

*Health &  
Wellness  
Seminar Series*



**MAKING CAMPUS MORE  
CARING AND COMPASSIONATE  
WITH JOHN BUCHANAN AND  
MALINDA BALFOUR FROM HOUSING**

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**Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**

**February 5, 2015**

# OUTLINE

- Why this seminar? Why are you here?
- Cal Maritime Culture
- The Problems
  - Data, Anecdotes, Contributing Factors
- Understanding Compassion
- Caring Organizations
- The Problems of Wealth and Youth
- The Solutions
  - What research suggests
  - What can we do?
- Flashcards – write questions for Q&A



# WHY THIS SEMINAR? WHY ARE YOU HERE?

- Survey data from fall 2013 about the mental health climate at Cal Maritime
- Rate the general climate for students at your campus (*1 to 6 Likert scale; CSU average in parentheses*)
  - 1-Hostile to 6-Friendly
    - 4.0 (5.0)
  - 1-Impersonal to 6-Caring
    - 3.6 (4.5)
  - 1-Intolerant of diversity to 6-tolerant of diversity
    - 3.9 (4.9)
- Why are you here?



# CAL MARITIME CULTURE



- Definition (Merriam-Webster.com)
  - the beliefs, customs, arts, etc., of a particular society, group, place, or time
  - a particular society that has its own beliefs, ways of life, art, etc.
  - : a way of thinking, behaving, or working that exists in a place or organization (such as a business)
- How would you describe our campus culture?
  - Motto: *Laborare Pugnare Parati Sumus*
    - To Work, (or) to Fight; We are Ready
  - Esprit de corps
    - feelings of loyalty, enthusiasm, and devotion to a group



# THE PROBLEM - DATA

- Compared to all other CSUs, Cal Maritime is...
  - *More Hostile*
  - *More Impersonal*
  - *More intolerant to diversity*
  - Should we be concerned?



# THE PROBLEM - ANECDOTES

- Evidence from Counseling
  - Perceptions of unfairness and preferential treatment
  - A “culture of yelling”
  - Aspects of a rape culture
    - Norms that encourage or condone:
      - Victim blaming, interpreting ambiguous signs as sexual interest, objectification of women
  - Focus on extrinsic incentives and avoiding punishment
    - \$\$\$, conforming to Corps standards
    - Lack of intrinsic motivation
  - Insensitivity: to diversity, individual differences, suicide



# THE PROBLEM - ANECDOTES

- Evidence from Housing
  - John and Malinda



# THE PROBLEM – CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- “Us versus them” mentality
  - Divisions on campus
    - between companies, divisions, groups, cadets and staff/faculty
- History of Maritime Industry
  - Ex: Psychological Problems in Training 16 and 17 Year Old Youths in the United States Maritime Service (1945)
    - Maturity, “broken homes”,
      - Eagerness led to denial of problems
        - “To have any weakness means that I am a sissy or a kid and I must convince the doctor (and myself) that I am really tough and a man”
        - “But, the authoritarian attitudes of some of the leaders are reflections of serious intrapsychic anxieties and insecurities within the leaders themselves”





# THE PROBLEM – CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- Lack of a critical mass
  - Gender and ethnic diversity
- Personality characteristics
- Stress, pressure, worry, and other mental health problems
  - Few healthy outlets for stress relief, enjoyment, fun
- Others?



# UNDERSTANDING COMPASSION

- Definition of compassion
  - Empathy and a desire to help
    - Sympathy, pity, kindness, tenderness, warmth, caring
- What triggers compassion?
  - Babies/children in need
  - Expressions of distress
  - Pain and Sadness
  - Illness
  - Homelessness and poverty
  - Victims of catastrophe or loss
- An evolutionary basis
  - Protective for raising vulnerable offspring; mate preference; cooperative relations
  - Compassion = decreased heartrate, Distress = increased HR
  - Present in religion. Ex: Christianity, Buddhism
- Goetz, Keltner, & Simon-Thomas (2010); Stellar et al. (2012)



# THE DALI LAMA ON COMPASSION



# UNDERSTANDING COMPASSION

- What does compassion look like?
  - Orientation
    - Eye contact, head and body oriented, forward lean
  - Touch – soothing and cooperation
  - Facial expression
    - Furrowed eyebrows, slight mouth press
- Goetz, Keltner, & Simon-Thomas (2010); Stellar et al. (2012)





# UNDERSTANDING COMPASSION

- What triggers compassion?
  - Individual factors
    - Relevance of the sufferer to self (proximity to suffering)
      - Family member versus stranger
      - Perception of similarity
    - Sufferer's deservingness
      - Responsibility for suffering
        - Ex: blindness and cancer versus obesity and drug abuse
    - Individual's ability to cope with the situation
      - Helplessness reduces compassion
- Goetz, Keltner, & Simon-Thomas (2010); Stellar et al. (2012)



# INDUCING COMPASSION

## RELIEFNYP.ORG PSA: AN ACT OF US





# UNDERSTANDING COMPASSION

- What triggers compassion?
  - Group factors
    - Interdependent or collectivist cultures
    - Culture of Emotional Intelligence
      - Where are emotions are valued, known, & expressed
    - Class differences
      - Lower class environments → greater compassion
        - Why?
          - See more suffering and feel things more deeply
            - Reading faces, compassionate expressions
          - More interdependent
            - Proximity to suffering
          - Adaptation to coping with threats
- Losing compassion – Compassion fatigue
- Goetz, Keltner, & Simon-Thomas (2010); Stellar et al. (2012)





# HOW WEALTH REDUCES COMPASSION

- “*Who is more likely to lie, cheat, and steal—the poor person or the rich one?*”
  - Cutting off other motorists at intersections
  - Perceived higher class → taking more candy from needy children
  - HR differences watching cancer video
- Grewal, D. (2012, April 10). *How Wealth Reduces Compassion*. Scientific American.



# CARING ORGANIZATIONS

- Creating Caring Organizations
  - Gratitude
    - *“Chronic bitching and blaming, justifiable or not, is much less likely to impair individuals in the presence of sincere gratitude”* (p. 135)
  - Forgiveness
  - Encouragement
  - Sensitivity
  - Compassion
  - Community
  - Tolerance
  - Inclusion
  - Charity
- Fuqua & Newman (2002)
- Cal Maritime Beliefs and Values (<http://www.csum.edu/web/about/mission>)
  - Dedication
  - Honor
  - Integrity
  - Respect
  - Responsibility
  - Trust



# HOW BEING YOUNG REDUCES EMPATHY

- Self-reported empathy has declined since 1980
  - Steep drop from 2000 to 2010
  - Narcissism increasing
  - Based on data from, Interpersonal Reactivity Index
- Impact of social context
  - Social isolation
    - Rates of living alone
    - Less reading
      - < 50% of adults read for pleasure (lowest ever recorded)
- Zaki, J. (2010, Dec 23). *What, me care? Young are less empathic*. Scientific American



# SOLUTIONS: WHAT DOES RESEARCH SUGGEST?

- Individually
  - Increasing Happiness
    - Definition: Positive emotions and thoughts about self
    - Interventions:
      - Savoring – sensory and memory
      - Gratitude – acknowledge external for + personal effect
      - Kindness – “pay it forward”, “better to give than to receive”
      - Promoting Positive relationships – “Other people matter”
        - Increasing quantity and quality
          - Active-constructive responding and questioning
      - Creating meaning
        - Life narrative, personal mission statement



# SOLUTIONS: WHAT DOES RESEARCH SUGGEST?

- Groups
  - College courses
  - Bibliotherapy
    - *The How of Happiness*
    - *Mindset*
    - *Give and Take*
  - Tech-based
    - *Live Happy* mobile app
    - Beacon: <https://www.beacon.anu.edu.au/>
- Schueller & Parks (2014)



# SOLUTIONS:

## WHAT DOES RESEARCH SUGGEST?

- Reducing prejudice – Mindsets
  - “Participants who believed mindsets couldn't be changed were more likely to act in prejudiced ways, by, for example, placing their chairs farther away from an African-American participant during a discussion.”
  - “Those who had read the articles that said people's prejudices can change also acted friendly with a black partner—even those initially found to be high in prejudice.”
  - [Carol Dweck on Mindsets and Happiness](#)



# SOLUTIONS: HOW DO THEY APPLY HERE?

- What we are doing
  - It's On Us
    - Harassment and Title IX updates
  - Trainings
    - Ally and diversity training for cadet leaders
    - Bystander training for cadet leaders
    - Red Folder training for faculty and staff



# SOLUTIONS: HOW DO THEY APPLY HERE?

- What more can we do?
  - More conversations about campus culture
    - Including caring for shipmates
      - not just in a crisis, but to prevent crises
  - Greater bystander intervention
    - Reporting harassment and discrimination
- What else?





Q & A



## NEXT WEEK, February 12

### **Maritime Relationships** with TSGB Chief Mate, Dan Lintz

*This presentation will address maintaining healthy romantic relationships while working in the maritime industry. From personal experience to scholarly articles and gCaptain threads, attendees will be able to share their experiences and develop plans for better relationships.*

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## Remaining Schedule

2/19 Revisit Your New Year's Resolution: Fitness Tips to Keep You on the Right Track (Athletic Trainer, Jeff Ward) \*

2/26 Preventing Violence Against Women (SafeQuest Solano Spokesperson) \*

3/5 Nutrition, Health, and Wellness (Christine Smith, NP from Student Health Services) \*

3/12 Improve Relations with Difficult Coworkers (Dr. Ingrid Williams, Director of HR) \*

3/19 Reducing Binge and Problematic Drinking (ATOD Member) \*

3/26 Suicide Prevention: QPR (Kate Kimble, Director of Housing) \*

4/2 Resilience and Grit as Stress Management (Commandant Staff) \*

4/9 Counselors on Cruise-2014 Report \*

\* Qualifies for ELDP Credit; <sup>a</sup> For Faculty and Staff Only



# THANK YOU

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