

Balancing Law School and Life: Stress Management Tips



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UC Davis

Initial slides adapted from Kensa Gunter & Karen Paez
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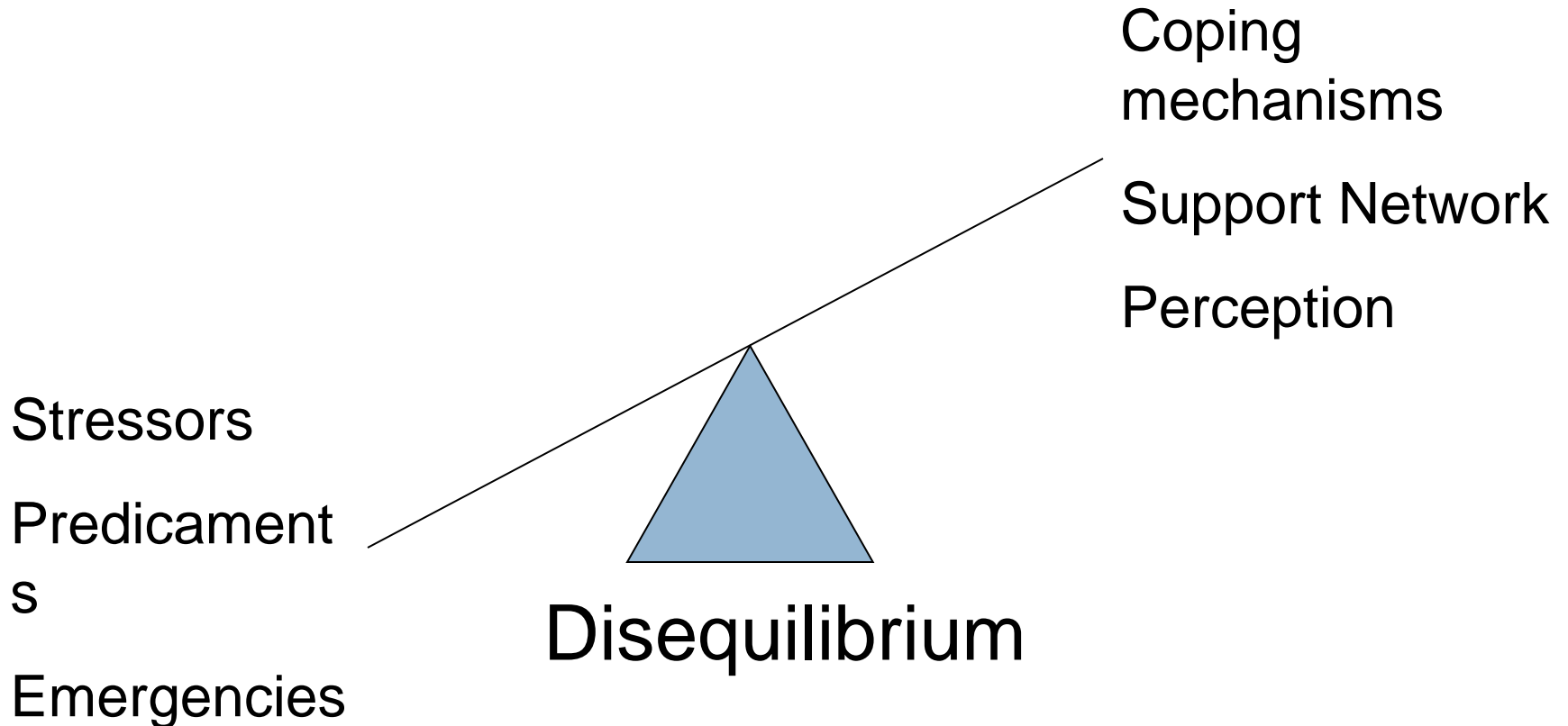
Why Are We Here?

2

- Law school is stressful!
 - Demands on your time and energy.
 - Emotional and intellectual demands.
 - Personal and professional obligations to juggle.
 - Struggles with adjusting to a new environment.
- It can be a struggle to balance law school and life!
- We're here to talk about what you can do to prevent burnout and achieve balance in your law school career and beyond.

Stress Theory Aquilera & Messick (1976)

3



Sources of Stress

4

- Family
- Friends/Relationships
- Work
- School
- Commitments/Responsibilities



Effects of Stress/Symptoms of Burnout

5



- Physical
 - ▣ Exhaustion, sleep disturbances, weight fluctuations, feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, frequent illness, headaches, difficulty concentrating.

- Cognitive
 - ▣ Mood changes, crying easily, isolation, irritability, low self-esteem, decreased motivation, rigidity, interpersonal conflicts.

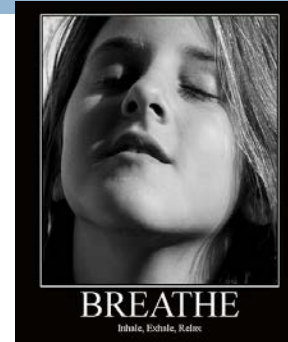
- Impact of burnout
 - ▣ Decreased quality of work, cram more, strained interpersonal relationships

What Balances Us Out?

6

- Coping Mechanisms

- The strategies used or mechanisms employed to help us deal with a difficult situation.



- Support Network

- Those individuals in your life who comfort, encourage, and express active interest in and concern for us.



- Perception

- Our subjective interpretation understanding of an event.

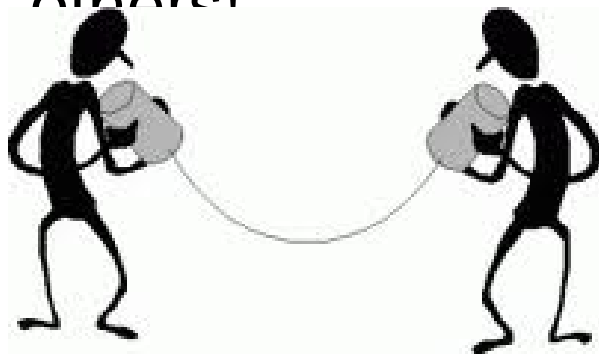


Half Empty or Half Full?

Support & Personal Relationships

7

- When we don't attend to our personal relationships, we throw ourselves out of balance.
- Our relationships need to be nurtured in order to maintain healthy connections with others.
- Resist the temptation to withdraw in difficult times. This is when it is most important to connect with others!



Perception

8

- Perceptions – what an event/situation means to you; how you see yourself in relation to it
- During difficult times:
 - Access your power and choose to change the situation or alter your perspective.
 - Identify and utilize your strengths to support yourself through the process.
 - Reflect on what lessons can be learned from the situation.



Perception & Self-Talk

9

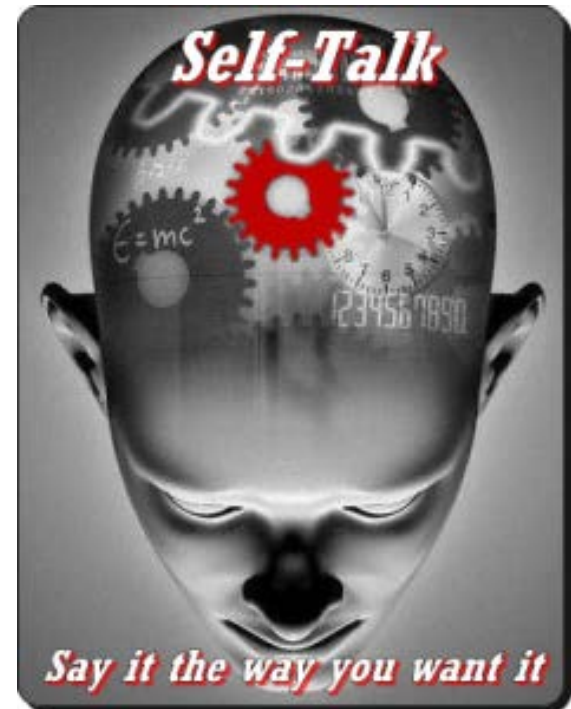
- Self-talk is the internal or external dialogue that individuals have with themselves.
- People use self-talk to:
 - ▣ Interpret feelings and perceptions about self, others & the world.
 - ▣ Give self instructions or encouragement.
- Self-talk can be positive or negative.



Perceptions & Self-Talk con't

11

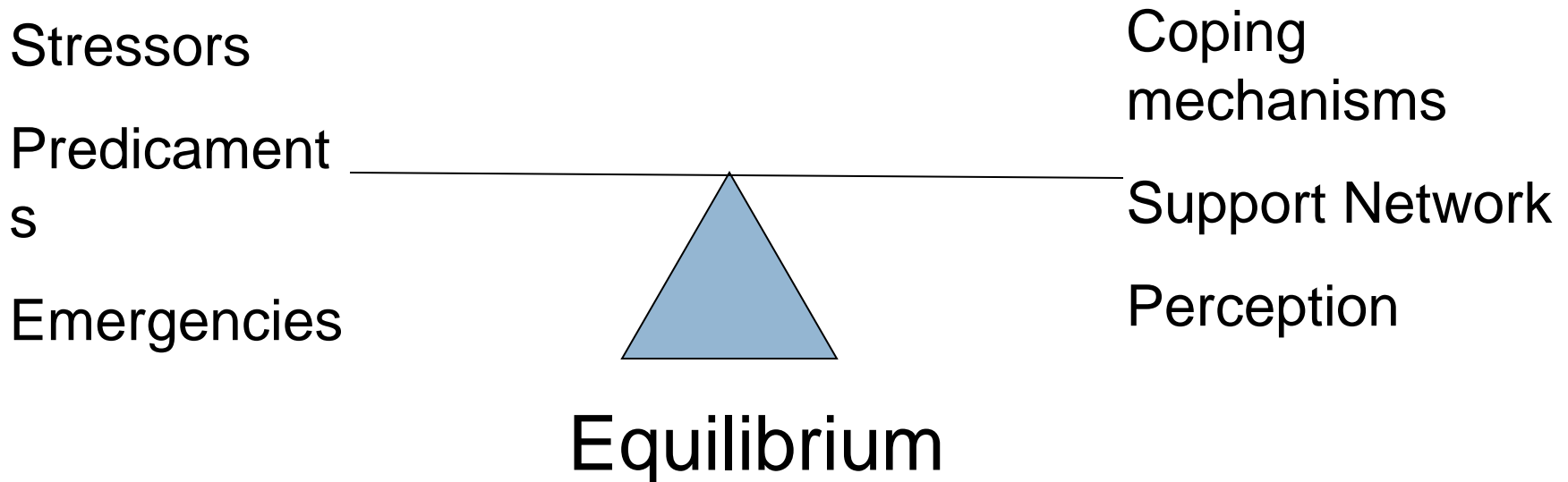
- Most unwanted feelings and behaviors come from distorted or illogical thoughts
- You can change the way you feel and behave by identifying these thoughts, identifying the evidence that discredits the thoughts and replacing them with a more affirming, logical , & realistic thought.



Review

12

- Recognizing that law school will likely throw you out of balance, and actively attending to those factors that will help to put you back in balance will support a healthy lifestyle.



Want Some Support?

13



- Counseling & Psychological Services
 - 219 North Hall
 - 752-0871
 - Brief individual and/or group counseling free to students.
 - All services are confidential.
 - Drop by or call to schedule an appointment.

Other Resources

14

- Student Health and Wellness Center
- The ARC
- Graduate Academic Achievement & Advocacy Program – thru SRRC
- Graduate Student Association
- Internship & Career Center
- Women’s Resources and Research Center
- Re-entry Student Services
- www.gradstudies.ucdavis.edu
- www.gradresources.org
- caps.ucdavis.edu/stress or
caps.ucdavis.edu/relax
- Mind Spa: caps.ucdavis.edu/mindspa

Questions or Comments?

