



UNIVERSITÄT
BIELEFELD

Gesundheitsmanagement

Research & (Mental) Health

Team Health Management:

Julia Burian, Zita Deptolla & Mats Huwendiek

Woche der Forschungskompetenzen, 10.10.2025, Bielefeld University



Agenda

- ✓ Quick brainstorming session to get started
- ✓ Background: State of Research, Data of our Projects
- ✓ Health Management, Support Services and (Counseling) Offers at Bielefeld University
- ✓ Time for discussion: Questions, wishes, suggestions, experiences?

(Mentimeter results)

Join at menti.com | use code 4685 1430

 Mentimeter

How do you deal with stress? / Wie geht ihr mit Stress um?

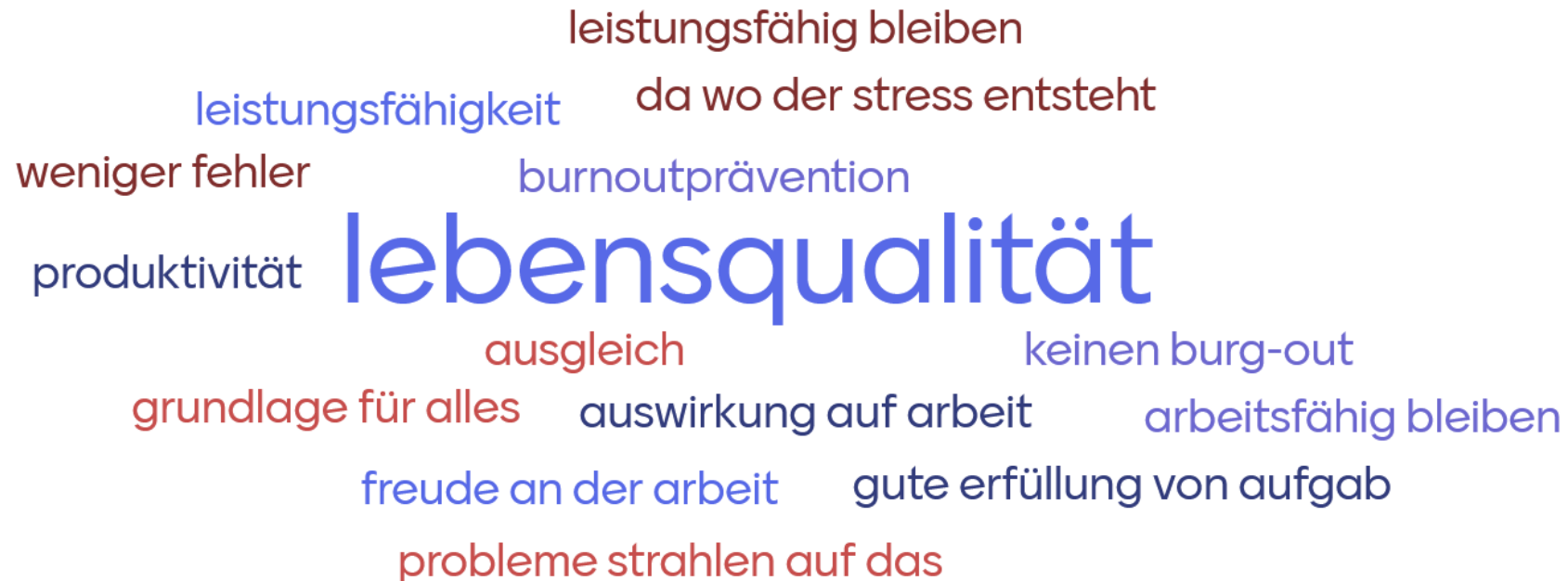
überblickssicherheit
struktur reinbringen
inne halten - einem
inne halten sport
spazieren
ausruhen ausgleich
sich beruhigen
meditieren
atemübungen essen
teilweise gar nicht
spazieren gehen
aufgaben planen
nicht gut
entspannungsübungen
mit freunden sprechen
versuch pausen zu machen

(Mentimeter results)

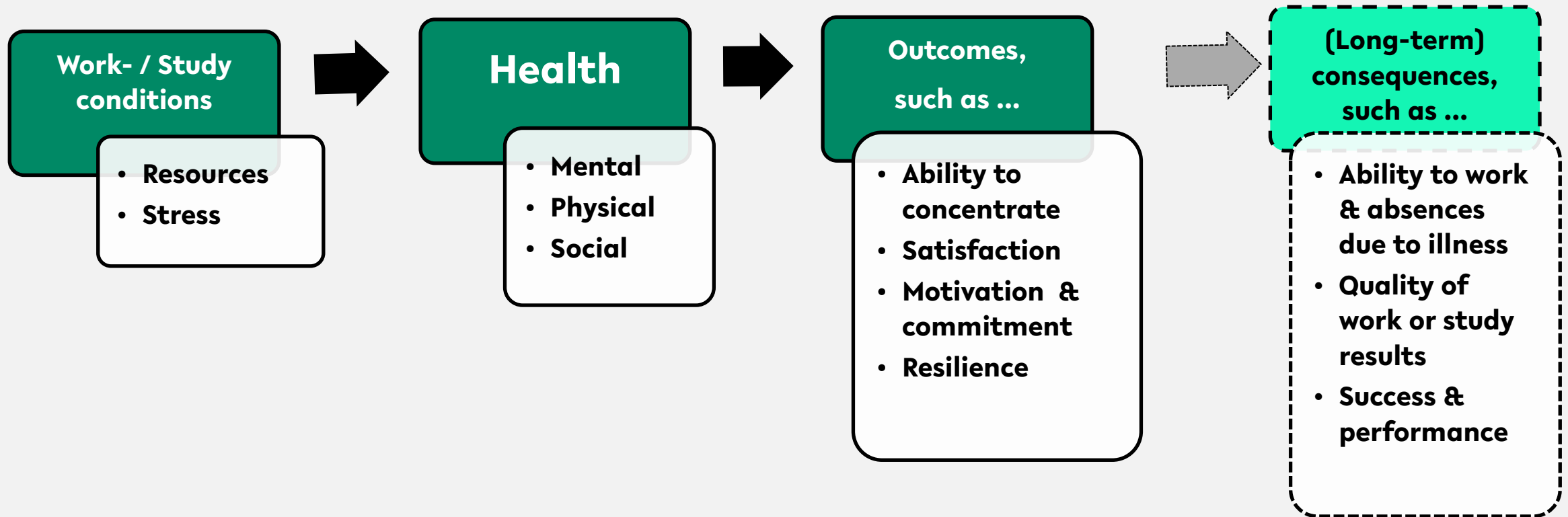
Join at menti.com | use code 7834 5822

Mentimeter

Why is health important in a *work or study context*? / Warum ist Gesundheit im *Arbeits- bzw. Studienkontext* wichtig?



Work / Studying and Health



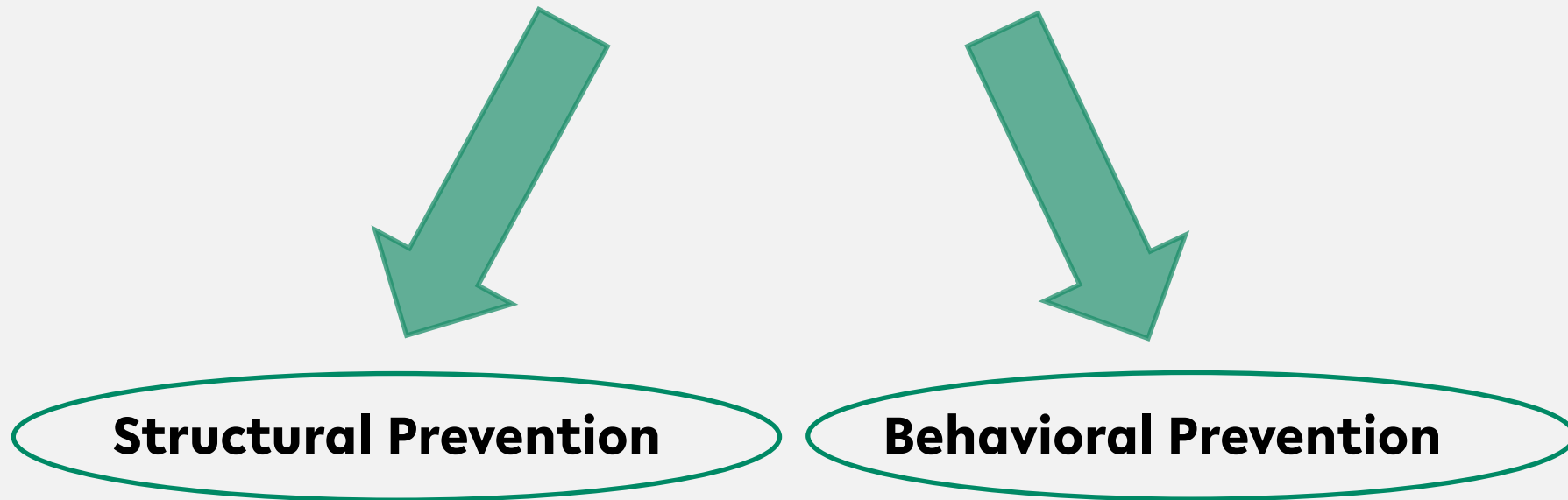
Exemplary research results

Close link between work/study and health:

- Work-related mental stress is at a high level and has risen in recent years (Badura, 2017; DGUV, 2025)
- Absences due to illness are closely linked to workloads (bpb, 2021)
- Musculoskeletal disorders are the most common, followed by mental illnesses (Dragano, 2023)
- Working conditions and personal factors interact with your own health (Heid, Hinz, & Schlink, 2016, BAuA, 2025)
- University context is not excluded here (especially due to increasing performance orientation and increasing competition) (Esdar, Steinke, Burian, Steinmann & Unnold, 2016)

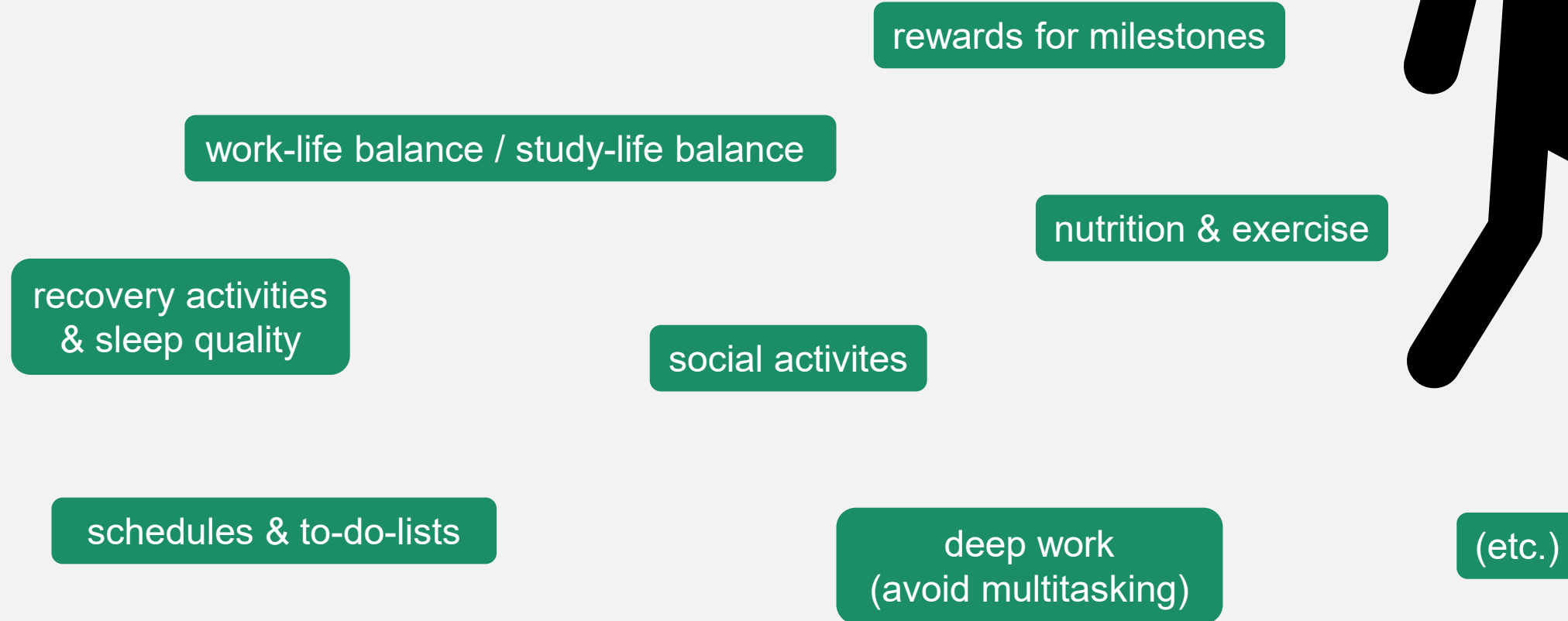
Where do we start?

Opportunities for action:

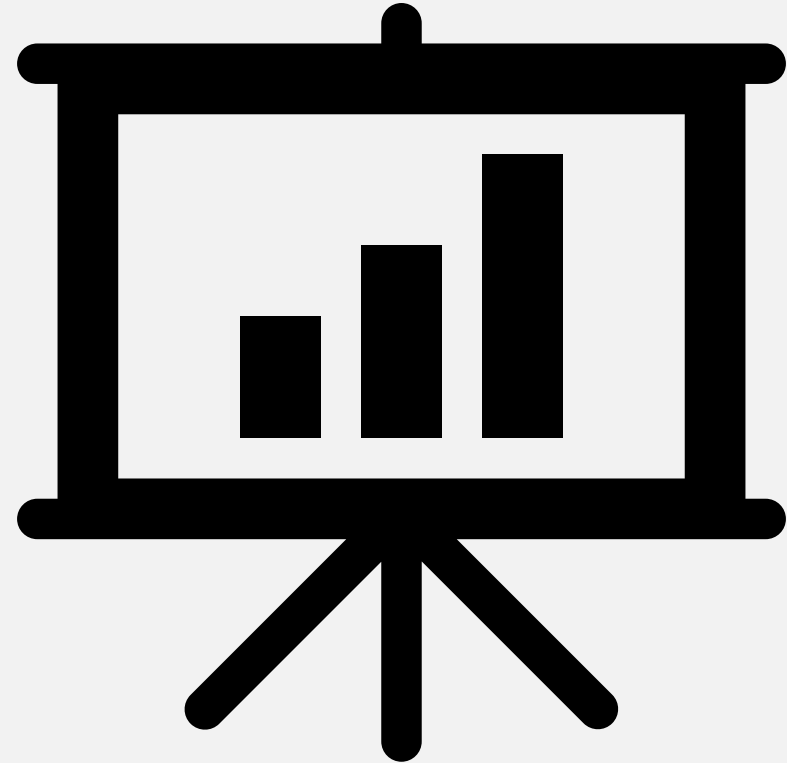


Behavioral Prevention

Exemplary topics for helpful personal action strategies:



Structural Prevention: Data from our Projects



History of the questionnaire

- **2013 - 2016** → Based on the **social capital approach** (Badura et al., 2017), the **Bielefeld questionnaire on working conditions and the university network was established at universities** was initially developed (funded by Unfallkasse NRW), while a at the same time
- **2016-2019** → **Bielefeld questionnaire on working conditions and health at universities** is being trialled and validated nationwide (funded by the DGUV)
- **2021** → **Bielefeld questionnaire on *working* conditions and health at universities** is adapted for **students** as the largest university status group

The Bielefeld Questionnaire on Study Conditions and (Mental) Health (StudiBiFra)

StudiBiFra (2023)



13 universities



24,533
participating
students



June 2021 – March
2023

- 35,3% of students rate their state of health in the last two months of their studies as severely or somewhat impaired
- Symptoms of exhaustion in particular are related to the time demands of studying
- Social interactions play an important role as resources for mental health

(StudiBiFra, 2023)

The social capital approach

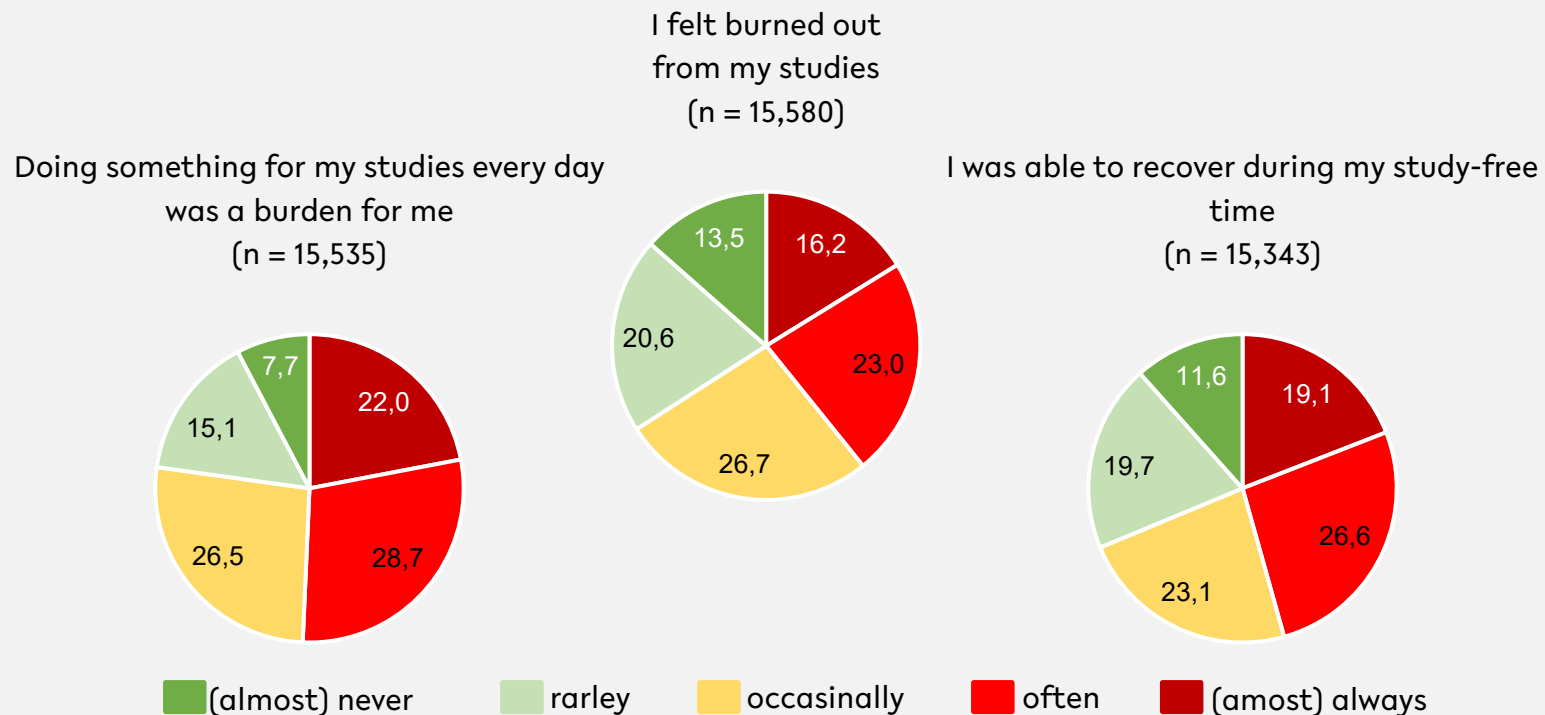
The social capital approach (Badura et al., 2017) emphasises the influence of an organisation's social assets on well-being and health.

- The social capital of an organisation includes the quality of its culture, the quality of its leadership and the quality of its relationships (social networks).
- Social capital strengthens trust and loyalty to the organisation.
- Improvements in social capital can improve health, well-being and performance



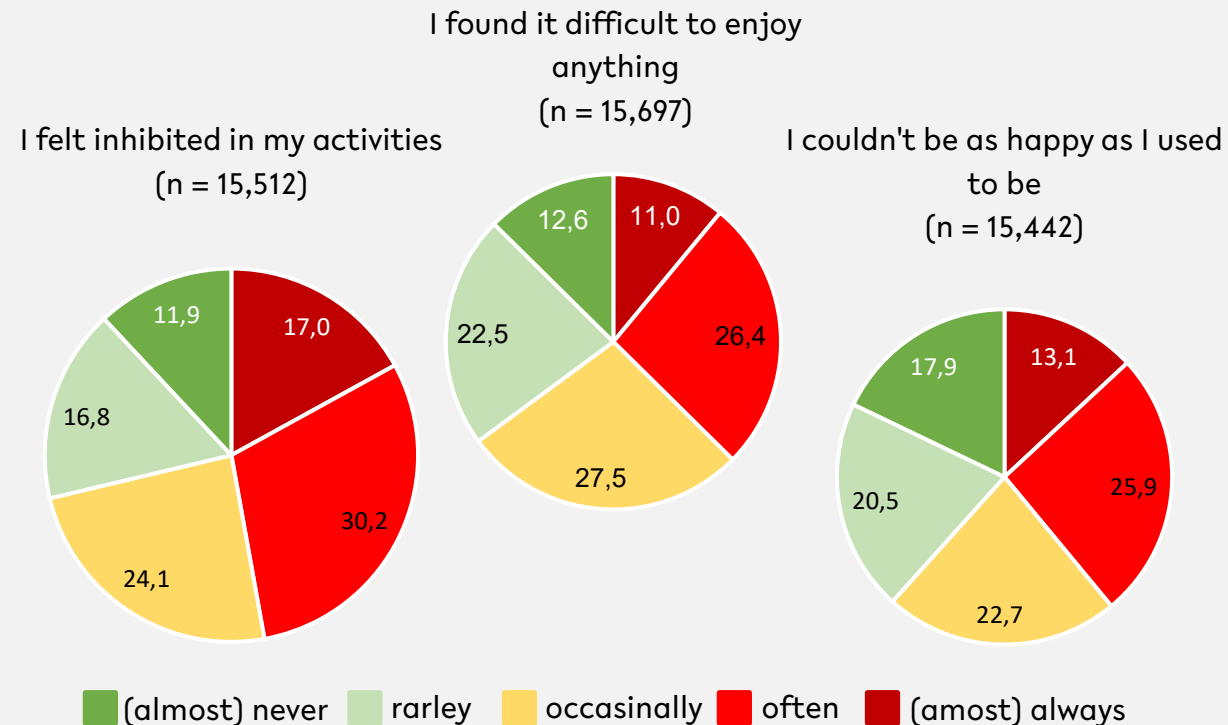
StudiBiFra (2023)

Exhaustion (selection)



StudiBiFra (2023)

Depressive mood (selection)



Bielefeld Questionnaire: Research Assistants



23 universities



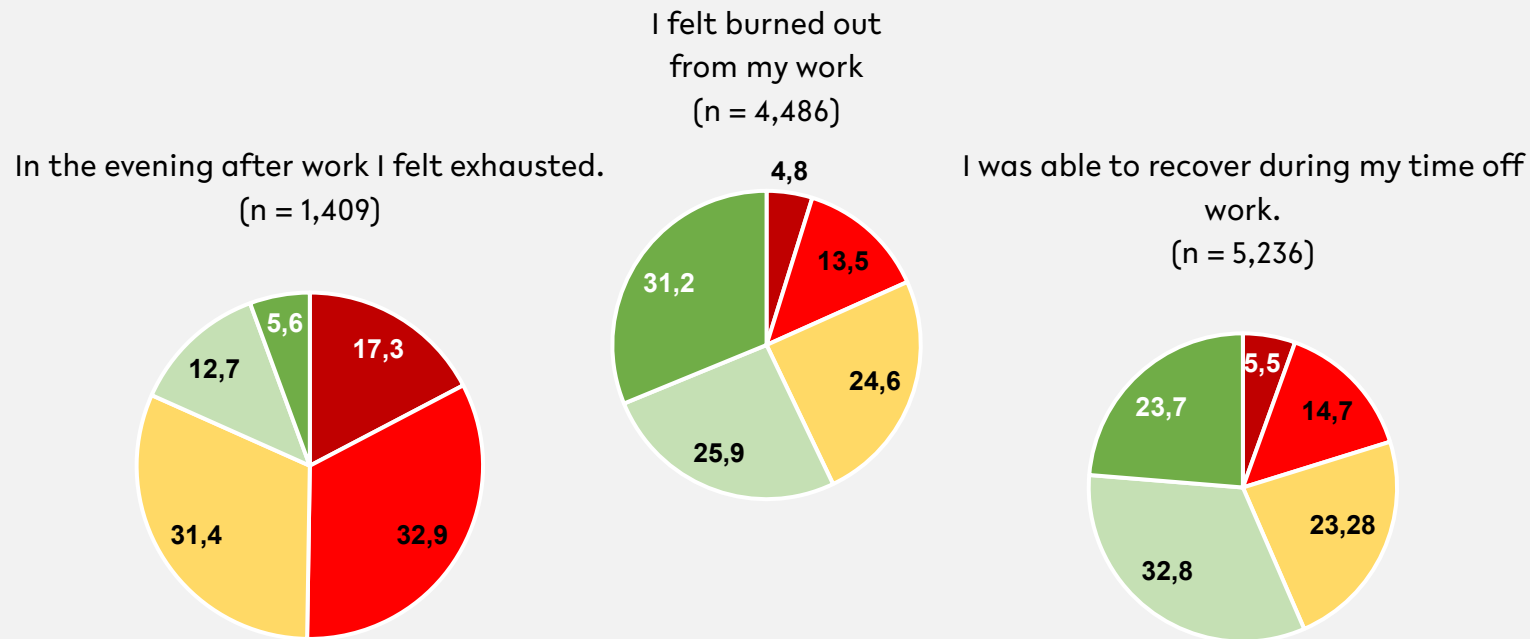
up to 9,200
participants



January 2016 –
July 2024

Bielefeld Questionnaire: Research Assistants

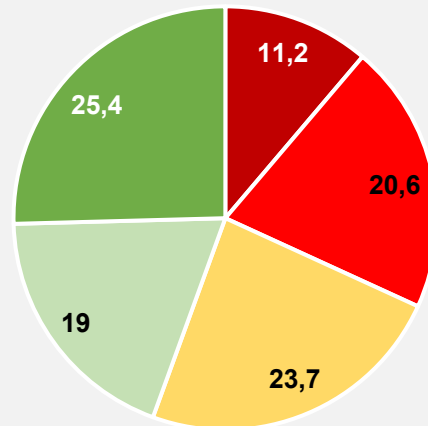
Exhaustion (selection)



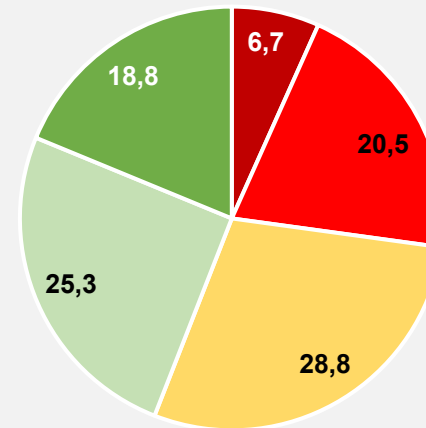
Bielefeld Questionnaire: Research Assistants

Health Complaints (selection)

I had pain in my neck, shoulders or arms.
(n = 4,290)



I quickly got tired
(n = 4,271)



Bielefeld Questionnaire: Resources and Burdens (selection)



Being openly welcomed by colleagues

Working with/for students

Feeling enriched by working with international students/employees

Having enough room for manoeuvre

Being given an adequate amount of responsibility by superiors



Having a high workload

Having a fixed term contract

Having to do too many things at once

Being under time pressure

Job perspectives in academia

Summary

- Students and academic staff are among the **most burdened status groups** at universities (compared to, e.g., administrative staff).
- Since the COVID-19 pandemic, a **continuing decline in mental health** has been observed among these groups.
- Persistent strain in academic work leaves stressed students facing **uncertain prospects in academia**.
- Working and study **conditions are closely linked to the mental health** of staff and students
- Upside: **Social support** among peers and positive relationships with lecturers and supervisors can serve as a crucial **protective buffer**.
- At Bielefeld University, the **UGM** (Universitäres Gesundheitsmanagement) is responsible for supporting the (mental) health of staff and students.



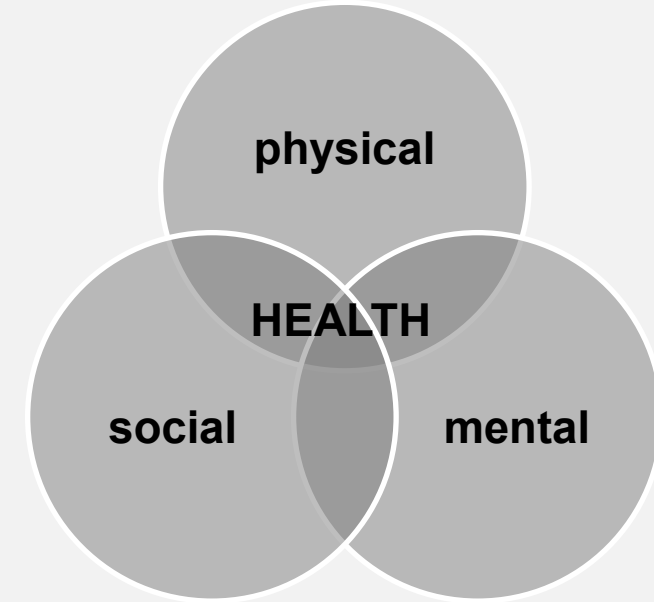
UNIVERSITÄT
BIELEFELD

Gesundheitsmanagement

Health Management Bielefeld University



Health Management Bielefeld University



- Central point of contact for the topic of health
- Goal: Maintaining and improving the physical, mental, and social health of all members of the university → by reducing stress and strengthening resources
- Structural- and behavioral-oriented approach
- Health as a cross-sectional topic → Placing the topic of health in relevant organisational processes, e.g. management development, onboarding, personnel development, degree programme development, campus design

Areas of Health Management



- **Betriebliches Gesundheitsmanagement (BGM):** Counseling, health-related information, courses for physical and mental health

Contact person: Julia Burian (BGM & management)



- **Studentisches Gesundheitsmanagement (SGM):** Communication of all health-related services offered by Bielefeld University for students, inclusion of the student perspective, events to strengthen social and mental health

Contact persons: Luisa Junker & Mats Huwendiek (Campus in Balance)

Areas of Health Management



- **Betriebliches Eingliederungsmanagement (BEM):** Integration assistance after incapacity for work, support services to make your own workplace healthier and prevent incapacity to work

Contact persons: Kathrin Krömer, Kirsten Nolte



- **Current projects:** such as employee surveys on working conditions and health at Bielefeld University, nationwide research projects such as the StudiBiFra

Contact persons: Uta Walter (employee survey), Zita Deptolla (BiFra, StudiBiFra)

Examples of offers provided

- General counselling on the topic of health in the workplace or study place
- Health courses (e.g., yoga, pilates, fitness, dancing) & Massage services
- Workshops to teach health skills (e.g., „The skill of relaxing“)
- Customised formats for working groups to improve team health
- Video clips with short practical tutorials for various topics (e.g., stop recurring thoughts, reduce stress levels)
- Handouts to read, e.g. on short breathing mediation, short relaxation breaks, ergonomic design of homeoffice-situations
- Participatory offers such as surveys or days of action (for example from 28-30 October, the action days on cycle health & menopause)



UNIVERSITÄT
BIELEFELD

Gesundheitsmanagement

Health-related contact points

Bielefeld University



Support Services and (Counseling) Offers (1)

- **Central Student Advisory Service (ZSB):** study advice and information as well as psychological counseling
- **Counseling Center for Employees and Supervisors:** e.g., for problems at the workplace, personal stress situations
- **Lili Goes Mental:** University group with a focus on destigmatization and raising awareness of mental health issues
- **Subject-related advice** from the student advisory service of the respective faculty
- **Family Service:** Advice for students and employees with care responsibilities
- **International Office (IO):** Advice, study support, and leisure activities for international students
- **Career Service:** central advice center for questions about professional orientation and career planning
- **Center for Teaching and Learning (ZLL):** Writing advice, psychosocial advice and career advice for doctoral students; various advisory services for teaching staff

Support Services and (Counseling) Offers (2)

- **Central Contact Point Barrier-free (ZAB):** Central point of contact for all matters relating to accessibility and active participation of people with disabilities or chronic illnesses
- **University Sports:** Many sports courses for students, break express etc.
- **Workplace, Health and Environmental Protection (AGUS):** Central service unit as a point of contact for questions relating to work and health protection
- **General Students' Committee of Bielefeld University (AStA):** Representing the interests of the student body; wide range of services and advice and organization of various events
- **Movement Mentoring Program:** Support for individual career development
- **GrACe - Graduate and Academic Career Development Centre:** Career and staff development for all career levels in academia (including counselling for those interested in a doctorate), as well as further development of leadership culture and cooperation in academia.

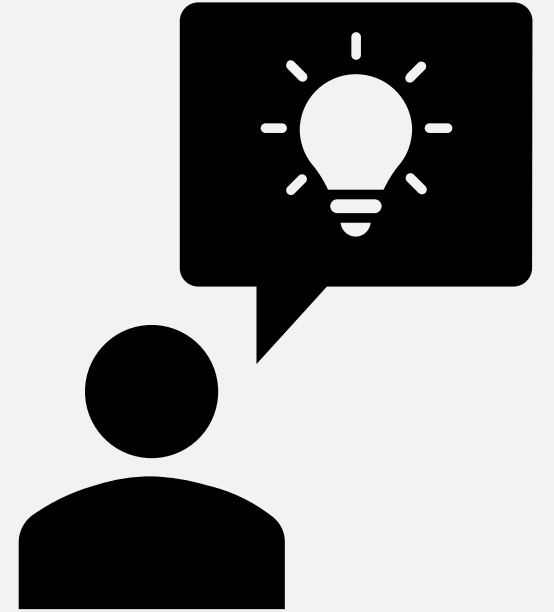
And how can you participate?

We ♥ cooperations
& shared projects.

We ♥ feedback,
suggestions,
exchange etc.

We offer visits to
lectures and
seminars.

... and much
more ...



Discussion

- What do you wish your university would do to better support the mental health and well-being of students and staff?
- In terms of social capital and peer support: how can we, as members of the university, support each other more effectively?
- Which aspects of support could grow from individual or collective initiative, and which require institutional structures?
- What insights or new perspectives are you taking away from today's discussion for your own work or studies?

References

- **Badura, B. (2017).** *Arbeit und Gesundheit im 21. Jahrhundert* (pp. 1-17). Springer.
- **BAuA (2025).** Studie Mentale Gesundheit bei der Arbeit (S-MGA). Verfügbar unter [BAuA | S-MGA](#)
- **Bpb (2021).** Arbeitsweltbezogene Einflüsse auf die Gesundheit. Verfügbar unter [Arbeitsweltbezogene Einflüsse auf die Gesundheit | Datenreport 2021 | bpb.de](#)
- **DGUV (2025).** DGUV Barometer Arbeitswelt 2025. Arbeitswelt im Wandel. Verfügbar unter <https://publikationen.dguv.de/uebergreifende-themen/5099/dguv-barometer-arbeitswelt-arbeitswelt-im-wandel>
- **Dragano, N. (2023).** *Arbeit und Gesundheit*. Springer Link. Verfügbar unter [Arbeit und Gesundheit | SpringerLink](#)
- **Grützmacher, J., Gusy, B., Lesener, T., Sudheimer, S., & Willige, J. (2018).** Gesundheit Studierender in Deutschland 2017. Ein Kooperationsprojekt zwischen dem Deutschen Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung, der Freien Universität Berlin und der Techniker Krankenkasse. Verfügbar unter [Grtzmacher-Gusy 2017.pdf](#)
- **Heid, G., Hinz, A., & Schlink, B. (2016).** Gesund arbeiten – Wie Sie alle Mitarbeiter leistungsfähig erhalten. RKW Kompetenzzentrum. Verfügbar unter [20161101-wegweiser-demografiefeste-arbeit-2.pdf](#)
- **Kauffeld, S., Ochmann, A., & Hoppe, D. (2019).** Arbeit und Gesundheit. *Arbeits-, Organisations- und Personalpsychologie für Bachelor*, 305-358.

***Thank you
for your attention!***

**You can find all current offers, events, contact points
and persons to contact as well as further information
on our homepage:**

www.uni-bielefeld.de/gesundheit



Or contact us directly:

By telephone: (0521) 106-57305

By e-mail: campusinbalance@uni-bielefeld.de