Continuing Education Handout: The Psychologist as Change maker

The Psychologist as Change maker: Expanding Our Impact in Turbulent Times

Presented by Dr. Jasmine Ross | North Carolina Psychological Association

Learning Objectives

By the end of this program, participants will be able to:

Identify Non-Traditional Applications

List at least three non-traditional industries where psychologists can effectively apply their expertise (e.g., media, technology, policy-making).

Master Career Pivot Strategies

Describe two distinct career pivot strategies relevant to early-career, mid-career, and late-career psychologists, respectively.
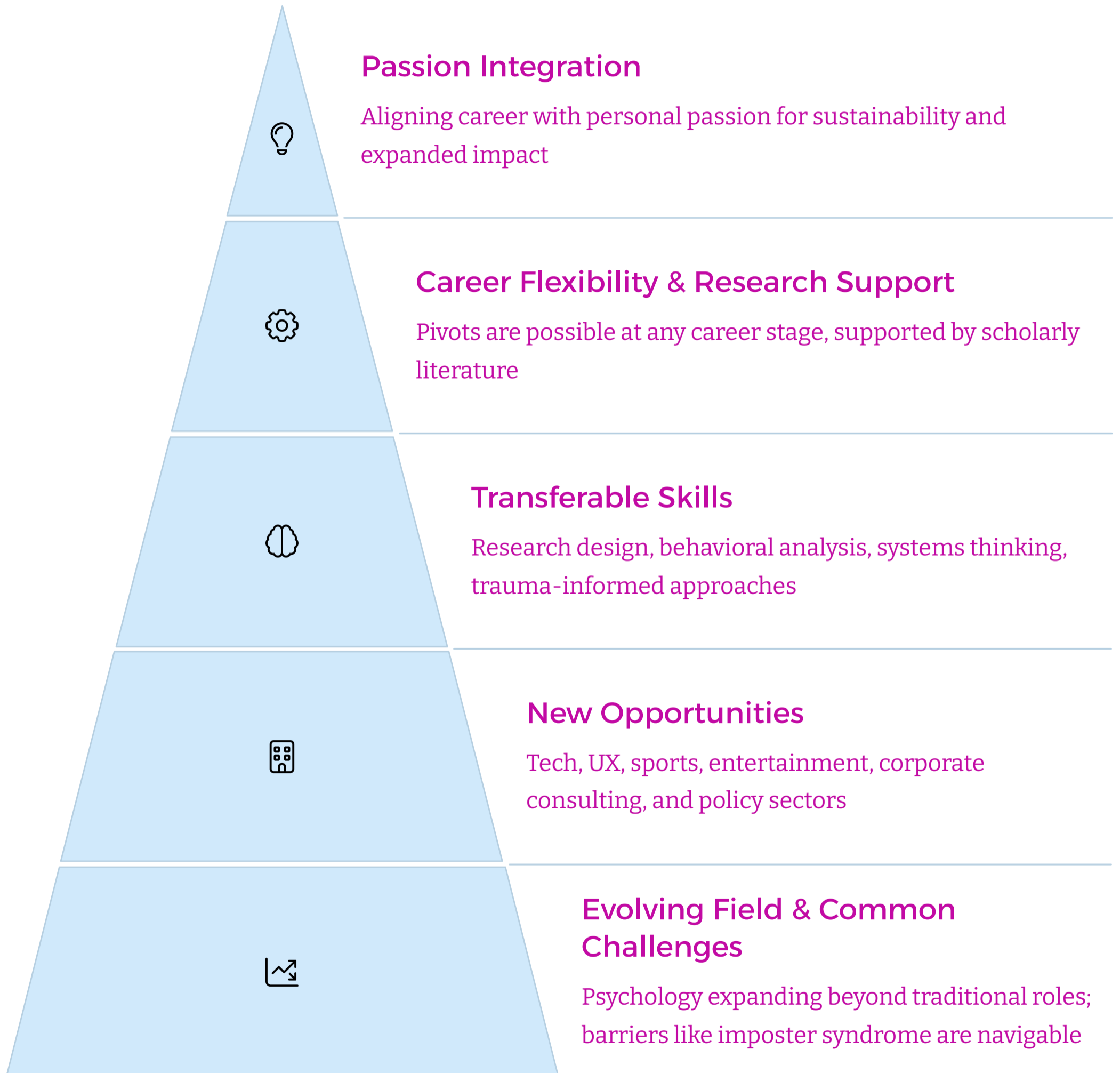
Create Personalized Integration

Develop two personalized strategies for integrating individual passions into a psychology-informed career transition, using provided reflection prompts or case examples.

Summary of Key Points

Psychology as a field is expanding beyond traditional roles, creating new opportunities while building on psychologists' core strengths.

Passion Integration

Aligning career with personal passion for sustainability and expanded impact

Career Flexibility & Research Support

Pivots are possible at any career stage, supported by scholarly literature

Transferable Skills

Research design, behavioral analysis, systems thinking, trauma-informed approaches

New Opportunities

Tech, UX, sports, entertainment, corporate consulting, and policy sectors

Evolving Field & Common Challenges

Psychology expanding beyond traditional roles; barriers like imposter syndrome are navigable

Fill in the Blanks Activity: Reimagining Your Role

Complete the sentences below to explore how your expertise could expand into new domains. Take your time with each prompt, allowing yourself to consider possibilities beyond your usual thinking.

Industry Exploration

1. One non-traditional industry I'm curious about is _____.

2. The aspect of this industry that most intrigues me is

_____.

Passion Integration

3. A personal passion I've never fully integrated into my professional life is

_____.

4. This passion could benefit others through my work by

_____.

Skill Transfer

5. A skill I use in clinical or academic work that could transfer to a new setting is

_____.

6. This skill might be valued in other industries because

_____.

Emotions & Motivation

7. I feel hesitant about pivoting because

_____,

but I'm also excited by

_____.

8. When I imagine myself five years from now having made this change, I see

_____.

First Steps

9. A first small step I could take to explore a new direction is

_____.

10. Someone in my network who might provide insight or connections for this exploration is

_____.

Potential Impact

11. A societal challenge I'm passionate about addressing is

_____.

12. My psychological expertise could contribute to solving this challenge by

_____.

Identity Reflection

13. The aspect of my identity as a psychologist I want to maintain in any transition is

_____.

14. The aspect of my professional identity I'm willing to let evolve is _____.

After completing this exercise, review your answers for patterns or themes that might point to meaningful career expansion opportunities. Consider discussing your reflections with a trusted colleague or mentor.

Multiple Choice Questions

1 Which of the following is a common psychological contribution in the technology industry?

A. Budget forecasting

B. Machine engineering

C. Human-centered design

D. Infrastructure development

Answer: C

2 According to Riches et al. (2024), the Metaverse holds promise for psychologists because:

A. It automates therapy

B. It reduces the need for licensed providers

C. It can be used as a therapeutic tool in virtual environments

D. It replaces clinical training

Answer: C

3 What is one reason psychologists may hesitate to pursue non-traditional roles?

A. Lack of interest in innovation

B. Concerns about losing professional identity

C. Low demand in other industries

D. Strict licensing requirements across all fields

Answer: B

4 Which of the following is a key transferable skill psychologists bring to corporate settings?

A. Graphic design

B. Systems-level behavioral insight

C. Financial compliance auditing

D. Web development

Answer: B

5 What strategy is recommended for mid-career psychologists considering a pivot?

A. Avoid networking to protect reputation

B. Stay exclusively within the clinical domain

C. Develop a niche that combines expertise and passion

D. Return to graduate school for re-specialization

Answer: C

Further Reading & References

- Riches, S., Williams, G., & Saidel, S. (2024). *The Metaverse as a Therapeutic Space. International Journal of Human–Computer Interaction.*

- Koerner, K., & Dimeff, L. A. (2019). *Becoming T-shaped Professionals. Cognitive and Behavioral Practice.*

- Rodríguez-Romero et al. (2022). *Psychology in Media During the COVID-19 Pandemic. Journal of Clinical Psychology.*

- Kozyreva, A., Lewandowsky, S., & Hertwig, R. (2023). *Psychology and Public Policy. European Psychologist.*

- Eyring, A. (2020). *Global by Design.* Consulting Psychology Journal.

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