

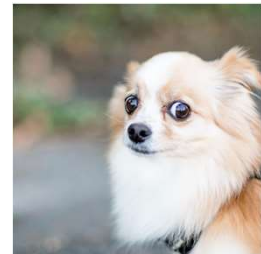


HOPE IN A TIME OF MONSTERS

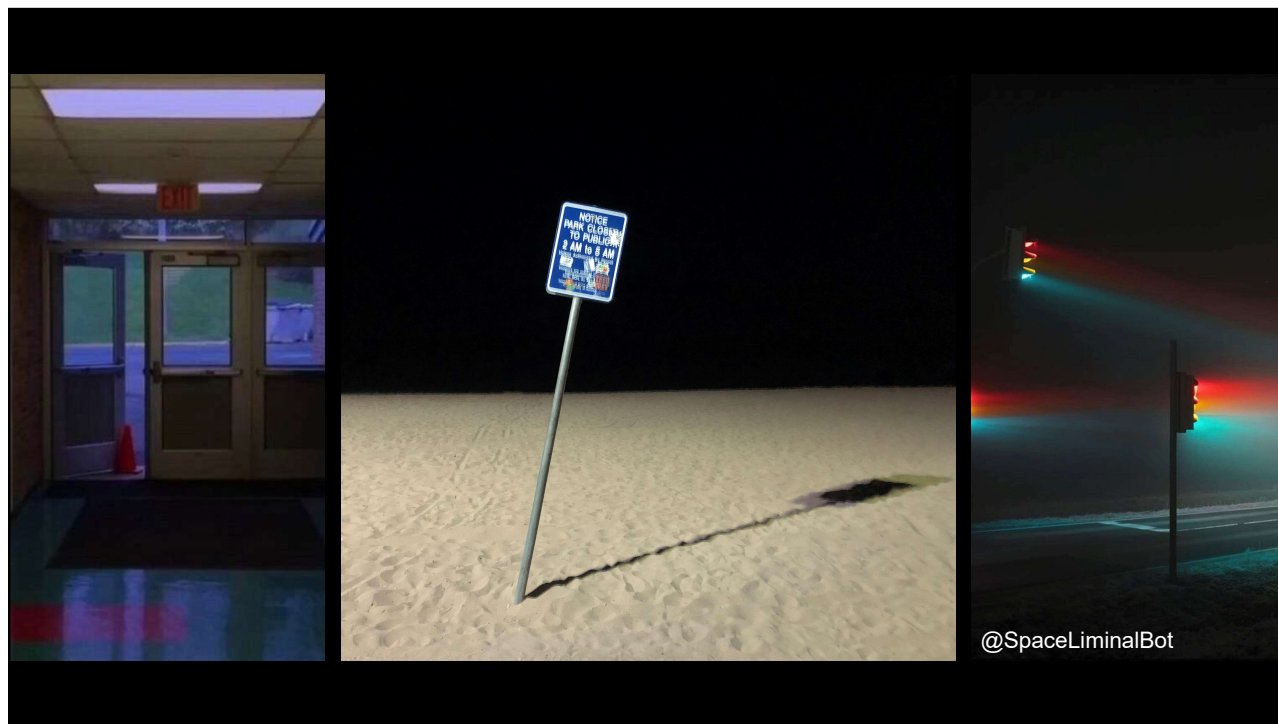
Supporting Student and Faculty Mental Health

1

Which of the following images matches best how you feel about the rest of this semester?



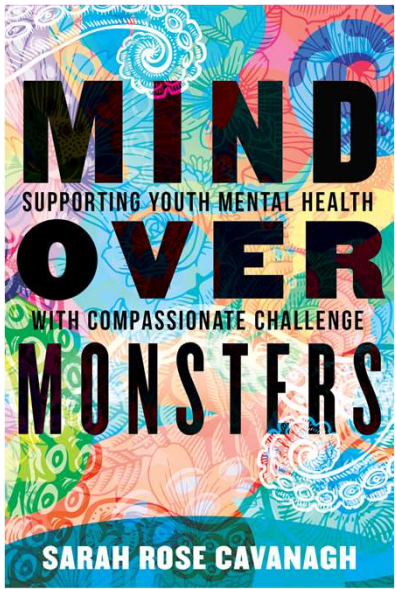
2



3



4



Voices
of our students

Science
latest psychological, neuroscientific, educational
literature

Solutions
expert interviews with educators, clinicians,
psychologists, acting coaches

5

THE PATH AHEAD



Problems



Science



Solutions


6



Uncontrollable - ruthless and unmanageable
Terrifying - evoke reactions of fear and uncertainty
Intimidating - we shrink from them

WHAT CHALLENGES (MONSTERS) DO OUR STUDENTS FACE?

7



DIFFICULT PASTS

Trauma, adverse childhood experiences, discrimination, racism, inequality

8




STRESSFUL PRESENTS

Lack of sleep, nutrition, exercise, housing, scheduling regularity, leisure activities

Missing or poor friendships, familial relationships, network of supportive acquaintances on campus, mentors

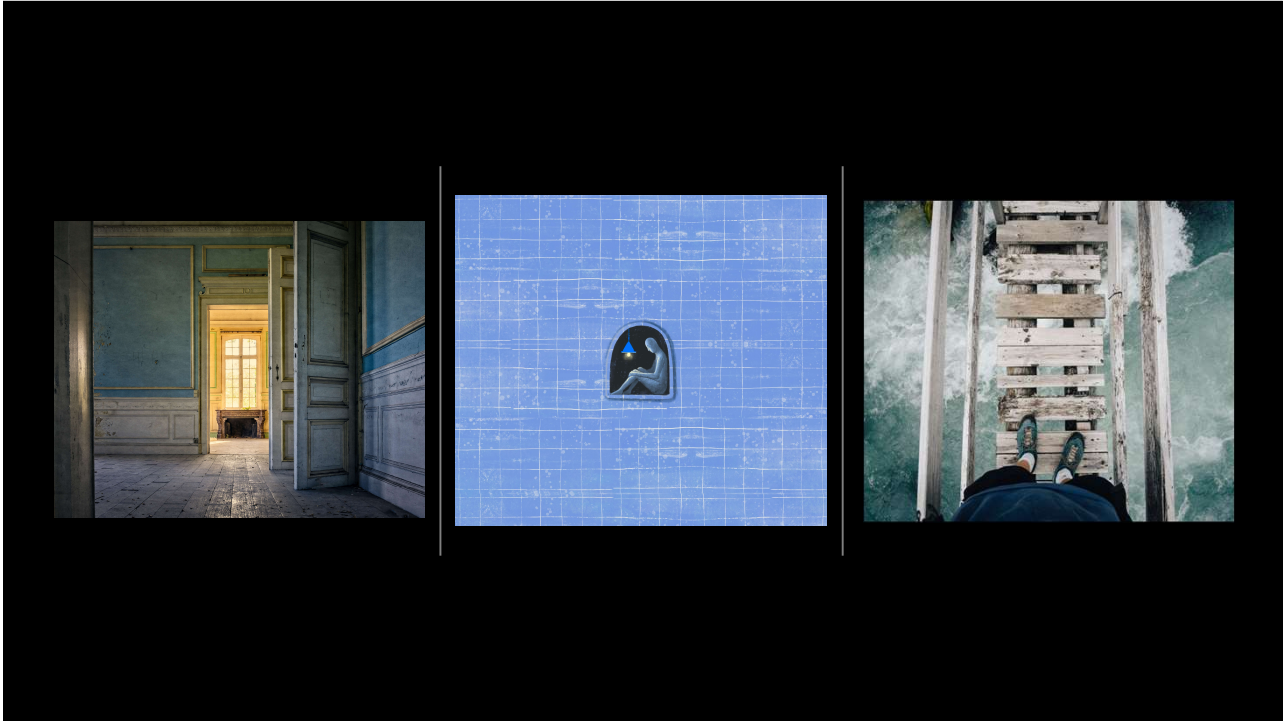
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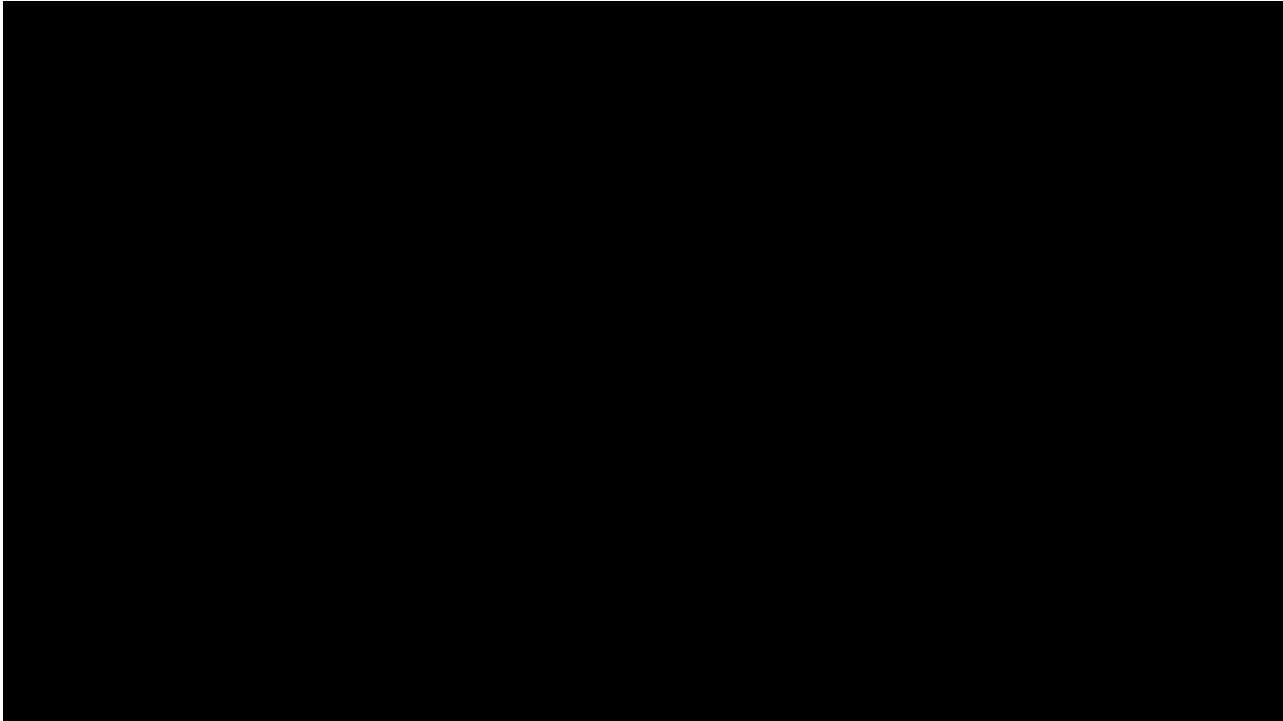
PRECARIOUS FUTURES

Uncertainty intolerance, lack of clear direction, perceived scarcity and precarity

10



11



12



13



14



15



16



17

American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®


Advocacy Blueprint for Children Advocacy Issues State Advocacy Focus Advocacy Resources

AAP-AACAP-CHA Declaration of a National Emergency in Child and Adolescent Mental Health

Home / Advocacy / Child and Adolescent Health/Mental Development / AAP-AACAP-CHA Declaration of a National Emergency in Child and Adolescent Mental Health

A declaration from the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Children's Hospital Association:

As health professionals dedicated to the care of children and adolescents, we have witnessed soaring rates of mental health challenges among children, adolescents, and their families over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbating the situation that existed prior to the pandemic. Children and families across our country have experienced enormous adversity and disruption. The inequities that result from structural racism have contributed to disproportionate impacts on children from communities of color.



A 'Stunning' Level of Student Disconnection

Professors are reporting record numbers of students checked out, stressed out, and unsure of their future.

HEUNGKONG KAM FOR THE CHRONICLE

AS A RESULT

18

FACULTY



In response to our Twitter thread, people said they were doing what they must, but nothing extra. They said they used to be a “rah-rah team player,” but not anymore. They used to feel strong ties to their institution, but they have since felt so undervalued that they’re cutting back. One response that especially stood out to us: “Faculty might not be quitting, but they’ve left the building — sometimes departure is a state of mind.”

Connections to the institution have been frayed. The work is getting done, but there isn’t much spark to it.

19

FACULTY

Your Most Important Resource Is Eyeing the Door

What colleges and universities need now is compassion, but not for the reasons you might think.

By *Sarah Rose Cavanagh* | JUNE 16, 2021



GETTY IMAGES

20

The Staff Are Not OK

It's time higher education started paying attention to the health and well-being of the staff members whose work has pulled campuses through the Covid-19 crisis.

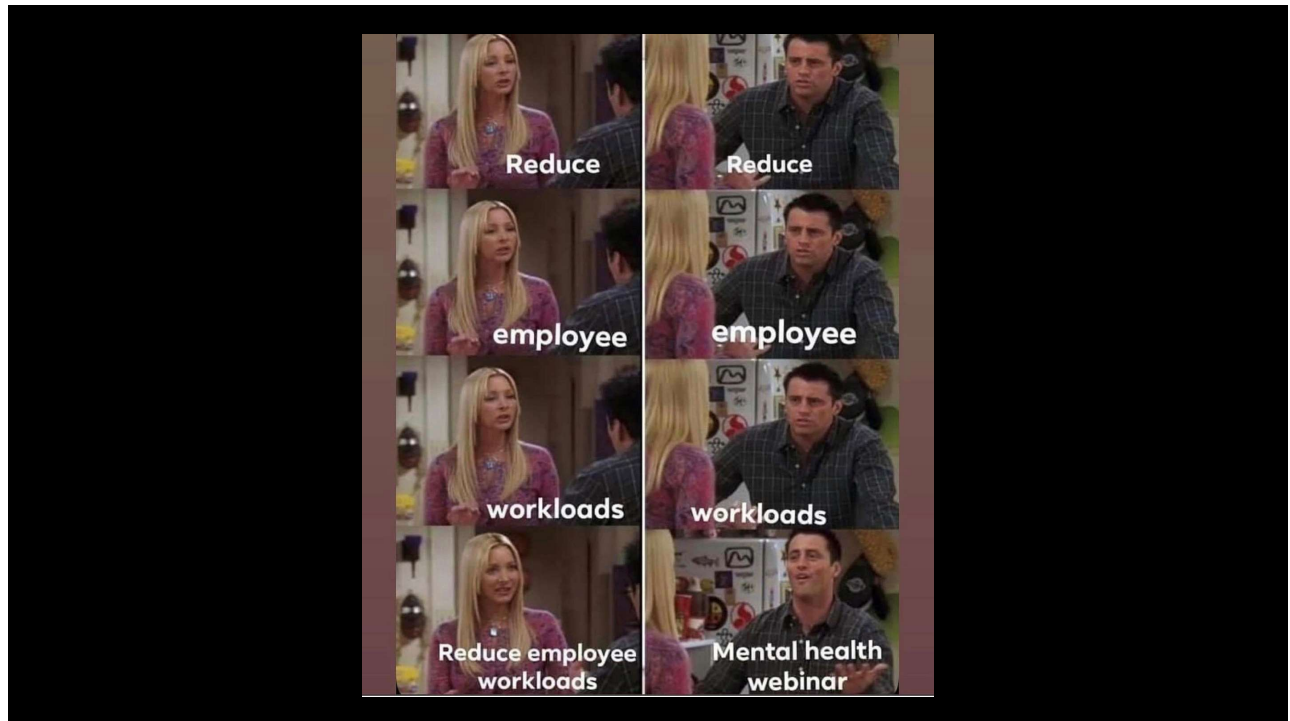
By *Lee Skallerup Bessette* | OCTOBER 30, 2020



STAFF

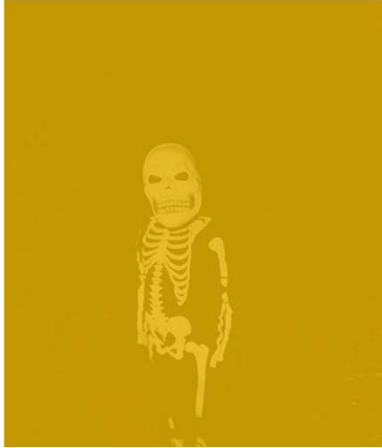
GETTY IMAGES

21



22

THE PATH AHEAD



Problems



Science

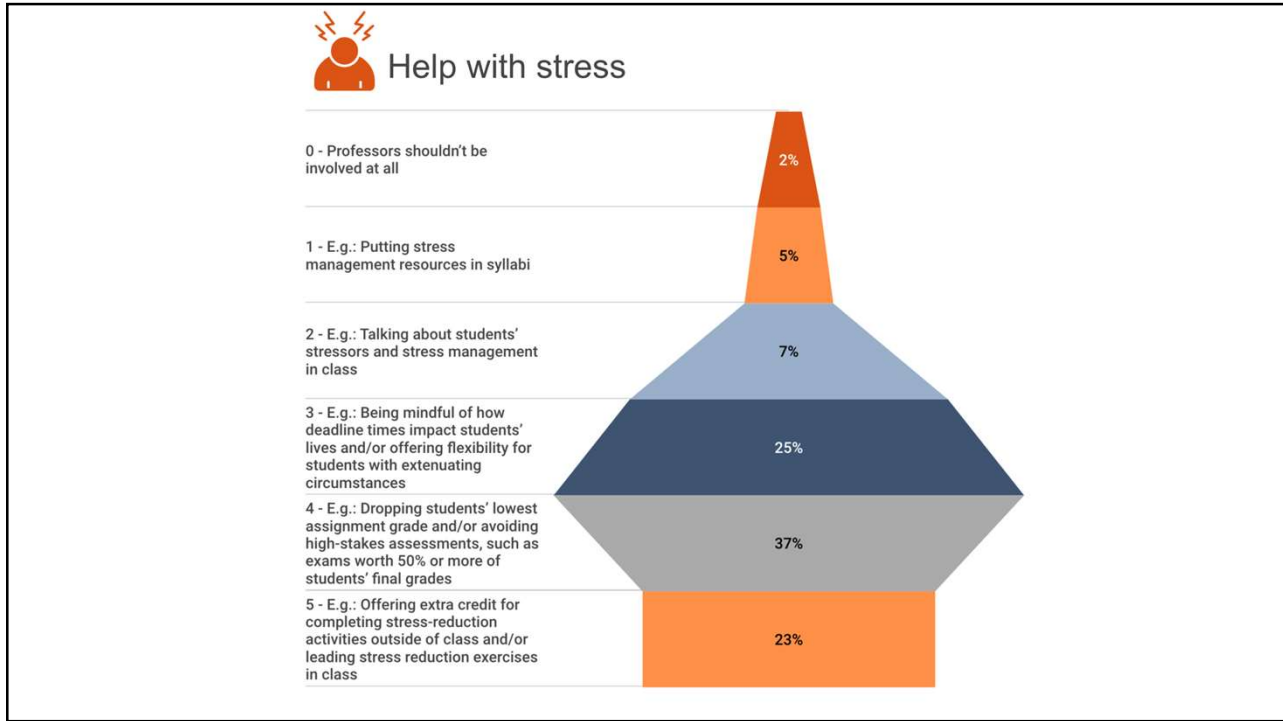


Solutions

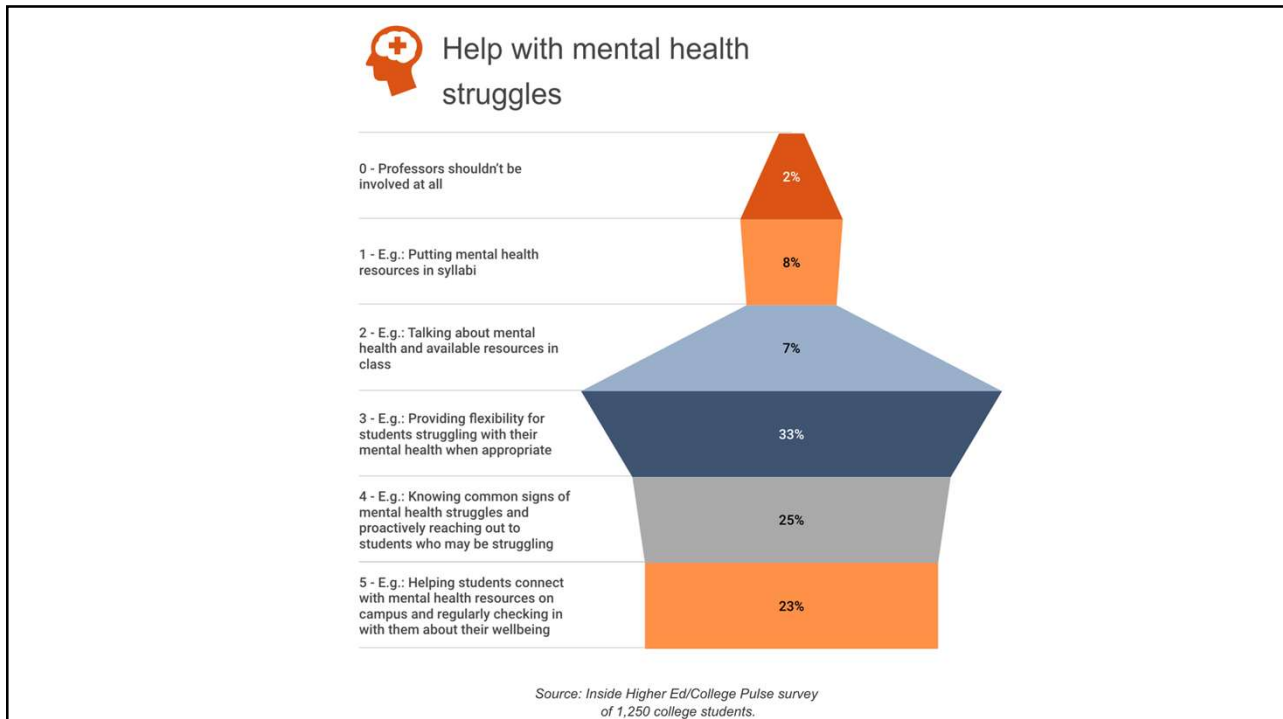
23

WHAT STUDENTS WANT: HELP WITH THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

24



25



26

WHAT STUDENTS **NEED**

27

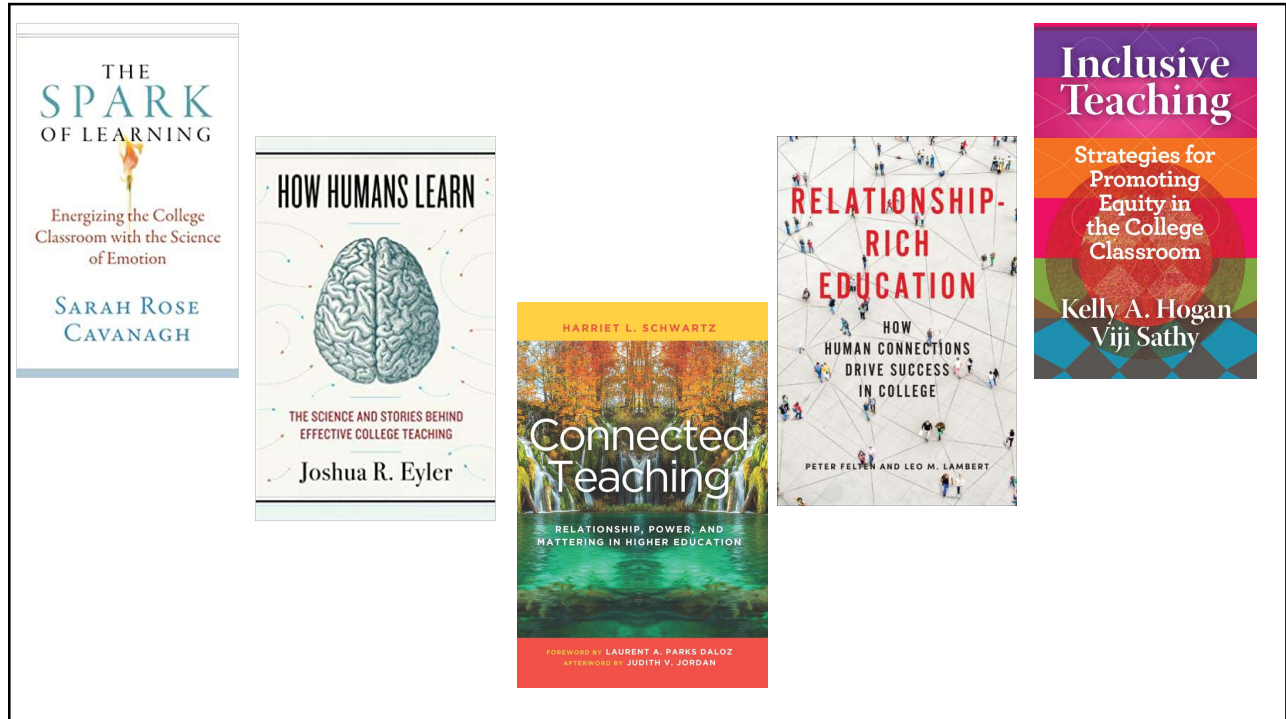
COMPASSION



”Resilience is a natural outgrowth of support. We don’t build resilience. We get correct care and support, and resilience blooms all on its own.”

– Karen Costa

28



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COMPASSIONATE FABRICS & ROUTINES



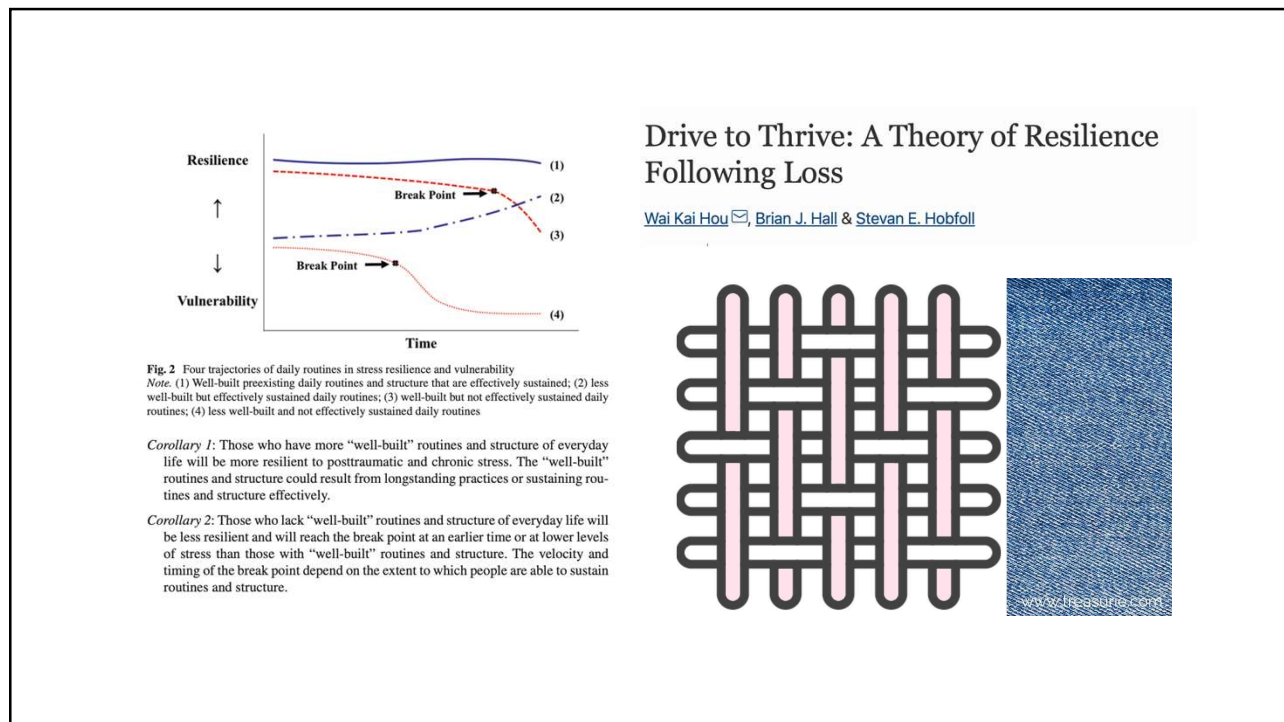
[S]tress resilience is determined by sustaining the fabrics/routines (i.e., interwoven psychosocial and communal activities, procedures, and practices) and structure of everyday life.

Wai Kai Hou, Psychologist

Drive to Thrive: A Theory of Resilience Following Loss

Wai Kai Hou [✉](#) [Brian J. Hall](#) & [Stevan E. Hobfoll](#)

30



31

STUDENTS NEED COMPASSION

As they are facing unprecedented challenges (and higher rates of working and caretaking)

As learning is relational

As the classroom is a collective social setting where emotional contagion guides motivation


32

WHAT STUDENTS **ALSO NEED**

33



34



“

Yesterday in a class, I volunteered to present my project first. That would never have been me during freshman year.

So I would say that yeah, anxiety has impacted the way I learn. It makes me *more* engaged.


Hannah, Student Voices Participant

35

AVOIDANCE REINFORCES ANXIETY

“Tension and turmoil, we find, are strange creatures...when we shrink from pressure and fear, they just take on new, harrowing proportions.”

- Lisa Damour, *Under Pressure: Confronting the Epidemic of Stress and Anxiety in Girls*



36

EXPERIENCES IN SAFE SETTINGS QUELLS ANXIETY

Inhibitory learning = extinguishing past associations between contexts (like the classroom) and **threat**

Safety learning = establishing new associations between contexts (like the classroom) and **safety**



37

Cognitive, Affective, & Behavioral Neuroscience (2021) 21:1–13
<https://doi.org/10.3758/s13415-020-00855-9>

Absence Makes the Mind Grow Fonder: Reconceptualizing Studies of Safety Learning in Translational Research on Anxiety

Hyein Cho^{1,2} · Ekaterina Likhtik^{3,4} · Tracy A. Dennis-Tiwary^{2,1}

Table 1 Known effects of explicit safety learning (i.e., the presence of safety signals) from animal and human studies

Behavioral effects of safety learning	Neurobiological effects of safety learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward effects (Rogan et al., 2005; Sangha et al., 2013) • Positive affect (“shelter-like” affect; Rogan et al., 2005) • Increase in explorative behavior in novel environments (Pollak et al., 2008, Nahmoud et al., 2020) • Increase in movement in the forced swim test (Kong et al., 2014; Pollak et al., 2008) • Mitigate the consequences of intermittent stressors (e.g., shock; Christianson et al., 2011, 2012) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in BDNF Expression (Pollak et al., 2008) • Regulation of amygdala miRNA expression (Ronovsky et al., 2019) • Reduction in spine size on synapses of the lateral amygdala (Ostroff et al., 2010) • Unique involvement of the posterior insular cortex during stress mitigation (Christianson et al., 2008, 2011) • Reduction in activity in the amygdala and increased activity in the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex measured via diffusion tensor imaging (Pollak, Rogan, et al., 2010)

38

WE ARE NOT CLINICIANS

We must create learning environments that support student mental health and well-being rather than attempting to treat mental illness

39

WELL-BEING IS COMPRISED OF...

positive emotions

a sense of meaning and purpose

life satisfaction

ability to pursue self-defined goals

COMMENTARY / OPINIONS | Published: 15 November 2022

Emotional Well-Being: What It Is and Why It Matters

[Crystal L. Park](#), [Laura D. Kubzansky](#), [Sandra M. Chafouleas](#), [Richard J. Davidson](#), [Dacher Keltner](#), [Parisa Parsafar](#), [Yeates Conwell](#), [Michelle Y. Martin](#), [Janel Hanmer](#) & [Kuan Hong Wang](#)

Affective Science 4, 10–20 (2023) | [Cite this article](#)

2880 Accesses | 12 Citations | 21 Altmetric | [Metrics](#)

Abstract

40

ALL OF THESE CAN BE COMPONENTS OF A WELL-RUN COLLEGE CLASS

exposure to vulnerability and risk taking in a safe setting

positive emotions

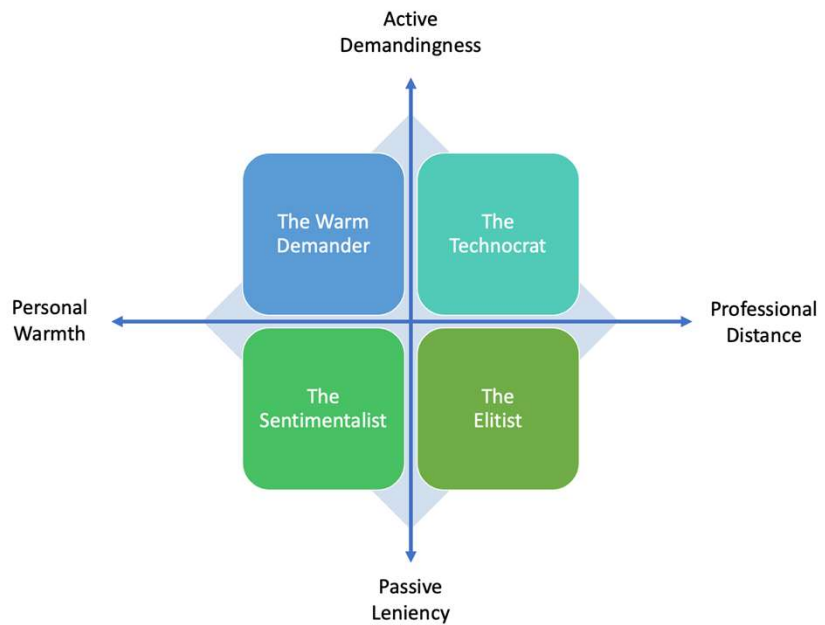
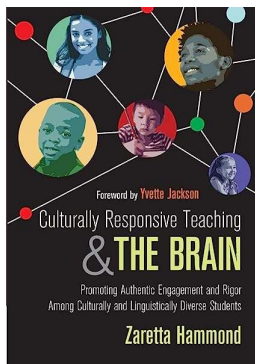
a sense of meaning and purpose

life satisfaction

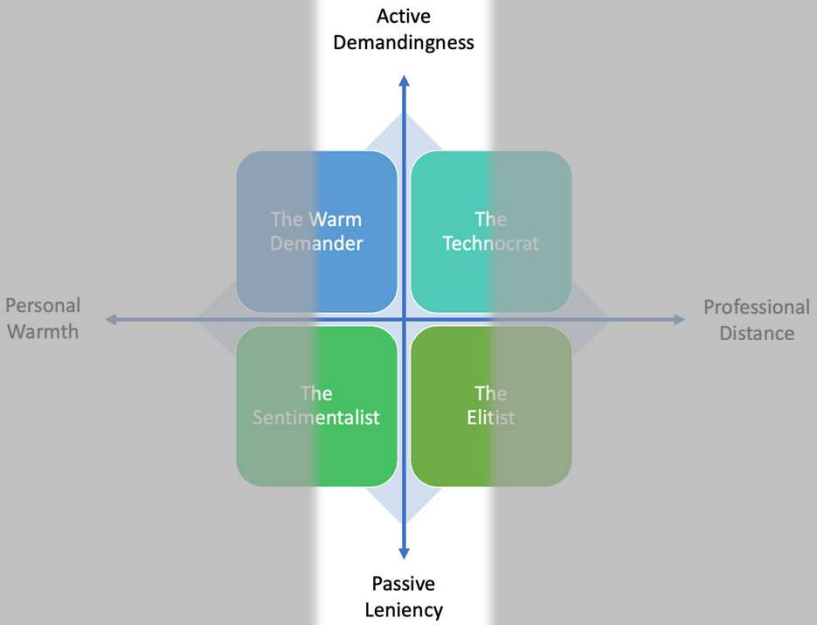
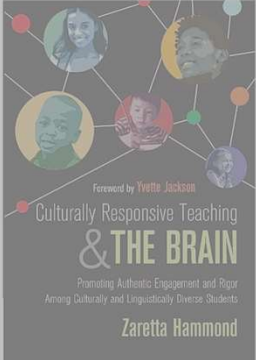
ability to pursue self-defined goals



41



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Active Demandingness

Personal Warmth ← Professional Distance

The Warm Demander

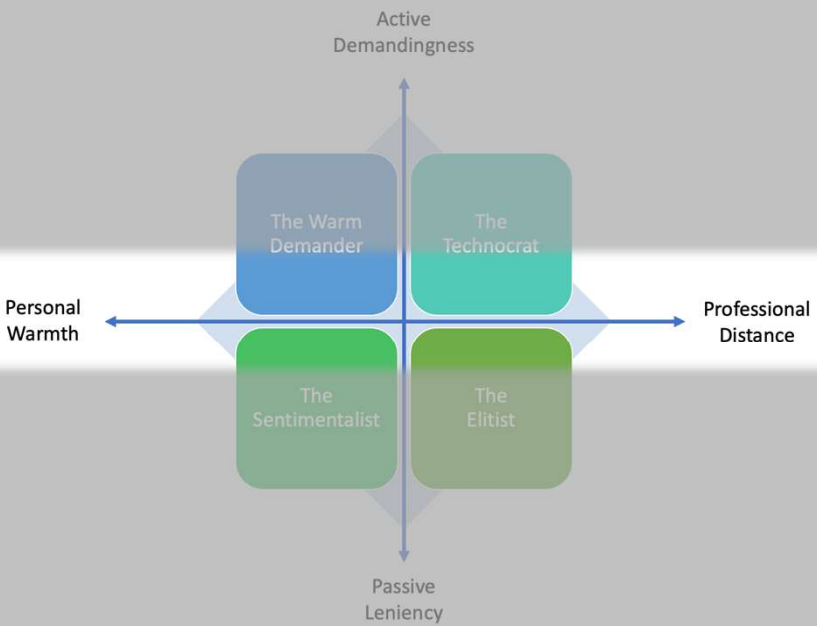
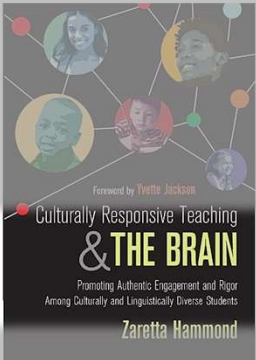
The Technocrat

The Sentimentalist

The Elitist

Passive Leniency

43



Active Demandingness

Personal Warmth ← Professional Distance

The Warm Demander

The Technocrat

The Sentimentalist

The Elitist

Passive Leniency

44




Active Demandingness

Personal Warmth

Professional Distance

Passive Leniency

The Warm Demander

The Technocrat

The Sentimentalist

The Elitist

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DISCUSSION BREAK

- What are the ways you have been **too distant/inflexible** in ways that were detrimental to you and/or your students?
 - What are the ways you have been **too lenient/had low expectations** in ways that were detrimental to you and/or your students?
- What are the ways in which you could instead model being a **warm demander**?

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THE PATH AHEAD



Problems



Science



Solutions

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COMPASSIONATE CHALLENGE GUIDELINE #1:

Build classroom community from the very first day, with attention to inclusivity

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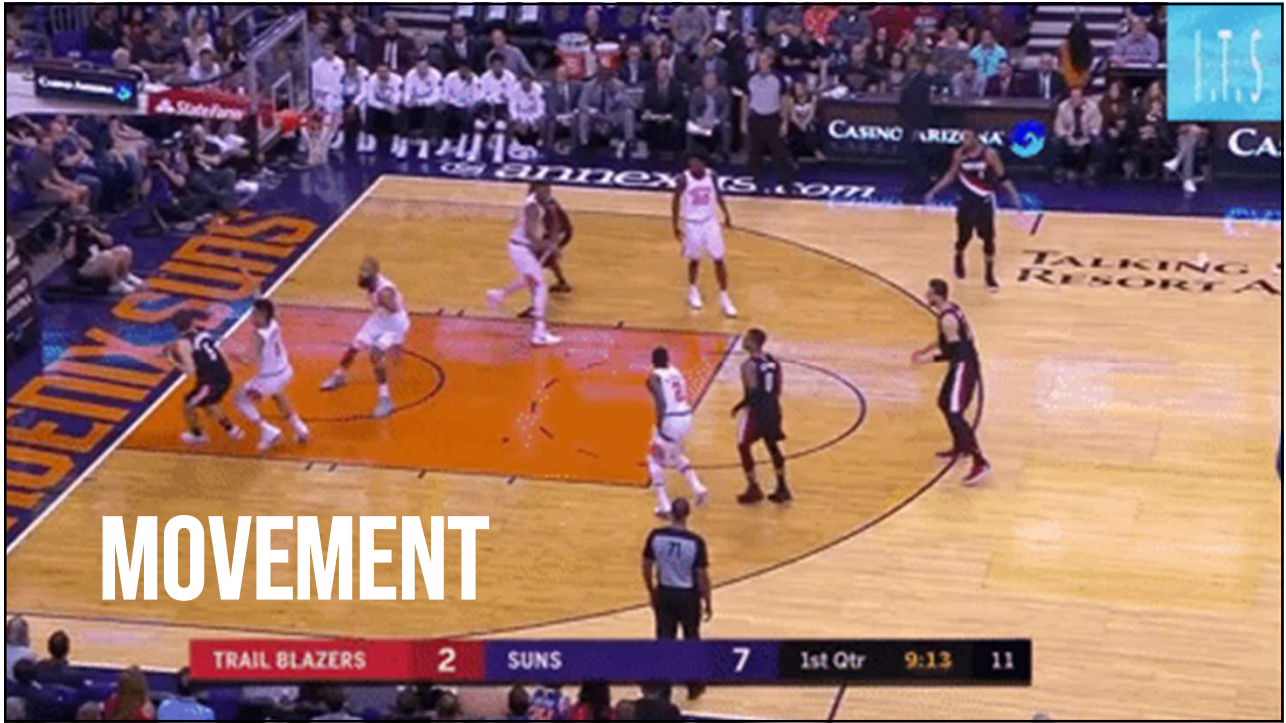


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FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

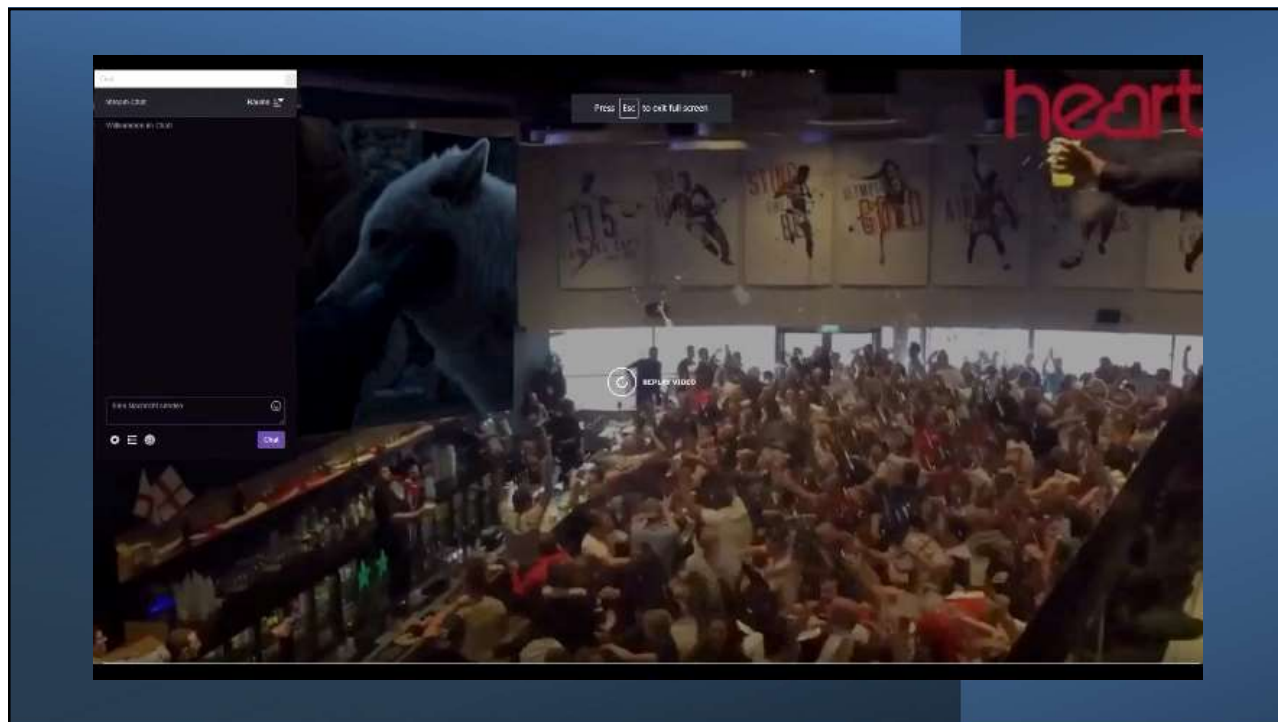
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52



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54



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Journal of Educational Psychology
2009, Vol. 101, No. 3, 705–716

© 2009 American Psychological Association
0022-0663/09/\$12.00 DOI: 10.1037/a0014695

Emotional Transmission in the Classroom: Exploring the Relationship Between Teacher and Student Enjoyment

Anne C. Frenzel
University of Munich

Thomas Goetz
University of Konstanz and Thurgau University of
Teacher Education

Oliver Lüdtke
Max Planck Institute for Human Development

Reinhard Pekrun
University of Munich

Rosemary E. Sutton
Cleveland State University

“The findings of the present study indicate that teacher enjoyment and student enjoyment in mathematics classrooms are closely linked and that the effects of teacher enjoyment on student enjoyment are mediated by teachers’ displayed enthusiasm.”

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“Basically, whatever the professor is like reflects on the students, and vice versa. If they're feeling some type of way, then we're also going to be feeling that way.”

VOICES PARTICIPANT

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“There is a feeling you get in a class where participation is crucial...it's almost a synergistic effect...I'm addressing the professor, but at the same time I'm addressing everyone else in the class and...I'm so much more interested in doing the reading and coming to class prepared and wanting to discuss the material.”

VOICES PARTICIPANT

58

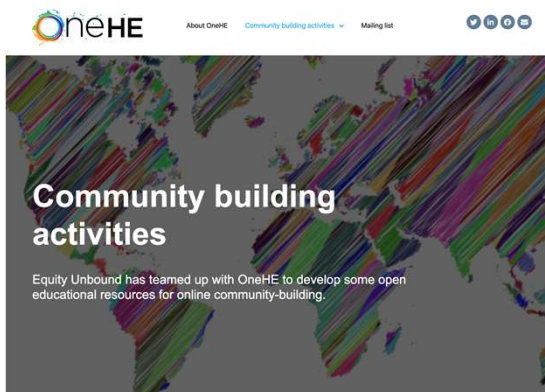


“It also depends on the teacher's mood in the morning, I have to say. Fridays are happier than Mondays.”

VOICES PARTICIPANT

59

Use Community building activities – online and off



60



61

COMPASSIONATE CHALLENGE GUIDELINE #2:

Help students reframe the roles of uncertainty, discomfort, and failure in learning

62

CHALLENGE: MOTIVATION AND ANXIETY

Both systems arouse the body for action in the context of an **anticipated demand**, under conditions of **uncertainty**.

The difference is primarily one of interpretation/appraisal



63

TABLE 7.1 Physiological changes in motivational states

Changes in physiology at rest and in response to various challenges, separated by type of motivational state (approach, avoidance, and effort). Adapted from Mendes & Park (2014).

	Approach	Avoidance	Effort
<i>Synonyms/related constructs</i>	Challenge Activation Appetitive	Threat Inhibition Withdrawal Defensive	Attention Mental demand Engagement Vigilance
<i>Measurements at rest or baseline</i>		Lower heart rate variability	
Autonomic nervous system			
Hormones	Higher testosterone Lower cortisol	Lower Dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA)	
<i>Measurements during reactivity or challenge</i>			
Autonomic nervous system	Large increases in sympathetic nervous system (SNS; e.g., heart rate, skin conductance)	Immediate SNS decreases Delayed, moderate SNS increases Decreased heart rate variability	Moderate increases in SNS Decreases in heart rate variability
Hormones	Moderate cortisol increases Testosterone increases	Cortisol increases	Moderate cortisol increases Moderate testosterone increases

Neurobiological Concomitants of Motivational States

Wendy Berry Mendes* and Jiyoung Park
Department of Psychiatry, University of California, San Francisco, CA, USA
*Corresponding author: E-mail: Wendy.mendes@ucsf.edu

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“It’s Scary but It’s Also Exciting”: Evidence of Meta-Affective Learning in Science

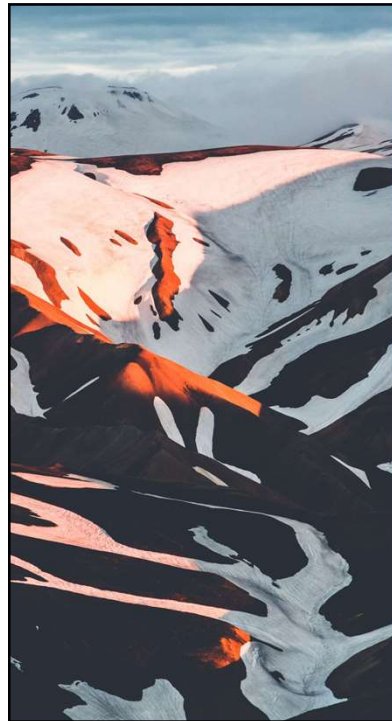
Jennifer Radoff ^a, Lama Ziad Jaber ^b, and David Hammer ^c

^a University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, USA; ^b Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, USA; ^c Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts, USA

ABSTRACT

We study the case of Marya, a freshman engineering major who showed and spoke of a drastic shift in her feelings and approach to learning physics during an introductory course. For the first several weeks, she was anxiously manipulating equations without considering physical meaning, and she was terribly worried about being correct. By the end of the semester, however, she was sense-making and taking pleasure in it, showing and expressing an enjoyment of challenges and uncertainty. In this paper, we illustrate Marya’s transformation using data from her interview and coursework, and we propose it as an example of *meta-affective learning*. We argue that meta-affective learning was an important part of Marya’s physics learning and that it was deeply entangled with her developing epistemology.

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EPISTEMIC VEXATION

“TORMENT OF THE UNKNOWN”

“THE JOY OF GOING AT IT”

“ANGST REQUIRED TO MOTIVATE THE SEARCH”

“FINDING PLEASURE IN MYSTERY”

- Physicist Jennifer Radoff

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Meet Marya.

First Year Engineering Major
STUDENT IN INTRO PHYSICS

Memorizing facts and formulas, anxious about getting things “wrong” on the first try. Worse for exams.

67

DECREASING UNCERTAINTY INTOLERANCE

Syllabus learning goal “experience physics as a refinement of everyday thinking”

Credit on problem sets = effort, not answers

Labs = self-designed, self-carried out experiments

Online text with checkpoint questions

Clickers in class

Weekly discussion sections led by TAs

Explicit conversations about emotions, confusion, & uncertainty as part of the process of doing science

Radoff, Jaber, & Hammer, 2019

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Section	Epistemology	Meta-affect
3.1.1	<i>Physics</i> is about absolute rights and wrongs	Anxiety about feeling uncertain
3.1.2	<i>Physics</i> is about the journey and the question	Comfort with feeling uncertain
3.1.3	<i>Doing physics</i> is a process of making sense of the world	Excitement about feeling uncertain

Table 1. Patterns of relationship between epistemology and meta-affect

69



“

This whole anxiety about not knowing, it disappeared and it was like, *oh, I don't know, but ok, we can work it out, you know?* And if we don't, then we have a question that we're just gonna have to wonder about.

70

**UNCOMFORTABLE AND UNMANAGEABLE
ARE NOT THE SAME THING**

71

**COMPASSIONATE CHALLENGE
GUIDELINE #3:**

Incorporate a sense of play or improvisational learning

72

Play is About
Learning – but
Animals Don't
Engage in
Play in
“Harsh
Conditions”



(Spinka, Newberry, and Bekoff, 2001)

73

**PLAY:
TRAINING FOR THE
UNEXPECTED**



74



Unexpected movements (falling, being pushed over)

Unexpected stress and loss of resources (held captive, attacked)

Alternating being in and out of control

Alternating status

75

PLAY

Low stakes, fun, engaging, cognitive, social, safe, new, competitive, active, clear, learning of subject.



Freedom to engage without judging yourself is play.



Low-stakes teamwork that is enjoyable is play.

76



Improv experience promotes divergent thinking, uncertainty tolerance, and affective well-being

Peter Felsman^{a,b,c,d,*}, Sanuri Gunawardena^c, Colleen M. Seifert^c

^a Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science, Stony Brook University, United States
^b Department of Psychology, Stony Brook University, United States
^c Department of Psychology, University of Michigan, United States
^d School of Social Work, University of Michigan, United States

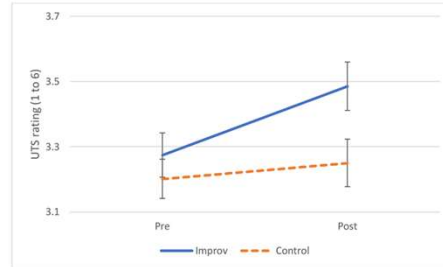


Fig. 5. Experiment 2 mean UTS ratings and standard errors at pre and post-treatment.

Results: This paper replicates the prior finding that improvisational theater training can improve divergent thinking (e.g., Lewis & Lovatt, 2013; Sowden et al., 2015), and provides new findings that improv can boost positive affect and increase uncertainty tolerance relative to other social interactions.

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PLAY IN ON-THE-GROUND ENVIRONMENTS



"Warm up" Activities



Movement



Innovate Grading



Role Play & Improv



Interrupt the Routine

78

PLAY IN ONLINE AND BLENDED ENVIRONMENTS



Collaborative Google Slides



Jamboards, Pinboards



Off-screen Activities



Use the Chat



Polls

79

COMPASSIONATE CHALLENGE GUIDELINE #4:

Challenging but compassionate course structure: lower stakes, lots of feedback, & “flexibility with guardrails”


80




FLEXIBILITY...WITH GUARDRAILS

1. Flexible deadlines
...within modules
2. Dropped lowest assignments
3. (Limited) tokens for missed or late assignments
4. Staged assignments, two-stage exams
5. Leaving last two weeks of semester for make-ups and revisions

81

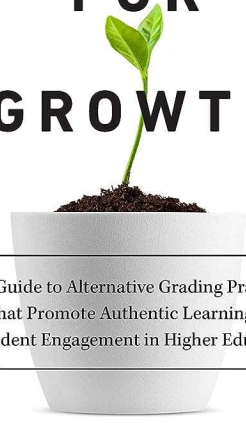




IN FEEDBACK LOOPS WE TRUST

- CLEARLY
DEFINED
STANDARDS
- HELPFUL
FEEDBACK
- MARKS
INDICATE
PROGRESS
- REATTEMPTS
WITHOUT
PENALTY

GRADING FOR GROWTH



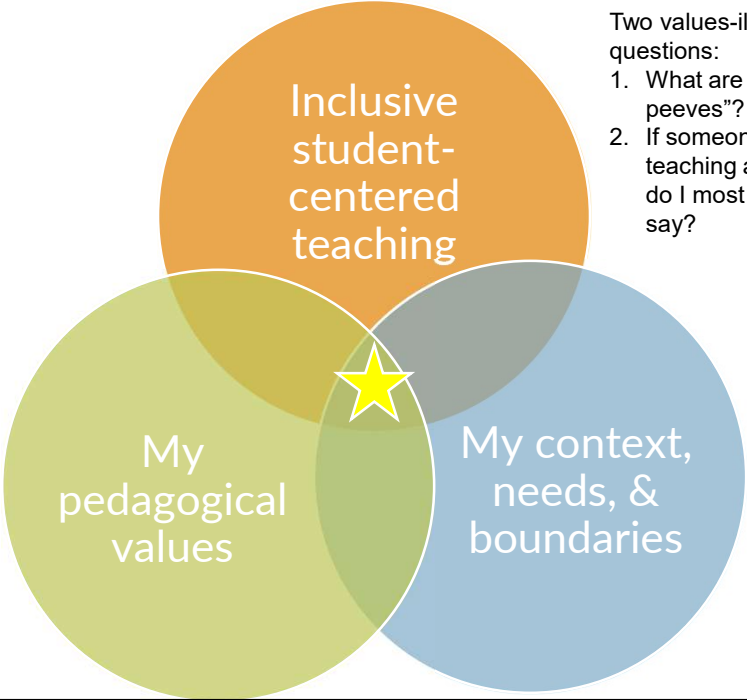


A Guide to Alternative Grading Practices
that Promote Authentic Learning and
Student Engagement in Higher Education

DAVID CLARK AND ROBERT TALBERT

FOREWORD BY LINDA NILSON

82


Lindsay Masland























Two values-illuminating questions:

1. What are my pedagogical “pet peeves”?
2. If someone were to give my teaching a compliment, what do I most hope they would say?

83



TRANSFORMING ASSESSMENT, FEEDBACK, & GRADING IN UNDERGRADUATE BIO EDUCATION (NSF RCN-UBE)

84

COMPASSIONATE CHALLENGE

GUIDELINE #5:

Have a plan for addressing “hot moments”

85

10 In the Moment Responses for Addressing Micro and Macroaggressions in the Classroom

Updated: May 17

[Chavella Pittman](#)

Dominican University

Remind of classroom goals & expectations.

6. You do not have to agree with the course material. However, you do have to demonstrate that you understand and can communicate the disciplinary perspective presented in this course's material.

7. This classroom is a place where we can discuss and interrogate ideas; however, we do so with respect and in the context of the course material.

8. Free speech is allowed as all students are encouraged to respectfully share their perspectives and ideas as a part of the process of learning the course material.

- Possible follow-up: As this is a course and classroom in a college setting, ideas and perspectives must be articulated in a manner consistent with the behavior expectations of the classroom/university and which furthers students' mastery of the presented course material.



86

COMPASSIONATE CHALLENGE GUIDELINE #6:

Know your campus resources – and use them

87

SAMPLE CAMPUS RESOURCES

Counseling center

Financial aid office

Advising/coaching offices

Tutoring

Multicultural center

Bias reporting

"Care team" / Dean's Council / Early alert

"Red book"

Library

Campus health services

88

COMPASSIONATE CHALLENGE GUIDELINE #7:

Know the limits of your role, and set boundaries to protect your own well-being

89

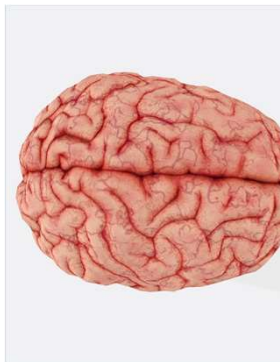
MENTAL HEALTH = BALANCING ENERGY DEPOSITS & WITHDRAWALS



Allostasis is the process by which the body responds to stressors in order to regain homeostasis.



Doing this effectively requires adding biological resources (nutrition, sleep, rest) and spending them wisely.



Your brain is part of your body! And your body is part brain.



These biological resources fuel not just your physical but also your mental health – and good mental health fuels the budget.

90

“Boundaries are the distance at which I can love you and me simultaneously.”

Prentis Hemphill



91

THREE QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELVES

92



93

Question **Two**: What Do I Commit to Saying No To This Summer/Fall?



Join at menti.com | use code 5232 3391


94



95




96



Hope, **ambition**, and **drive** live in that space between the present and the uncertain future.

So when we engage with our anxiety, we can also leverage all the possibilities of the future.

Tracy Dennis-Tiwary, Clinical psychologist & author



97



For my substack newsletter "Once More, With Feeling," follow QR code →



KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING!

BlueSky: @SaRoseCav
Instagram: #SarahRoseHIVE

Images through paid subscriptions to Adobe Images and 99 Club and Unsplash.

Author images from author websites.

Memes – who knows?

98