

TODAY'S GOALS

- Identify key stages in the employee lifecycle and adapt supervision strategies for each phase.
- Implement practical tools for learning about and engaging employees (e.g., onboarding, intake, stay interviews, feedback models, etc.)
- Recognize and address supervisor burnout through strategies that support personal energy management and resilience.

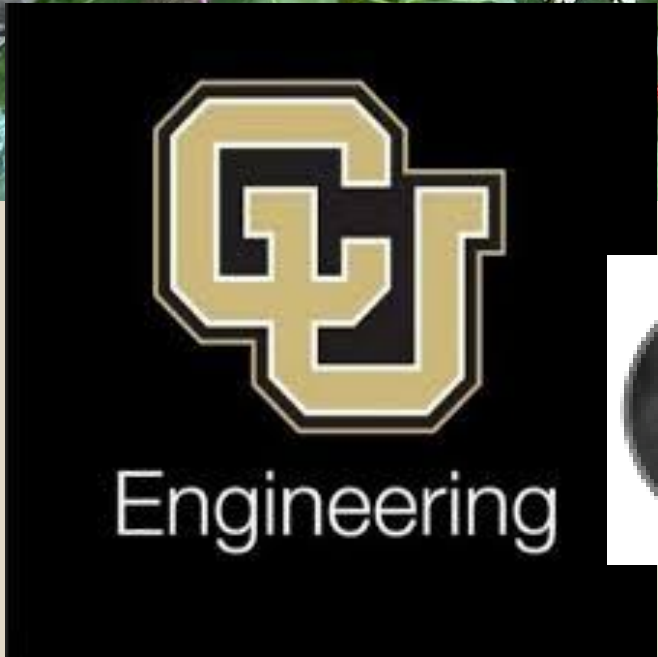
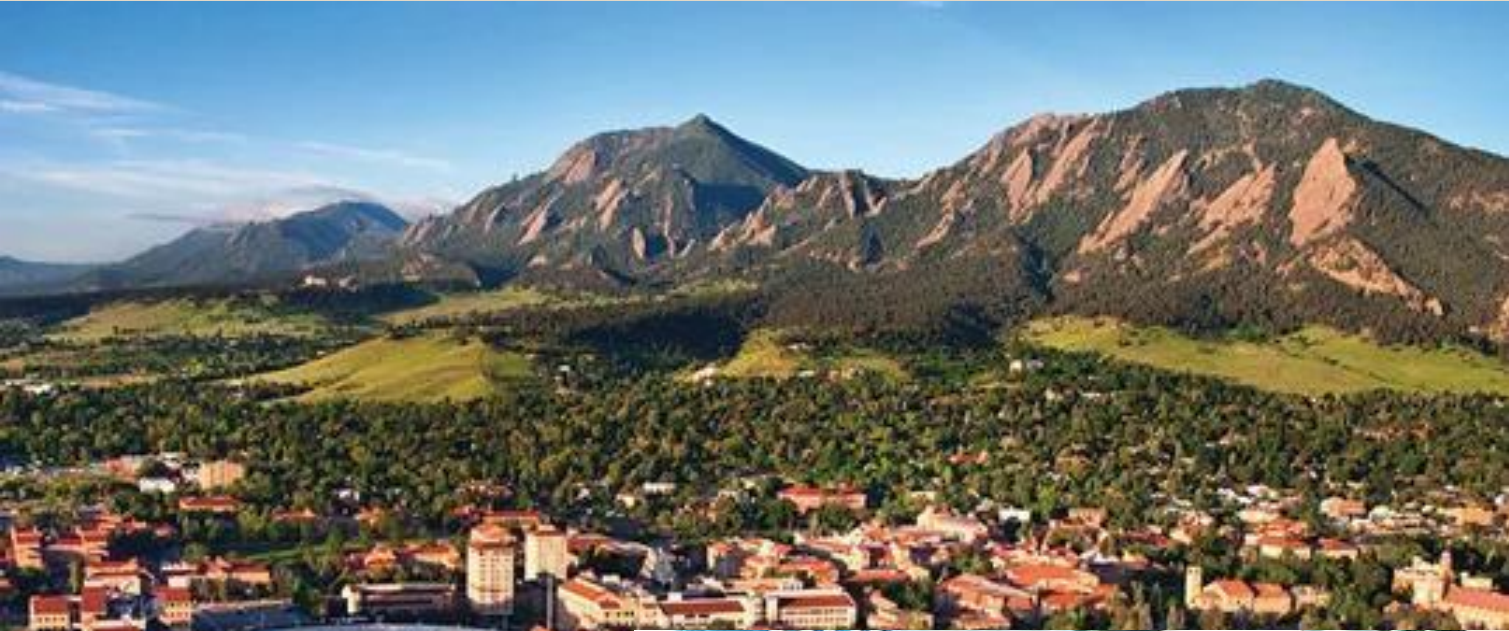
Supervision is a Marathon, Not a Sprint

Building a Community of Support
for Your Team and Yourself

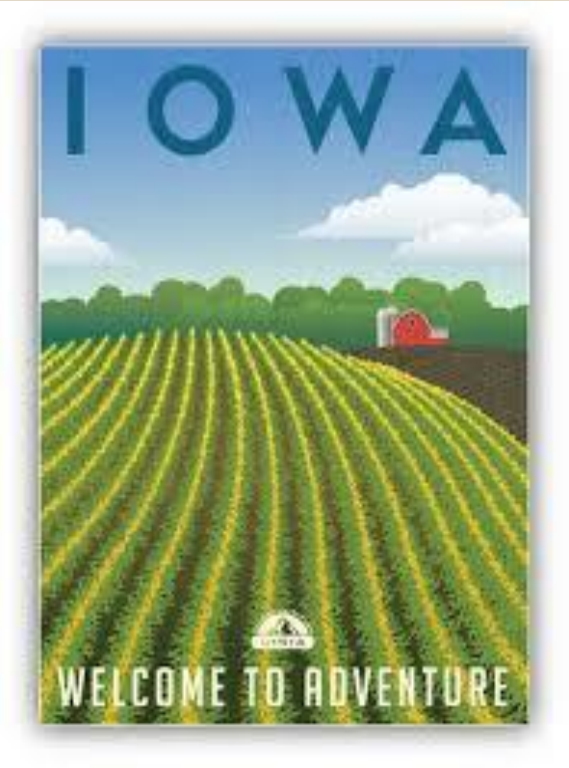
2026 CU Boulder Student Success Conference

Kristi Wasson, Continuing Education &
Alana Davis-DeLaria, Engineering & Applied Science

Oh hi! I'm Alana (pronounced Uh-lan-uh, like "Atlanta" with no "t"s).



Hello—I'm Kristi!



SESSION AGENDA

- Introduction and framing of our session
- The employee lifecycle
- Strategies across the lifecycle
- Practicing and Modeling Self Care
- Wrap up and Q&A
- Post-session reflection and application

IMPORTANT NOTES

- Not a supervisor (yet)? You're still welcome and have valuable information to share here!
- Supervisee/employee and supervisor/manager will be used interchangeably
- Supervision can come with challenges – take care of yourself during our session.



WHY IS THIS TOPIC
SO IMPORTANT?

A 2018 report on the Employee Experience by Udemy found nearly 50% of employees quit their job because of a bad manager. A good manager, on the other hand, acts not as a “boss” but as a “coach.”

A NOTE ABOUT VALUES

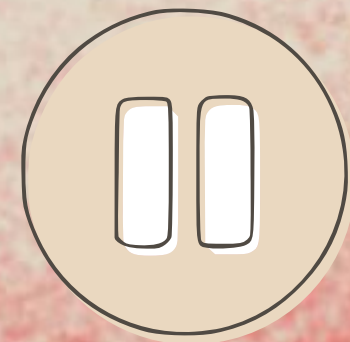
Intentional practices help employees to recognize and appreciate the attributes we hope to embody most within our supervision!



ONBOARDING

Reflection and Discussion:

What onboarding experiences
have been valuable or
positive in your career?



Campus, College, & Unit-Specific Onboarding:

- Ensure a pre-arrival comprehensive onboarding schedule that may include:
 - Required and optional training (including scheduled campus and unit face-to-face and asynchronous training),
 - Resource overviews
 - Supported sessions with a mentor
 - Opportunities to connect with others and build community
 - A way to track progress that's accessible to employee and supervisor

“Add-On” Onboarding:

As a supervisor, it's also valuable to get to know your supervisees, including:

- Self-identified strengths, values, and areas of expertise,
- Preferences,
- Communication style,
- And more!

“Add-On” Onboarding for New Employees

Helps a supervisor:

- Get to know their employee
- Learn more about them
- Find possible opportunities
- Identify potential challenges
- Start to build trust
- Live and share their values!

Sample Questions

- What would you like to share with me regarding how your strengths and values influence your work performance (creating opportunity and challenge)?
- What is your preferred communication style (email, chat, in-person, video-chat, other)?
- How often would you like to meet with me for check-ins?
- How do you like to receive feedback from your supervisor (both positive and constructive feedback that requires honest and sometimes vulnerable dialogue)?

DAY-TO-DAY
FEEDBACK
aka
“COACHING”

Per Gallup, 80% of employees who say they have received meaningful feedback in the past week are fully engaged!

“Fast Feedback” is meaningful and approachable because it is frequent, focused, and future-oriented.

- Make feedback common and frequent
- Prioritize active listening to make feedback two-way
- Individualize feedback
- Emphasize the current moment and what’s ahead
- Focus on behaviors NOT characteristics, with the goal of employee development

“

“Managers who continually listen, ask questions, gain context and promote dialogue have progressed to a coaching mindset.”

DEVELOPMENT
THROUGH FEEDBACK

Development Through Feedback—using OARS

- Notice and name patterns before they become performance problems
- Get (and stay) curious – ask about behaviors & listen
- Point out challenges; impacts vs intent
- Ask what is needed/could help encourage growth
- Provide resources/trainings
- Create accountability & feedback loops for check-ins

Development Through Feedback - Benefits:

Supervisor:

- Observe your employee in practice and authentic interaction
- Provide valuable, consistent, and timely:
 - Recognition (strengths)
 - Feedback
(Opportunities)
- Identify areas where your employee might be ready for new projects or to share and help train!

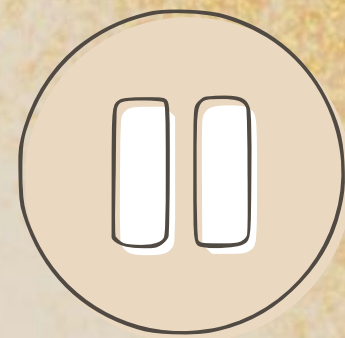
Employee:

- Obtain recognition and feedback
 - Grow confidence
 - Understand challenges
- Ask questions or voice areas of insecurity
 - Express obstacles or what may be needed
- Get supervisor commitments
 - How can and will I help? What can we practice?

Feedback Expectations and Process:

Make it clear (both process and frequency) and get creative:

- Session recordings*
 - *Ensure recording release is obtained
- Contact log reviews
- Facilitation feedback
- What else?



Reflection and Discussion:

What is your experience with feedback opportunities?

What norms or expectations would you want to set before starting or continuing these reviews with your employees?

STAY INTERVIEWS

What is a Stay Interview?

“A structured discussion a leader conducts with an individual employee to learn specific actions the leader can take to strengthen the employee’s engagement and retention with the organization.”

Stay Interviews help retain and maintain the engagement of our highest-performing employees. Thinking about higher education professionals, they often:

- Care DEEPLY
- Go above and beyond, without ask
- Look for innovative ways to support
- Work tirelessly
- Are high-performing. So....

Stay Interview - Benefits:

Helps You Discover:

- That more support or direction is needed
- What is needed to keep employees you've invested in at your institution or in your unit
- Possible changes that could help your employee stay engaged (or re-engage).

Helps Employee Understand:

- That you appreciate them
- That you care about more than their performance
- That you acknowledge their efforts in addition to their outcomes
- That you're open to making changes

A Note About Evaluations:

An eval can be a culmination of all the strategies you use (in partnership with your employee) to understand, support, and productively challenge!

- Timely is best – don't let evaluations be the first time an issue is discussed
 - TIP: An email folder to log planning and emailed feedback from staff or students
- Find YOUR support and mentorship!

LEADERSHIP: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

"Leadership is about creating spaces where people can be whole"

- Parker Palmer

"Leadership is about caring for those in our charge– not being in charge"

- Simon Sinek

Managers Make or Break Engagement:

The single greatest influence on employee engagement is → their manager

Engagement levels declined across the board in 2024:

- Manager engagement dropped **30% → 27%**
 - No other employee group saw a larger decline
- Global employee engagement fell **23% → 21%**

Why are Managers Disengaged?

- Lack of training
- Lack of clear expectations
- Lack of control in decision making
- Responsible for communication and accountability

Which can lead to burnout and compassion fatigue

Burnout vs Compassion Fatigue

- **Burnout** = exhaustion due to chronic occupational stress and overload, *particularly when self-care is neglected.*
- **Compassion fatigue** = depletion of the individual's emotional capacity *particularly when caring for others' trauma and suffering.*

Recognizing Burnout and Compassion Fatigue

Burnout

- Caused by workload and systemic pressure
- Develops gradually over months, years
- Feels like cynicism, disengagement, low productivity
- Needs rest or change in workload to overcome

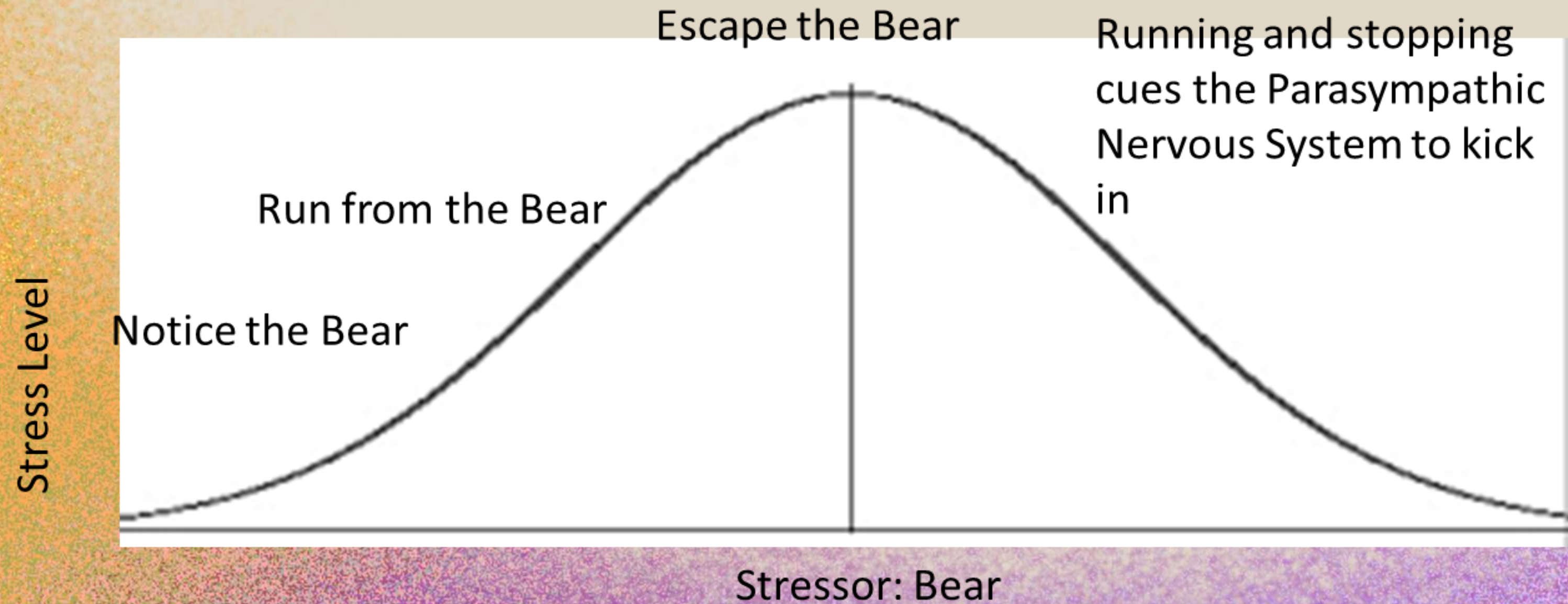
Compassion Fatigue

- Caused by emotional overload from others' pain
- Can arise suddenly after an intense appointment
- Feels like numbness, guilt, reduced empathy
- Needs emotional replenishment, boundaries

Why are Supervisors at Such High Risk for Both?

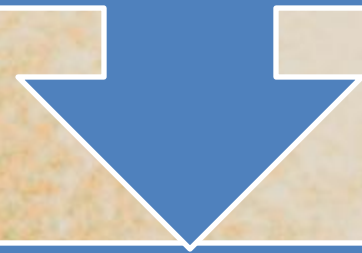
- A lot falls on us
- We absorb others' emotions
- High responsibility with little control
- Pressure to be a role model
- Can feel isolating with fewer peers to process with

A Note About Stress



Releasing Stress Is Essential to Preventing Burnout.

Current stressors (workload, back-to-back appointments, etc.) may not offer **natural physiological outputs** to let our bodies know that the stressor has passed.

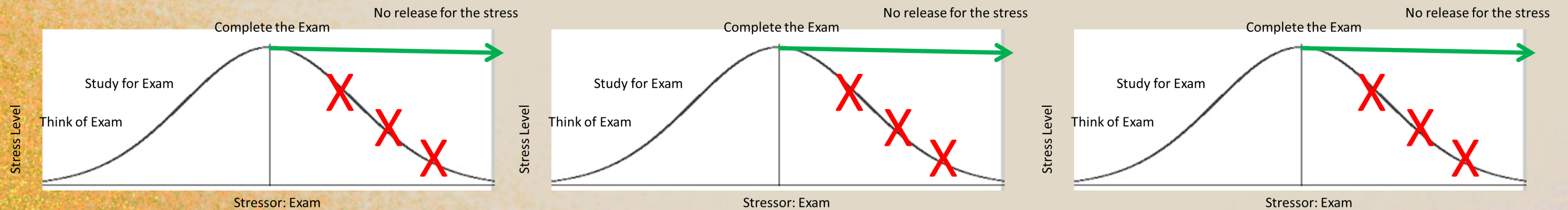


We must intentionally **create those outlet opportunities** on our own within our own systems and habits.



Prolonged Stress Impact

If stress is permitted to build without release, physical and mental health symptoms can arise.



Releasing the Pressure Valve...if we don't run, what do we do? (This is how we explain it to students – why would it be any different for us?)

Modeling and Protecting Wellbeing on your Team

Set the Example (Behavior = Permission)

- *When they see you choose balance it becomes allowed*

Support & Normalize on the Team

- *Recovery time is productive time*

Break the Silence Around Burnout and Compassion Fatigue

- *When they are named, they become manageable*

Sustaining your Wellbeing as a Supervisor

Micro-Recovery

- *Build habits, not one-offs – presence requires freshness*

Redefine Boundaries

- *Boundaries aren't quitting – they're choosing where energy goes*

Practice Self-Compassion

- *You don't solve compassion fatigue – you soften around it*

Wellbeing isn't indulgent. It's part of the job

Change in manager burnout from 2024 to 2025 reflects a support gap, not a strength gap

Manager Training

- Thriving increases (28% → 34%)
- Extreme disengagement is cut in half

Coaching Skill Development

- Performance improves by 20–28%

Ongoing Professional Development

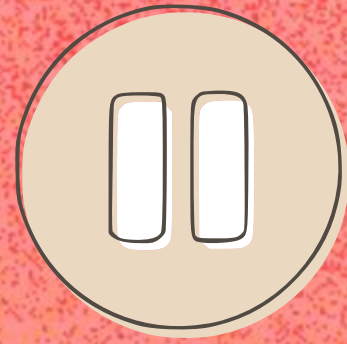
- Wellbeing increases by 32%

Supervisor Support isn't a Luxury – it's a Performance Strategy

RESOURCES & BOUNDARIES

Higher education employees care deeply and show up for students. WE show up for them (and ourselves) by:

- Checking in often to ensure they can connect with resources (counseling, wellness, etc.)
- Helping them to set work/life boundaries
- Advocating for needs (professional development, limits, etc.) to grow confidence.



Reflection and Discussion:

Based on an insight you gained through this presentation or
your reflection:

- What is one thing you will do in the next two weeks?
- What resources or information do you still need?
- Who can help you or provide accountability?

RESOURCES



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Resources, Citations, and Sample Templates:

- Onboarding:
 - [Sample Onboarding Questions](#)
- Supervision, Development, and Feedback:
 - Crail, C. April 30, 2024. [15 Effective Employee Retention Strategies in 2024](#). Forbes Advisor.
 - McClain, D. & Nelson B. January 1, 2022. [How Effective Feedback Fuels Performance](#). Gallup Workplace.
 - Newhouse, M. December 2, 2020. [Why Effective Onboarding Is More Important Than Ever](#). Forbes.
- Stay Interviews:
 - Finnegan, Richard P. (2018). The Power of Stay Interviews for Engagement and Retention. Society for Human Resource Management
 - Willyerd, K. Nov.18, 2014. [What High Performers Want At Work](#). Harvard Business Review
 - Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM). 2021. [Stay Interview Questions](#). HR Daily Newsletter.
 - Heinz, Kate. January 12, 2021. [What is a Stay Interview? 13 Questions to Ask](#). Built In.
 - Expert Panel, Forbes Human Resources Council. April 8, 2020. [12 Strategies for Conducting Effective Stay Interviews](#). Forbes.

THANK YOU!!

We'd love to connect via
LinkedIn (or you can always
Teams or email us)!

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Session Feedback Survey