

Byron Suits, PharmD Candidate, Rachel Riggins, PharmD Candidate,  
Kelly Gable, PharmD, BCPP, Misty Gonzalez, PharmD, BCPP  
School of Pharmacy, Southern Illinois University of Edwardsville, Edwardsville, IL, USA

### Introduction

- The WHO declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020.<sup>2</sup>
- American businesses begin voluntarily shutting down to reduce virus spread.
- SIUE School of Pharmacy (SOP) ceased on-campus instruction on March 20, 2020 and faculty, staff, and students were tasked with rapidly adapting to a new academic paradigm.
- Studies have examined the impact of quarantines on students in previous pandemics, but few have looked at their impact on University faculty and staff.

### Methods

- An online survey was created with the intent to assess the emotional impact of the initial phases of the COVID-19 pandemic on faculty and staff well-being at SIUE SOP.
- All faculty and staff employed at SIUE SOP between July 16, 2020 and August 16, 2020 were recruited via email and asked to complete a survey instrument administered via Qualtrics.

### Results

- 33 respondents completed the survey (53.2% response rate).
- 65.7% of respondents identified as female; 28.6% male; 5.7% other.
- Primary age range was 35-54 years old (80% of respondents).
- The most common reported feelings about the initial COVID-19 work from home order were: stressed (51.5%), anxious (63.6%), and scared about the future (42.4%).
- The most common reported feelings about the COVID-19 work from home order 5 months into the pandemic were: stressed (39.4%), tired (30.3%), anxious (51.5%), scared about the future (48.5%), calm (33.3%), and just fine (30.3%).
- The highest ranked concerns both in March 2020 and July/August 2020 were contraction of the virus personally or a loved one contracting the virus. The lowest ranked concern at either time was how social distancing would affect patient care.
- Most agreed that the more flexible hours were beneficial for work/life balance.
- 84.8% reported maintaining physical exercise at least 2-3 times per week during the initial phases of the pandemic.

Figure 1

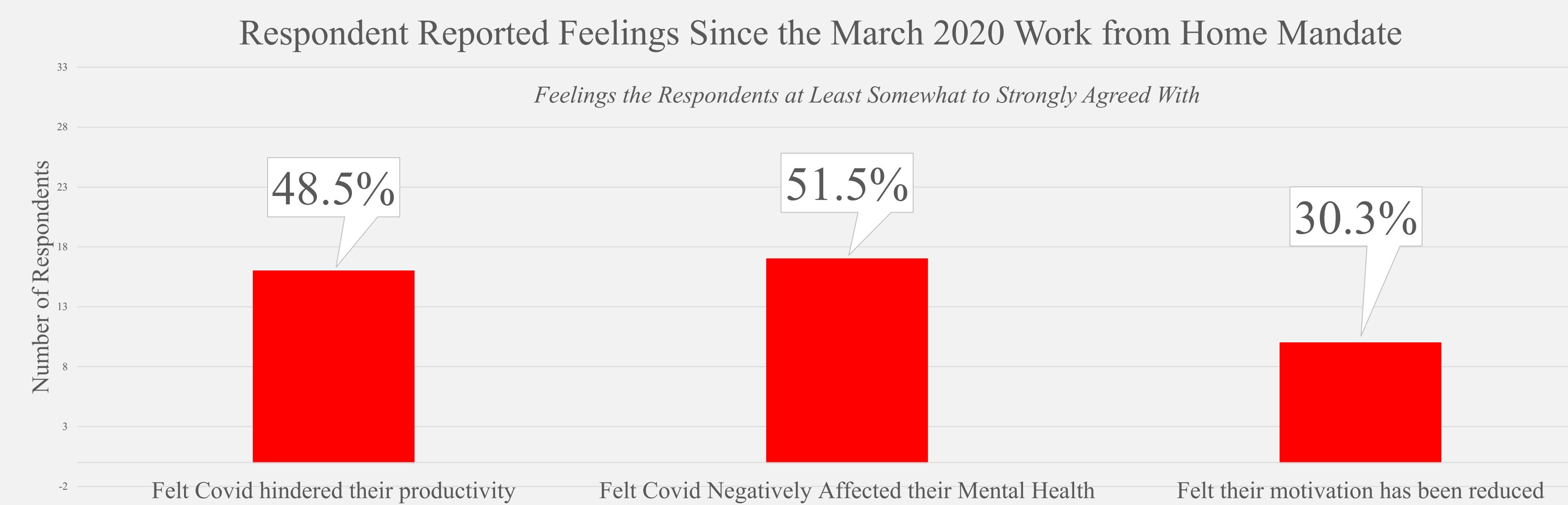


Figure 2

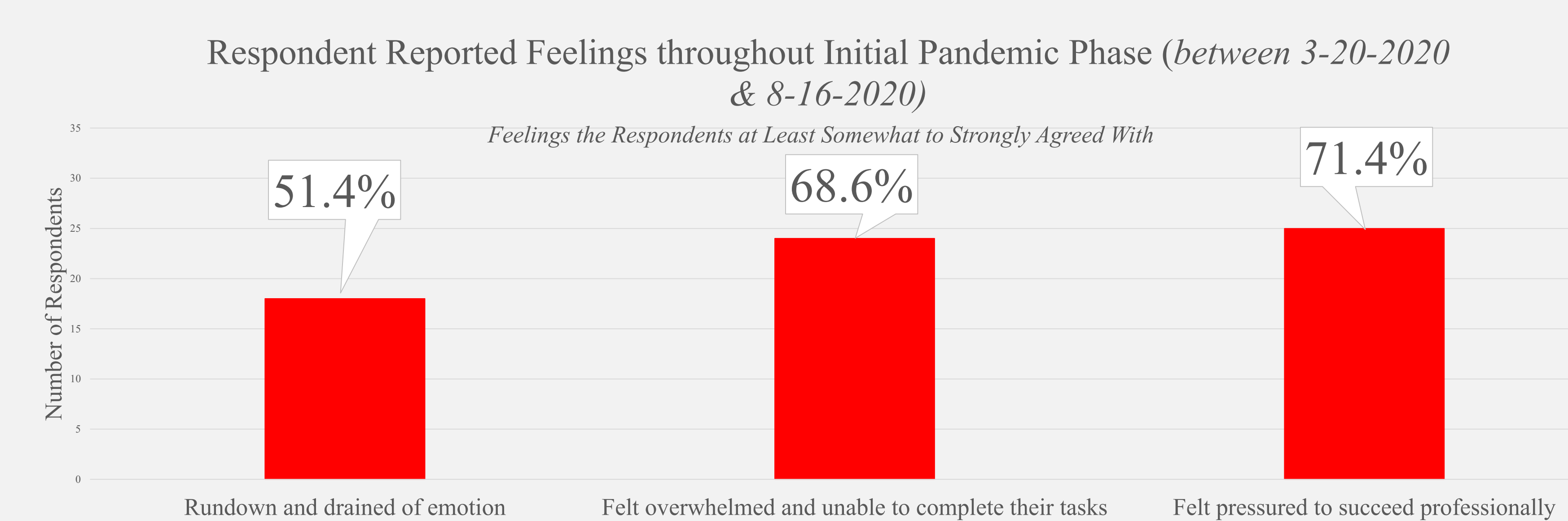


Figure 3

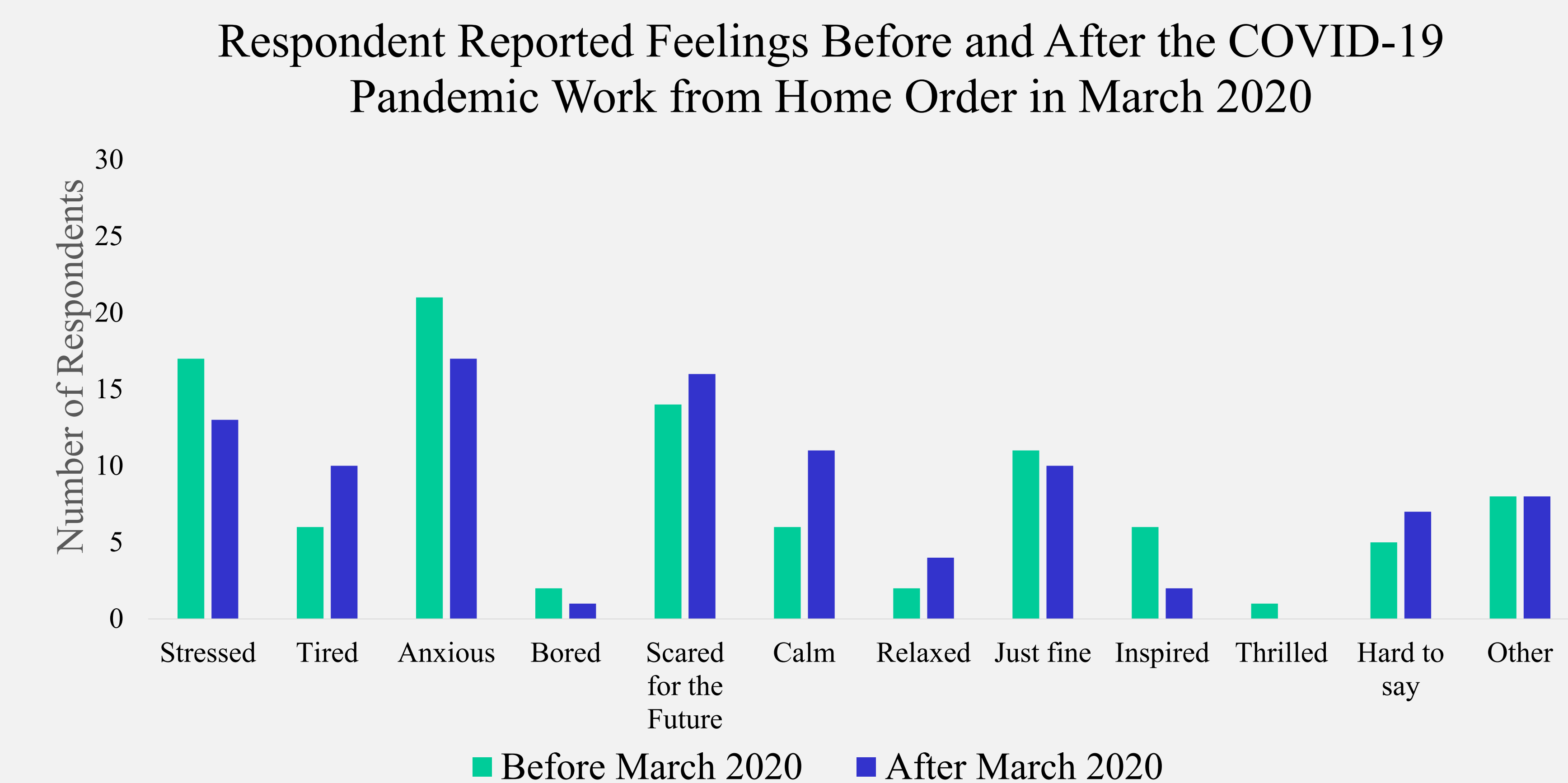


Figure 4

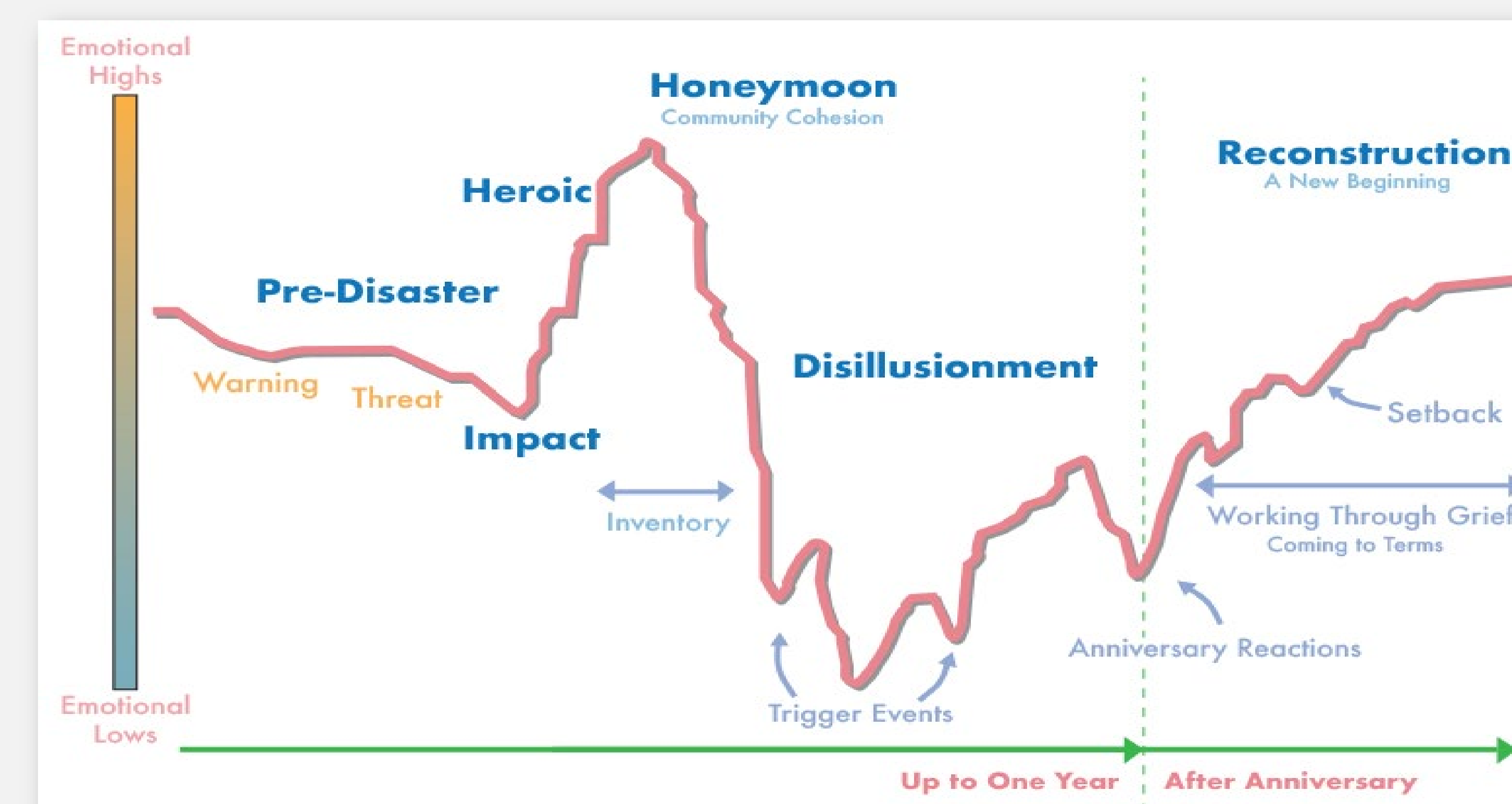


Figure 4: Phases of Disaster. Source: Zunit/Meyers, as cited in Training Manual for Mental Health and Human Service Workers in Major Disasters, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2000).

### Discussion

- About half of SIUE faculty/staff reported difficulty completing tasks, feeling emotionally drained, and less productive during the initial phases of the pandemic.
- The administration of this survey coincided with primary and secondary education school mandated online learning and community business closures, leaving many faculty and staff to work from home, while also caring for young children and/or older family members.
- The widely published SAMHSA Phases of Disaster (figure 5) highlights the patterns of human behavior and response during a disaster such as the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Responses to this survey reflect the phase of disillusionment with the pandemic response.

### Limitations

- While the survey drew inspiration from the WHO-5, it was not itself a validated instrument.
- A completion rate of 53.2% lends to high internal validity to the results.
- A lack of diversity and survey bias reduces external validity.
- Current medications taken by the participants are not addressed.
- Only SIUE pharmacy faculty/staff were surveyed, SIUE general campus faculty/staff were not included for a baseline

### Conclusions

- University faculty and staff were negatively impacted in the initial phases of this pandemic, in part due to rapid shifts from in-person to online learning.
- The continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic emphasizes the need to not only re-assess faculty and staff well-being, but also to intentionally address the continued personal and professional needs of University communities.

### References

1. "Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic." World Health Organization. World Health Organization, 2020. Web. 26 Aug, 2020. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>