Boundary Control and Identity Management: A New Frontier for Occupational Health

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CEO of Me
CREATING A LIFE THAT WORKS IN THE FLEXIBLE JOB AGE

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Work-Life Boundaries

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Boundaries

Session Objectives

- Define boundary control, its linkages to work-family, career identity management strategies & occupational health outcomes.

- To share an application that can be used in occupational health research/training

- Consider future research; e.g. how boundary control may vary in enactment across occupations and workplaces and cultures

Transforming Work-Family Boundary Relationships

- – People increasingly managing own boundaries
- – Technology rise of smart phones = 24-7 work
- – Family and personal connectivity
- – Email and text overload
- – Rising hours, availability expectations, overwork
- – Identity & career, family intertwined
- – Formal, informal connectivity patterns
- – Boundary blurring increasing across gender, culturesy

Sources: Kossek & Lautsch, 2008, 2012

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Boundary Control Occupational Health Variation/ Stratification

- Some jobs constantly connected, freedom to work 24-7; electronic tethering; high self regulation
- Others not formally **connected for job demands but using smart phones for personal use (safety issue)**
- **Family variation (kids, parents, social strata)**
- **Personality (addictive behaviors, conscientiousness)**
- **Individual Fit (job supplies, demands preferences**
- Supervisor, group, partner Fit   Important to look at individual styles in relation to congruence of others
- Boundaries are enacted in a social context; Occupational work culture, norms matter

Think Pair Share Ice Breaker

Why are work-life boundaries increasingly important for Occupational health?

Why This Matters

Individuals

Reduced stress

Reduced work/life conflict

Reduced burnout

Improved wellbeing

Health, addiction, mood disorder

Organizations

Higher employee engagement

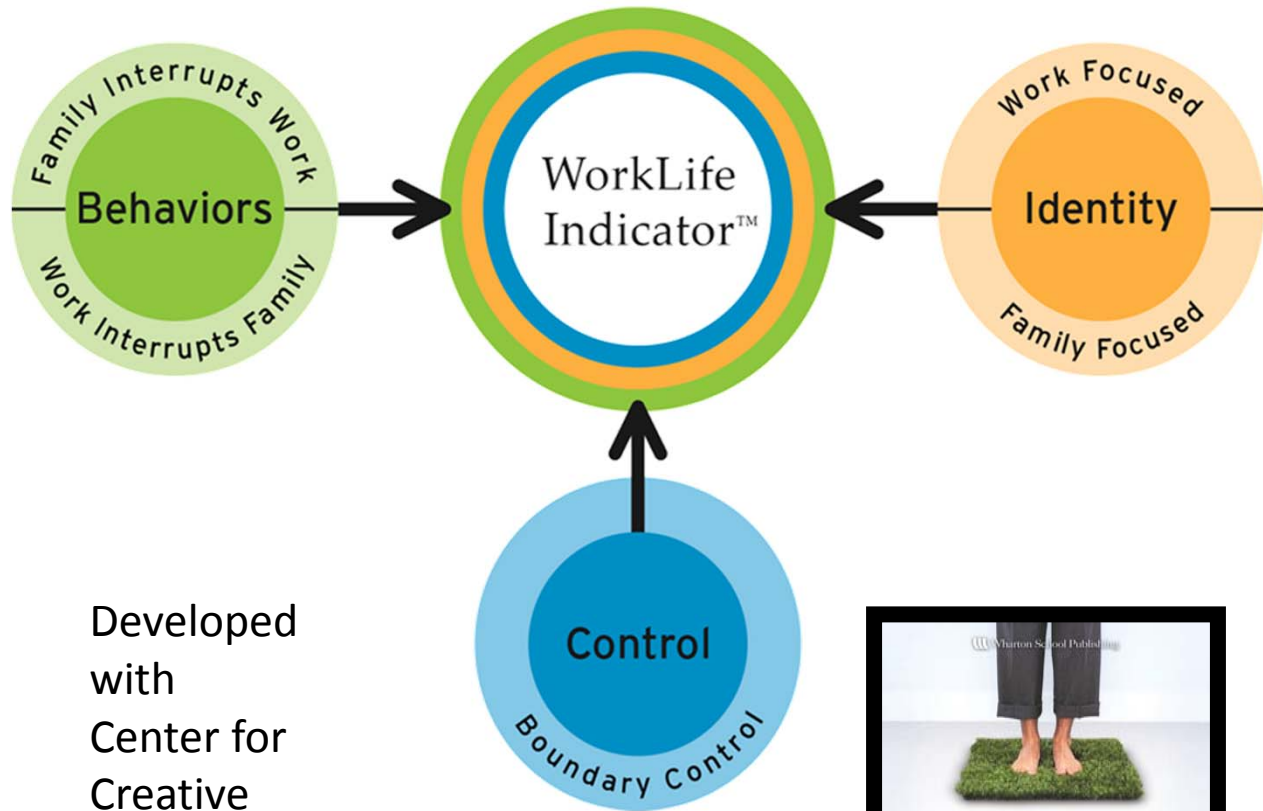Reduced turnover

Higher productivity
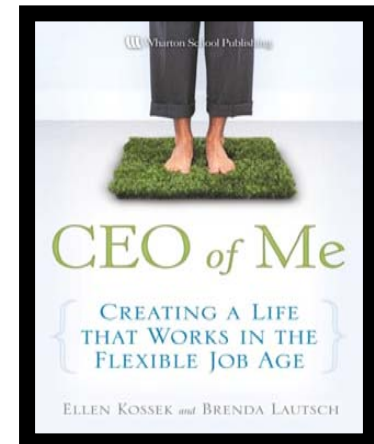
Attracting top talent

Reduced health/leave costs

Safety, Accidents

Model

Flexstyles

Developed
with
Center for
Creative
Leadership

Kossek, Ruderman, Brady, Hannum, JVB, 2012
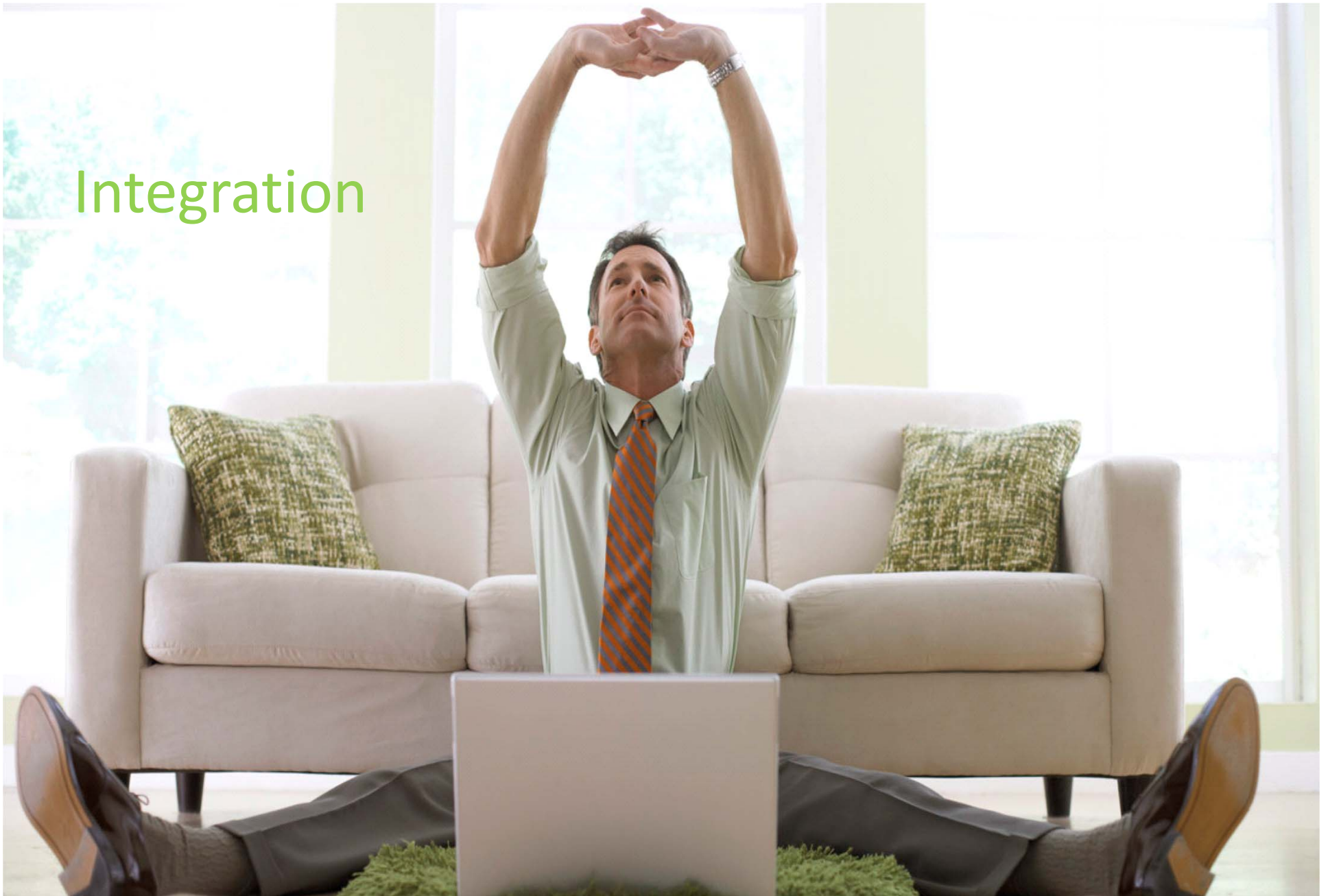
Behaviors

The degree to which you **combine** or **separate** tasks associated with work and those associated with your personal life.

Integration

Integration

Separation

Integration

Behaviors

Integrators

Separators

Work Firsters

Family Firsters

Cyclers

Identity

The degree to which you **identify with and invest** yourself in

work and family roles.

Identity

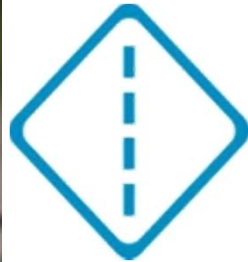(W) Work Focused

(F) Family Focused

(WF) Dual Focused

(O) Other Focused

Boundary Control

The degree to which you **feel in control** as you manage the boundaries between your work life and personal life.

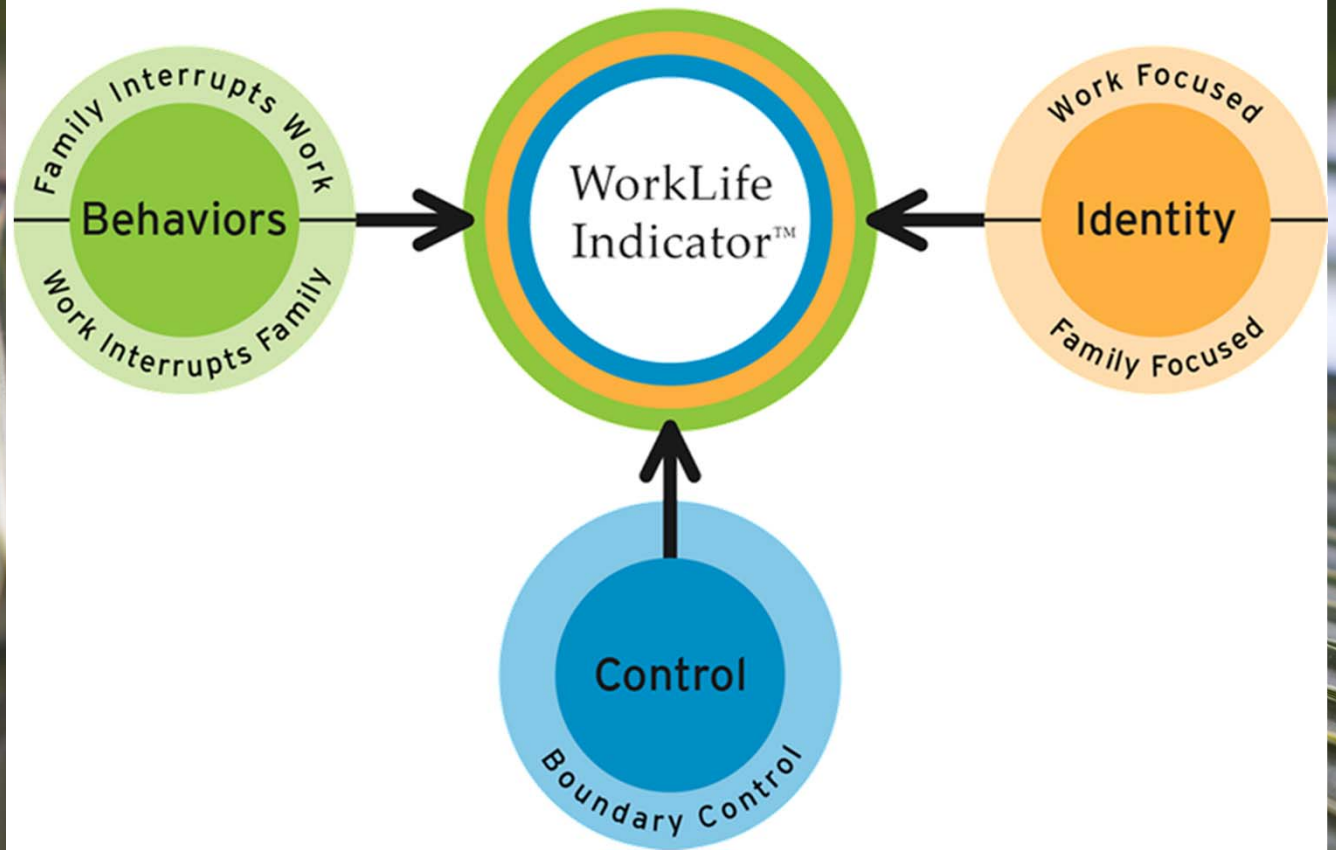# Boundary Control

High Boundary Control

Moderate Boundary Control

Low Boundary Control

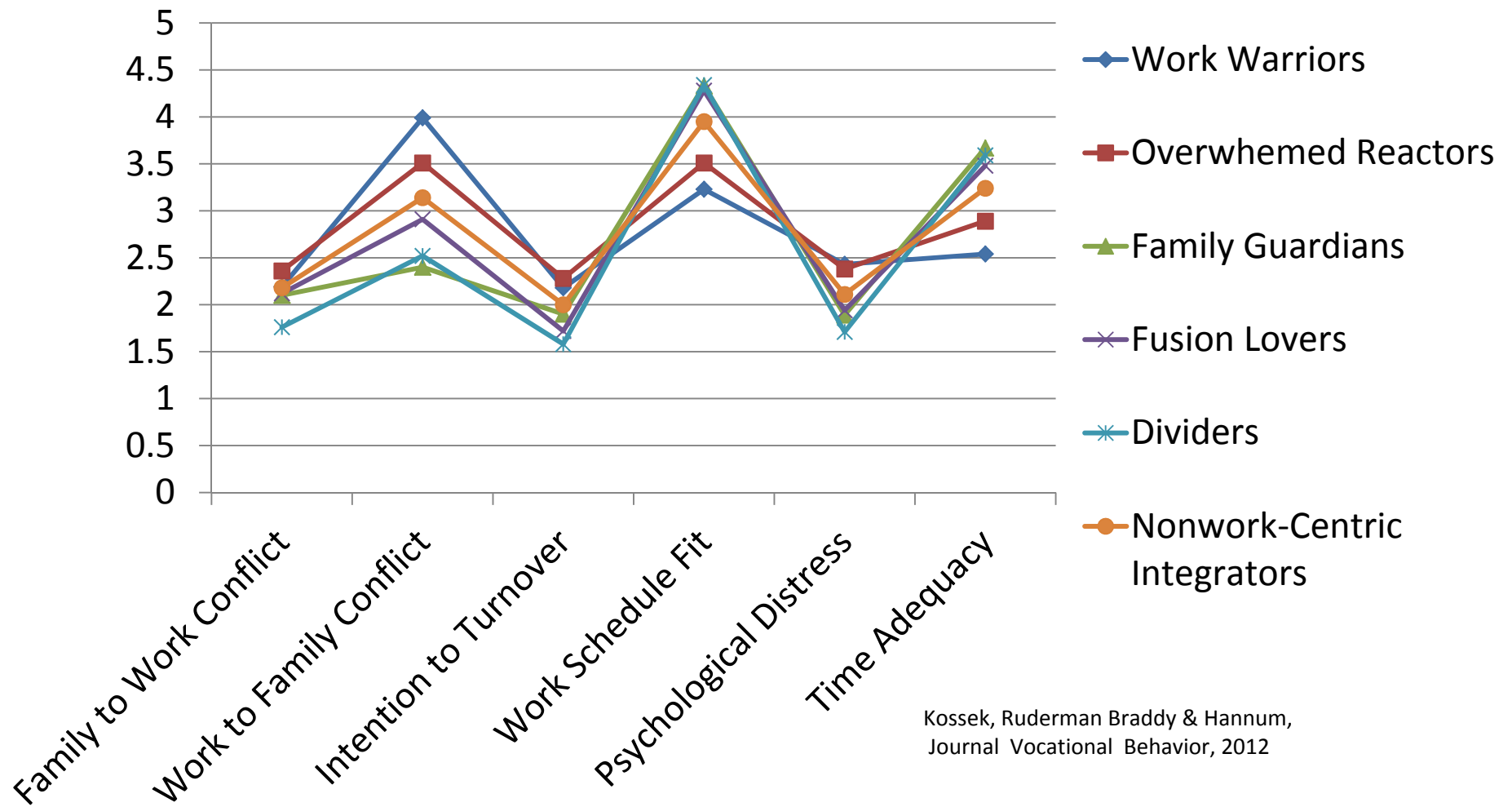# What's Your Style?

Small Group Work

What are tradeoffs of your style & level of boundary control for well-being on and off the job?

What's your story?

Strengths and Weaknesses of Each Behavioral Style

Behavioral Style	Positive Perceptions	Negative Perceptions
Integrators	Can do it all; always available	Exhausted; always in a hurry
Separators	Reliable; professional	Rigid; not adaptable
Work Firsters	Dedicated to work; professional	Workaholic; detached
Family Firsters	Dedicated to family; protective	Rigid; self-centered
Cyclers	Fully engaged; flexible	Chaotic; exhausted

Validation Study of Implications of Styles for Outcomes: Boundary Control & Role Overload Matter

Legend:
- Work Warriors
- Overwhemed Reactors
- Family Guardians
- Fusion Lovers
- Dividers
- Nonwork-Centric Integrators

X-axis categories: Family to Work Conflict, Work to Family Conflict, Intention to Turnover, Work Schedule Fit, Psychological Distress, Time Adequacy

Separator Tradeoff:
Stunted Life

Integrator Tradeoff: Switching Costs
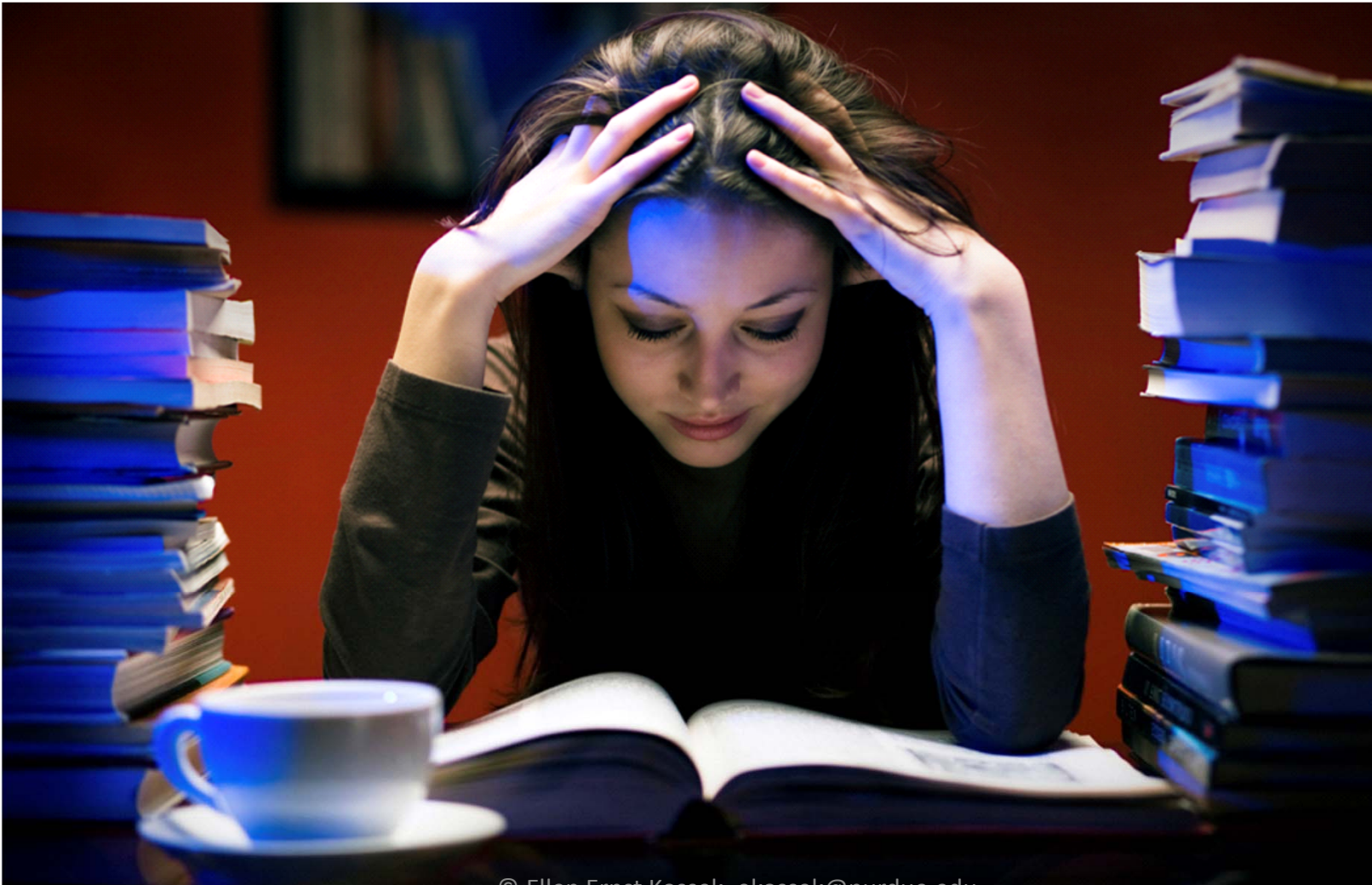
Cycler Tradeoff:
Role Confusion

Work Life Indicator Report

	Dimension	Low	Mid	High	Your score suggests that:
Behaviors	**Family Interrupts Work** - Behaviors allow family responsibilities and relationships to interrupt your work life.			♦	Your family life interrupts your working hours.
	Work Interrupts Family - Behaviors allow work responsibilities and relationships to interrupt your personal life.			♦	Your work interrupts your family time.
Identity	**Work Focused** - Identify with and invest yourself in your work.			♦	You strongly identify with and invest yourself in your career.
	Family Focused - Identify with and invest yourself in your family.	♦			Your identity is primarily based on roles outside of family.
Control	**Boundary Control** - Feel in control of how you manage the boundaries between your work life and personal life.			♦	You feel in control of how you manage the boundary between your work life and personal life.

Development Planning Guide

Step 1
Identify What Is Not Working For You

Step 2
Learn About Boundary Management Techniques

Step 3
Envision A Better Life

Step 4
Get Support

Step 5
Track Your Progress
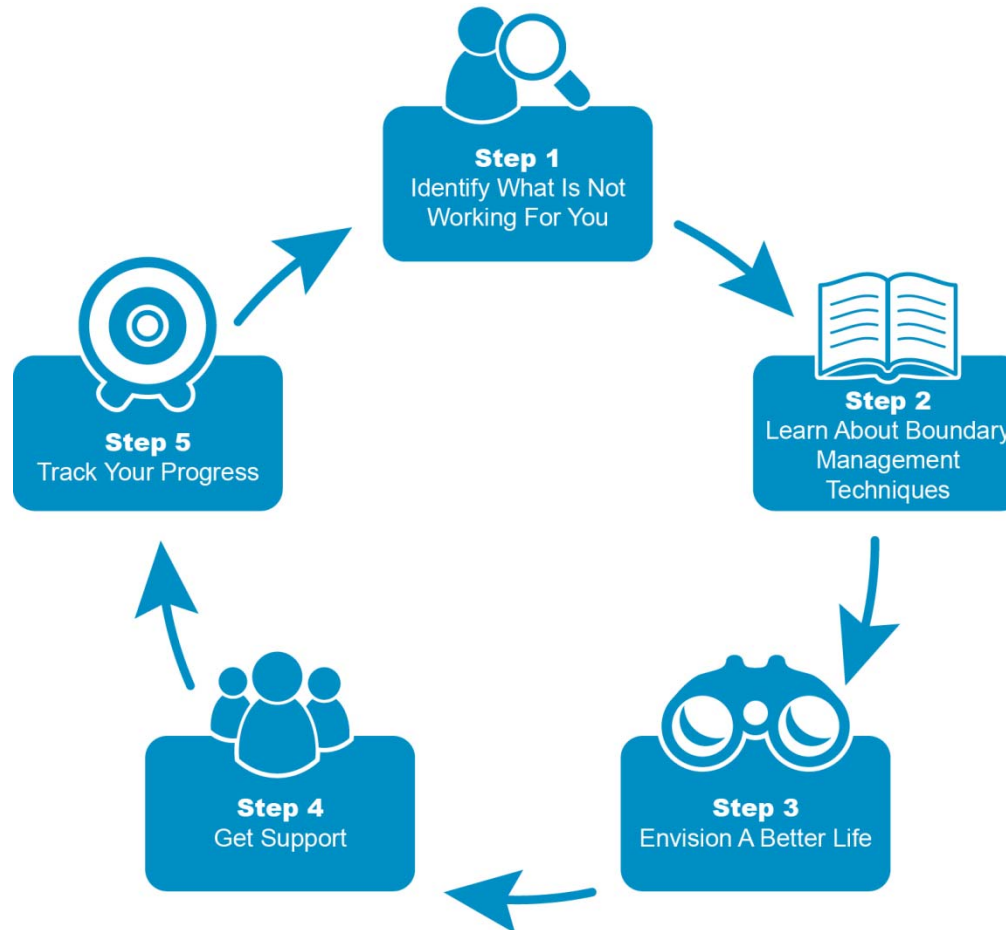
Positive ROI

Positive boundary control:

➢ Better engagement at work and home (enrichment over depletion)

➢ Enhanced well-being

➢ Skills and perspectives can be shared

➢ Better Health, safety

➢ Fewer accidents, arguments, rushing, less depression, mood disorder

OHP for Individuals

➢ Reflect & assess regularly

➢ Create social support systems

➢ Experiment & self-monitor

➢ Identify role models

➢ Create substitutes & efficiencies

➢ Track your progress
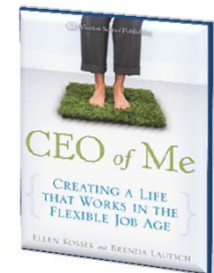
Kossek & Lautsch, 2008, 2012 & CCL work life indicator

OHP for Leaders & Managers

➢ Find out about employees' work life values.

➢ Perspective Taking; diversity skill

➢ Set/communicate clear expectations about boundaries and performance.

➢ Be sensitive to burnout and heavy workloads/ long hours.

➢ Be a role model for paying attention to well-being.

➢ Provide options for increasing employee control over work patterns.

OHP for Orgs.

➢ Development of Leaders

➢ Individual, Team clarification of values for self managing boundaries.

➢ Promotes conversations between supervisors and direct reports

➢ Coaching

➢ Stress reduction, work-life improvement initiatives/ training& learning

➢ Implementation flexible work arrangements

➢ Link boundary management to support organizational change for new ways of working: telework or global work, new work processes.

Supporting Different Styles

- ➢ <u>Training Example</u>
- ➢ Emotional support
- ➢ Role modeling
- ➢ Instrumental support
- ➢ Creative work-family management

Hammer, Kossek, Bodner, and Crain (JOHP, 2013) & Kossek & Hammer, (HBR. 2008) ; Hammer, Kossek et al, (JAP, 2011) (JOM, 2009)

Example of Cross- Cultural Values variation in group collectivism: Unique moderator of elder but not child care hours

- Globe In-group collectivism "reflects "the degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families (P, 12) & "the extent to which family is important in life, people are motivated to make their parents proud, and parents are supposed to make sacrifices for their children" (House et al., 2004, p.485)

- Country level values regarding in-group collectivism will will moderate the relationships between (a) gender, (b) career identity, and (c) family identity with eldercare hours but not childcare hours.

- **Source: Kossek, E., Chang, Daisy, & Zhao, K. 2014. Differential time investments in care-giving activities: Exploring effects of Gender and Cross-Cultural and Institutional Contexts, Paper presented at WFRN, NY NY.**

Future research

- Individual Level. Measures should differentiate between peoples' preferences and what they actually do to assess gap between w-f demands & supplies & Occ. Health

- Nested work-nonwork Environment Systems Levels. Measures should differentiate between life partners and coworker preferences and target's congruence, & outcomes

- Cross-cultural value variation influences (femininity, masc. pubic and private space norms)

- Crossover. How does lack of boundary control of worker/ partner affect health/well-being families? How does lack of boundary control of worker/ partner affect health of families?

- Workplace customization climates (Kossek & Lautsch, 2012); Diversity and inclusion contexts vary in support for boundary control.

- Occupations, access to flexibility, global hours; (telework, global hours), link to boundary control enactment & well-being. (Predictability, segmentation)

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