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10-5-2018

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#### Recommended Citation

Renner, Kelly B., "Mitigating Student Learning Burnout" (2018). *Scholars Showcase 2018: Innovations in Leadership and Learning*. 73.

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# Mitigating Student Learning Burnout

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## Overview

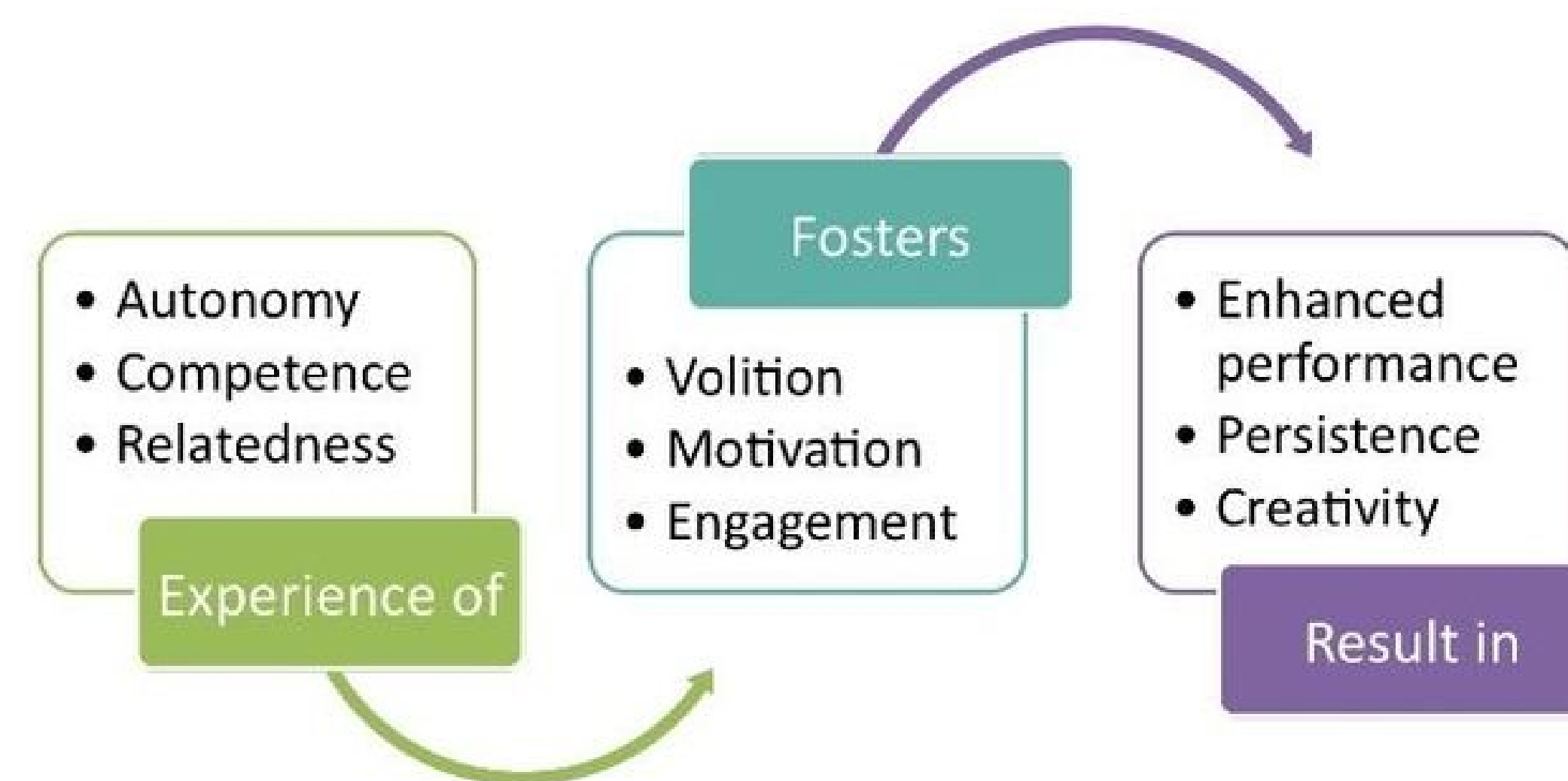
- Individuals in a wide range of occupations, including students, athletes, and the general population, have reported experiencing burnout (Dubuc-Charbonneau & Durand-Bush, 2015; Halbesleben, Osburn, & Mumford, 2006; Maslach, 2003; Salmela-Aro, Näätänen, & Nurmi, 2004).
- Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is often viewed as the foundation for a plausible explanation of burnout (Cresswell & Eklund, 2005; Lonsdale, Hodge, & Rose, 2009).
- SDT identifies the satisfaction of basic psychological needs results in optimal human functioning, social development, and personal well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000).
- The needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are regarded as not only essential, but also universal among humans (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

## Methods

Applying the components of SDT and the burnout syndrome, as well as drawing from consulting and personal experiences, ways in which instructors can potentially deter student-learning burnout are identified.

### Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

(Ryan & Deci, 2000)



## Terms

Burnout is a syndrome that includes:

- Chronic feelings of emotional and/or physical exhaustion
- Devaluation
- A reduced sense of accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1981)

## Hypothesis

Applying the key components of SDT to course design and teaching style will decrease student burnout.

## Data

- Exhaustion and social support have a statistically significant effect on business students' commitment to remain in school (Law & Patil, 2015).
- Feelings of loneliness and learning burnout negatively influence students overall academic experience and their perceptions of stress (Stoliker & Lafreniere, 2015).

## Recommendations

- **Autonomy**-Give students options within assignments, fostering creativity and a sense of control in their classroom experience.
- **Competence**-Remind students of how the course content builds on their knowledge and skills from previous courses. Additionally, infuse positive language into student communications and feedback.
- **Relatedness**-Develop an online learning environment in which students feel supported by their classmates and the instructor.

## Discussion

- It is possible that implementing the proposed recommendations could limit student learning burnout, or at minimum, create a more positive learning environment.
- Consciously fostering student autonomy should be taken into consideration during the course design process.
- The course instructor should continuously work to foster student competence and relatedness throughout the course.
- More data is needed to determine if student success has a positive relationship with implementing these specific techniques grounded in SDT.



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