

# COPING STRATEGIES IN THE HOSPITAL WORK ENVIRONMENT

Jane Lemaire MD FRCPC

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# DISCLOSURES



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# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this session, you will be able to

Recall how you respond to stress in the work environment

Discuss various coping and resilience strategies

Identify behaviors that may mitigate contextual tensions in the workplace

# INDIVIDUAL SYSTEM



# RECALL A STRESSFUL EVENT



# HOW DID YOU FEEL?

Angry	Depressed	Confused	Helpless	Indifferent	Afraid	Hurt	Sad
irritated	lousy	upset	incapable	insensitive	fearful	crushed	tearful
enraged	disappointed	doubtful	alone	dull	terrified	tormented	sorrowful
hostile	discouraged	uncertain	paralyzed	nonchalant	suspicious	deprived	pained
insulted	ashamed	indecisive	fatigued	neutral	anxious	pained	grieved
annoyed	powerless	perplexed	useless	reserved	alarmed	tortured	anguished
upset	diminished	embarrassed	inferior	weary	panicked	dejected	desolate
hateful	guilty	hesitant	vulnerable	bored	nervous	rejected	desperate
unpleasant	dissatisfied	uneasy	empty	preoccupied	scared	injured	unhappy
offensive	miserable	stupefied	pathetic	cold	worried	offended	lonely
bitter	detestable	disillusioned	hesitant	disinterested	timid	afflicted	grieved
aggressive	repugnant	unbelieving	frustrated	lifeless	shaky	aching	mournful
resentful	despicable	skeptical	woeful		restless	victimized	dismayed
inflamed	disgusted	distrustful	tragic		threatened	heartbroken	pessimistic
provoked	terrible	pessimistic	dominated		cowardly	humiliated	
indignant	in despair	tense	distressed		menaced	wronged	
infuriated		unsure	in a stew		wary	alienated	

WHAT DID YOU DO TO COPE?

# COPING

A wide range of cognitive and behavioral strategies that individuals may use in avoiding, evaluating or altering stressful situations or easing their undesirable effects



# PROBLEM FOCUSED OR ACTIVE COPING

Used when we feel we can have some control over the situation  
Aimed at eliminating or altering the source of stress



# EMOTION FOCUSED COPING

Used when source of stress is beyond our control

Aimed at reducing or managing the emotional distress or psychosomatic symptoms



# SEEKING SUPPORT



Emotional



Informational



Instrumental

# MALADAPTIVE COPING STRATEGIES

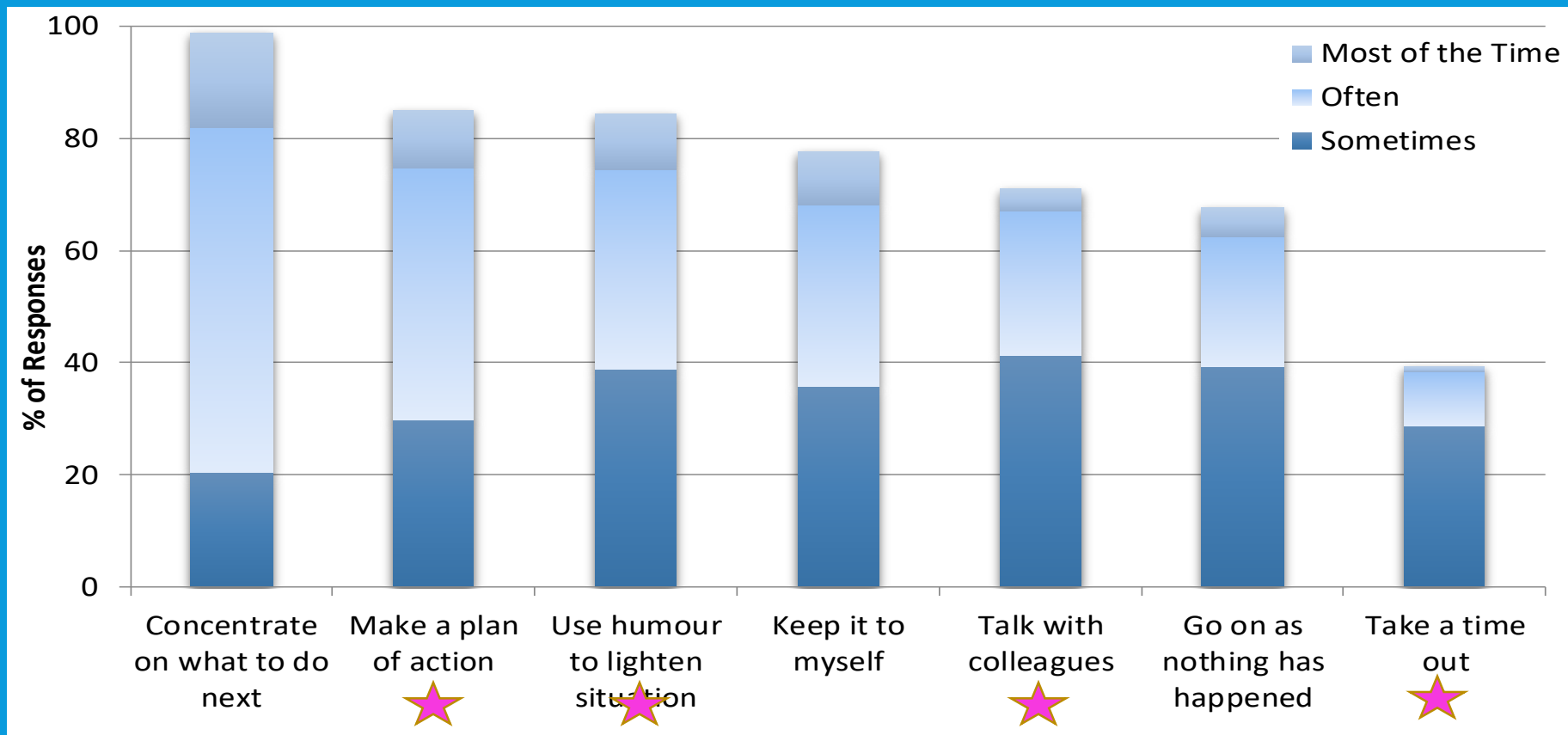
Substance use disorders, disordered eating,  
gambling, shopping

Denial or avoidance of the problem or the  
feelings of stress



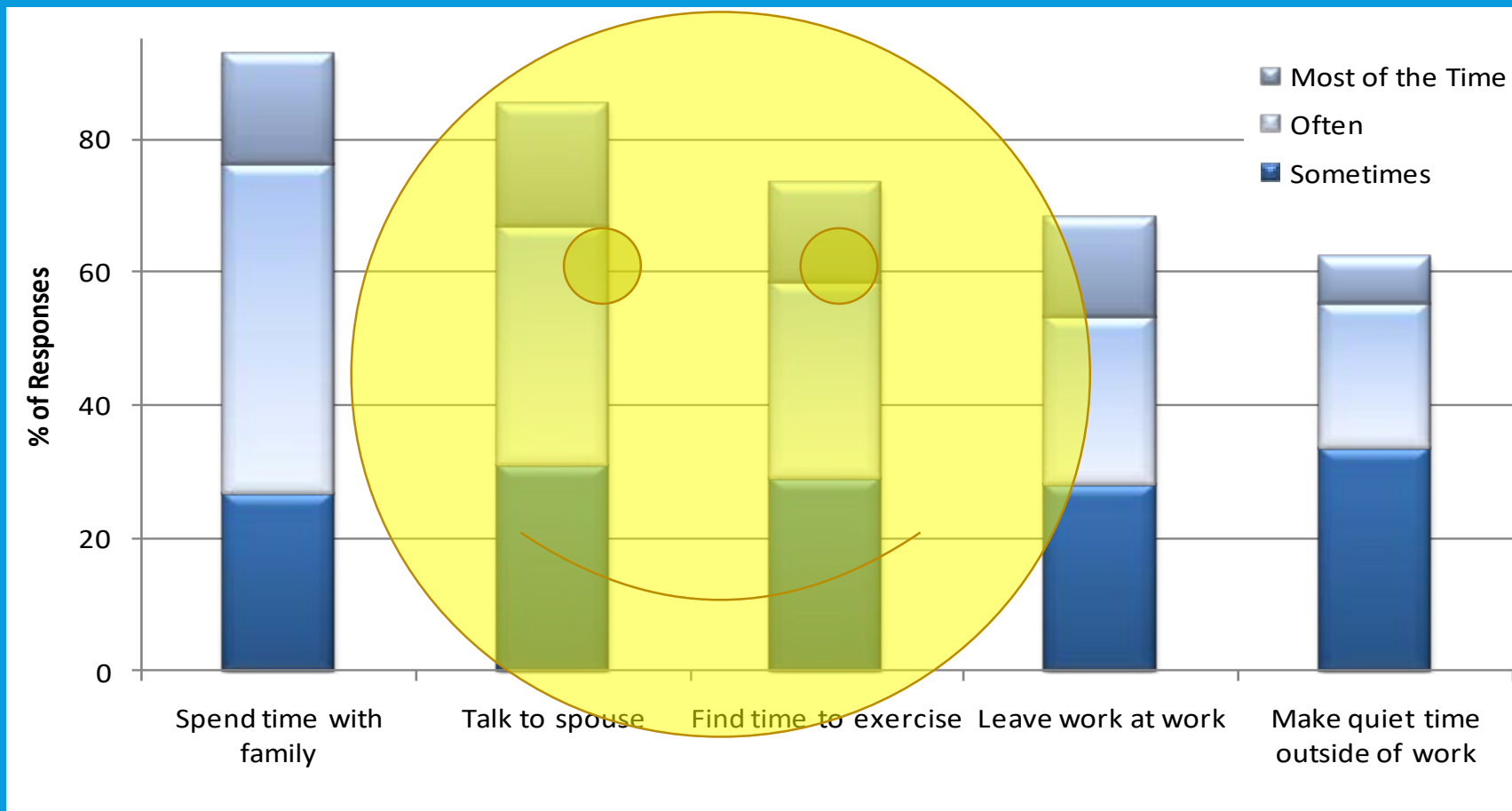
# PHYSICIAN COPING STRATEGIES (WORK)

(n=1151)



# PHYSICIAN COPING STRATEGIES (HOME)

(n=1151)



# COPING STYLES AND AFFECT

High  
positive  
affect

N=493

- More problem solving
- More seeking support
- More time outs

High  
negative  
affect

N=281

- More denial
- More keeping to self

# REVIEW YOUR COPING STRATEGY

## *WAS IT...*

**Active?** where you tried to solve the problem

**Emotion-focused?** where you tried to alter your reaction

**Support seeking?** where you sought help from friends or colleagues

**Maladaptive?** where you potentially did harm



# RESILIENCE

The capacity to respond to stress in a healthy way

The ability to recover quickly from illness, change, or misfortune; buoyancy



# RESILIENCE

**Job-related sources of gratifications**  
from the doctor-patient relationship  
from medical efficacy

# RESILIENCE

## Resilience practices

Leisure time activity

Quest for and cultivation of relationships with colleagues, family and friends

Personal reflection and goal setting

Self-demarkation and limitation of work hours

Self-organization

Ritualized time outs

Spiritual practices

# RESILIENCE

## **Useful attitudes**

Acceptance and realism

Self-awareness and reflexivity

Recognizing when change is necessary

Appreciating the good things (e.g. 3 good things)

CHAOS

# A DAY IN THE LIFE..... BY SARAH NEWMAN



# CHAOS IN THE WORKPLACE



## BEST PRACTICES: PART I

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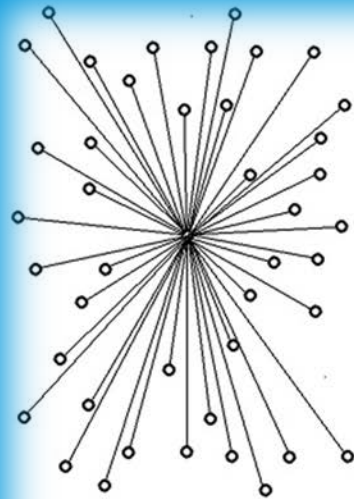
# CHAOS IN MEDICAL PRACTICE: AN IMPORTANT AND REMEDIABLE CONTRIBUTOR TO PHYSICIAN BURNOUT

Jane B. Lemaire, MD; Diane W. Shannon, MD, MPH; Elizabeth Goelz, MD; Mark Linzer, MD, MACP

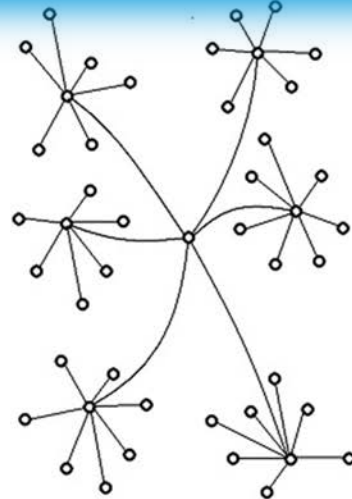
*Dr. Lemaire (lemaire@ucalgary.ca) is clinical professor and vice chair for physician wellness and vitality, Department of Medicine and W21C Research and Innovation Center, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada. Dr. Shannon (dshannon@mdwriter.com) is a healthcare writer and author, Boston, MA. Dr. Goelz (elizabeth.goelz@hcmed.org) is associate director, Institute for Professional Worklife, Hennepin Healthcare, assistant professor of medicine, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN. Dr. Linzer (Mark.Linzer@hcmed.org) is M. Thomas Stillman Endowed Chair and vice chief for education, mentorship and scholarship, Hennepin Healthcare, and professor, Department of Medicine, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN.*

“Chaos: a state of total confusion with no order”.<sup>1</sup>

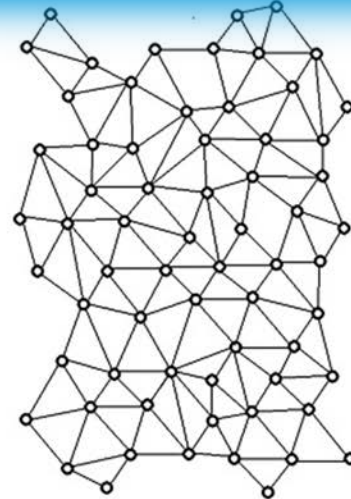
# COMPLEX ADAPTIVE SYSTEMS



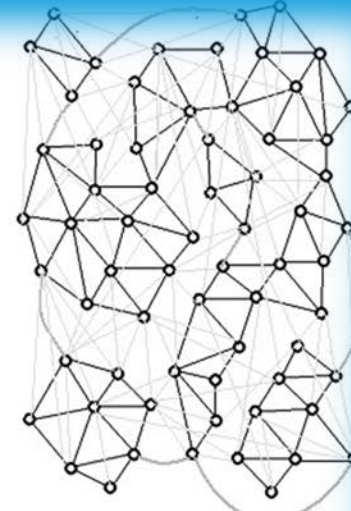
CENTRALIZED



DECENTRALIZED



NETWORKED



COMPLEX ADAPTIVE

Edge of Chaos...



Systems with multiple elements adapting or reacting to the pattern these elements create (Arthur 1990's)

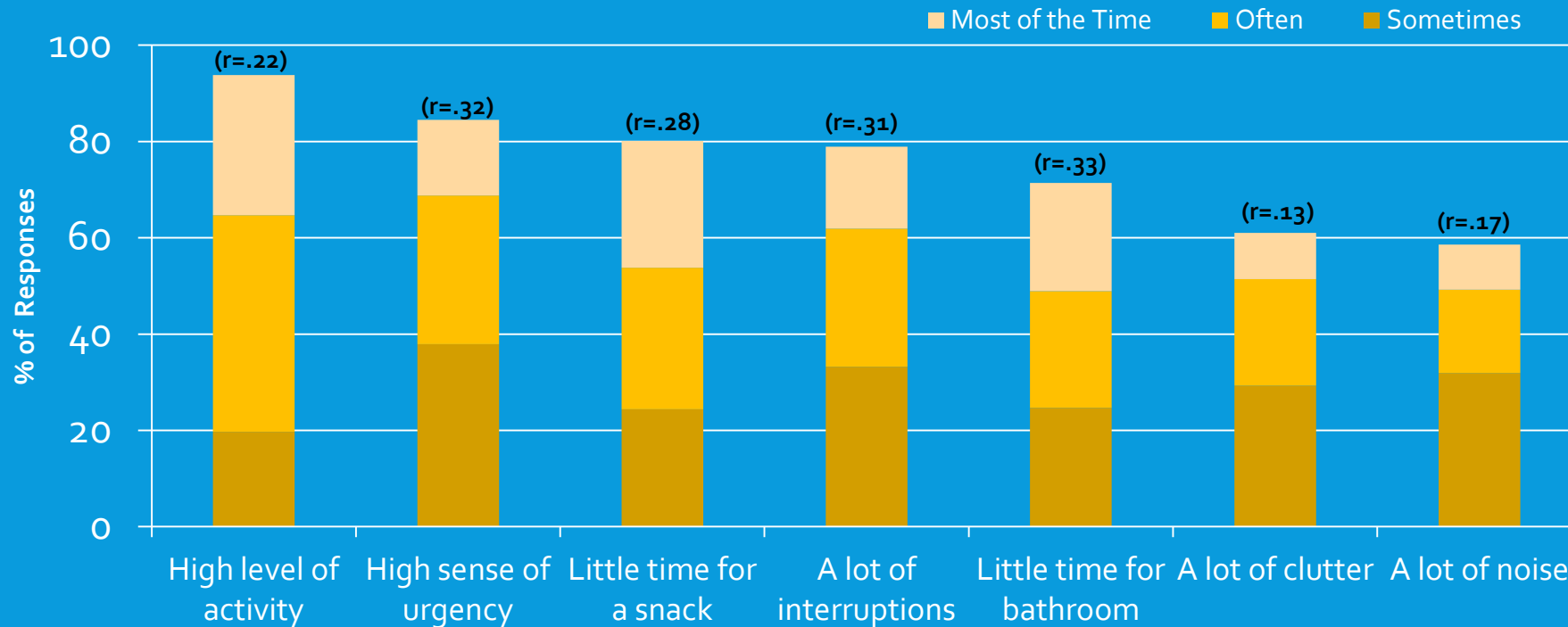


# CONTEXT MATTERS

Chaotic work environments are associated with burnout  
We can't always control the contextual factors that lead to chaos

# HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS: WORK ENVIRONMENT

Frequency of stressful work environment characteristics and correlations with emotional exhaustion (N=1178)



# WORK ENVIRONMENT

**What does a  
Medical Teaching Unit  
preceptor physician do?**

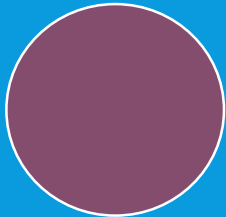


# THE THREE "CS" OF THE JOB



## Competence

The execution of traditional physician competencies



## Context

The environment in which the role is carried out



*Often = sources of workplace stress*

# CONTEXT

The work

The team

The institutional setting and physical space

# THE WORK

## Nature of the Work

Intense work and environment  
Heavy workload and diversity of tasks  
Complexity of patient care  
Difficult encounters  
Invisible labor and redundancy  
Transitions of patients and team  
Information density

## Work Flow

Interruptions  
Waits and delays  
Unpredictability and urgency  
Structured and routine  
approaches to patient care  
Scheduled events

## Work Demands

Emotion work  
Physical work  
Cognitive work  
Unrestricted access to preceptor

# THE TEAM

## Membership and Structure

- Diverse membership
- Composition and transitions
- Different skillsets and experience
- Schedules and conflicts
- Structure, routine and rituals

## Teamwork

- Teamwork skills
- Cohesion and cooperation
- Virtual borders to healthcare team

# THE INSTITUTIONAL SETTING

## Physical Space

Vast spaces

Lack of quiet, private spaces

Virtual borders

Disorganization of physical resources

## Technology

Inefficiencies

## Healthcare System

Inefficiencies

Inadequate resources

Gaps in process and responsibility

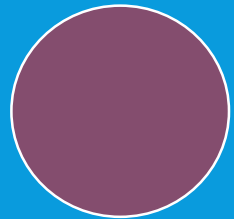


# THE THREE "CS" OF THE JOB



## Competence

The execution of traditional physician competencies



## Context

The environment in which the role is carried out



## Conduct

The manner of acting, or behaviors and attitudes in the role



*Often = how we mitigate workplace stress*

# CONDUCT

Adaptability and flexibility

Relationality (humanism)

Wellness behaviors

Creativity and using the art of medicine

# NEGOTIATING THE CONTEXT

Being adaptable and flexible

Juggling roles, responsibilities and expectations

Balancing efficiency and professionalism

Dealing with distractions and interruptions

# INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Relational with team and learners

*Empathy, compassion, respect, sincere interest*

Relational with patients

*Non-examining touch, endearing terms, hearing concerns*

Relational with self

*Displaying satisfaction around intellectual challenges, and enjoyment of teaching*

Maintaining positivity

# WELLNESS BEHAVIORS

Effecting personal wellness

Using humor and irony, often to diffuse stress

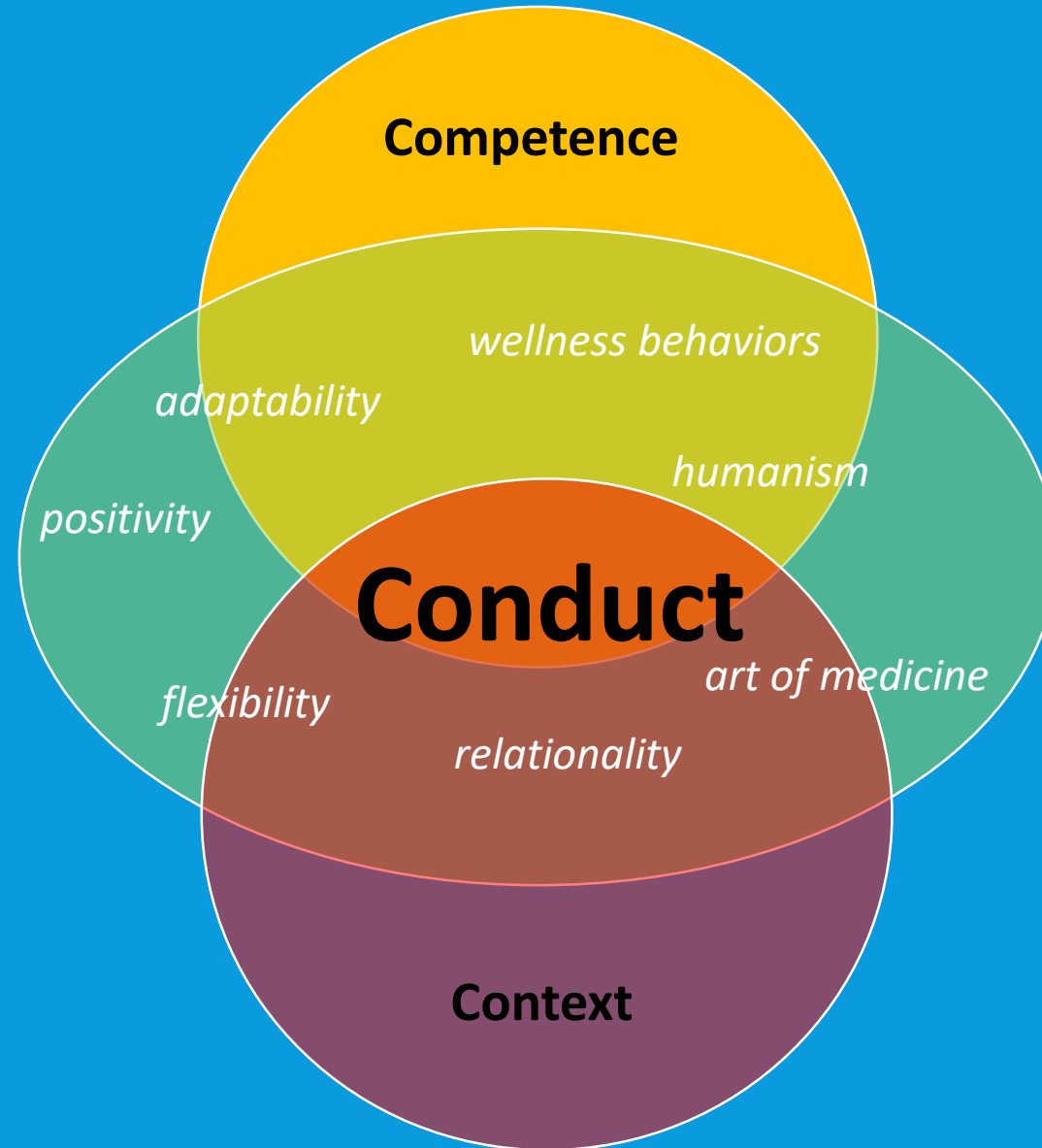
Providing and receiving collegial support

Promoting wellness to others

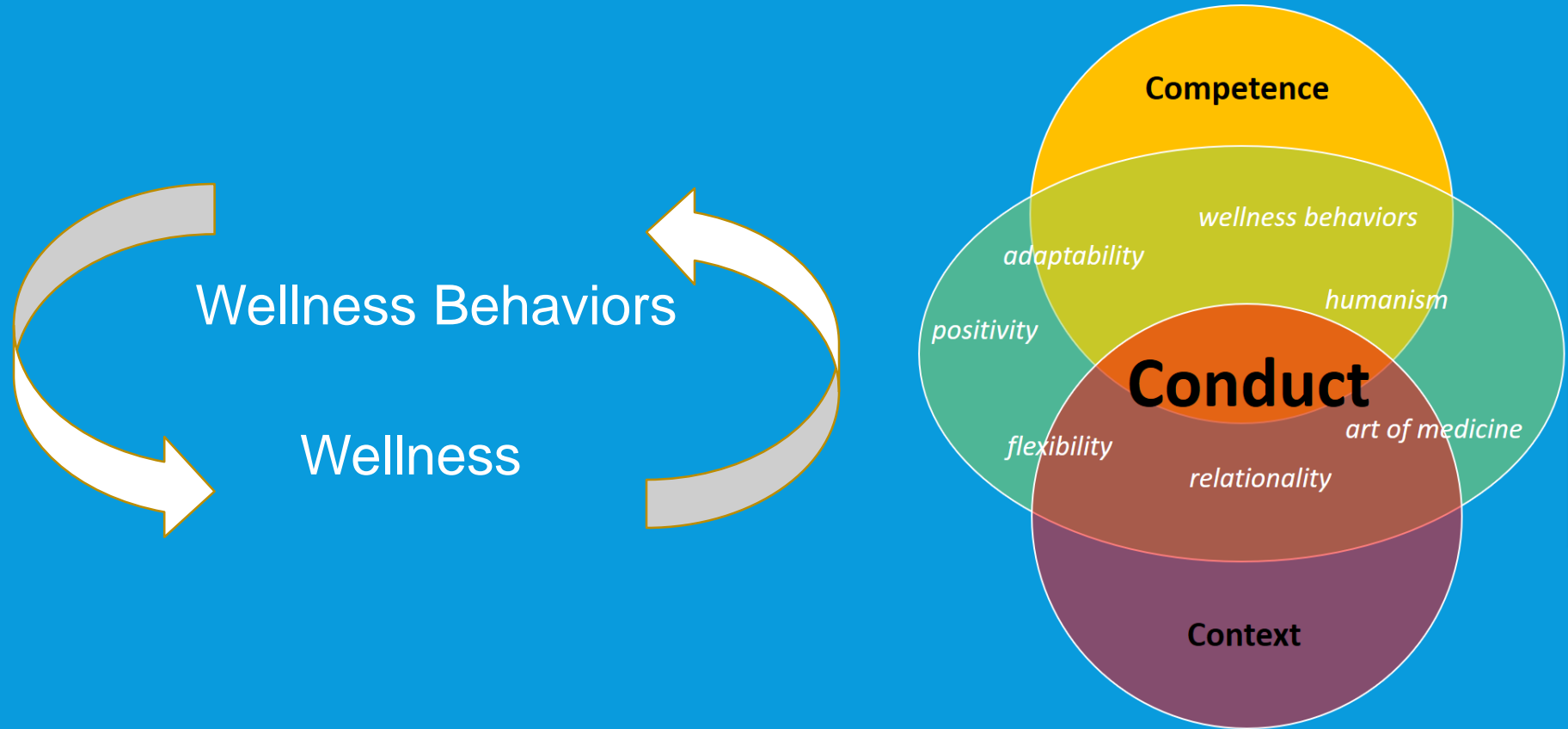
# PRECEPTORS USED CONDUCT TO...

...negotiate the  
stressful and  
complex work  
environment

...mitigate the  
negative influence  
of contextual  
factors



Conduct = Skills that should be explicitly taught to help deal with the chaotic hospital work environment



# UNDERSTAND THE WORK ENVIRONMENT COPE WITH STRESSFUL WORK FACTORS IDENTIFY AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT



Acknowledge and assess the problem



Harness the power of leadership



Develop and implement targeted work unit interventions<sup>a</sup>



Cultivate community at work



Use rewards and incentives wisely



Align values and strengthen culture



Promote flexibility and work-life integration



Provide resources to promote resilience and self-care



Facilitate and fund organizational science



# LIST 3 WORK FACTORS THAT CREATE STRESS IN YOUR HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT

Are they potentially modifiable?

Do you have any control?

What could you do to improve things?

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this session, you will be able to

Recall how you respond to stress in the work environment

Discuss various coping and resilience strategies

Identify behaviors that may mitigate contextual tensions in the workplace

# COPING STRATEGIES AND RESILIENCE

Take a time out, laugh and smile

Talk with colleagues, friends, family, take care of each other

Take time away from work!

Review your resilience strategies

# CHAOTIC WORK ENVIRONMENTS

Cultivate “conduct”

Consider what contextual factors you have control over

Make a plan of action

# REFERENCES

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