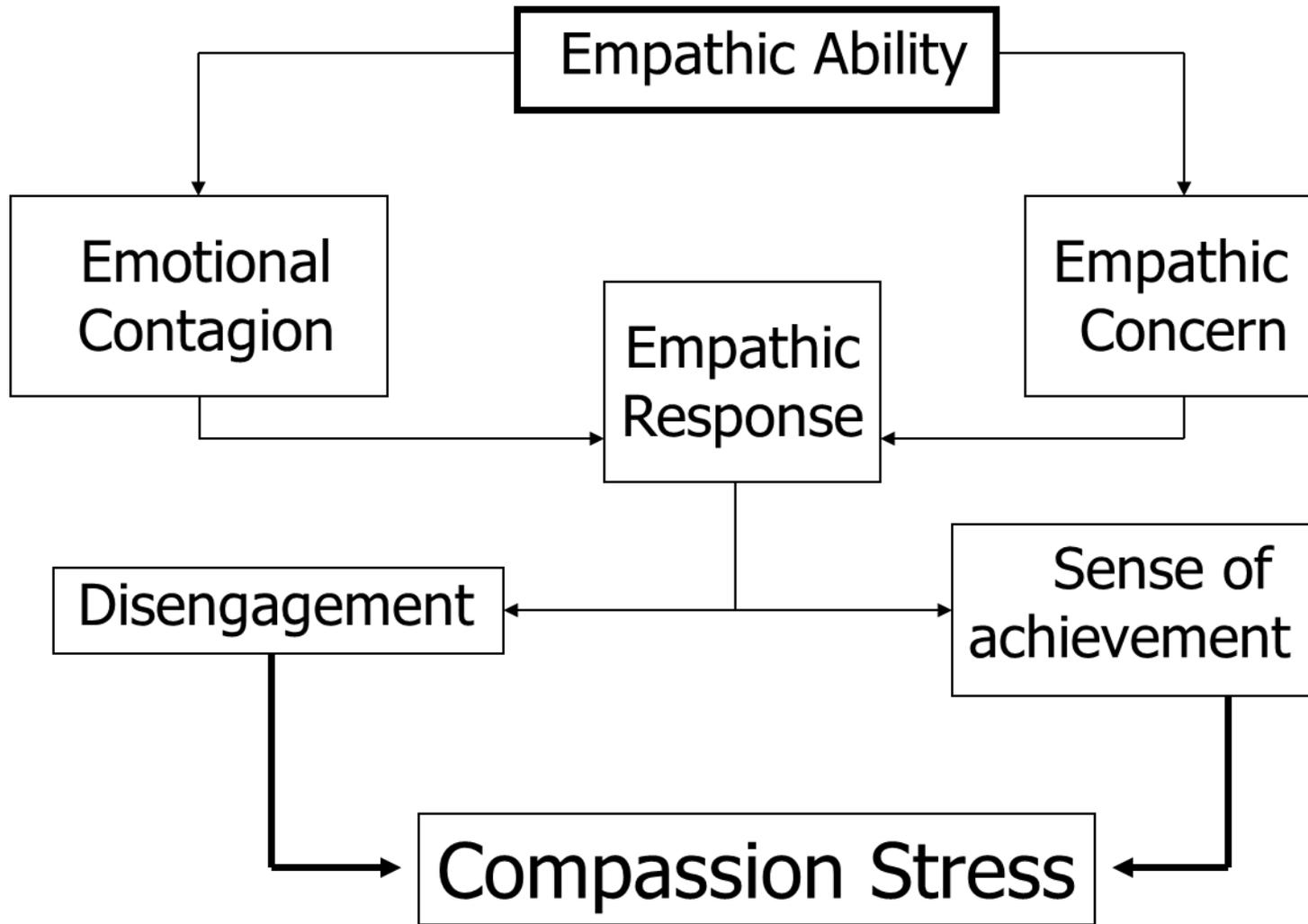
THE BURNOUT MODEL



A MODEL OF COMPASSION FATIGUE



A MODEL OF COMPASSION STRESS



An Accelerated Recovery Program for Compassion Fatigue

Gentry, Baranowsky & Dunning

A brief intervention protocol, emphasizing...

- The therapeutic alliance
- Symptom identification
- Recognition of compassion fatigue triggers
- Identification and utilization of resources
- Contracting for life enhancements
- Review of personal & professional history to the present day
- Master arousal reduction methods
- Learning grounding and containment skills
- Resolving impediments to efficacy
- Initiating conflict resolution
- Designing and implementing a supportive aftercare plan of self-care

Is there a “bright side” to the experience of Crisis?

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- Rates of “benefit from adversity: range from 45% to 90% of persons studied
- Health adversities
- Natural disaster
- Criminal victimization
- Grief
- Combat

The Search for Protective Factors

Compassion Exhilaration

Networks

Hope

**The Keystone of high
achievement and happiness
is exercising your strengths,
not overcoming your
weaknesses**

Personal
Empowerment

Resilience

M.E.P. Seligman

Optimism

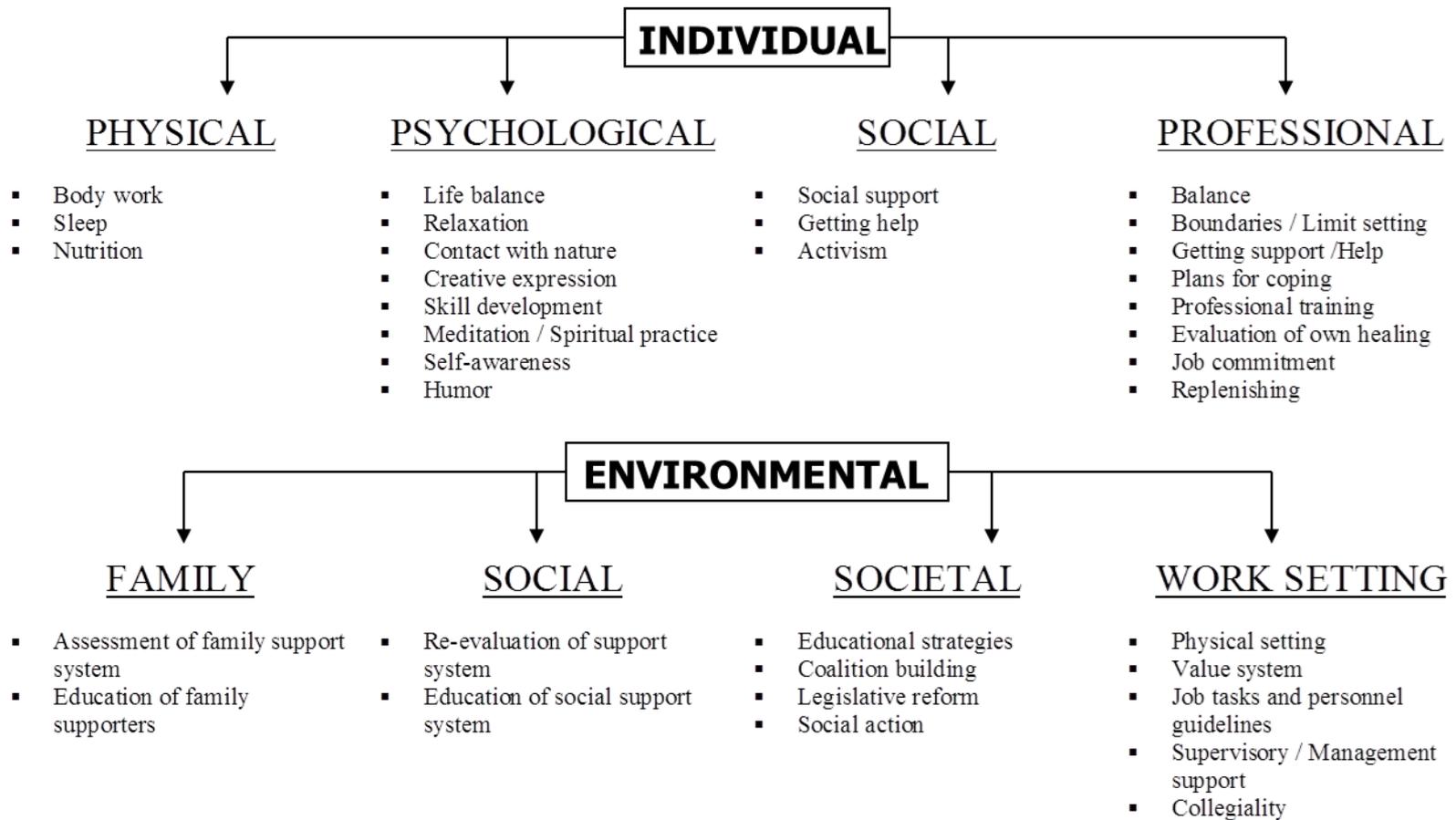
Strengths-Based
Workplaces

Sense of Coherence

The Power to Protect...

Protective Factor	CF	BT
Sense of Coherence	-.725***	-.602***
Compassion Satisfaction	-.412**	-.385**
Optimism	-.400**	-.410**
Hope	-.331*	-.323*
Co-worker support	-.452**	-.430**
Fun	-.432**	-.443**
Family/Social support	-.386**	-.350**
Supervision	-.276*	-.261^a

An Ecological Model for the Prevention of Compassion Fatigue





The Strengths-Based Workplace

Organizational Practices that Sustain Values

- Its ironic that just as many businesses in the corporate world are learning to embrace respect and empowerment values toward employees that much of contemporary Human Services systems are characterized by worker exploitation, and a fierce “factory” mentality.
- Employment security and mutual commitment
- Selective recruiting for cultural fit as well as skill
- Investment in training and developing the skills and capabilities of employees
- Decentralization of decision making and the delegation of substantial authority
- Pay and other rewards that are contingent on group and organizational, as well as individual performance
- Broad sharing of information within the organization

The Strengths-Based Workplace

Buckingham & Coffman (1999). *First, break all the rules*

- I am extremely satisfied with workplace
- I know what is expected of me at work
- At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best everyday
- In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work
- I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right
- My supervisor, or someone at work seems to care about me as a person
- There is someone at work who encourages my development
- At work, my opinions seem to count
- The mission/purpose of my organization makes me feel my job is important
- My associates are committed to doing quality work
- I have a best friend at work
- In the last six months, someone at work talked with me about my progress
- This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow

Work Environment Features leading to Burnout

PSYCHOLOGICAL	PHYSICAL	SOCIAL	ORGANIZATION
COGNITIVE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Autonomy - Variety - Overload 	FIXED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structure - Space - Noise 	SERVICE RECIPIENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Numbers - Problems - Relations 	BUREAUCRATIC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Red tape - Paperwork - Communication problems
EMOTIONAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significance - Actualization - Growth 	FLEXIBILITY TO CHANGE FIXED FEATURES	CO-WORKERS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work relations - Sharing - Time out - Support - Challenge 	ADMINISTRATIVE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rules and regulations - Policy influence - Participation
		SUPERVISORS & ADMINISTRATORS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feedback - Rewards - Support - Challenge 	ROLE IN THE ORGANIZATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role conflict - Role strain - Role ambiguity - Status disorder

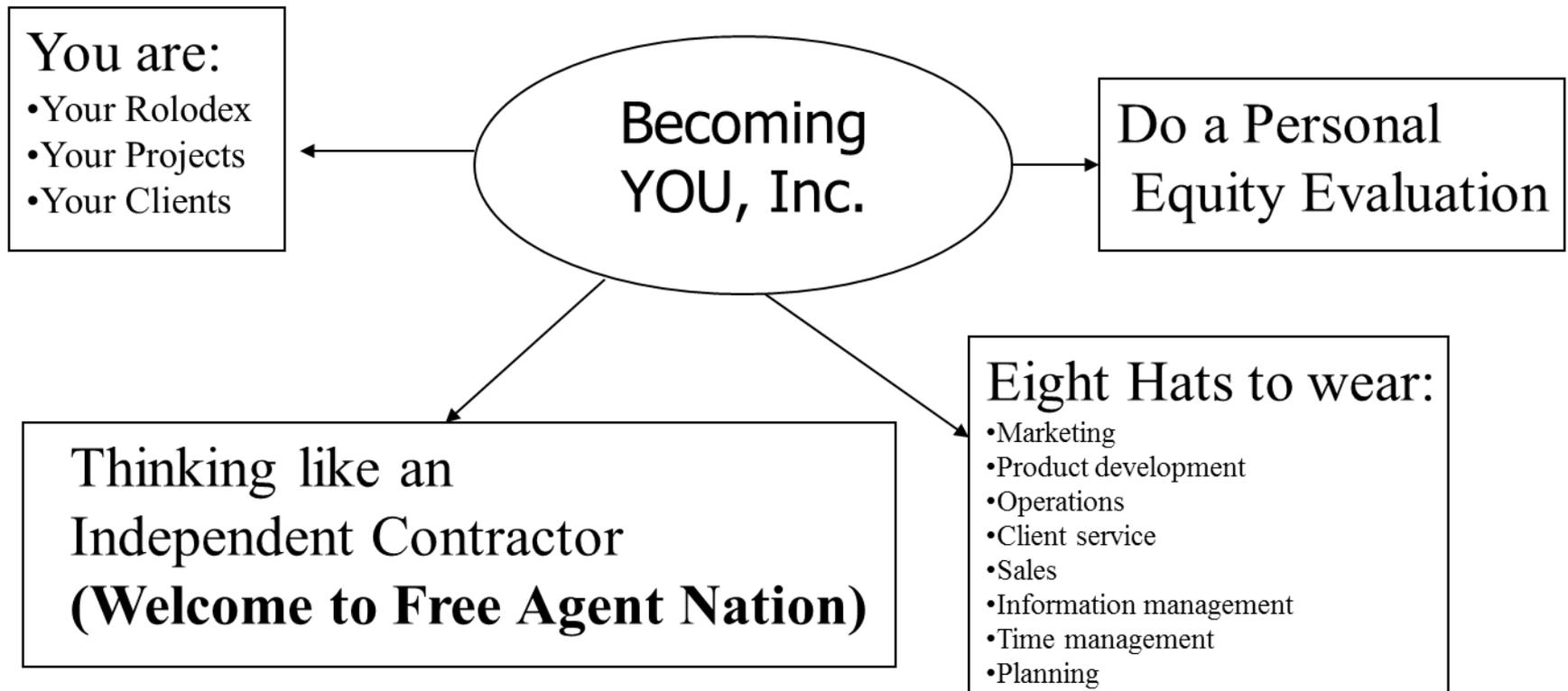
Source: A. Pines, *Changing Organizations: Is a Work Environment Without Burnout a Possible Goal?* In W.S. Paine Ed.), *Job Stress and Burnout* (p.192). Beverly Hill, CA: Sage.



The fundamental unit of the new economy is not the corporation but the individual. Tasks aren't assigned through a stable chain of management, but rather are carried out by *autonomously* independent contractors...join(ed) together in fluid and temporary networks to produce and sell goods and services...when the job is done, the network dissolves and its members become independent agents again, circulating through the economy, seeking the next assignment.

Malone & Laubacher in Harvard Business Review

When is the last time you asked yourself what you wanted to be?



It's a Brand You World

(For a personal tour of Brand You World see www.tompeters.com)

- I am known for (2-4 things). By this time next year I plan also to be known for (1-2 more things).
- My current project is challenging me in the following (1-3) ways.
- New stuff I've learned in the last 90 days includes (1-3 things)
- Important new additions to my Rolodex in the last 90 days include (2-4 names)
- My public (local, regional, national) visibility program consists of (1-2 things)
- My principle "resume enhancement activity" for the next 90 days is (1 item)
- My resume/CV is discernibly different from last year's on this date in the following (1-2) ways.
- Today's date: _____