

What Underlies Well-Being? Satisfying Human Needs

Cristina Banks, PhD | University of California, Berkeley

Interdisciplinary Center for Healthy Workplaces

The Objective: Human Thriving

*“The state of **positive mental, physical, and social functioning** in which workers’ experiences of their work and working conditions **enable them to thrive in their overall lives**, contributing to their ability to achieve their full potential in their work, home, and community.”*

Peters, S.E., Sorensen, G., Katz, J.N., Gundersen, D.A., & Wagner, G.R. (2021). Thriving from work: Conceptualization and measurement. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18, 7196. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18137196>.

How do we
achieve that
objective?

Two Ways:

1. Creating a *physical environment* that supports a person's basic need satisfaction.
2. Creating and being in a *psychological environment* that reinforces need satisfaction.

What are the
basic needs we
need to satisfy?

Basic Human Needs

- Autonomy
- Belonging
- Competence
- Safety
- Meaning/Purpose
- Fairness
- Positive Emotions

How do we
design for need
satisfaction?

Design Qualities in the Environment:

- Connection
- Flexibility
- Predictability
- Comfort
- Security
- Privacy
- Equity

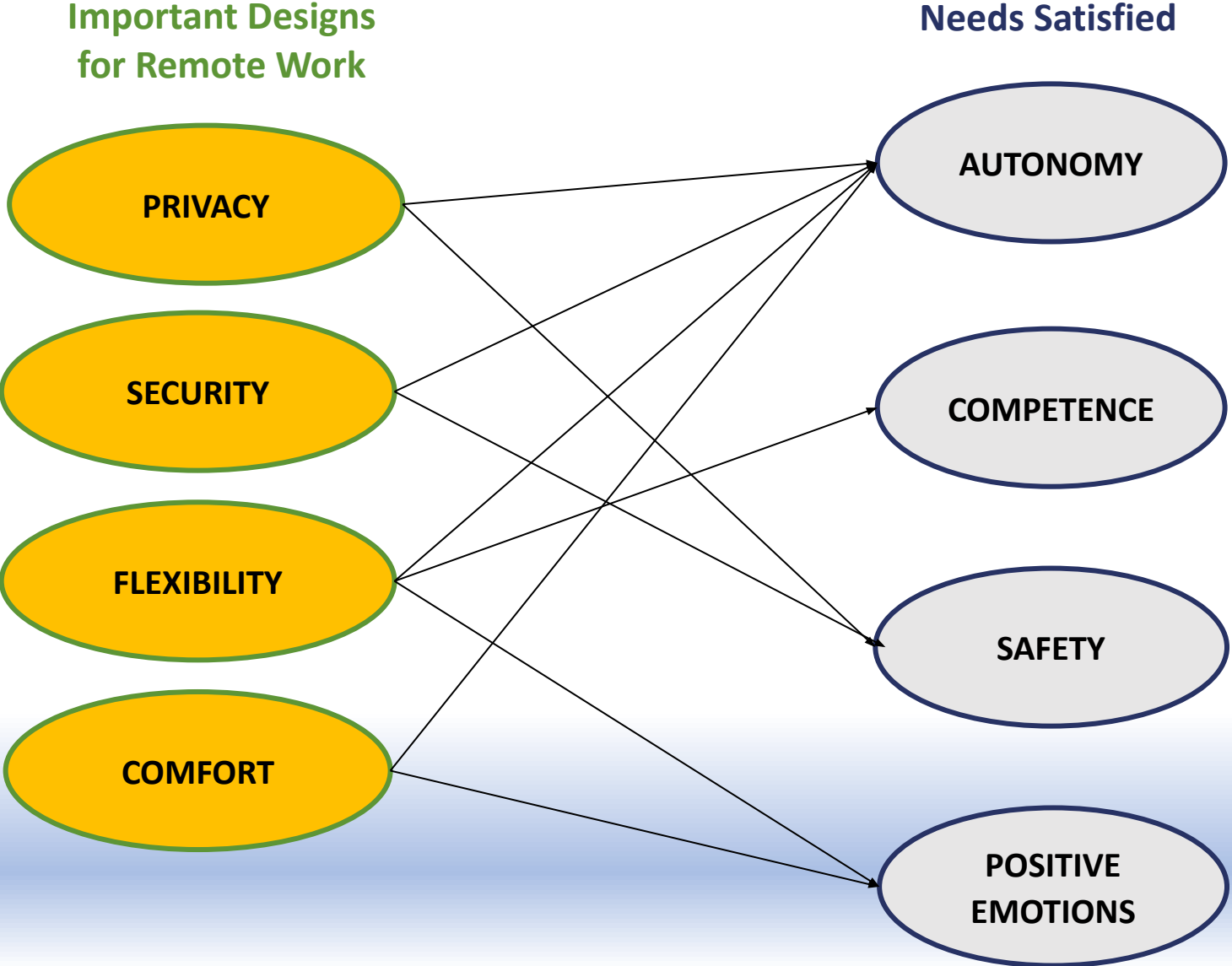
Examples

- If we want more ***Autonomy***, we build in more *Flexibility* and *Predictability*
- If we want more ***Belonging***, we build in more *Connection* and *Equity*
- If we want more ***Competence/Mastery***, we build in more *Flexibility*, *Predictability*, and *Connection*.

Key Environments for Need Satisfaction

- The Home
- The Workplace
- The Field

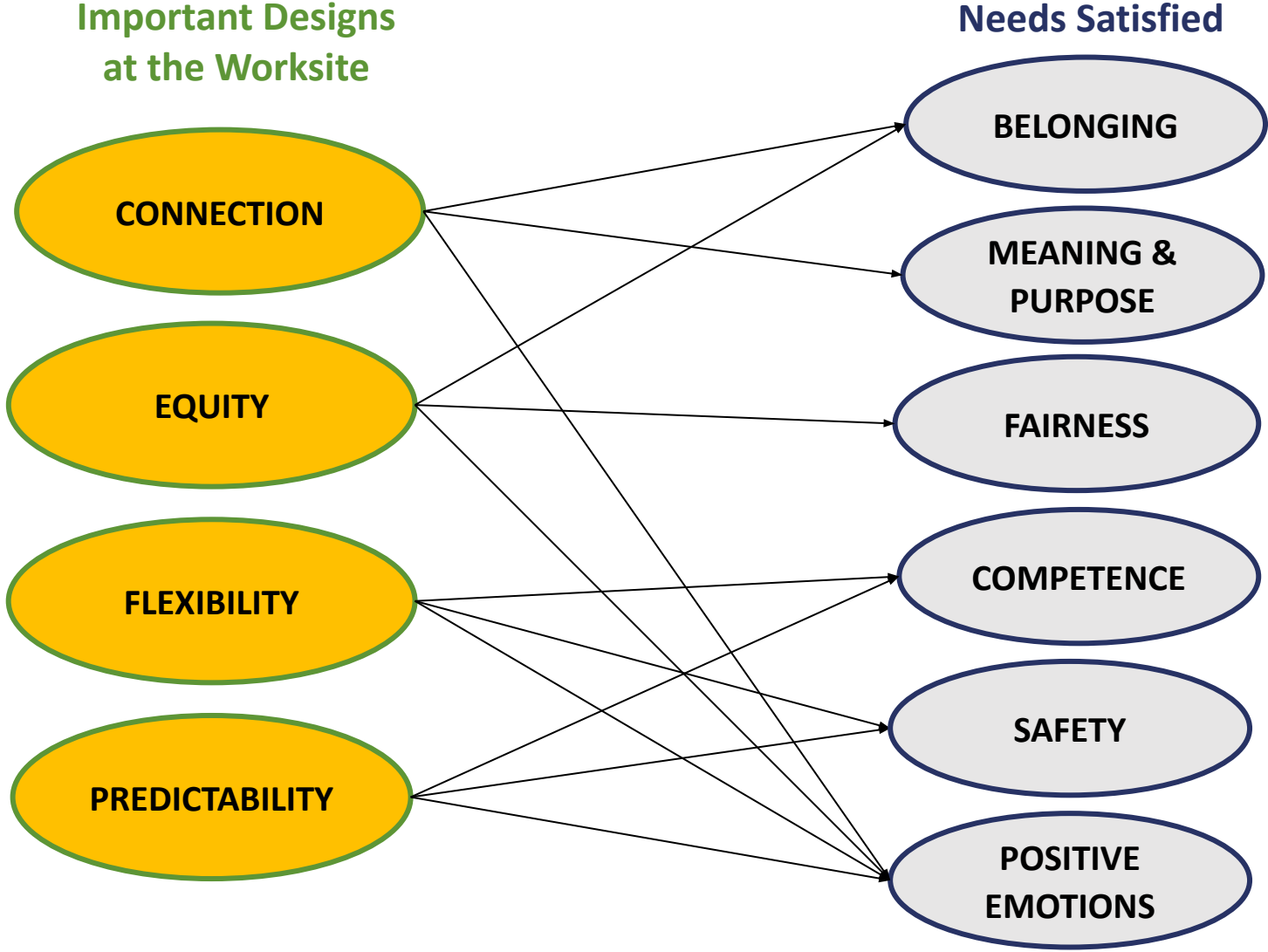
What needs are satisfied working from home?



HOME

- Abundant natural light
- “Cooler” light for productivity, “Warmer” light for eve
- Fresh air or filtered from outside
- Biophilic features: green plants, natural fabrics, art, gentle moving water
- Views of nature or distant buildings
- Colors: light sage green (creativity, concentration, productivity, calming), light orange (socializing)
- Moderate clutter, moderate visual complexity
- Ergonomically-fit furniture
- Work hour limits, variable schedules
- Established rest breaks
- Built in fun or exercise

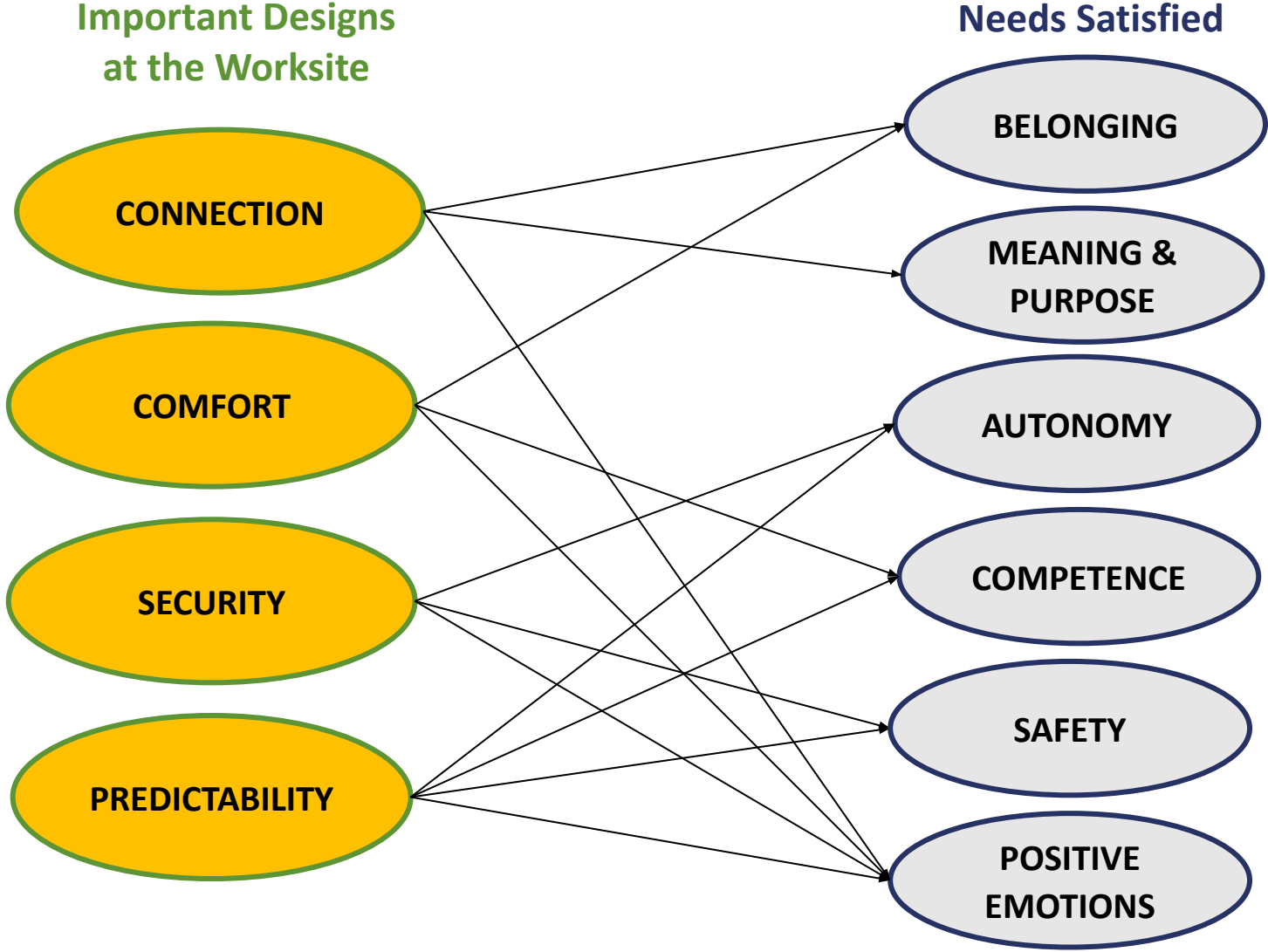
What needs are satisfied at the office?



WORKPLACE

- Personalized workspace
- Seating near windows (fresh air, views)
- Predictable and sufficient access to resources
- Multiple work space types to match purpose
- Noise and disruption control
- Separation of focus work from social/collaboration activities
- Allocated time for socializing, building relationships
- Sufficient meeting/collaboration space
- Flexible work hours
- Restorative space
- Biophilic features (green plants, moving water, natural elements,
- Toxic-free materials
- Ergonomic workstations
- Neighborhoods
- Cultural symbols, visual displays of company values and mission
- Involvement in problem-solving /decision-making
- Rewards and recognitions

What needs are satisfied in the field?



FIELD

- Ergonomic seating or workstation
- Access to natural light, fresh air, window views
- Bounded, reasonable work hours
- Flexible work schedules
- Access to restorative space or activity
- Regular and sufficient rest breaks
- Predictable and sufficient access to resources
- Private, confidential space for focus work
- Access to affordable, healthy food
- Allocated time for socializing, building relationships
- Involvement in problem-solving /decision-making
- Rewards and recognitions
- Reliable technology



How can you apply this new information?



BREAKOUT

*What do you
need to do
more?*

- To make **remote work** more satisfying?
- To make working **at the workplace** more satisfying?
- To make working **in the field** more satisfying?

Thank you!

- cbanks@berkeley.edu
- Website: healthyworkplaces.berkeley.edu
- <https://berkeleycoeh.catalog.instructure.com/browse/ichw/courses/built-to-thrive-book-and-community>

