

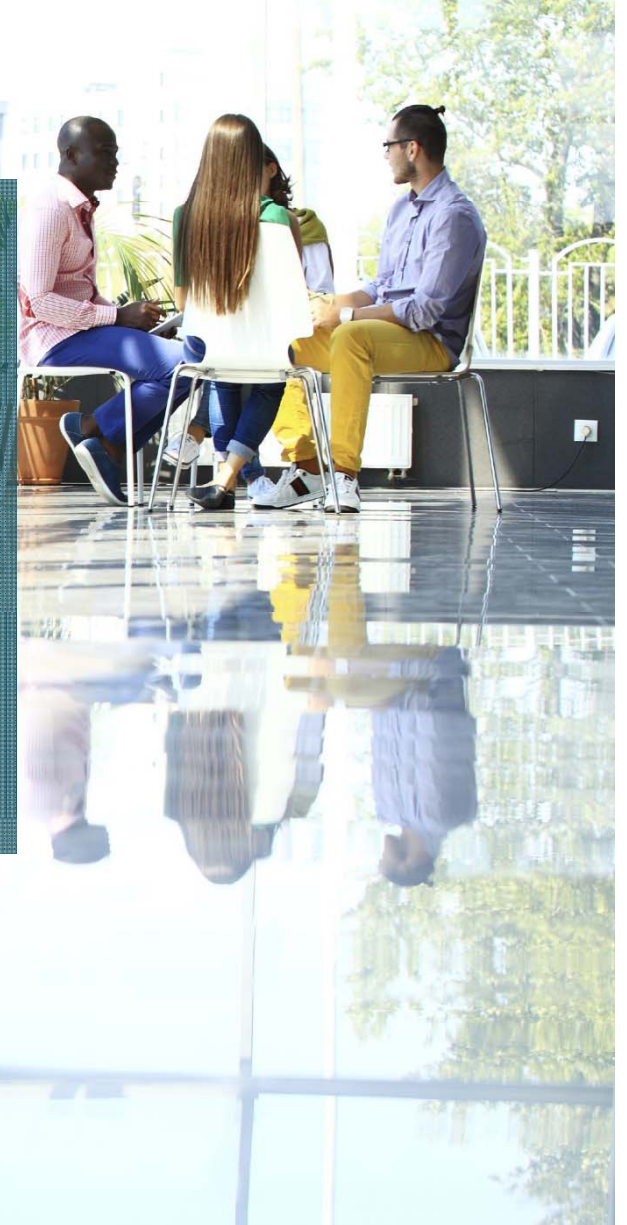


Connected  
Commons



Leadership

# Three Strategies for Thriving: Engage with Purpose, Buffer, Anchor



# Step 1: Build Purpose-Fueled Networks



## Purpose

Establish “Why” In Work  
Common Values  
Co-Create  
Energizing Interactions  
Help Others

# Engage In Interactions That Generate Purpose For You At Work



- **Talk about the *why* and shared purpose.**
  - Use team meetings to share stories of impact on customers (internal or external)
  - Use workshops, events or volunteer activities (Habitat for Humanity, staffing a 5K fundraiser) so people feel part of something bigger
- **Build in interactions with people who care about similar processes or outcomes.**
  - Focus teams around shared values, like wanting to make an impact or innovation or driving change
  - Each Sunday review your calendar for the next two weeks and make changes to include meaningful work
- **Co-create and explore with others**
  - Bring people in early to define problems and explore solutions and “kick the tires”
  - Don’t just take work that comes to you. Give time to conversations that allow you to shape and define the work.



# Engage In Interactions That Generate Purpose For You At Work



- **Seek out energizers.**
  - People who help you feel valued, trusted and respected. Identify more opportunities to work with them.
  - Don't allow de-energizing people and situations define you. If you see you are going to have difficult meetings, offset them with positive ones.
- **Step outside of your own self interest and help others**
  - Give before you ask to get
  - Use regular 1:1s to have development and career conversations with direct reports
  - Be a mentor in your organization or in your community.

## Step 2: Activating Buffering Strategies



### Purpose

Establish “Why” In Work  
Common Values  
Co-Create/Energizing Interactions  
Help Others

### Buffer

Rules or Flow/Gratitude  
Accountability (Family)  
Men Focus/Women Block

# Create Habits To Buffer You From The Demands Of Work ...



- **Have a few hard rules that keep work from taking over.**
  - Don't check your phone from the moment you walk in the door until kids go to bed
  - Leave work at 4:30 once a week to get to the gym
- **Use your calendar to keep other people from structuring your day.**
  - Don't schedule meetings for first two hours of your day
  - Create "Do Not Schedule" blocks on your calendar each week
- **Create practices to maintain perspective.**
  - Keep a gratitude journal. It is easy to focus on what is wrong and let it spill over.
  - Go to someone who will help you find the upside or move to higher ground.
- **Have people who hold you accountable outside of work**
  - Spouse, sibling, close friend
  - Faith community

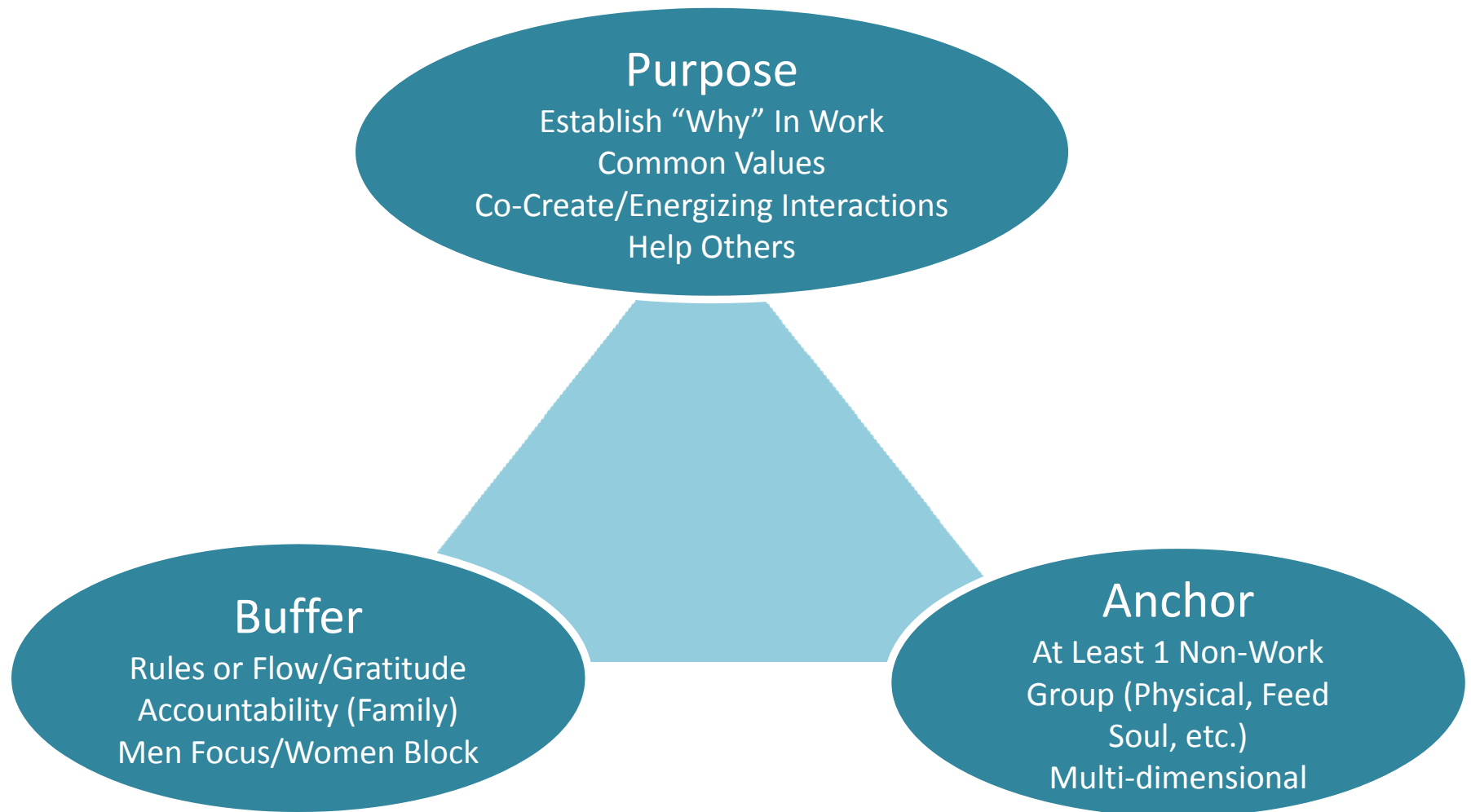
# Be Grateful For Flexibility, Too



People with always-connected, always-on roles sometimes thrive by integrating instead of buffering. 20% of interviewees saw the positives in the flexibility, rather than the negativity of demands.

- **Working on the go.** Being able to work wherever and whenever can be freeing. “My life is so much better because I can sit at a parent/teacher conference or a soccer game and my boss will call if he needs me. I can check email wherever I am.”
- **Managing personal rhythms.** Working from home or trading out evening work for breaks during the day can help match work to your energy and personal needs. “I do email at night and on weekends to manage my own stress and personal schedule.”
- **Freedom to choose.** A sense of control and thriving comes from having choice. “As high as the stress is, I still feel like I have flexibility in my job. For that, I’m grateful.”

## Step 3: Anchoring in Non-Work Networks



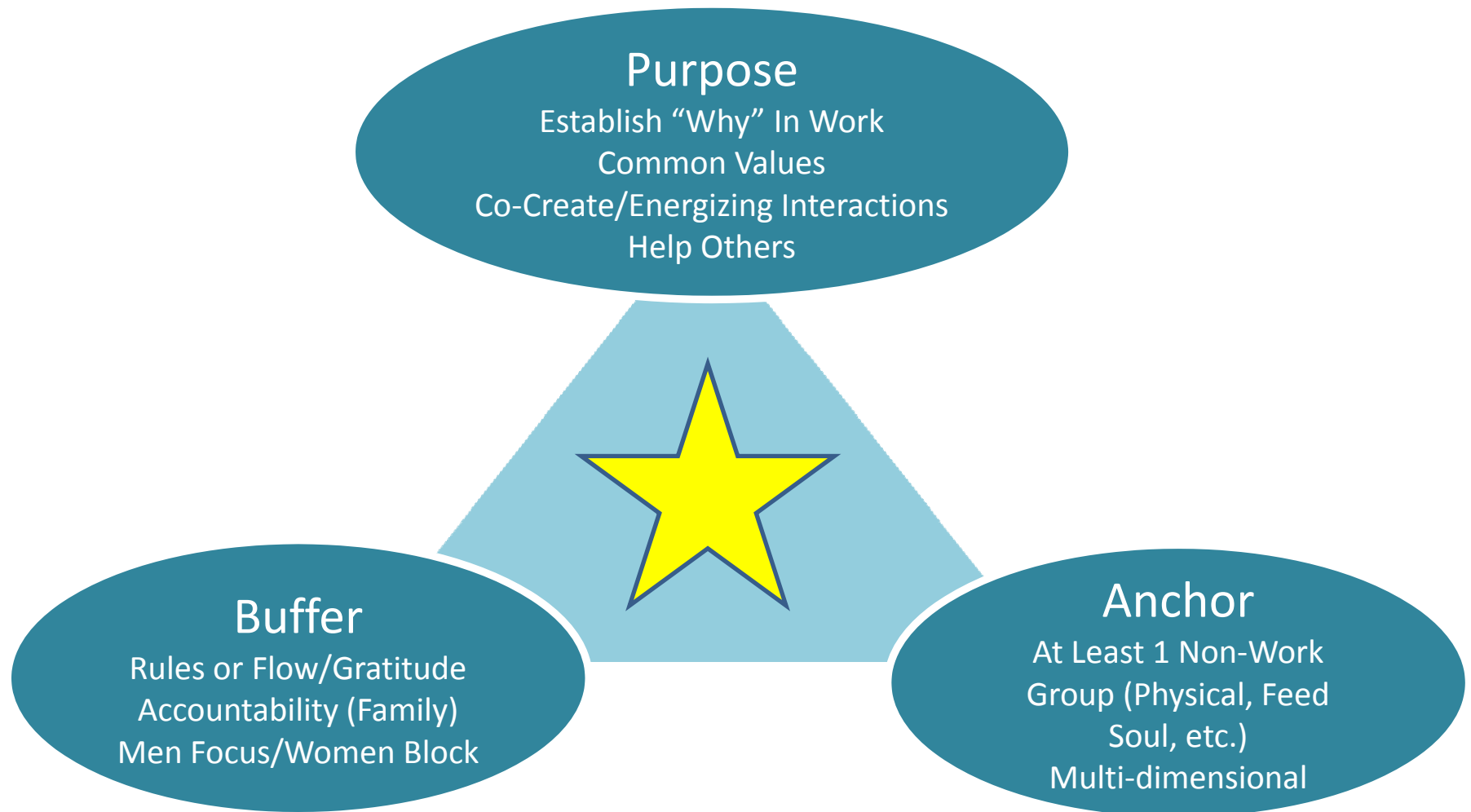


# Anchor In Relationships And Activities Outside Of Work



- **Get involved in activities with other people so you are obligated to show up.**
  - Dinner with friends or extended family every other week
  - Volunteer on board of local nonprofit
  - Coach or play on a sports team
- **Commit to activities that absorb your attention fully and keep you from thinking about your job.**
  - Physically immersive: cycling, auto racing, skiing
  - Mentally immersive: photography, time with grandkids
- **Invest in external professional groups. This gives you greater influence over your career and is a source of new ideas and perspectives.**
  - A technical association working group
  - A start-up incubator
  - A group of close friends from graduate school

# Finally, Know Your North Star



# A North Star Boosts Your Ability To Sustain And Thrive Over Time



- A North Star will give you clarity on:
  - Expertise you want to develop and deploy
  - Values you want to embody
  - Identity you want to form and live
- A North Star prevents you from getting lost in the day-to-day stress or letting others dictate what matters most
- A North Star helps you see things more positively, rather than focusing on the negatives of the job or the demands of others

# A North Star Boosts Your Ability To Sustain And Thrive Over Time



- If you don't have clarity about your direction or purpose, you will get pulled into projects, jobs and situations that waste your time.
- When your time and attention get diffused, it is difficult to maintain energy and enthusiasm you need for important work or complex challenges.
- You become less productive, more stressed. You are a candidate for burnout.



# Build A Network That Pulls You Toward It Your North Star



“Playing defense sucks. You are always reactive and living in fear. The only way to get out of it is to get clarity on who you are and what you want to do and start forging a path and network that enables you to get there.”