



BELONGING AT WORK

More than Mere Inclusion

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Workforce Development and Education Summit
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Topeka, KS



Welcome & Housekeeping notes



This presentation (45 mins), and happy to share slides.



The “Q & A” section will last 15 mins.



Email any time at omidf@pitt.edu



GOALS FOR TODAY

01

Historical Context
of Belonging and
Learning

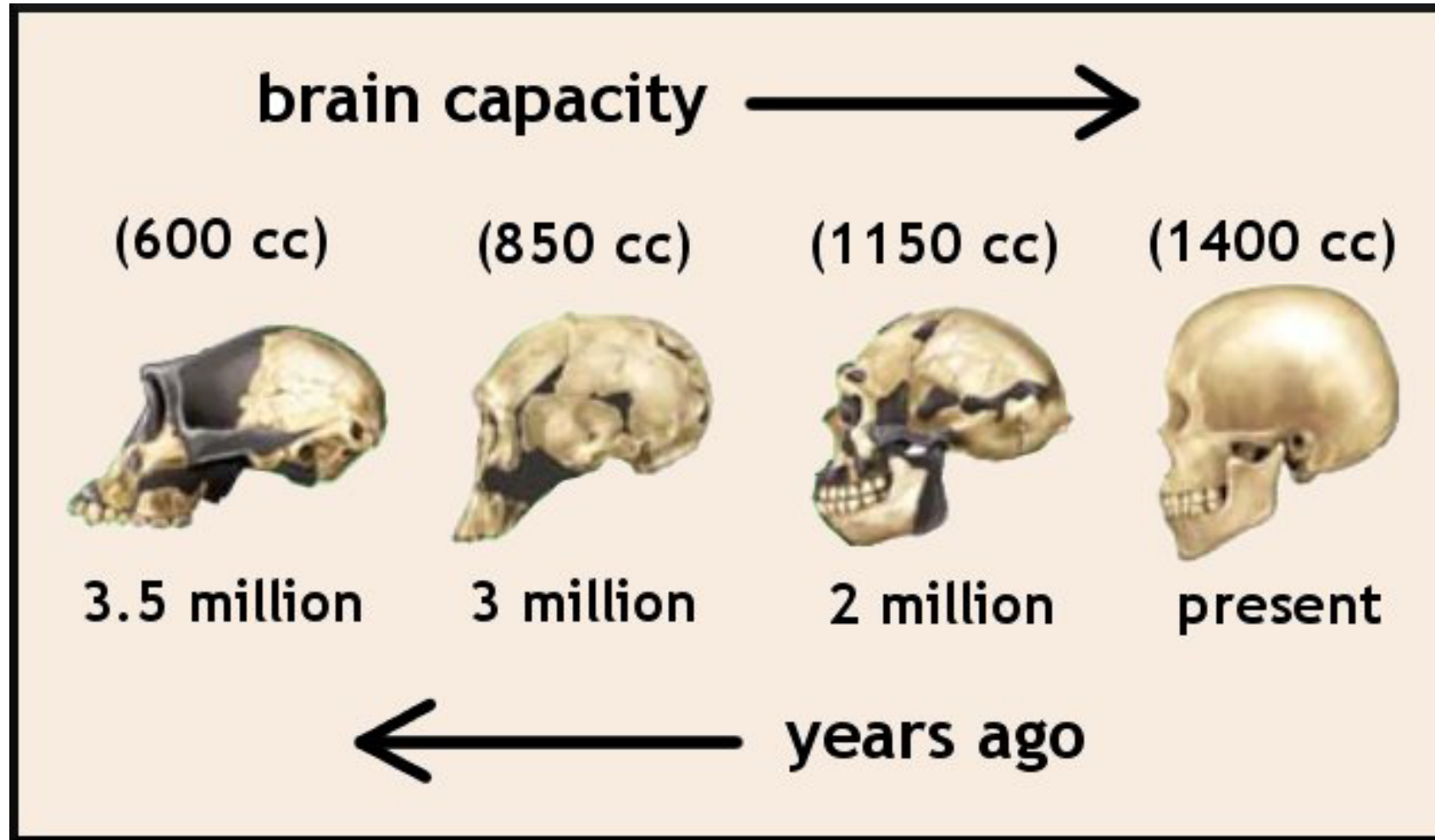
02

Defining and
Measuring
Belonging

03

Outline Strategies
for Fostering
Belonging

Evolutionary Gamble



Need to
Belong





Belonging from Birth

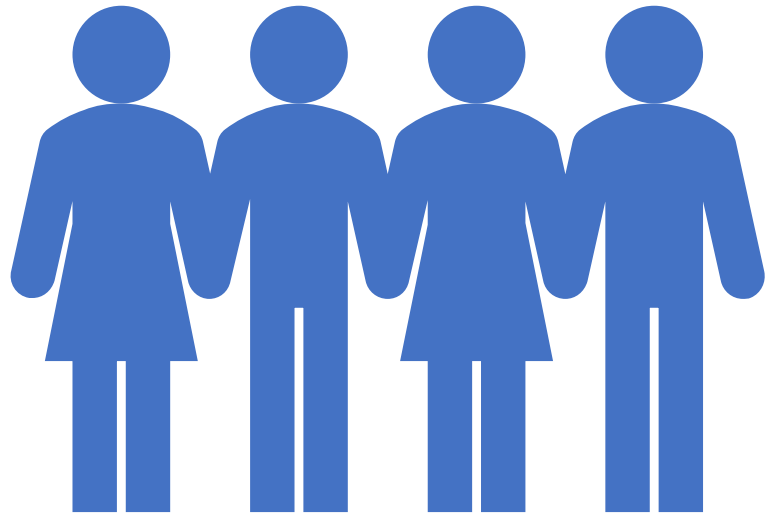
- When you are claimed by a group.
- Need to belong continues to influence group integration.

Need to Belong

Fundamental Need

Driving Motive





Defining Belonging

Impact, Measure, and
Consequences




Measuring Belonging

- When you are claimed by a group.
- The feeling that you are cared for and valued.
- Most noticeable experienced through its absence



Impact of Belonging in the Workplace

- High belonging is linked to a
 - 56% increase in job performance,
 - a 50% drop in turnover risk,
 - and a 75% reduction in sick days,
 - a 167% increase in their employer promoter score (their willingness to recommend their company to others),
 - received double the raises,
 - and 18 times more promotions.
- 

Impact of Belonging in the Workplace

- 40% of people say that they feel isolated at work, and the result has been lower organizational commitment and engagement.
- *“I get paid well to do something I enjoy, and...[I’m] surrounded by clever, funny, like-minded people. And for 45 or 50 hours every week, I feel isolated.”*





Social Identity Theory



Three Kinds of Belonging Problems

1. Belonging certainty, but not desired
2. Certainty about not belonging
3. Belonging Uncertainty

Cues in the Context

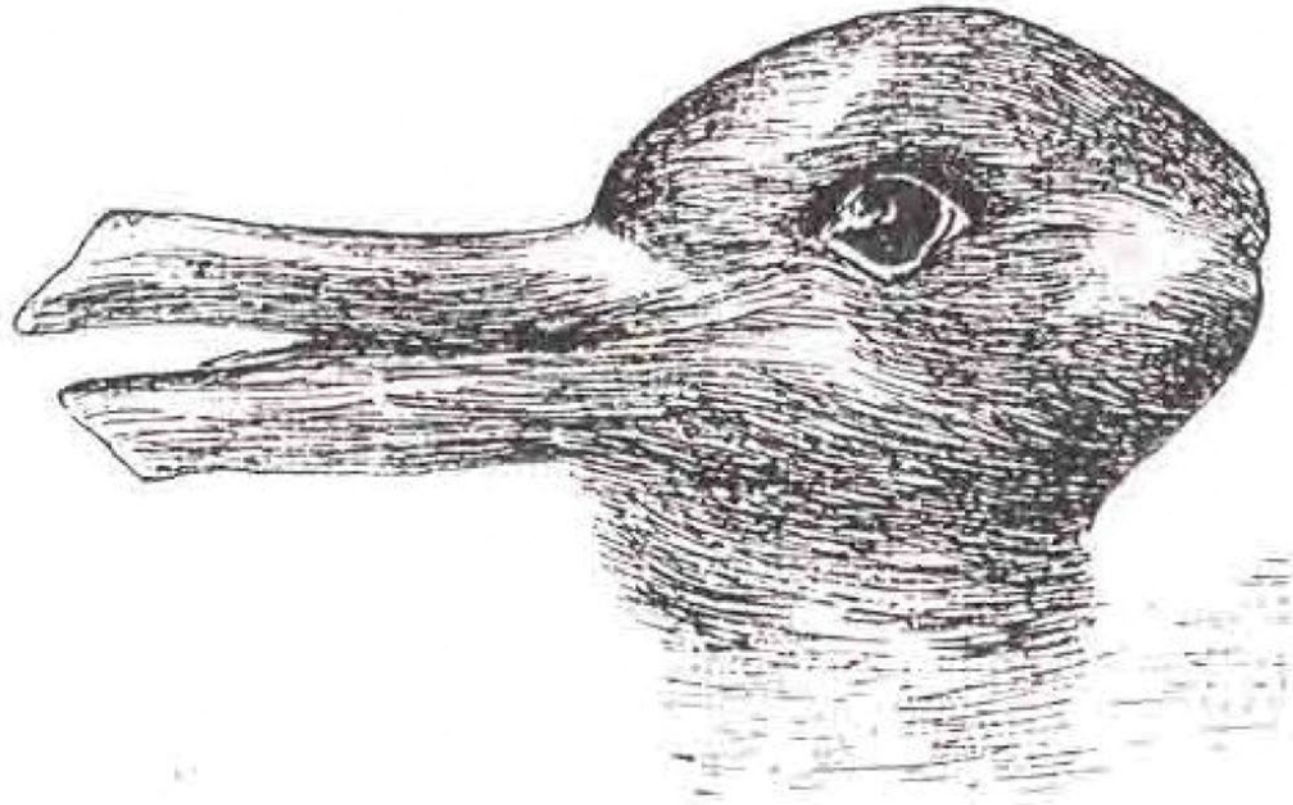
A THREAT IN THE AIR



Photo by Kirill Pershin on Unsplash



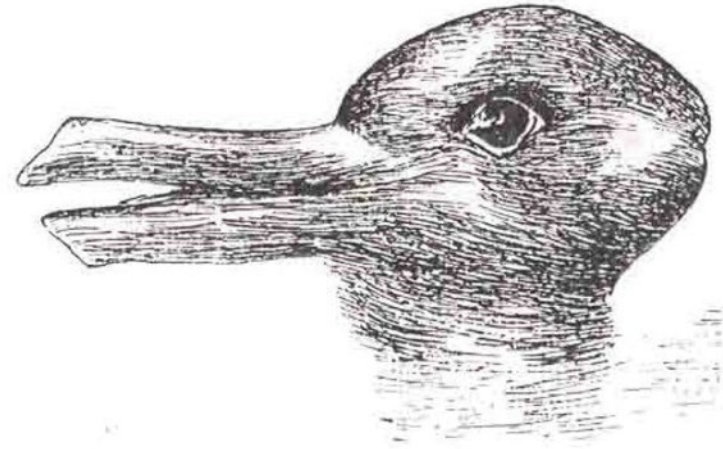
What do you see?



Reality is Subjective

Influenced by past experiences and context

- Easter Sunday: 87% saw a Rabbit
- Sunday in October: 92% saw a Bird
- In Oregon



(Brugger and Brugger, 1993)



Context Matters

A A

B
B



Classroom Environments: A threat in the air

Stereotypical room

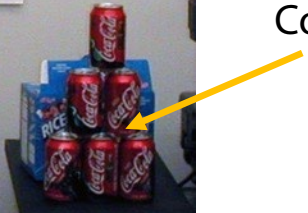
Star Trek poster



Sci Fi books



Coke cans



Cheryan, Plaut, Davies & Steele, 2009



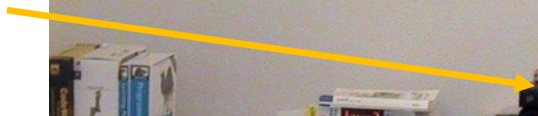
Classroom Environments

Non-stereotypical room

Nature poster



Neutral books

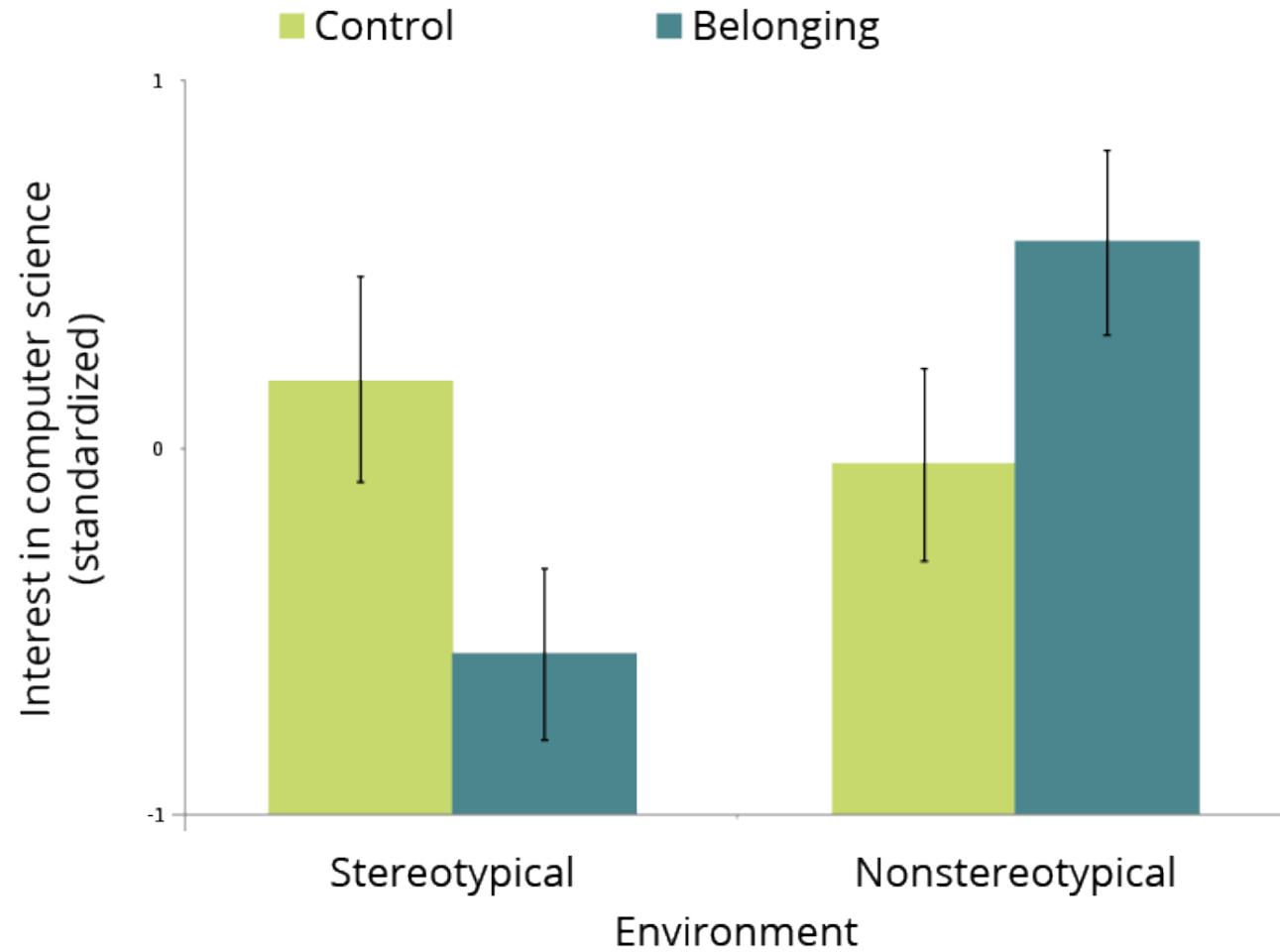


Water bottles



Cheryan, Plaut, Davies & Steele, 2009

Environment Influences Women's Interest in CS



Cheryan, Plaut, Davies & Steele, 2009

Interaction: $F(1, 35) = 10.22, p < .01$

Organizational Cues

REPRESENTATION

AMBIENT CUES

MISSION &
VISION

PROCESSES,
POLICIES &
STRUCTURES



Bureaucratic Hassles

A QUESTION OF BELONGING



Photo by Siora Photography on Unsplash

Web Form Manipulation

Biographical Information

- Last Name:
- First Name:
- Date of Birth:
- Email Address:
- Confirm Email Address:
- Phone Number:
- Please Choose a Username:
- Password:
- Confirm Password:
- State of Residence:
- Did you become a resident of this state before January 1, 2008?

Manipulation check: $p < .001$

Biographical Information

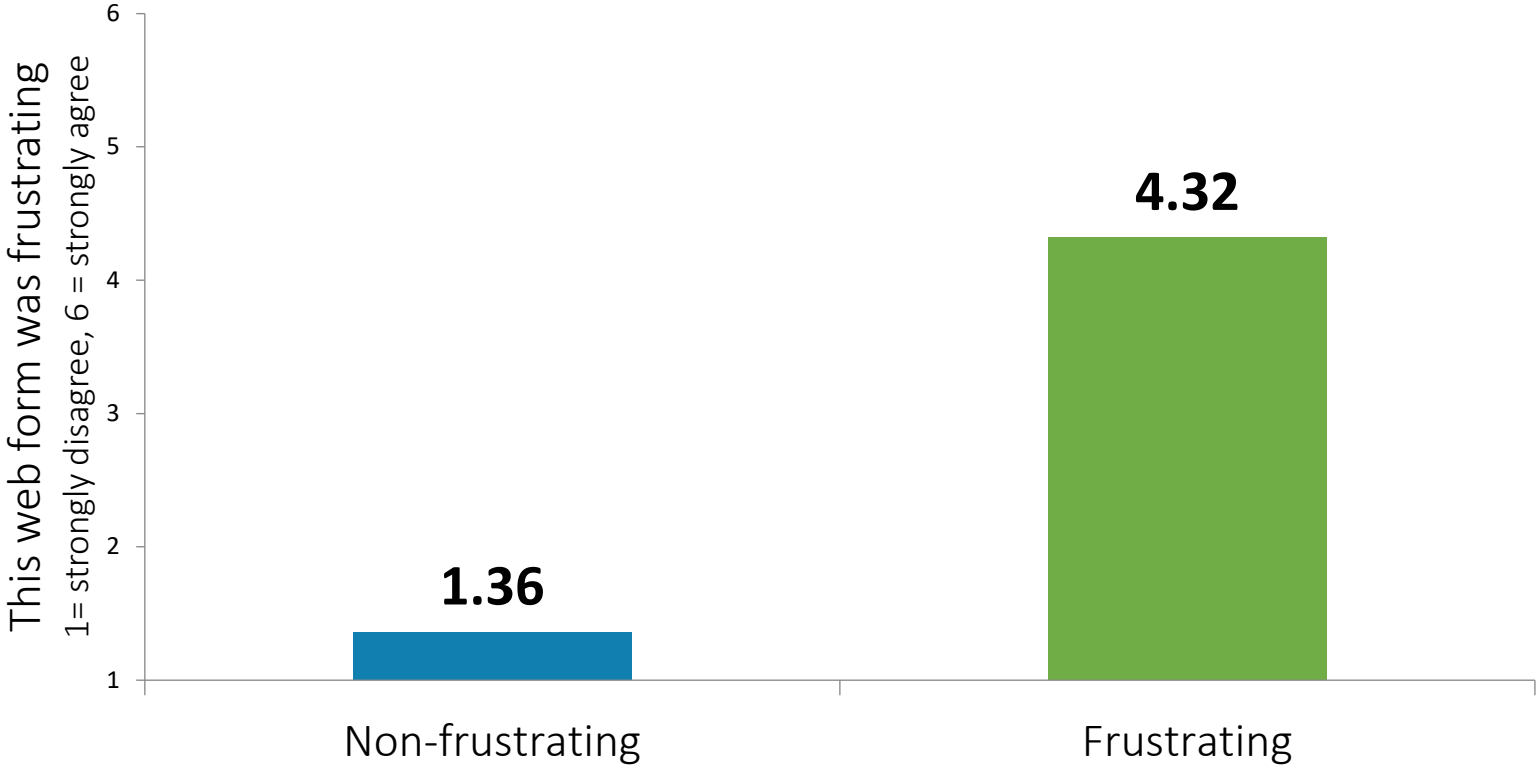
Please correct the following errors:
Invalid Password. Your password must include a minimum of 15 characters, one or more upper case letters, one or more numerical digits and one or more of the following symbols: ,/!*#@%&!.

- Last Name:
- First Name:
- Date of Birth:
- Email Address:
- Confirm Email Address:
- Phone Number:
- Please Choose a Username:
- Password:
- Confirm Password:
- State of Residence:
- Did you become a resident of this state before January 1, 2008?

CONTINUE



“This Form was Frustrating”

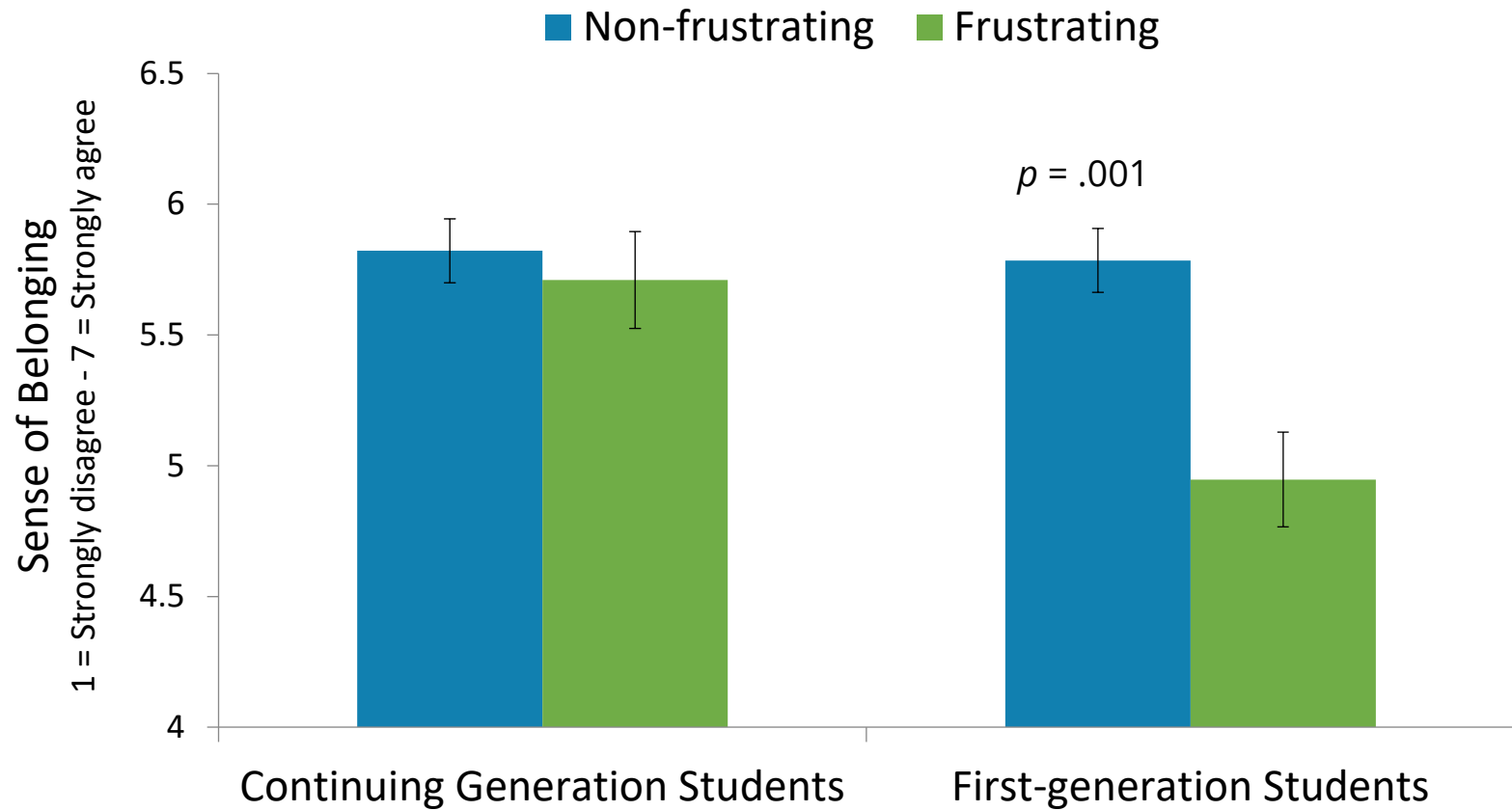


No differences across high vs. low SES individuals



Results: Sense of Belonging in College

e.g. "I don't feel like I belong at my college"



Interaction: $p = 0.02$



Good News

3 Main Channels of Intervention to Reduce *Underperformance*

1

Psychological
Interventions

2

Adaptive Mindset
Training

3

Changing Messaging



Belonging Intervention



BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

BELONG.



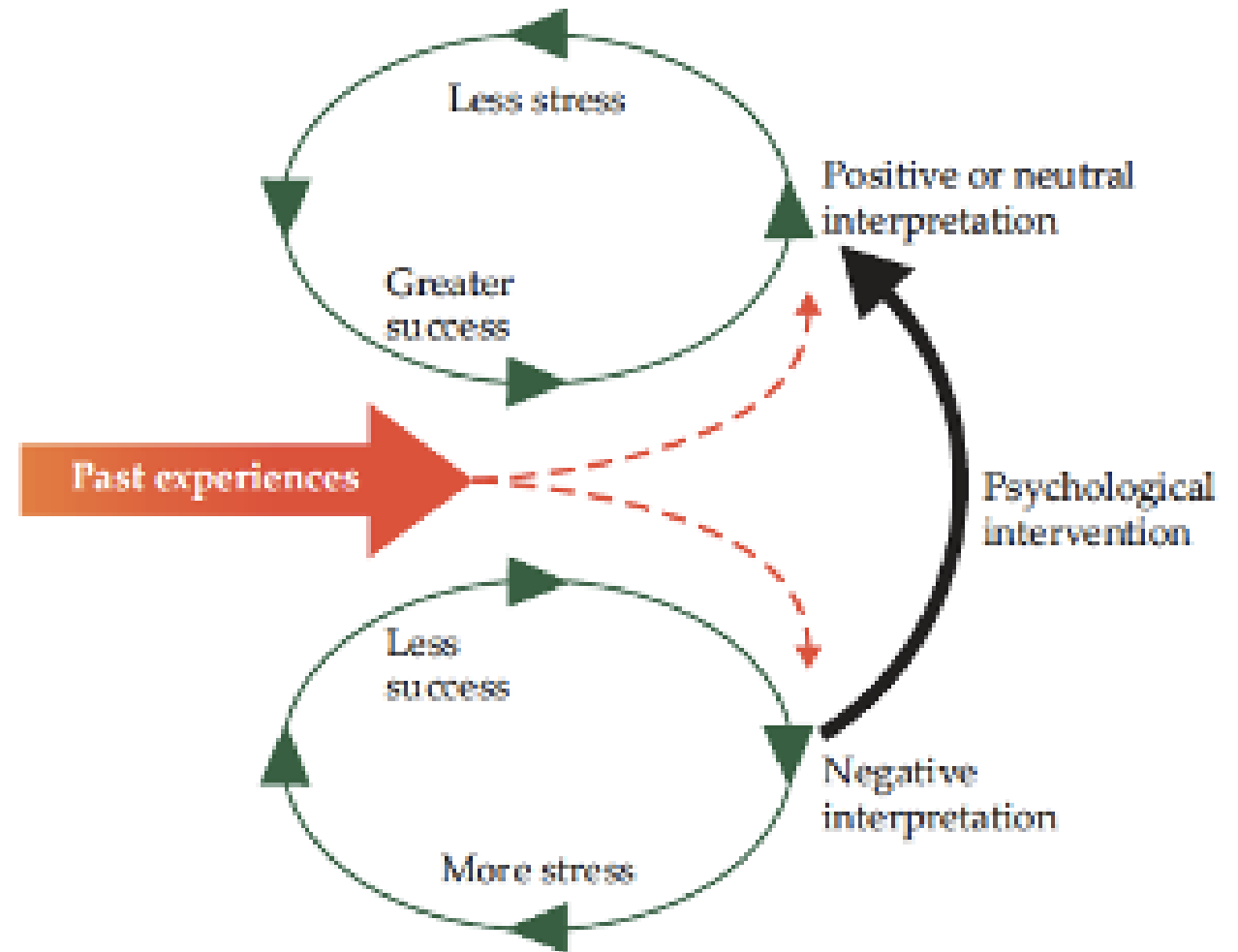
BGSU. BELONG. STAND OUT. GO FAR.

ONLY
\$93

the
ecopl
Saving the

Changing Recursive Processes

- Belonging Uncertainty
 - More likely to attribute neg events to not belonging (Walton & Cohen, 2007)
- Belonging Intervention
 - Normalize common struggles
 - Common
 - Due to transition
 - Temporary

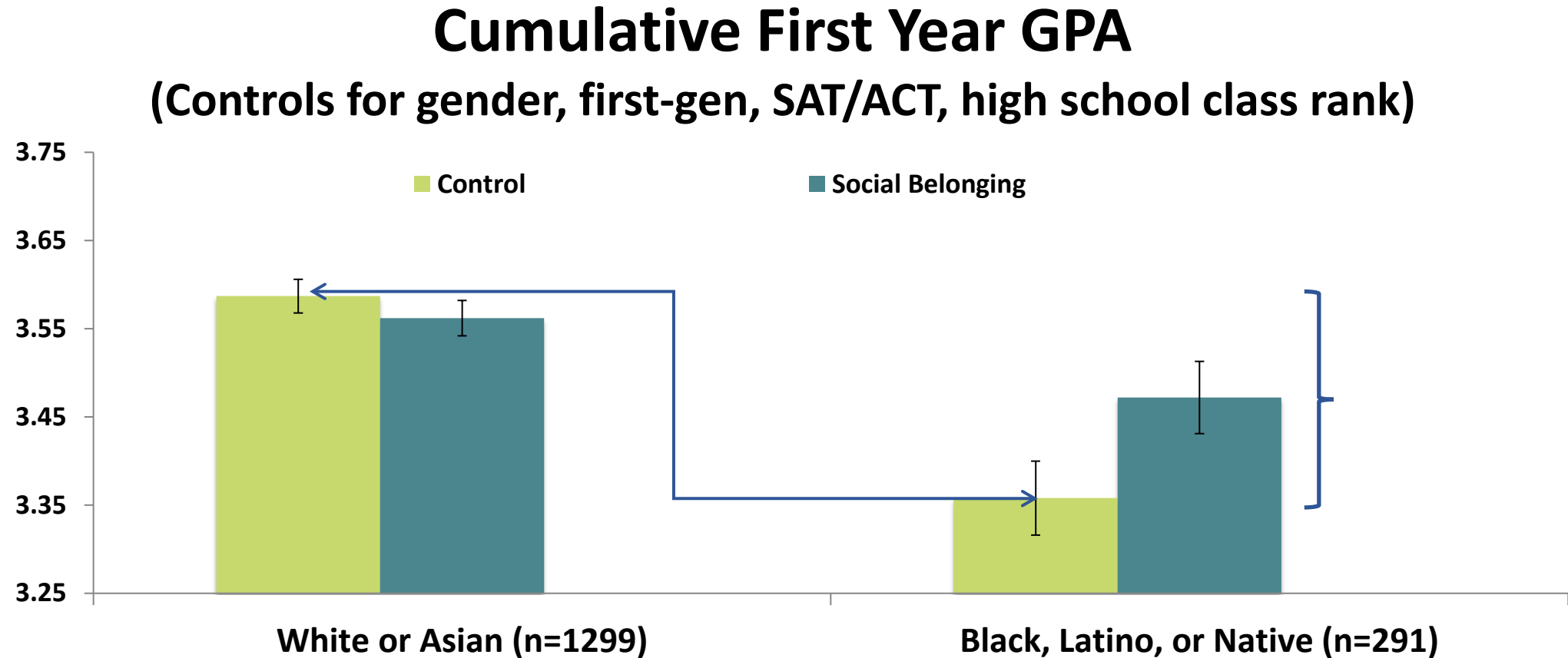


Intervention Message

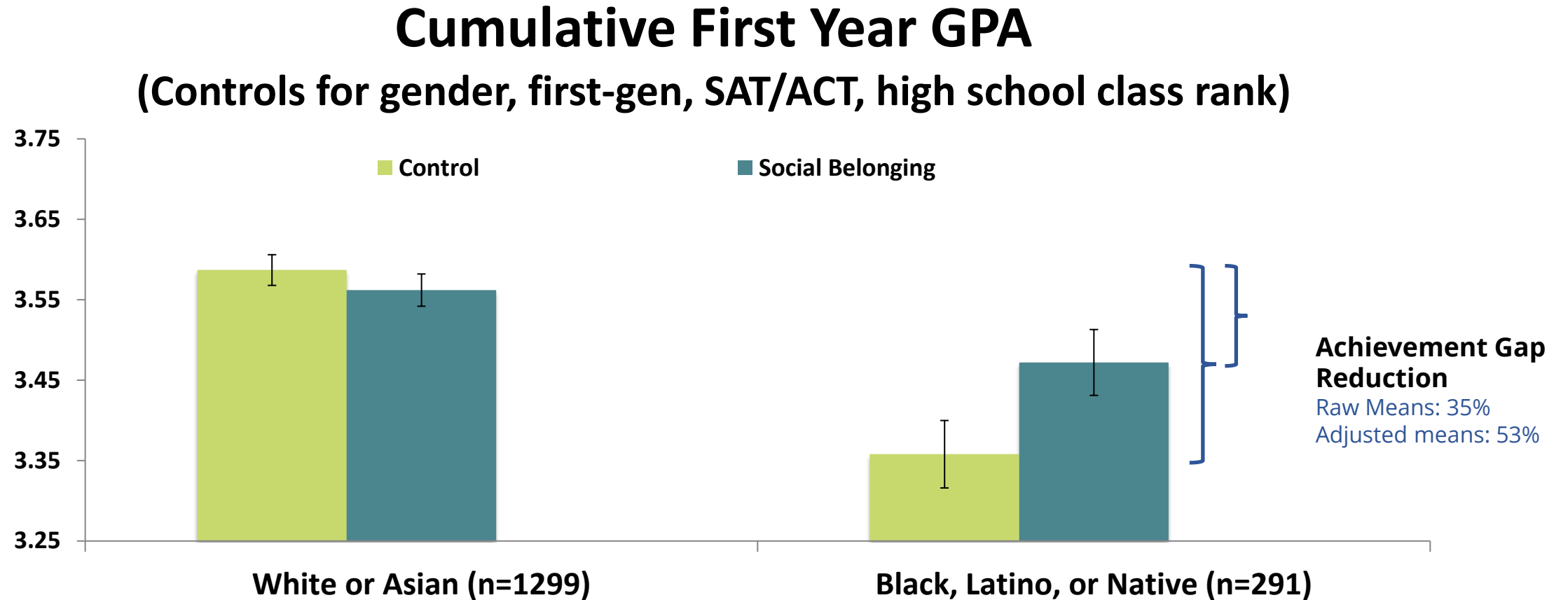
“When I first got to [school name], I worried that I was different from other students. Everyone else seemed so certain that they were right for [school name], I wasn’t sure I fit in. Sometime after my first year, I came to realize that many people come to [school name] uncertain whether they fit in or not. Now it seems ironic – everybody feels they are different freshman year from everybody else, when really in at least some ways we are all pretty similar...”

- Senior, African-American female

Belonging Intervention Results



Belonging Intervention Results

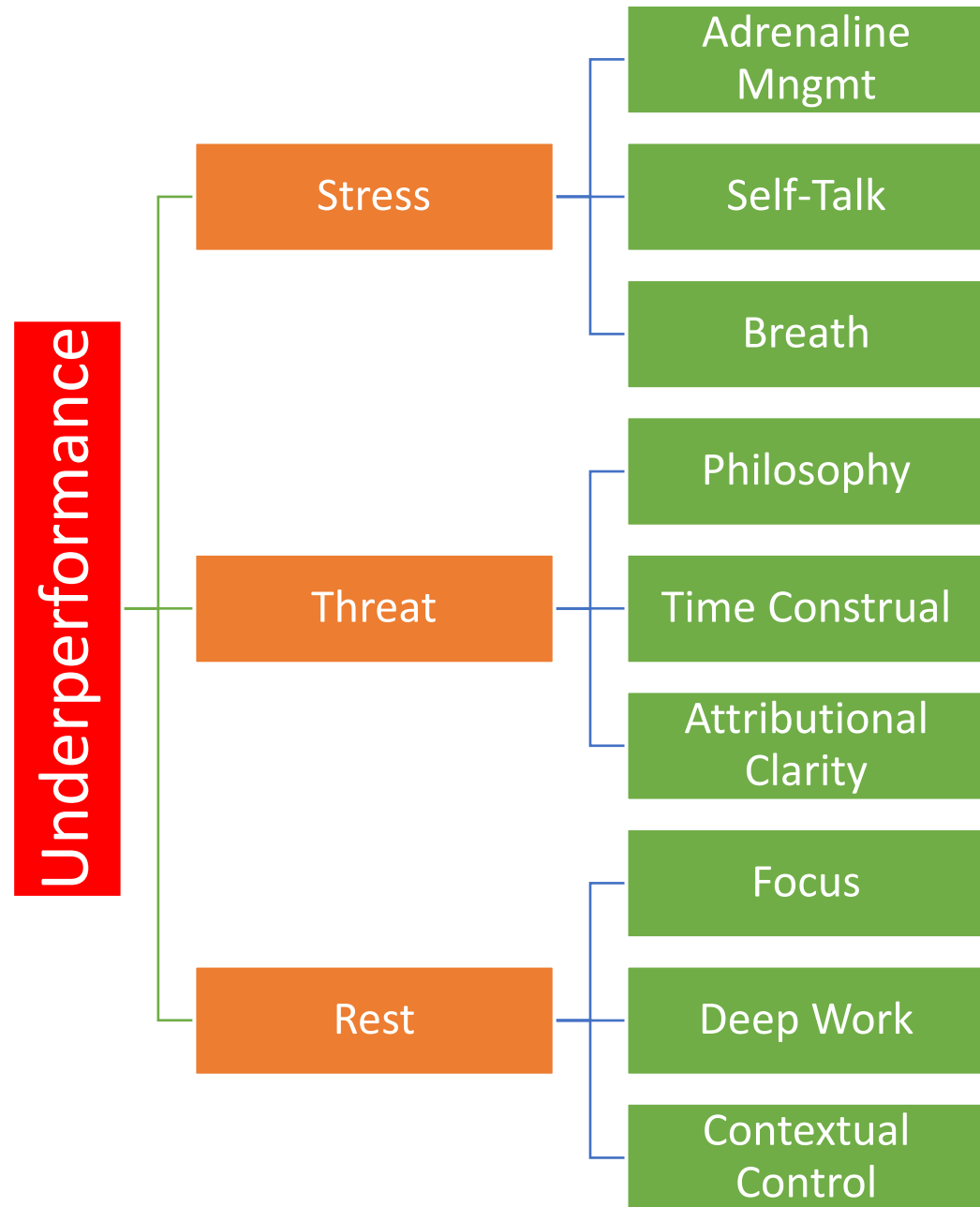




Adaptive Mindsets

The Unwritten Curriculum of Success

Psychological States of *Under-Performance*



Mindset Skills Training Modules

Mindset: Frontiers of ability

Master your Myopia:
Managing the Hot System

The Secret of Self-Control: Divorce Willpower, Marry context

Devotion over Emotion: The Passion Myth

Taking ownership:
The Need for Self-Management

Respond, don't React:
Effective goal-setting

Resilience vs. Grit:
Trust the group, not the grind

Personality as Repeated States, not Fixed Traits: The Power of Habit

Growth over Grades:
Love the Process, not the Product

Becoming Limitless:
Underperformance Explained

Initiation & Maintenance:
Approach Vs. Avoidance Motivation

Passion & Purpose:
Pasting Passion to Purpose

Activity

“Do you think _____ is something that can be improved?”

1. Not at all
2. A little
3. A moderate amount
4. A lot
5. Very much



“Do you think _____ is something that can be improved?”

- Height
- Hair Color
- Creativity
- Artistic ability
- Math
- Singing
- Intelligence
- Sports/Athleticism
- Ability to control impulse
- Ability to pay attention
- Extraversion/Shyness

Mindset Skills Training Modules

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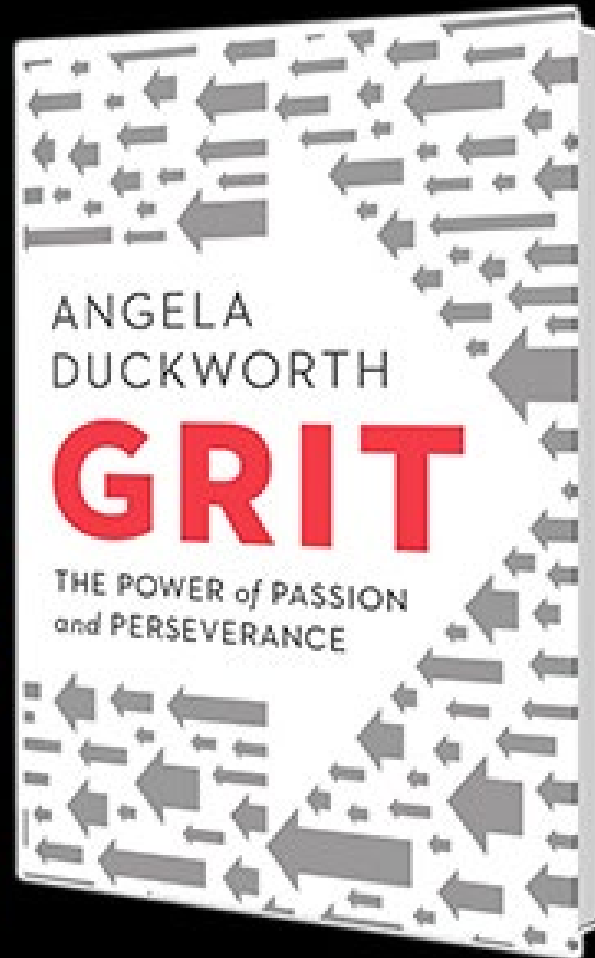
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TED Talks EDUCATION



Grit Mania

- Grit (Duckworth): Perseverance and passion for long-term goals
- >19,500, 100 views!



The Grit Contradiction & Adaptive Resilience

- Grit carries notion that you can find a little extra when you feel drained.
- Usually believe this is done in isolation
- Resilience is quality of network, not characteristic of individual.





Messaging





Getting the Belonging Message Right

Getting Belonging Message Right

1. Avoid Deficit Model:

- Participants treated as benefactors, not beneficiaries
- Inquiry based invitation
- Create space & slack

2. Internalize Message:

- Message reinforced using “saying-is-believing” techniques (Aronson et al., 2002)

3. Timing:

- Delivered early to interrupt maladaptive recursive cycles



Belonging is...

the feeling that you are cared for and valued.

Goal for your Company

*“I didn’t choose to work at [Company Name]...
[Company Name] chose me.”*

WGU Labs Supports

Assessment

- Engagement Audit
- Messaging Review
- Policy Review

Psyc Intvn

- Belonging
- Values Affirmation
- Wise Intervention

Training

- Manager Training
- Mindset Training for Employees
- Strategic Consulting



LinkedIn



THANK YOU!

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