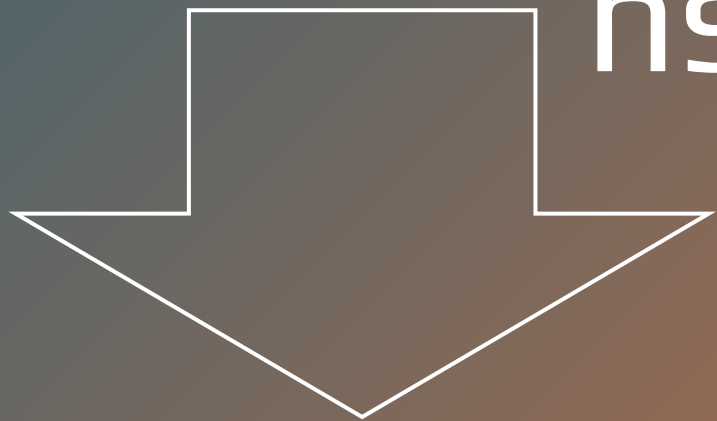


Systems Approach to Well-being in Schools

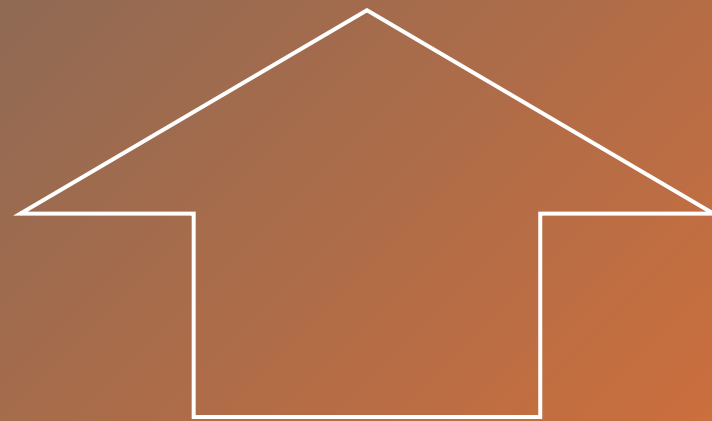
Imad Zaheer, Ph.D.
St. John's University



Stop having
the wrong
conversations



And start having the
right one around
issues of burnout,
stress and well-being



Burnout- Three Key features

- **Chronic job stressors**
 - Exhaustion
- **Negative hostile response to work conditions**
 - Cynicism
- **Negative sense of self**
 - Lack of self efficacy (“Maybe I’m not good”)



Burnout Is About Your Workplace, Not Your People

by Jennifer Moss

December 11, 2019



Martin Barraud/Getty Images

Leading Expert in
Burnout
Christina Maslach



Canary in the coal Mine

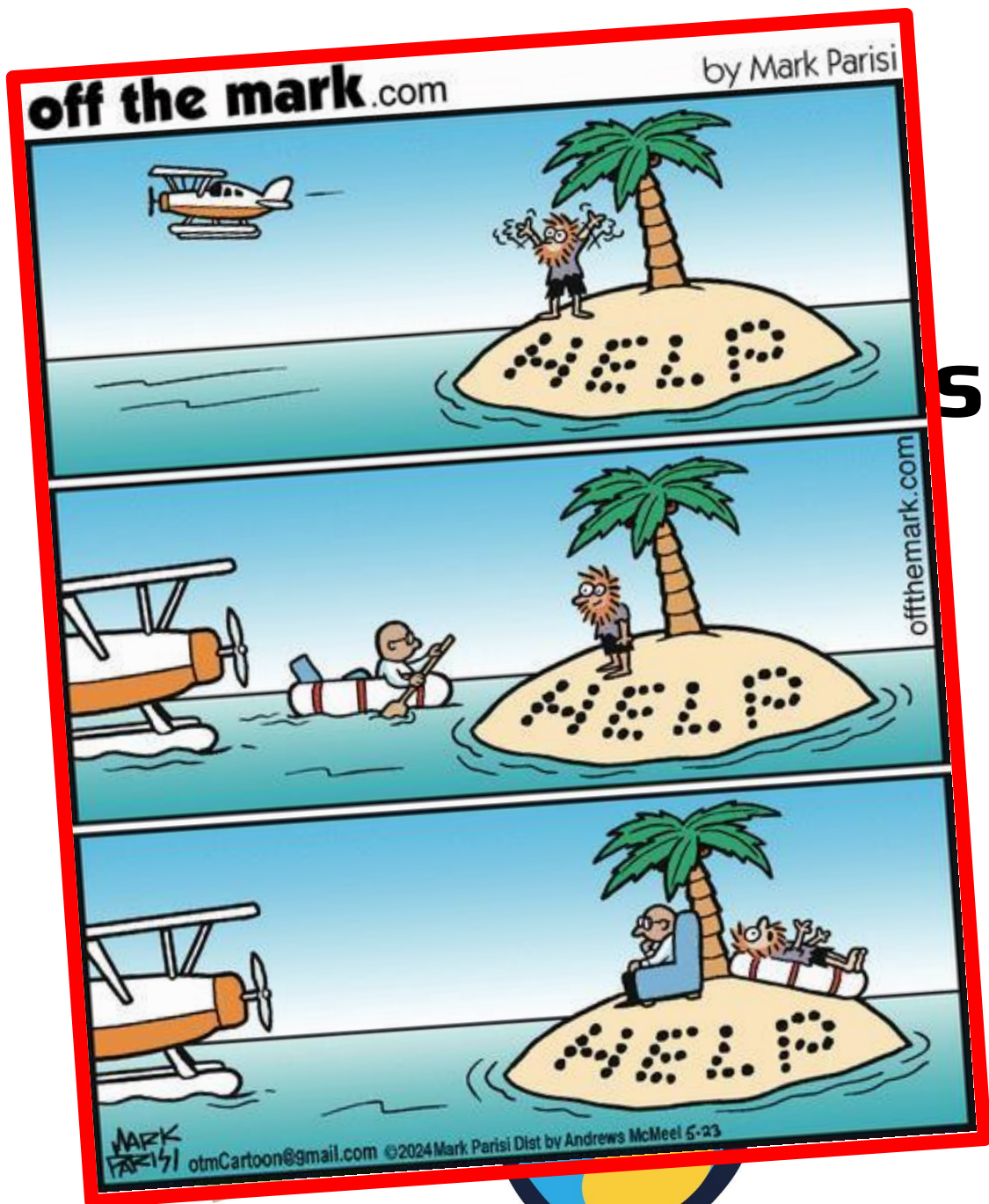
*“...Maslach asked me to picture a canary in a coal mine. They are healthy birds, singing away as they make their way into the cave. But, when they come out full of soot and disease, no longer singing, **can you imagine us asking why the canaries made themselves sick?** No, because the answer would be obvious: the coal mine is making the birds sick.”*

*“Although developing emotional intelligence skills — like optimism, gratitude, and hope — can give people the rocket fuel they need to be successful, if an employee is dealing with burnout, **we have to stop and ask ourselves why.**”*

*“We should never suggest that if they’d just practiced more **grit** or joined another **yoga class** or taken **a mindfulness course**, their burnout would have been avoided. I have long been a proponent of empathy and optimism in leadership. I believe in practicing gratitude skills for a happier, higher performing work and life experience. I endorse the idea of building resilience to better handle stress when it arises. **But these skills are not the cure for burnout, nor are they the vaccine.**”*

FOCUS ON THE
POSITIVE IN THE
SITUATION.





[Iancu et al. \(2017\)](#) conducted a meta-analysis of individual-level interventions targeting teacher burnout (23 controlled trials examined)

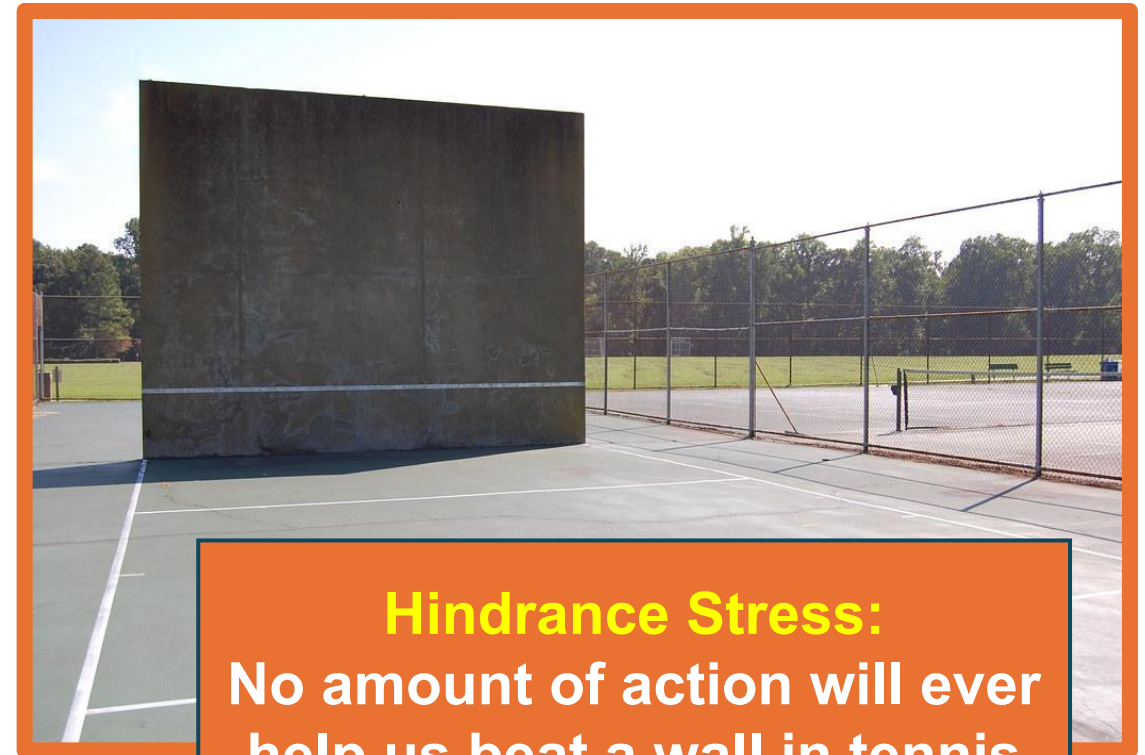
- The overall effects were **small**, but statistically significant ($d = 0.18$, $SE = 0.05$, $Z = 3.26$, $p < 0.001$, $k = 23$).
- Separate analyses on each burnout component showed similar intervention effects on emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment, but almost null effects on depersonalization ($d = 0.03$, $SE = 0.06$, $Z = 0.53$, $p > 0.05$, $k = 11$).

Some stress is good and can be overcome, other forms of stress can be crippling

- Difference between **challenge stress** and **hindrance stress**

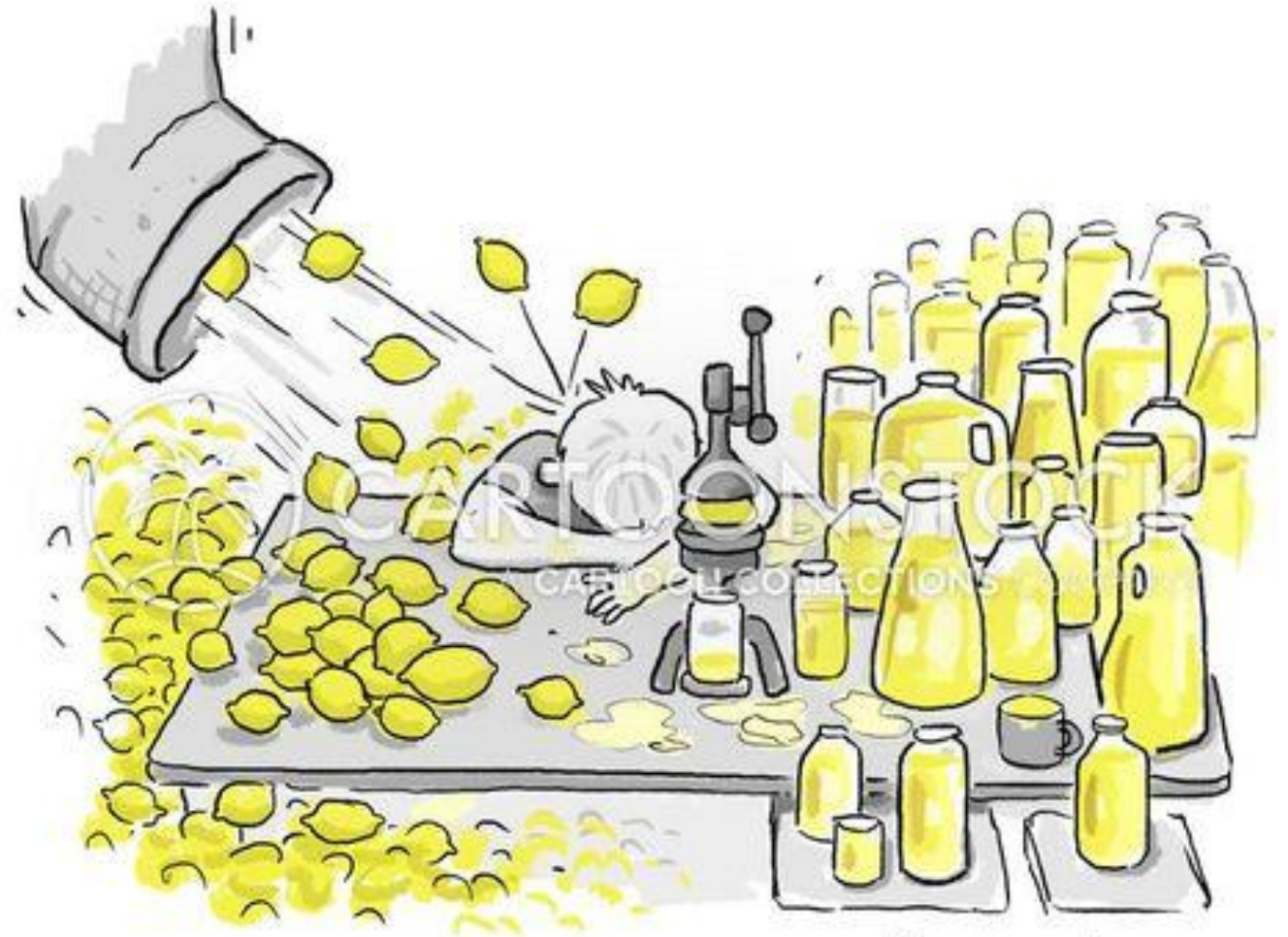


Challenge Stress:
Using a challenge mindset to take action can help us overcome a net



Hindrance Stress:
No amount of action will ever help us beat a wall in tennis

**What
happens
when you
can't make
lemonade?**



WILL SANTINO

Solution Types

Coping strategies

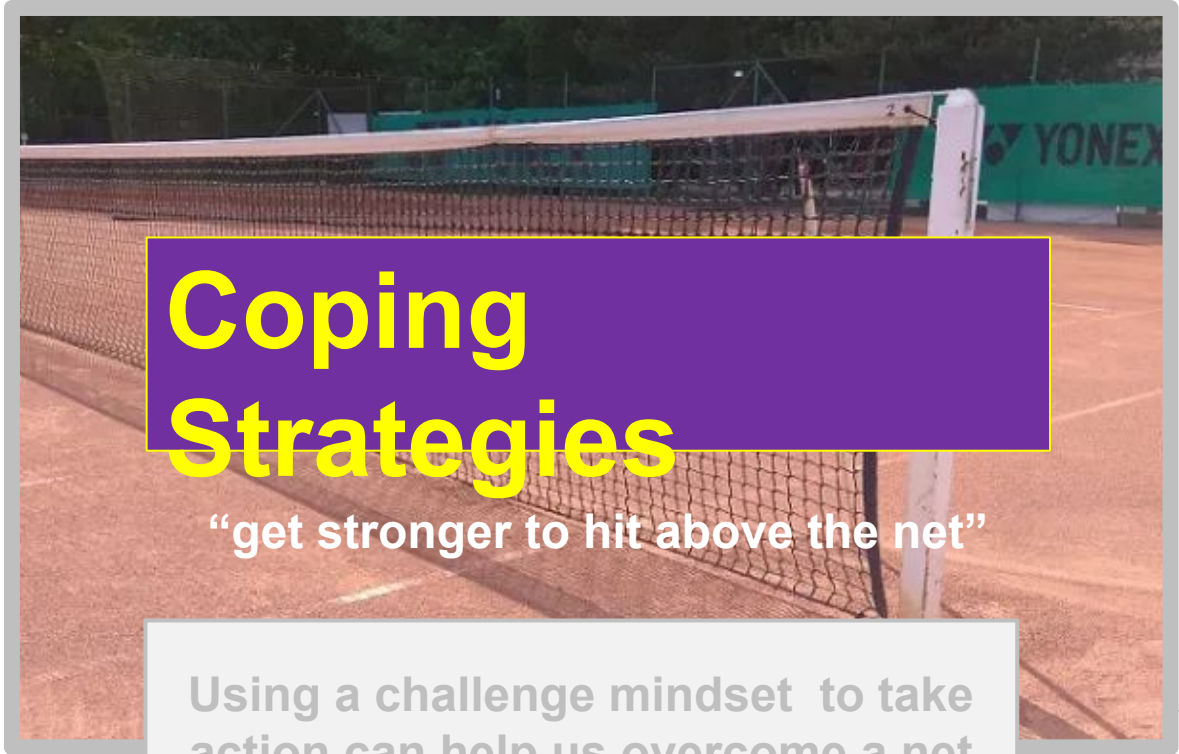
- Self care
- Wellness (meditation, yoga, candles, etc...)
- Vacations

Prevention and systems change

- Creating more nurturing and supporting environments
- Better work conditions
- Psychological enhancements to work environment

However, not all stress is good and not everything we can overcome

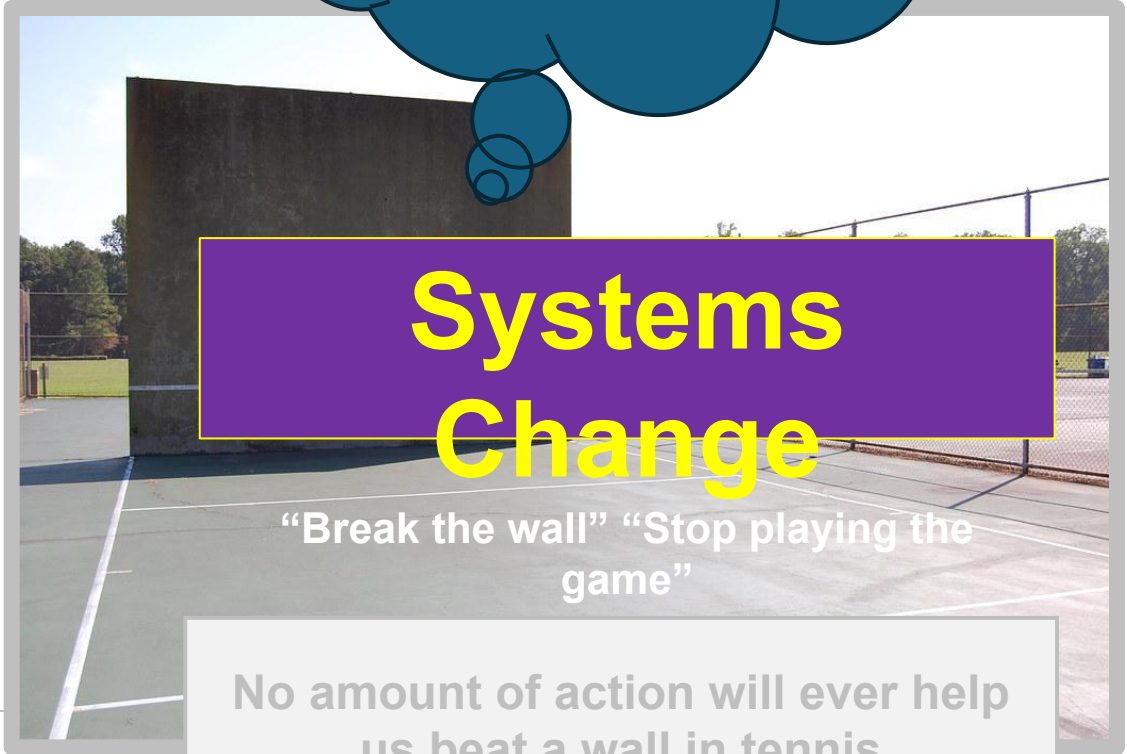
- Difference between challenge stress and



Coping Strategies

“get stronger to hit above the net”

Using a challenge mindset to take action can help us overcome a net



Systems Change

“Break the wall” “Stop playing the game”

No amount of action will ever help us beat a wall in tennis

Six Major Areas To Address Stress and Burnout at the Systems Level

1. Workload
2. Choice
3. Recognition (not just pay but social rewards)
4. Community (socially toxic or nurturing?)
5. Fairness
6. Values- meaning of the work

Organizational Interventions

- **Designed to improve climate and culture**

- **Systematic review with mixed findings**
 - 31 studies, 9 took place in school or early childhood settings

- **Most common components of interventions:**
 - Formation of an internal committee to direct change
 - Data-informed team-based decision-making
 - Goal alignment
 - In-person trainings and consultative support
 - Peer to-peer provider support and knowledge sharing
 - Organizational restructuring



Which one should we do?

Prioritize systems

Coping strategies

- Self care
- Wellness (meditation, candles, etc...)
- Vacations



Prevention and change

more nurturing environment

work conditions

biological enhancements
environment

“A bad system will beat a good person every time.”
— W. Edwards Deming

MTSS/ School-based Mental Health for Students **AND** Adults

- **Evidence-based framework** for addressing the mental health needs of everyone
- Incorporates a system approach to adopt and implement different level of supports to meet the various needs
- Combination of **institutional** and **individual** strategies



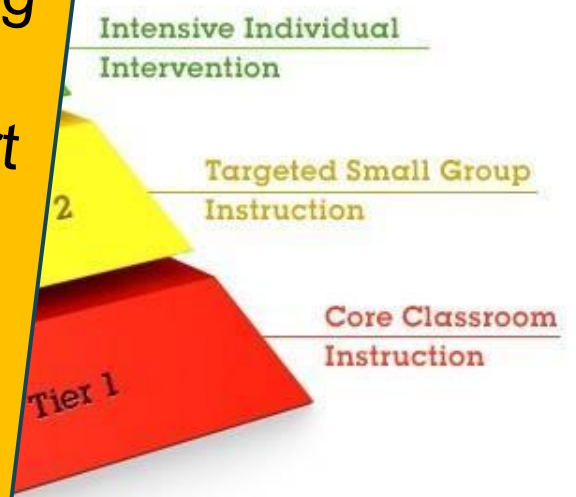
MTSS/ for Stu

Team-based Mental Health

- Evidence-based the mental
- Incorporate and implement meet the
- Combine strategies

- Aligns with review on organizational change
1. Formation of an internal committee to direct change
 2. Data-informed team-based decision-making
 3. Goal alignment
 4. In-person trainings and consultative support
 5. Peer to-peer provider support and knowledge sharing
 6. Organizational restructuring

(Ouellette et al., 2020)



MTSS

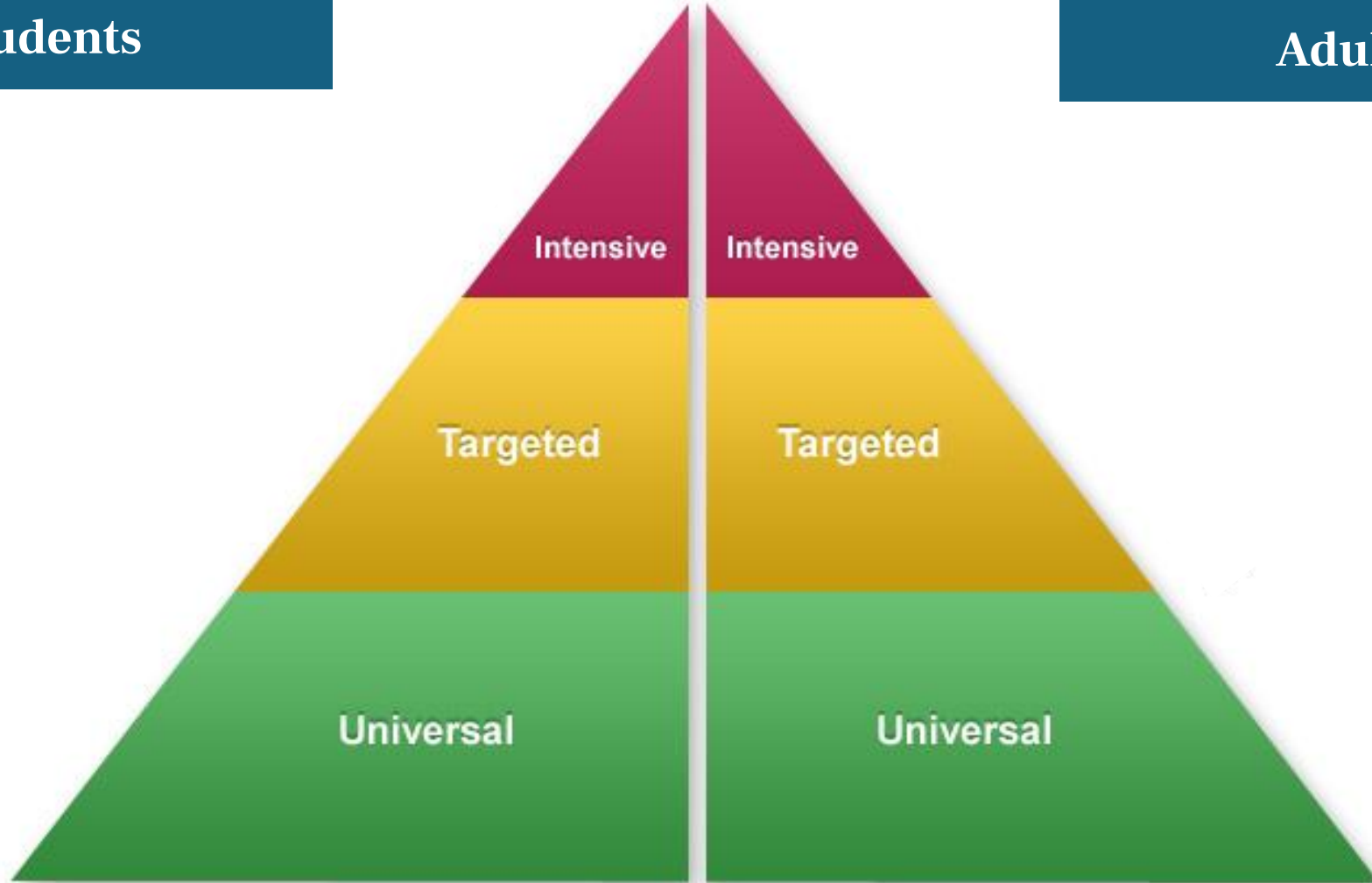
Students



MTSS

Students

Adults

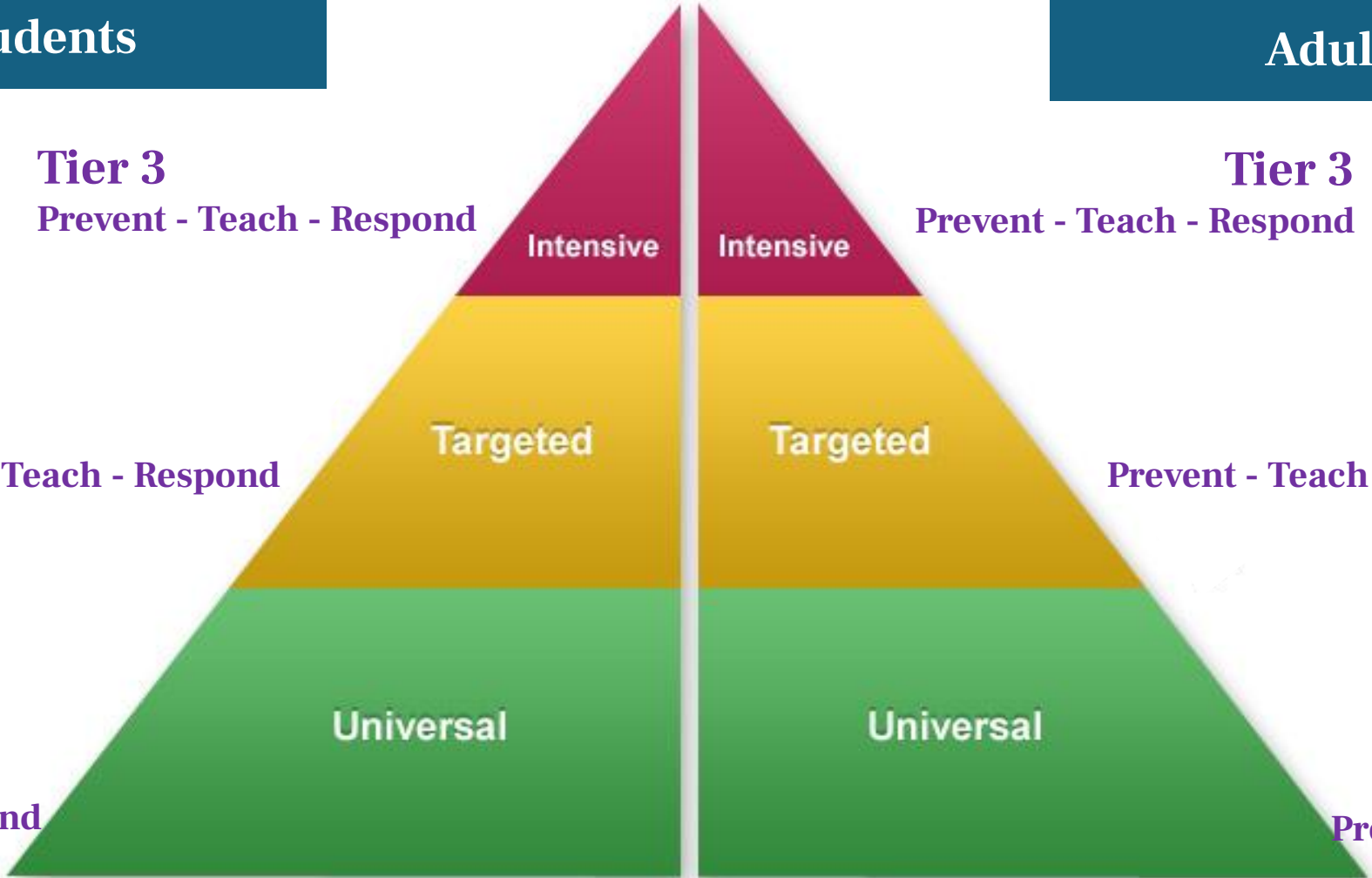


Prevent-Teach-Respond

MTSS

Students

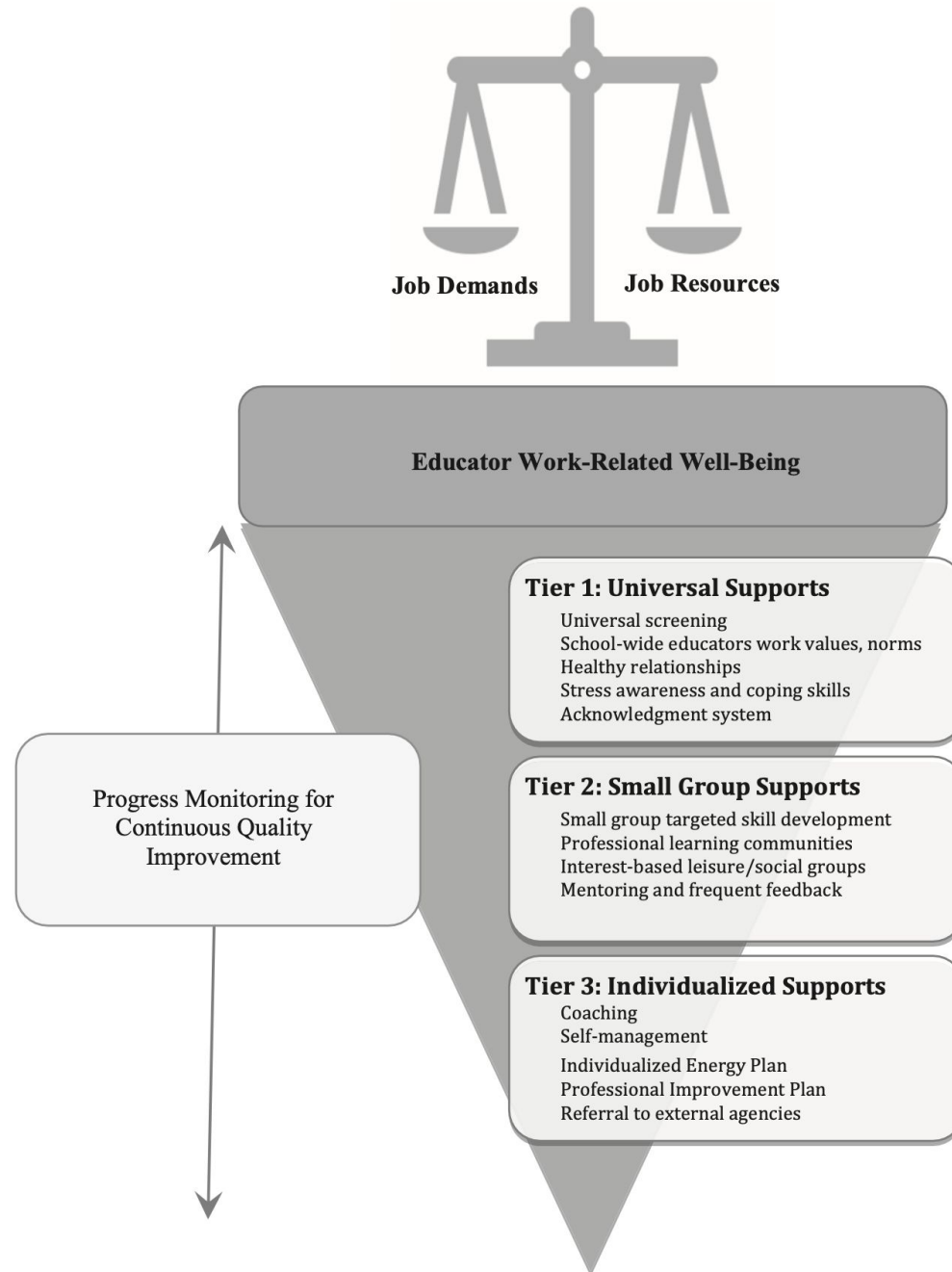
Adults



Tier 1
Prevent - Teach - Respond

Tier 1
Prevent - Teach - Respond

Figure 1
Framework for Addressing Educator Work-Related Well-Being



Coping Strategies

Students

Adults

Tier 3

Prevent - Teach - Respond

Intensive

Tier 2

Prevent - Teach - Respond

Targeted

Targeted

Universal

Universal

**Need
team-based
approach like
all MTSS
initiatives**

Systems Strategies

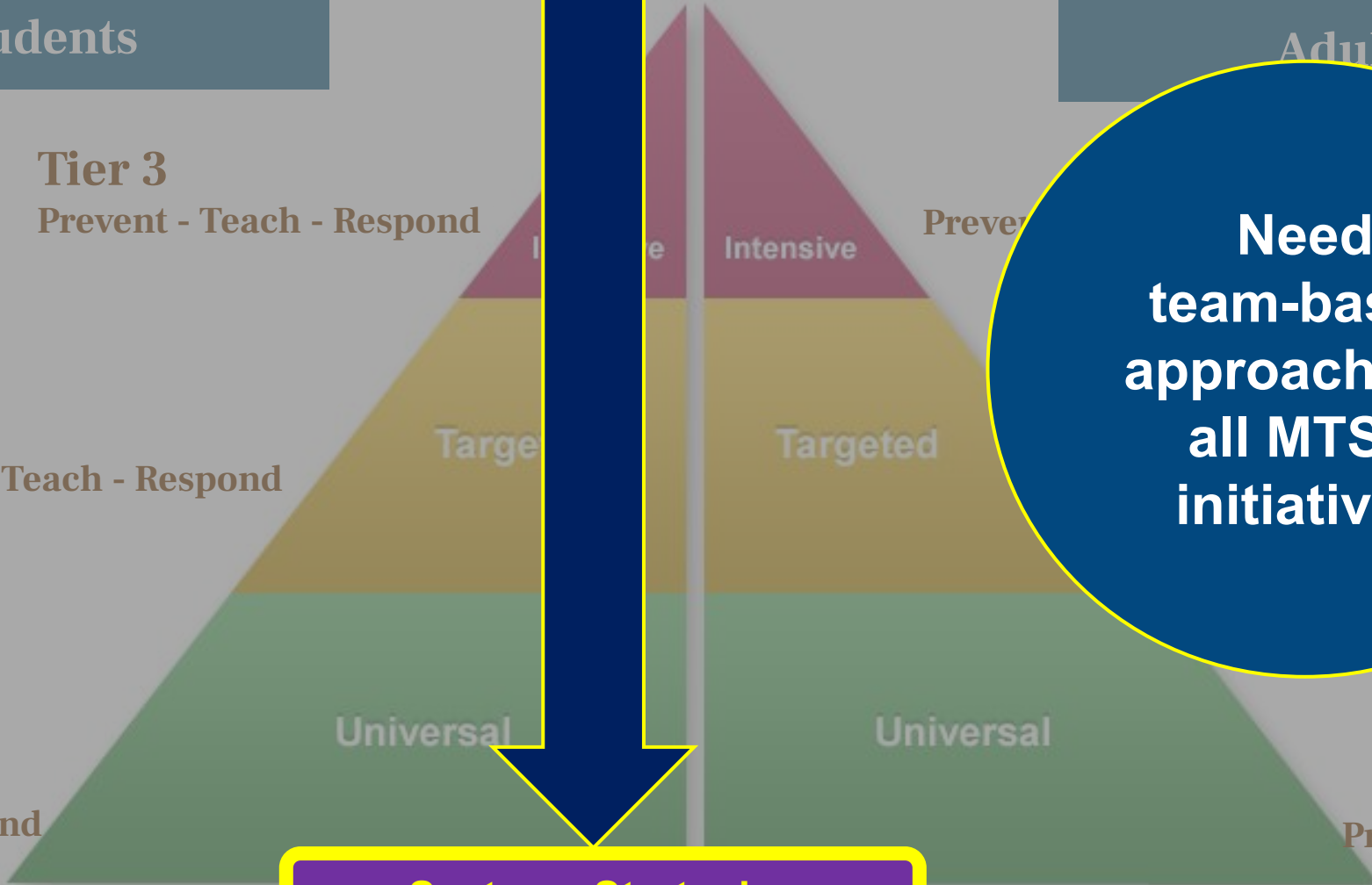
MTSS

Tier 1

Prevent - Teach - Respond

Tier 1

Prevent - Teach - Respond





Teaming for Success

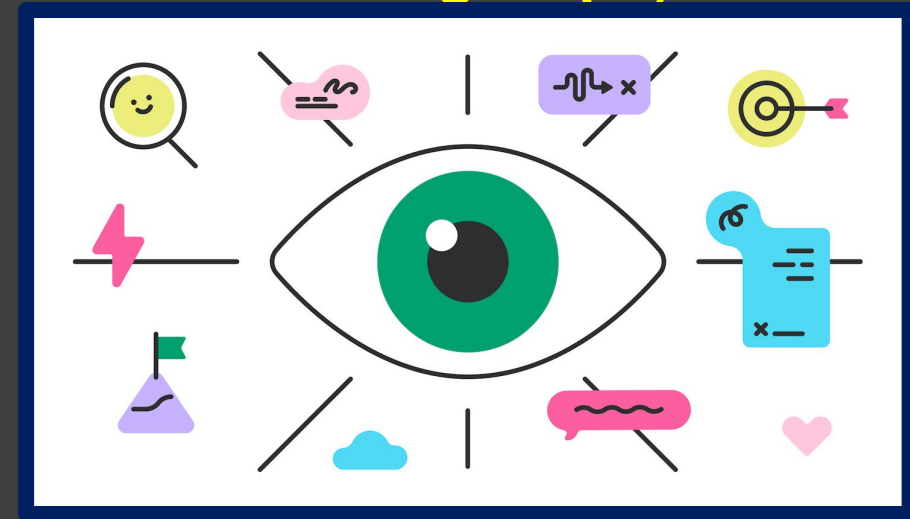
Wellness Teams for Adults

Two Models

Team-initiated Problem Solving (TIPS)



PROSOCIAL (ACT Matrix applied to groups)





Team-oriented Problem Solving

Three elements of team problem solving

- **Meeting foundations**
- **Problem solving process**
 - Defining new problems develop solution & evaluation plan
- **Progress monitoring & adaptations**
 - Using data to monitor solution implementation status and progress toward meeting the goal

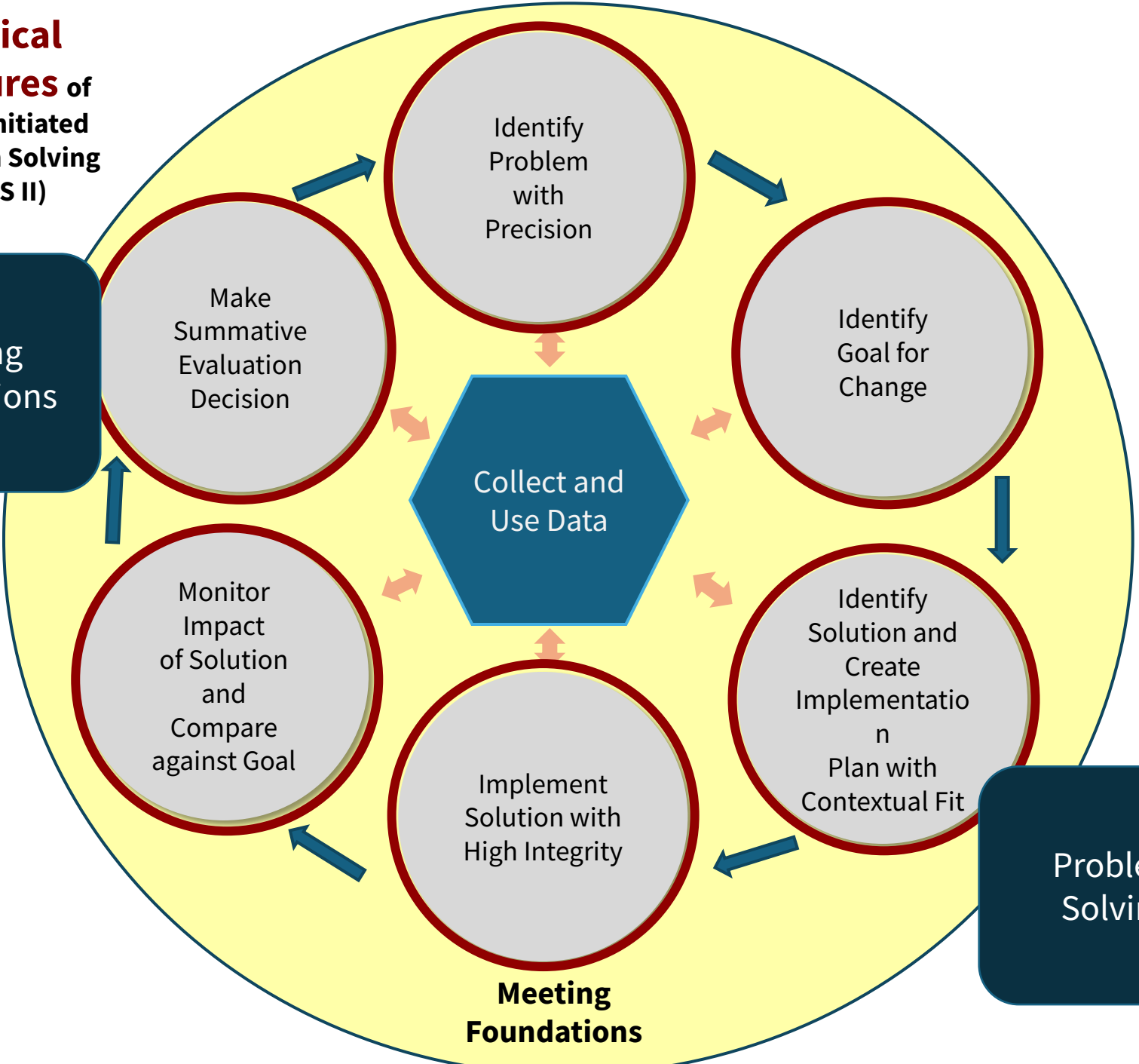
Meeting Foundations

- **Clear Purpose/ Authority**
 - What is the purpose of our team?
 - What is the impact we are to have on students/ families/ School?
 - What authority do we have to implement solutions?
- **Agreement about process**
 - Start time/stop time
 - Schedule
 - Respect and commitment
- **Roles and responsibilities**
 - Facilitator
 - Minute Taker
 - Data Analyst
 - Member
- **Electronic Meeting Minutes/Agenda**



**Critical
Features of
Team-Initiated
Problem Solving
(TIPS II)**

**Meeting
Foundations**

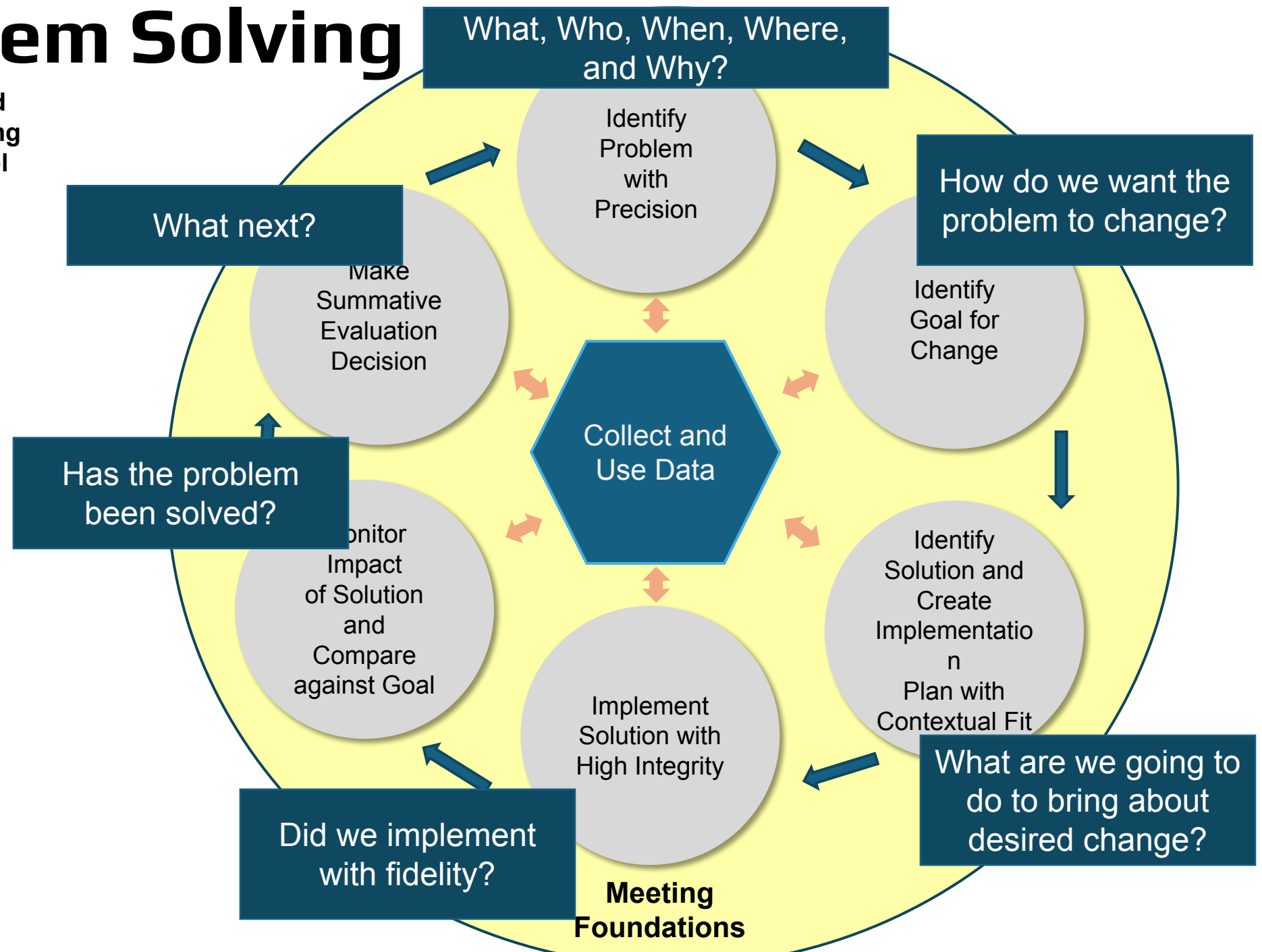


**Problem
Solving**

**Meeting
Foundations**

Problem Solving

Team-Initiated
Problem Solving
(TIPS II) Model



Problem Solving

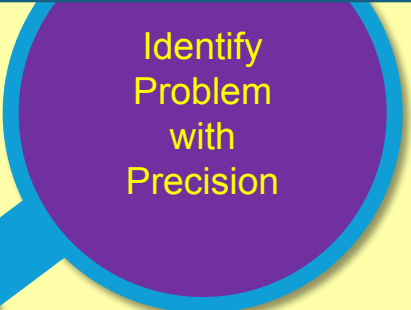
Team-Initiated
Problem Solving
(TIPS II) Model

Measures for stress & well-being

- Screening
- Progress monitoring
- Evaluations

Both institutional and individual level

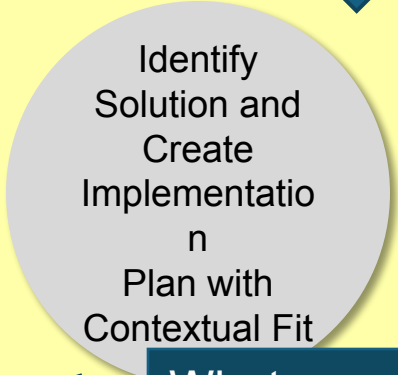
What, Who, When, Where, and Why?



How do we want the problem to change?



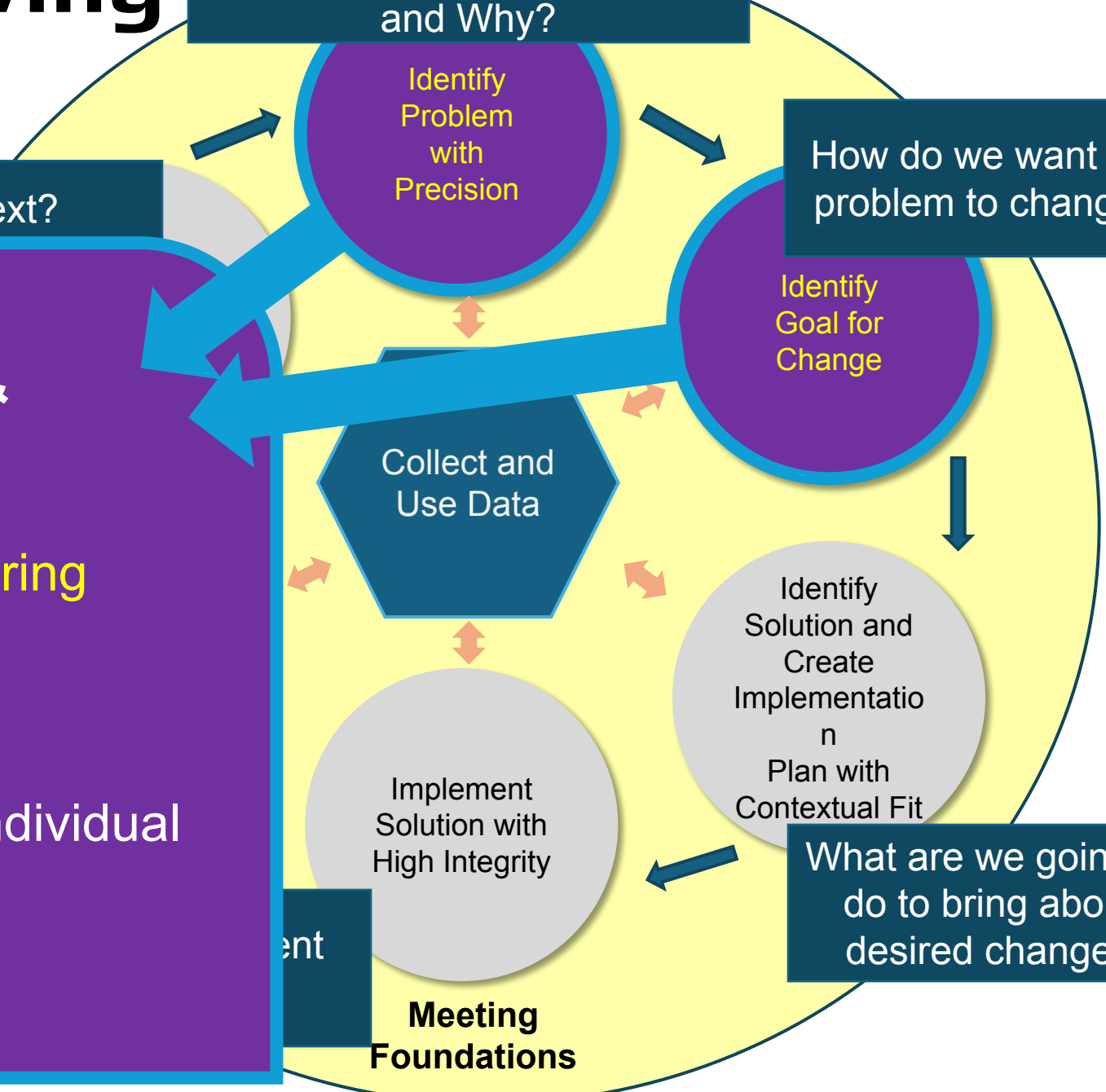
What next?



What are we going to do to bring about desired change?

ent

Meeting Foundations



Levels of Assessment

Institutional

- Assess for organizational health
- Common experiences among school community members
- Support decisions about systems change and universal supports

Individual

- Identify resilience and needs
- Assess need for individualized supports
- Support decisions about offerings of opt-in programs and interventions

Institutional Screening

- Organizational Health Inventory (OHI)
- The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)
- Work Stress Questionnaire (WSQ)
- Supportive Teacher Environment Scale (STES)



Organizational Health Inventory (OHI)

Morale

- “teachers exhibit friendliness to each other”
- “here is a feeling of trust and confidence among the staff”

Resource Support

- “teachers are provided with adequate materials for their classrooms”
- “teachers have access to needed instructional materials”

Consideration

- “the principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal”
- “the principal is willing to make changes”

Academic Emphasis

- “teachers in this school believe that their students have the ability to achieve academically”
- “academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school”

Institutional Integrity

- “teachers feel pressure from the community”
- “a few vocal parents can change school policy”

Principal Influence

- “the principal is able to work well with the superintendent”
- “The principal is impeded by the superiors”

Initiating Structure

- “the principal lets faculty know what is expected of them”
- “The principal maintains definite standards of performance”

Individual Screening & Assessment

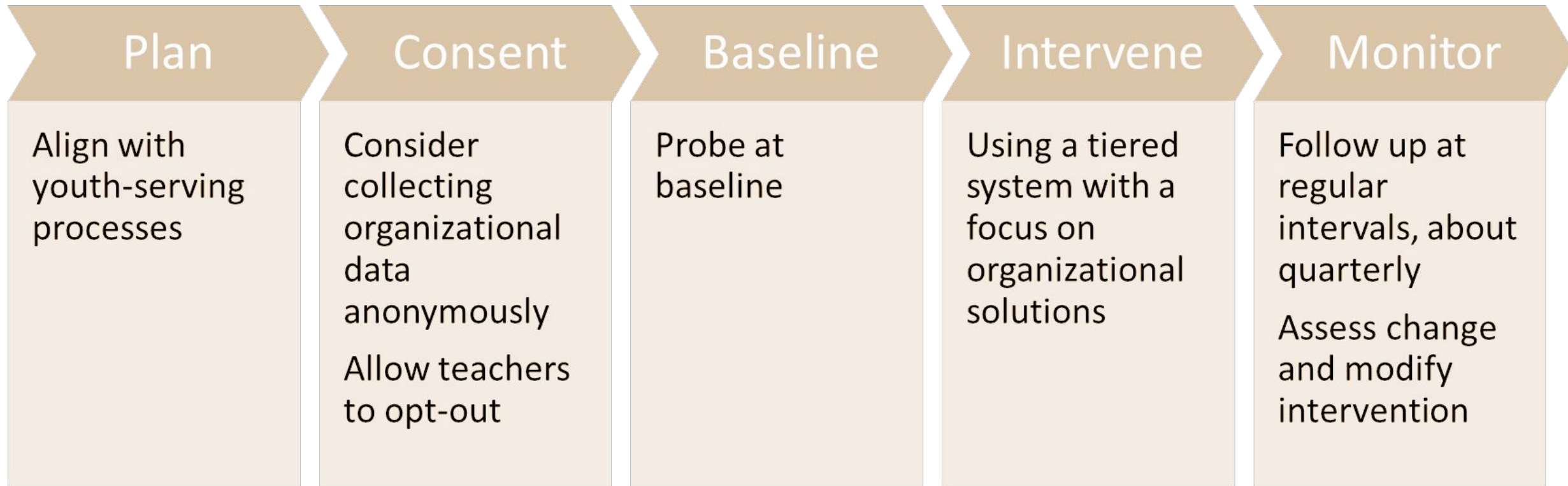


- Teacher Well-Being Scale (TWBS)
- Teacher Subjective Well-Being Questionnaire (TSWQ)
- Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale – Short Form (TSES)
- The Classroom Appraisal of Resources and Demands (CARD)

Teacher Subjective Well-Being Questionnaire

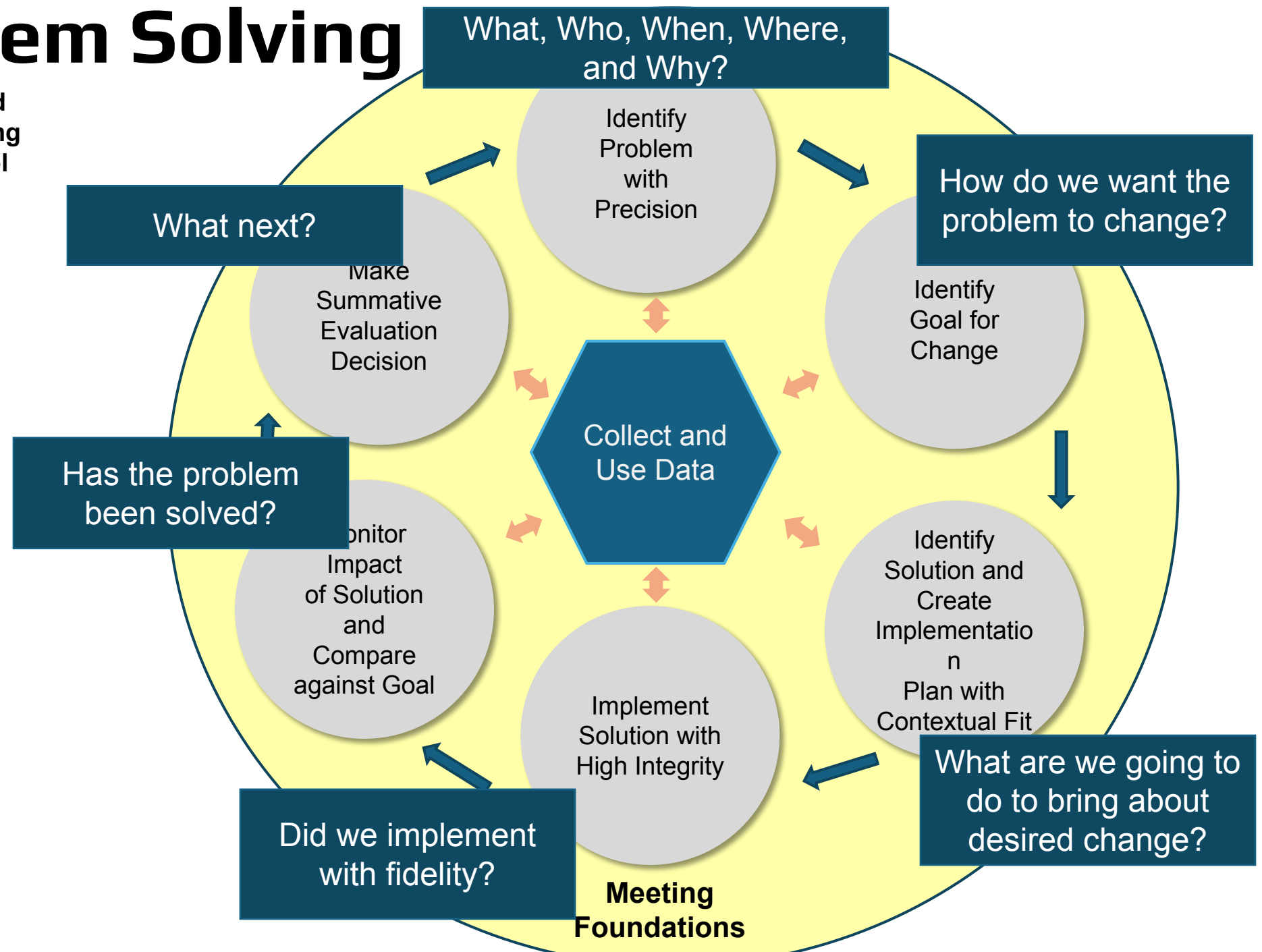
		Almost Never	Some- times	Often	Almost Always
1.	I feel like I belong at this school.	1	2	3	4
2.	I am a successful teacher.	1	2	3	4
3.	I can really be myself at this school.	1	2	3	4
4.	I am good at helping students learn new things.	1	2	3	4
5.	I feel like people at this school care about me.	1	2	3	4
6.	I have accomplished a lot as a teacher.	1	2	3	4
7.	I am treated with respect at this school.	1	2	3	4
8.	I feel like my teaching is effective and helpful.	1	2	3	4

Assessment Process



Problem Solving

Team-Initiated
Problem Solving
(TIPS II) Model



Problem Solving

Team-Initiated
Problem Solving
(TIPS II) Model

What, Who, When, Where,
and Why?

Identify
Problem
with
Precision

How do we want the
problem to change?

Identify
Goal for
Change

Collect and
Analyze
Data

Identify
Solution and
Create
Implementation
Plan with
Contextual Fit

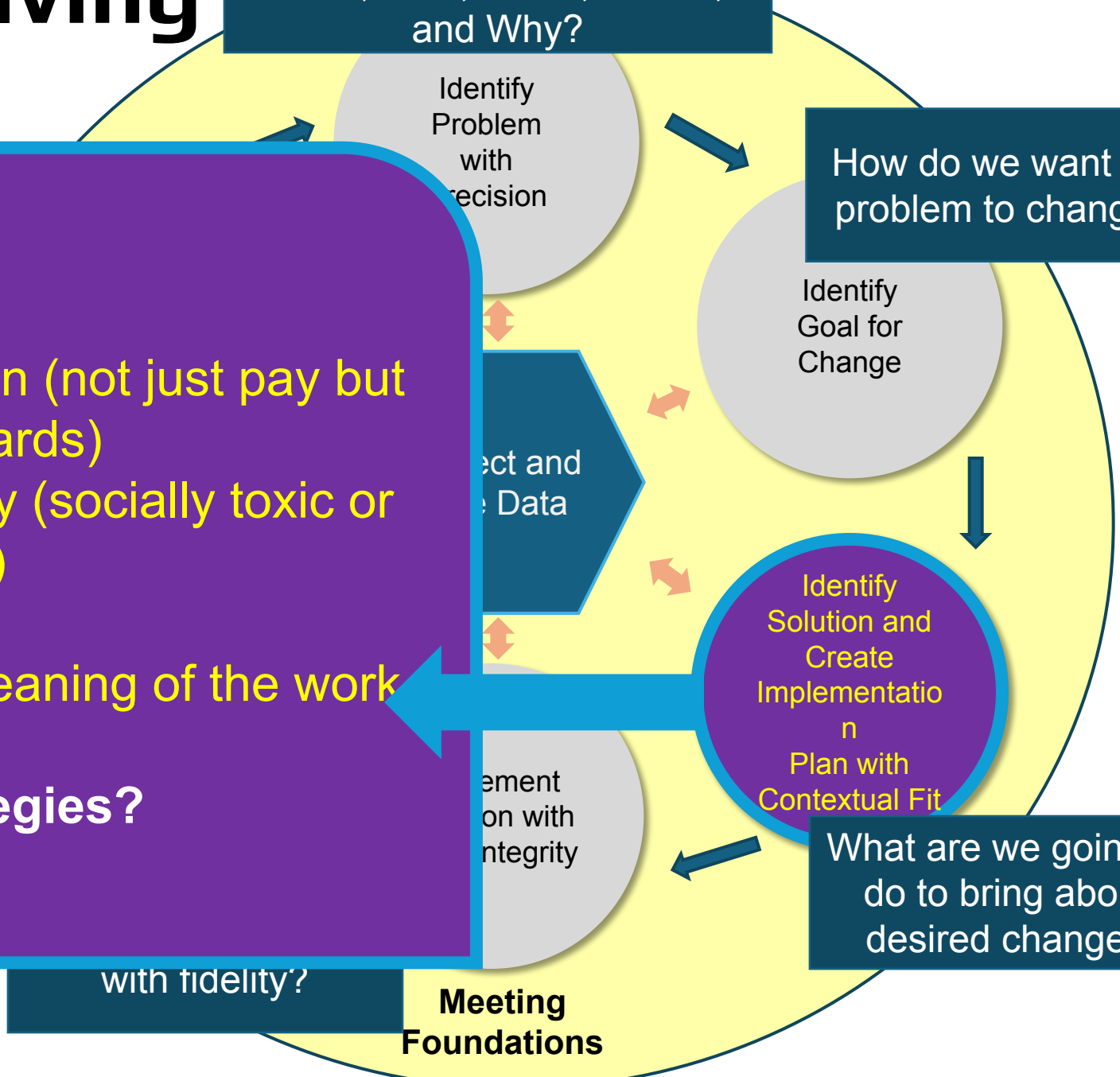
What are we going to
do to bring about
desired change?

- 1. Workload
- 2. Choice
- 3. Recognition (not just pay but social rewards)
- 4. Community (socially toxic or nurturing?)
- 5. Fairness
- 6. Values- meaning of the work

Coping strategies?

with fidelity?

Meeting
Foundations





PROSOCIAL

ACT Matrix for Teams

5
Sense



Two Step Process

1. Psychological flexibility loop

2. Psychological safety loop

3. Core Design principles



Aw
y



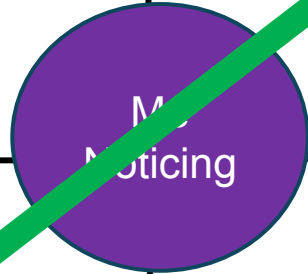
Mind

Flexibility
(individual focused)

What thoughts and away moves get me stuck?

5
Sense

What can me towards my values and goals?



Towards

What do I value as a professional...

Mind

5
Sense



Two Step Process

1. Psychological flexibility loop

2. Psychological safety loop

3. Core Design principles

Aw
y

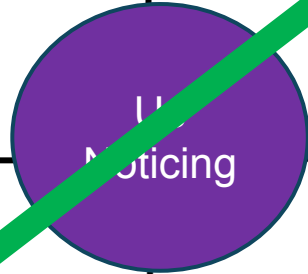


Mind

Group Matrix

What thoughts and away moves get us stuck?

Away



Towards

5 Sense

What can move us towards our shared values and goals?

What do we value as a group, team, family, etc...?

Mind

Key difference here is
That we are working towards
not just individual **psychological
flexibility**

But also towards group
psychological safety

**moves get
us stuck?**

**What can move us towards
our
shared values and goals?**

How comfortable do I feel in
sharing my thoughts on what's
keeping us back?

Will be use this information to
move forward?

Key difference here is
That we are working towards
not just individual **psychological
flexibility**

But also towards group
psychological safety

**moves get
us stuck?**

**What can move us towards
our
shared values and goals?**

How comfortable do I feel in
sharing my thoughts on what's
keeping us back?

Will be use this information to
move forward?

6 Areas of Addressing Burnouts	Specific Actions (toward moves)
Workload	Reduce the workload Add more employees
Choice	Ask and add more choices Flexible on how, when, and where the work is done
Recognition	Social recognitions for individual and group accomplishments Tangible/financial rewards
Community	Create positive culture and social community Address toxic behaviors within the system
Fairness	Ensure fair procedures are in place for everyone in the organization Advocacy work to ensure fairness is achieved
Values- meaning of the work	Create a clear and present sense of purpose Ensure everyone knows what the purpose is

5
Sense



Two Step Process

1. Psychological flexibility loop

2. Psychological safety loop

3. Core Design principles

Aw
y



Mind

Elinor Ostrom

- Core Design Principles or common pool resources
- Power of small groups (teams)
- Self-interest versus cooperation
 - David Sloan Wilson – Evolutionary biologists
 - “Groups” all the way down



Not by accident, have to set the stage

	Core design principles (CDPs)	Function
1	Strong Group Identity and Sense of Purpose	← Values
2	Fair distribution of costs and benefits	← Fairness
3	Fair and inclusive decision making	← Fairness
4	Monitoring agreed upon behaviors	Ensures effectiveness by balancing individual and collective interests
5	Graduated sanctions for misbehaviors	
6	Fast and fair conflict resolution	← Fairness
7	Authority to self-govern	← Choice
8	Appropriate relations with other groups	Scales to Whole Systems

Table 1. Core design principles (CDPs) for the efficacy of groups with related functions.

**5
Sense**

**Leveraging psychological flexibility of individuals
and psychological safety as a group to work on the
8 principals**

- 1. Strong Group Identity and shared purpose**
- 2. Fair distribution of responsibilities, costs and benefits**
- 3. Fair & inclusive decision making**
- 4. Monitoring agreed upon behaviors**
- 5. Warranted course-corrections (including indicated sanctions)**
- 6. Fair & efficient conflict resolution**

**Min
d**

What happens if we are not moving towards?

How do we address away moves?

5
Sense

What actions align?
How can we monitor our progress?

Leveraging psychological flexibility of individuals and psychological safety as a group to work on the 8 principals

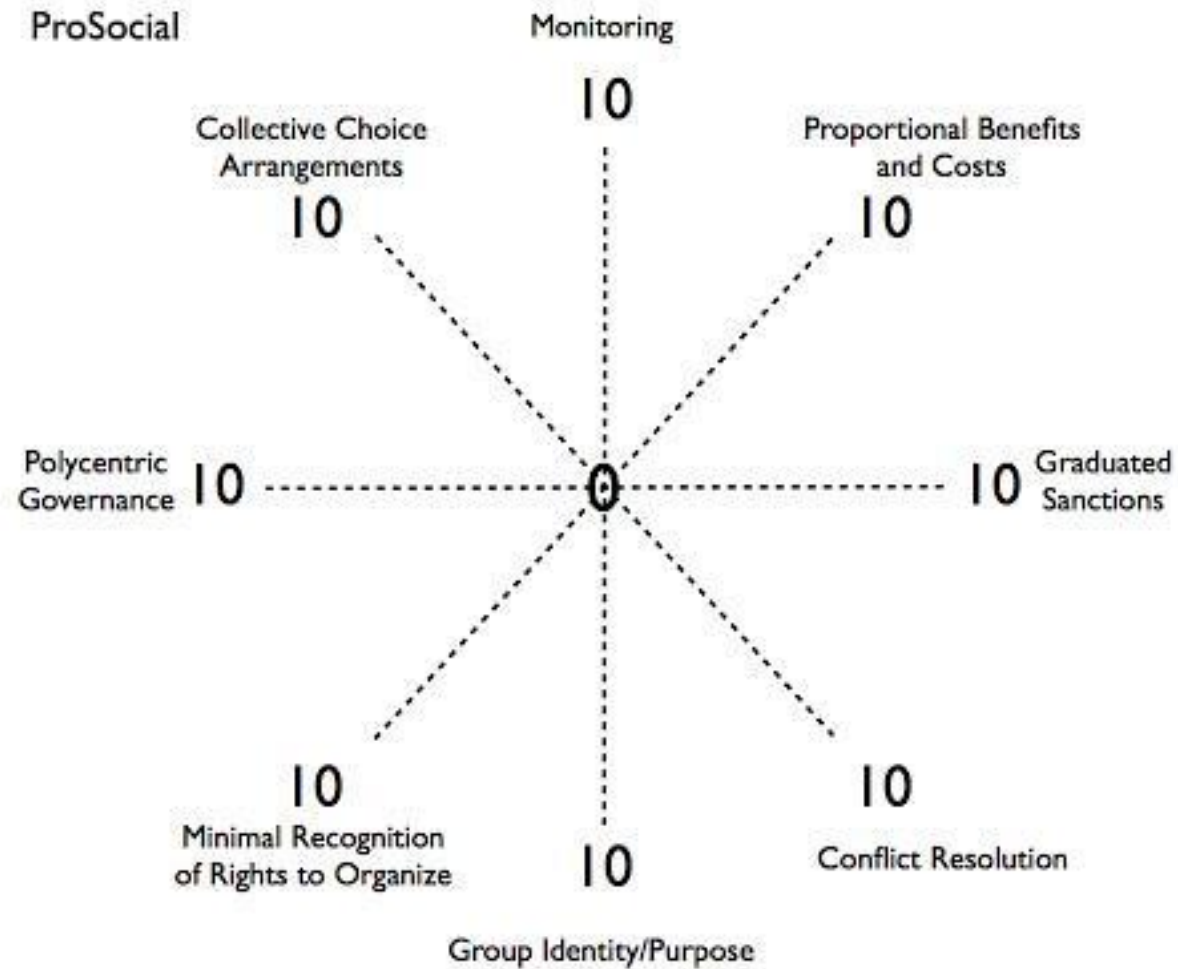
1. Strong Group Identity and shared purpose
2. Fair distribution of responsibilities, costs and benefits
3. Fair & inclusive decision making
4. Monitoring agreed upon behaviors
5. Warranted course-corrections (including indicated sanctions)
6. Fair & efficient conflict resolution

Conflicts, feelings of unfairness

Group identity and purpose?

Min
d

Core Design Principles- Elinor Ostrom



1 = Strongly Disagree; 3 = neither agree or disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree

Ratings for your own group

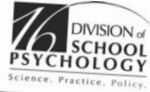
Questions		Our Rating						
<i>Evaluation of Consultation Supports (Mark your ratings with an X)</i>		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Shared Identity and Purpose								
This group has a shared sense of identity and purpose								
The demands and benefits of participating in this group are distributed equitably between its members.								
Group members are included in the making of decisions about how the group should run.								
Group members know what others in the group are doing.								
If someone behaves in a way that is unhelpful or disruptive in this group, people respond appropriately to discourage that behavior.								
There is fast and fair conflict resolution in this group.								
This group has authority to govern itself without excessive interference from outside the group.								
This group has collaborative relations with other groups.								
Total Shared Identity and Purpose								
Group Commitment								
I feel proud to belong to this group								
I feel very committed to this group.								
I am glad I belong to this group and not to another group.								
I am willing to exert extra effort to help this group succeed.								
Total Group Commitment								
Group Cooperation								
In this group we work in a climate of cooperation.								
In this group we discuss and deal with issues or problems openly.								
While making a decision we take each other's opinion into consideration. Some people hold back relevant information in this group. (R)								
In this group people minimize what they tell about themselves. (R)								
Most people in this group are open to advice and help from others.								
Total Group Cooperation								

	How often do you, your colleagues or your manager...	Never/ almost never	Seldom	Fairly often	Very often
1	Interrupt the person speaking				
2	Look away, or at another person than the one speaking				
3	Harshly criticize or blame someone				
4	Use discriminatory language/jokes, or laugh at such				
5	Respond defensively in discussions				
6	Say that something is important, but act as if it is not				
21	Speak impulsively, without considering other perspectives				
7	Ask about or validate others' needs/feelings/state				
8	Ask how work task are proceeding				
9	Offer help or ask for help				
10	Invite others into conversation or socializing				
11	Listen actively to the person speaking				
12	Encourage and reinforce others' behaviors and achievements				
16	Create opportunities for follow-up/feedback				
13	Express opinions in a constructive way				
14	Talk about how people behave (instead of their traits or attitudes)				
15	Remind about values/rules/policys in close proximity to an activity where they apply				
17	Discourage behaviors that are not ok				
18	Deal with potential problems early on				
19	Make decisions aligned with values/policy even when it might lead to short term losses or problems				
20	Ask for dissenting opinions and listen to them				
22	Summarize and confirm others' arguments before own thoughts are expressed				
23	Talk about shared values				

More details in paper!



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION



DIVISION of
SCHOOL
PSYCHOLOGY
Science. Practice. Policy.

© 2023 American Psychological Association
ISSN: 2578-4218

School Psychology

<https://doi.org/10.1037/spq0000567>

Healthy Educators Need Healthy Schools: Supporting Educator Work-Related Well-Being Through Multitiered Systems of Support

Talida M. State¹, Rachel R. Ouellette², Imad Zaheer³, and Miranda R. Zahn⁴

¹ Department of Teaching and Learning, Montclair State University

² Department of Psychiatry, Yale University School of Medicine

³ Department of Psychology, St. John's University

⁴ Division of Counseling and Psychology in Education, University of South Dakota

The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified preexisting challenges for educators as manifested in high rates of work-related stress and burnout, and educators leaving the profession in higher numbers than ever before. In this article, we highlight the urgency for work-related well-being supports for educators, with a particular focus on system changes. Individual self-care is necessary, yet insufficient. To this end, we recommend the use of a multitiered system of support framework to promote a supportive and balanced work environment for all educators, tailored to local needs. We provide a rationale for the use of a tiered model and give specific recommendations for implementation and sustainability of a continuum of supports for school-wide educator well-being.

Thank you for this Opportunity



Imad Zaheer

imadzaheer@gmail.com

<https://nei.squarespace.co>



ST. JOHN'S
UNIVERSITY



Nurturing Environments Institute