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# Reflecting on Unraveling the Dance of Daily Proactivity: Impacts on Well-being under the Shadow of Punitive Supervision in Group Processes, Social Cognition and Boredom

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**Abstract:** This reflection explores the intricate interplay between daily proactivity, well-being, and punitive supervision in the context of boredom, group processes, and social cognition. Employing a narrative opinion approach, the study investigates how daily proactive behaviors influence individual and group well-being, particularly in the presence of punitive supervisory practices. Drawing from existing literature and theoretical frameworks, the research delves into the multifaceted implications of proactivity on various dimensions of well-being, including psychological, emotional, and social aspects. Additionally, it examines the moderating role of punitive supervision in shaping the relationship between proactivity and well-being, elucidating potential pathways and mechanisms through which punitive supervision may impact individual and collective welfare. By integrating insights from organizational behavior, social psychology, and human resource management, this reflection contributes to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay among individual agency, supervisory practices, and socio-cognitive processes within organizational contexts. The findings provide valuable guidance for practitioners and scholars, informing strategies for fostering a supportive work environment conducive to both proactivity and well-being, while highlighting the need for further research to explore alternative approaches to supervision that promote employee thriving and organizational effectiveness.

**Keywords:** Boredom, Daily proactivity, Group processes, Punitive supervision, Social cognition, Well-being.

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## **1. Introduction**

This paper falls within the scope of a self-challenge contextualised to the field of Group Processes, Social Cognition and Boredom, representing a reflection aimed at promoting the exploration and deepening of topics, approached with scientific rigour. Various topics will be addressed and explored, and different arguments and evidence will be confronted, with the objective of grounding a structured, reasoned line of thought, drawing on reflections and personal perspectives on the explored themes. The guiding principles are the notions of daily proactivity and well-being, particularly exploring the extent to which daily proactivity affects well-being, the moderating role of punitive supervision, and its relationship with the fields of Group Processes, Social Cognition, and Boredom Studies. Building upon these concepts, we will engage in an exercise of reflection and organization of personal arguments, considering the premises of this relationship, identifying its similarities and differences, in line with Cangiano et al. (2018), with argumentation corroborated and enriched through supplementary readings and reflections, culminating in a personal syllogism. Divided into five sections, the body of the paper begins with this introduction, followed by the development section, where the reflection prompted by the challenge occurs, culminating in the third phase: the conclusion. This is followed by a discussion of future challenges, ending in the reference section.

## **2. Development**

Firstly, it is important to consider how social cognition is viewed. Within the world of psychology, there are several ways to understand social cognition. One of the most important, according to Moscovici (1988), focuses on the social dimension of knowledge, which, from this perspective, has a sociocultural origin since it is shared by social groups. Moscovici (1988) asserts that ‘social representations’ are ideas, thoughts, images, and knowledge that members of a group share, serving a dual function: understanding reality to plan action and facilitating communication. Lewin (1977), on the other hand, interprets social cognition as focusing on the individual and their psychological processes. According to him, individuals construct their own cognitive structures from interactions with their physical and social environments. Next is Adolphs’ perspective (1999), which states that social cognition is how we manage the vast amount of social information we receive every day. The stimuli and data we gather through our five senses are analyzed and integrated into mental schemas, which guide our thoughts and behaviors in subsequent situations. Social cognition is, in other words, a study of how we process information, with this processing being how we encode, store, and retrieve learned information through social situations. Once formed, these schemas are difficult to change (Adolphs, 1999). Perhaps due to this latter assertion, Albert Einstein, as cited in Benjamin (2002), said that it is harder to crack a prejudice than an atom. We continue with Merton’s perspective (1948), which states that these structures or schemas influence attention, encoding, and information retrieval, potentially even leading to a ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’ (SFP). This is a prediction that, according to Merton (1948), once made, becomes the cause of its own realization. The ‘chameleon effect’ (Rosenthal Effect) is directly related to the concept of the self-fulfilling prophecy, as it involves having a belief about someone that, simply by existing, shapes and encourages a behavior that ultimately materializes (Mitchell and Daniels, 2003). Continuing with the viewpoint of Selman

et al. (1977), they argue that social knowledge is, in part, independent of other types of knowledge; for example, individuals with greater intellectual capacity in problem-solving do not necessarily have the same high intellectual capacity for solving social problems. According to this reasoning, Selman et al. (1977) developed one of the most pertinent models of social cognition, which focused on taking the social perspective of others, namely: ‘Putting oneself in someone else’s shoes’, that is, the ability that confers powers of self-understanding and understanding other individuals, allowing for the perspective of one’s own behavior from the standpoint of others. Lastly, Skinner asserts that social cognition is the dominant model in social psychology, as it arises in opposition to behaviorism, which denies the involvement of mental processes in explaining behavior (Catania, 1984).

After dissecting the notion of social cognition, we proceed to define Boredom. Despite being a common emotion, boredom has received little attention compared with other emotions such as happiness or anger (Westgate and Steidle, 2020). Although boredom is often seen as an unpleasant experience, it can have both negative and positive effects on individuals. On the one hand, boredom can be a source of creativity and innovation because when bored, the brain is more likely to wander and explore new ideas or perspectives. Boredom can encourage one to seek novel experiences, discover new interests, or challenge oneself to learn and grow. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, boredom as a result of lockdowns and isolations helped many explore new ideas and discover new interests (Ndeti et al., 2023). Boredom can also prompt reflection on values, goals, and aspirations and motivate people to make changes in their lives. In this sense, boredom can be seen as an opportunity for self-awareness and self-improvement. Studies have shown that people who experience moderate levels of boredom are more likely to engage in creative thinking and problem-solving (Elpidorou, 2018, quoted in Ndeti et al., 2023; Van Tilburg and Igou, 2019, quoted in Ndeti et al., 2023). On the other hand, boredom can also have negative consequences. Hebb and Donderi (1987) considered boredom to elicit active seeking of excitement to prevent boredom from occurring/persevering (Nett et al., 2010b). Emotional factors are intrinsically related to existential and psychoanalytic theories of boredom. Motivational factors are closely related to arousal theories of boredom. Lastly, cognitive factors are explained by cognitive theories of boredom, which state that the propensity for boredom stems from the lower capacity for self-regulation of attention (Fisher, 1993; Mercer-Lynn et al., 2013). According to Fisher (1993), boredom is an unpleasant and transient affective state characterized by a significant lack of interest, as well as difficulty in concentrating on the task being performed. Some examples include giving up the search for more satisfying activities (Eastwood et al., 2012; Gerritsen et al., 2014), difficulty in engaging with the environment, emotional unawareness (Eastwood et al., 2007; Gerritsen et al., 2014), lack of meaning in life (Fahlman et al., 2009; Gerritsen et al., 2014), and the individual’s inability to commit to their own goals. Westgate (2020) highlights two main causes: attention and the meaning attributed to the activity. In summary, Westgate (2020) states that attentional difficulties arise when the challenge present in the activity is either too low or too high for the individual’s capabilities (Westgate, 2020; Westgate et al., 2017). The meaning attributed to tasks relates to their ability to satisfy personal goals. When an activity fails to do so, it becomes insignificant and consequently boring. Although many theories acknowledge boredom as an emotion that serves a purpose, most authors focus on the negative consequences of boredom. Generally, boredom presents negative

consequences at psychological, social, and physical levels (Eastwood et al., 2012). In addition, boredom has been associated with deficits in impulse control, resulting in negative consequences such as compulsive gambling and substance use (Chin et al., 2017), such as nicotine, alcohol, and drugs (Pekrun et al., 2010). Some consequences presented by certain authors include depression, anxiety (Chin et al., 2017), stress and health problems (Pekrun et al., 2010), dissatisfaction, frustration, and anger (Fahlman et al., 2013; Isacescu et al., 2016), difficulties in self-regulation of negative affect, reflected in physical and verbal aggression, hostility (Fahlman et al., 2013; Isacescu et al., 2016), juvenile delinquency (Nett et al., 2010a), and a widespread absence of life satisfaction and purpose (Chin, 2017; Fahlman et al., 2009).

Now that we have touched on the notions of social cognition and boredom, we proceed to contextualize the title of the Cangiano et al. (2018) article: “Does Daily Proactivity Affect Well-being? The Moderating Role of Punitive Supervision”, with content from the Group Processes, Boredom Studies and Social Cognition areas, in order to develop an exercise of reflection on personal arguments, identifying their similarities and differences, according to Cangiano et al. (2018). These authors aimed to understand how and when proactivity can influence employees’ daily well-being through two distinct processes: a motivating aspect, in which proactive behavior at work can generate a sense of vitality, and a tension/demotivating aspect, in which proactivity, under particular conditions, can generate anxiety and interfere with workers’ ability.

According to Cangiano et al. (2018), the motivating aspect leads workers to perceive their competencies; for example, on days when individuals proactively take personal initiatives and produce something positive at work, they are more likely to feel competent. According to Fay and Sonnentag (2012), as cited in Cangiano et al. (2018), workers’ desire to feel competent is not only an important motivator for proactivity but also a consequence of this behavior.

Strauss and Parker (2014), as cited in Cangiano et al. (2018), argue that being proactive at work can provide workers with feelings of accomplishment in work activities, corroborating that proactivity is an important promoter/encourager of perceived competence because it is a challenging behavior. Cangiano et al. (2018) further assert, according to Shirom (2011), that experiencing a sense of competence is crucial for well-being, as it fosters feelings of vitality and subsequently a range of positive outcomes, both for employees and organizations. This syllogism is consistent with the words of Damásio (1997), who argues that thoughts influence emotions, but emotions also influence thought.

In line with this motivating process, Cangiano et al. (2018) suggested that the effects of proactive work behavior on employee vitality are not affected by the extent to which their supervisor is seen as punitive. Without further delay, and after addressing the motivating aspect, we now explore the study of the tension/demotivating aspect, reinforcing what has already been mentioned, namely, proactive behavior can have detrimental effects on employee well-being, particularly feelings of anxiety, which in turn have a negative impact on employees’ after-work disengagement. Wu and Parker (2014), cited by Cangiano et al. (2018), obtained results showing that the extent to which employees perceive their supervisor as punitive is important in shaping whether proactive behavior on a given day generates anxiety or not, as participants whose supervisors tend to react negatively and blame employees for their mistakes reported higher

anxiety on days when they engaged in proactive behavior at work. Conversely, this negative effect did not occur for employees whose supervisors were more tolerant of errors. These results reinforce the idea that supervisors play a crucial role in the proactive process and not only in training at the proactive level but also in determining the well-being consequences of proactive behavior.

After analyzing the data from this research, Cangiano et al. (2018) found that, contrary to what they thought, the positive effects of proactive behavior (motivating aspect) were unconditional, as the perceptions of competence resulting from proactive behavior at work had a more immediate and almost automatic outcome.

Regardless of contextual variables and depending on how workers perceived their supervisor as punitive, the motivating aspect provided workers with a sense of control and environmental mastery, satisfying an innate psychological need of human beings (Ryff, 1989, quoted in Cangiano et al., 2018), which enabled the challenging nature of proactivity to nullify any potential mitigating effects of punitive supervision.

Specifically, although perceptions of how the supervisor reacts to errors may alter their sense of competence when being proactive, on the other hand, this can also increase perceptions of challenge and level any moderating effect of punitive supervision. Conversely, Cangiano et al. (2018) found that the tension/demotivating aspect occurred only for individuals with a punitive supervisor, where being a proactive worker in this context generated feelings of anxiety associated with a downward spiral/cycle of negative thoughts about the job itself, thus conditioning the work engagement process, leading to long-term disengagement/turnover.

From a practical standpoint, these results indicate that organizations can benefit from encouraging employees to engage in proactive activities, not only for performance benefits but also because proactivity enhances feelings of competence and motivational indices (Cangiano et al., 2018). Thus, Cangiano et al. (2018) concluded that understanding the implications of proactivity on well-being is an important endeavor because organizations are increasingly dependent on their employees' proactivity to survive and thrive in business. However, if proactive behavior at work is detrimental to employees' well-being, then encouraging this behavior may have the opposite effect. Understanding how proactive behavior at work affects daily well-being will give organizations a better understanding of how to manage their workers' proactive behavior.

Therefore, we conclude that, on the one hand, proactive behavior at work is positive for employees because it provides opportunities to experience a sense of competence and mastery in the job, which has a motivating effect on their well-being, even if their supervisor is perceived as punitive; on the other hand, when supervisors react negatively to their workers' errors, they can create feelings of anxiety, to the extent that their capacity for work engagement becomes weakened (disengagement/turnover).

Overall, this study advances the understanding of the consequences of proactive behavior at work, integrating and complementing the 'bright' (Strauss and Parker, 2014, quoted in Cangiano et al., 2018) and 'dark' sides (Bolino et al., 2010b, quoted in Cangiano et al., 2018; Fay and Hüttges, 2016, as cited in Cangiano et al., 2018) of proactivity.

Thus, in order to consolidate what has been developed within the scope we propose, to better contextualize, elucidate, and conclude this study, we will respond to some questions that bridge various concepts and reasoning.

### 2.1. Given the Aforementioned, We Ask Ourselves: How Does Well-being Affect the Dynamics of a Work Group Oriented by the Standards of Normal Social Condition and Cognition?

Well-being is a product of work conditions and relationships, which, if positive, tend to have positive effects on performance and dynamics. That is, based on this, we can infer that if it is negative, it will tend to have negative effects, depending on the type of supervision.

Therefore, abusive supervision is, in this context, the most common expression within psychology. It is always a behavior exhibited by the supervisor more or less aggressively and/or disrespectfully towards the supervisee and is distinct from phenomena such as bullying.

I further assert that there are doubts about what constitutes abusive supervision in the supervisor's mind or perception and what is considered abusive supervision in the supervisee's mind, noting that any supervisor who is in a context of stress or pressure tends to exhibit more abusive supervision behaviors, and also those who are supervised and are under pressure tend to recognize abusive supervision more easily, thus inevitably having negative effects on well-being, also negatively affecting the group.

### 2.2. Continuing the Previous Line of Thought, Another Question Arises. How Is Well-being Affected by Proactivity?

Proactivity is an attribute associated with individuals (however, each individual has a different level of proactivity) and can have a collective dimension. If the group has a collective norm of stimulating and favoring individual and collective proactivity, it will surely tend to anticipate future problems and even propose solutions to the problems it faces in advance, thus positively affecting well-being.

We can then infer that in a contrary context, if the group acts to diminish and discourage proactivity, it will have greater difficulty in presenting solutions to the problems it faces, thus negatively affecting its well-being. It is also worth noting that punitive supervision, in this context, directly affects individual or group proactivity and, consequently, well-being. Assuming that, although each case is unique, well-being affects individuals and consequently groups at the level of social cognition and their dynamics.

### 2.3. Since Well-being Is Affected by the Productivity of Individuals, What Is the Role of Abusive Supervision in the Midst of this Equation?

Affective issues impact group performance, and it is not certain that only positive affects or the experience of positive emotional states have effects on well-being or productivity. The latter is always the final variable that can be considered, or if it is considered that well-being, having good or bad performances generates well-being, with known retroactive effects.

Abusive supervision inevitably has effects on well-being and emotional state, first on the individual who is subject to this type of supervision and then on the group, if it validates that it is abusive supervision. In groups, where several people interact, processing all events of the



dynamics differently, it does not mean that there is sharing. Sharing only exists when the processed information is very high among all members, and only then is it noticeable if the group considers there to be abusive supervision. If ten people are being supervised by someone and only one indicates that there is abusive supervision, it cannot be said that there is abusive supervision of the group. In some cases, the group may elect that person as the group's scapegoat and then ally with the supervisor (black sheep effect, or escape effect [Marques et al., 1988]), choosing another scapegoat to justify the group's failure, which may be inside or outside the group (Marques and Yzerbyt, 1988; Marques et al., 1990).

In my statements, I occasionally use the term 'abusive supervision', referring, in this context we have been discussing, to the fact that within psychology, it is the most commonly used expression. However, throughout this study, I suggest the concept of 'punitive supervision'.

#### 2.4. What Is the Difference Between the Two Types of Supervision?

Abusive supervision (Detert et al., 2007; Hiller et al., 2019; Kaluza et al., 2019; Mackey et al., 2017, 2019; Park et al., 2019; Tepper, 2000; Wang et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2019; Zhu et al., 2019) is itself a very diffuse concept, although there has been some evolution in typifying and even measuring it (there are even instruments in the literature that measure the phenomenon well) (i.e., Ghayas and Jabeen, 2020). Abusive supervision is considered a more generic term, while punitive supervision only concerns the fact that feedback is negative. It is more accurate to address abusive supervision because it is already punitive enough and does not need feedback on tasks, as in many cases, the feedback is about aspects unrelated to the task but rather about the individuals. Punitive supervision is closely associated with reward mechanisms, whether through feedback or through punishment for errors (Domjan, 2003; Skinner, 1935, 1938, 1948, 1953; Thorndike, 1905), which may even be part of the contract, either legally or psychologically.

#### 2.5. Another Question that Arouses Some Curiosity Is: Can Harassment Be Considered a Form of Abusive Supervision?

Abusive supervision has a very narrow definition, defining workplace bullying as a much more generic phenomenon, which has become, in most countries, at least in the West, a legally framed issue. Currently, in Portugal, in the context of work, harassment is what is described in the context of the law (Diário da República, 2024). Abusive supervision, for example, is when a direct supervisor consistently and systematically treats a person uncivilly or gives very different instructions to one subordinate than to another. Regarding harassment, it is necessary to clarify that it is not enough for a supervisor, in Portugal, to shout at their subordinate once or twice to be considered harassment, but it is a behavior, from the perspective of work psychology, of abusive supervision.

It is also important to note that abusive supervision is always a dyadic relationship in which someone, due to their hierarchical position, addresses the other uncivilly, humiliating them, belittling their abilities, and injuring their self-concept, whereas harassment is a bit more than that (Tepper, 2000; Tepper et al., 2006, 2008). In harassment, we are dealing with persistence over time, with consequences in terms of career advancement, in terms of how one is or is not remunerated, giving examples such as making dishonest proposals of a sexual nature or otherwise, which have nothing to do with abusive supervision because, by definition, it is the

fact that someone, in the normal exercise of their hierarchical supervisory activity, exhibits uncivilized behaviors towards their subordinate. I also exemplify that no one would say there is harassment if a supervisor systematically ignores the proposals or contributions of a worker, but if a supervisor systematically ignores the contributions, proposals, ideas, and suggestions of a subordinate, it is clearly exhibiting abusive supervision because they are completely disregarding the person and in some way, without saying it directly, are calling them incompetent or unintelligent.

## 2.6. Therefore, We Ask: What Is the Role of Abusive Supervision as a Moderating Variable?

Whenever there is abusive supervision, we tend to think that it diminishes the proactive capacity of supervised individuals (Yang, 2008), which is true when the organizational culture is typically obedience-centered (Bjorkqvist et al., 1994; Reed, 2004). However, in a culture that encourages individual assertion, abusive supervision typically ceases to moderate proactivity, as the culture itself values and provides security for individuals to express themselves. It is important to note that each case is unique.

## 2.7. This Reflection Also Raises the Question: Does Punitive Supervision Affect Social Cognition?

Firstly, it is important to define cognition as the set of mental and neurophysiological processes through which any human being collects, encodes, processes, and stores information to subsequently decode, translate, and influence a set of behaviors. When discussing social cognition, there are elements of the social context that interfere with some of these processes. I also note that the original idea of social cognition was once associated with an alternative way for socio-cognitive theories (Bandura et al., 2008) to occupy and even define what was generally the field of Social Psychology.

In my view, cognitive processes are necessarily involved in everything, often acting as moderating, mediating, or predictive variables. In some cases, this explicitly involves the understanding that information processing capacity varies from individual to individual. For example, when processing information, we may pay more or less attention to the available information. Often, the available information is extensive, and some of us focus only on certain details. This is related to biases, information distortion schemes, and so forth.

I further assert that there is another dimension to the discussion of social cognition, which relates to group cognition or the cognition that emerges within groups. The study of groups initially began with the concern that group life generated cognitive phenomena that were initially formulated as group mind. Just as individuals develop their minds, groups also develop theirs, shaping how people or groups think, act, and so forth. Therefore, generally speaking, everything related to stereotypes, attitudes, and mechanisms of social influence is involved in social cognition.

Given this, in response to the initial question, I affirm that punitive supervision affects social cognition, as punishment from supervision negatively impacts the proactivity of both individuals and groups, and consequently, the well-being of teams.



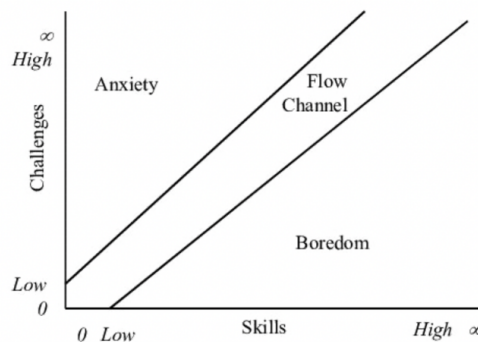
## 2.8. And How Do Boredom and Social Cognition Relate?

I think that the relation between boredom and social cognition is an intriguing puzzle that challenges human understanding. At its core, we can say that boredom is a psychological state characterized by a lack of stimulation or interest in the activities we are engaged in/on. On the other hand, quickly defining, social cognition refers to our ability to perceive, interpret, and respond to the social cues we encounter in the world around us. At first glance, it may seem that boredom and social cognition are in direct opposition... After all, when we are bored, we often feel disconnected from the world and less likely to engage in meaningful social interactions. However, this simplistic view overlooks the complexity of the human mind. An intriguing theory is that boredom may indeed trigger an increase in social cognitive activity... When we find ourselves in states of boredom, our minds may begin to seek out external stimuli to combat the monotony. This can lead to greater sensitivity to social signals and an amplification of interpersonal interactions as a way to fill the emotional void left by boredom. On the other hand, it is also possible that boredom exerts an inhibitory effect on social cognition... When we feel bored, we may become more introspective and less likely to engage in active social interactions. This can result in a decrease in our ability to accurately interpret social cues and engage meaningfully with others. Furthermore, it is important to consider the role of emotional states in the interaction between boredom and social cognition. For example, boredom may be associated with feelings of loneliness or despondency, which in turn can influence how we perceive and respond to social interactions. Ultimately, the correlation between boredom and social cognition is a complex and multifaceted topic that requires a lot of careful analysis and always an integrative approach (a systemic approach). By exploring this correlation further, we can gain valuable insights into the nature of the human mind and how emotional states influence our perception of the social world around us.

## 2.9. How Does Boredom Correlate to Punitive Supervision?

In the scientific-philosophical realm, the correlation between boredom and punitive supervision prompts a profound examination of the nuances between emotional states and systems of control. Boredom, as a psychological state, often arises when faced with activities lacking stimulation or meaning, resulting in a sense of emptiness or disinterest. Conversely, punitive supervision represents a form of authority that employs coercive measures to correct behaviors deemed inappropriate. Again, one might argue that boredom and punitive supervision are opposing phenomena. The matching of an individual's skill level to the challenges was explored by Csikszentmihalyi (1990, 1997), who suggested that the optimal level of experience is where a person's skill matches the level of risk or challenge. The model further suggests that where the challenges exceed the skills, there may be anxiety, whereas challenges that are lower than the individual's skill level may lead to boredom (see Figure 1). While boredom stems from a lack of engagement or challenge, punitive supervision is a direct response to deviant or undisciplined behaviors.

Figure 1. Flow (Dickson and Dolnicar [2004] adapted from Csikszentmihalyi [1990])



However, this dichotomy fails to fully capture the complexity of their relationship. An intriguing theory is that boredom may, in a way, fuel the need for punitive supervision. Individuals experiencing boredom repeatedly may resort to disruptive behaviors as a means of escaping this monotonous feeling, eliciting a punitive response from the authority. In this sense, boredom can be considered an indirect catalyst for punitive supervision, creating a cycle of behaviors and reactive responses... Conversely, punitive supervision may also contribute to the emergence or intensification of boredom. The use of punishments or disciplinary measures can create a demotivating and uninteresting environment, leading individuals to feel trapped and disengaged. This lack of stimulation can, in turn, heighten feelings of boredom and perpetuate a cycle of dissatisfaction and discontent. However, it is crucial to recognize that the relationship between boredom and punitive supervision is complex and multifaceted, varying depending on the context and individual characteristics (such as personality, character and temperament). In some cases, boredom may lead to the pursuit of constructive forms of engagement, while punitive supervision may be applied fairly and effectively to correct harmful behaviors. Ultimately, the interplay between boredom and punitive supervision is a topic that deserves further examination. By gaining a better understanding of this relationship, we can develop more effective strategies to promote healthier and more productive work and social environments, while acknowledging the inherent challenges in managing boredom and authority.

### 3. Conclusion

In conclusion, Parker et al. (2006), as cited in Cangiano et al. (2018) suggest that organizations can benefit from redesigning job roles and functions to promote greater autonomy and control among workers, facilitating proactive behavior in the workplace. The findings of Cangiano et al. (2018) also support the idea put forth by Grant and colleagues that it is important for supervisors to “create cultures, climates, norms, and reward systems that encourage proactive behaviors” (2009, p. 52).

Cangiano et al. (2018) emphasize the importance of training supervisors to effectively deal with the proactivity of their employees, including being tolerant of mistakes, as reacting negatively to errors can lead to adverse effects, creating anxiety, reducing engagement, and ultimately diminishing proactive behavior. Furthermore, they argue that the results of this study

support the idea that merely encouraging employees to take control and show personal initiative is not sufficient.

According to Baer and Frese (2003), as cited in Cangiano et al. (2018), organizations must also create a psychologically safe climate in which employees feel comfortable taking risks without fearing negative consequences for themselves or their careers.

Cangiano et al. (2018) suggest that the consequences of employee well-being in terms of proactivity are multifaceted. Essentially, proactive work behavior has a ‘bright’ side for employees, but it can also have a ‘dark’ side. Understanding how proactivity influences well-being can shed light on how we should promote this behavior to make it sustainable in the long term. Although proactivity is an inherently motivating behavior that can help employees feel competent in their work, how supervisors react to errors and failures can impact whether proactive behaviors also generate anxiety.

### 3.1. How Does this Theme Fit with Group Processes and Social Cognition?

The exploration of daily proactivity, well-being, punitive supervision, group processes, social cognition, and boredom is crucial within organizational theory. These inquiries prompt a reevaluation of leadership models, challenging notions of ‘friendly’, charismatic, and transformational leadership, which may inadvertently manifest as toxic leadership. Even supervisors once idealized for their ability to inspire and mobilize teams can exhibit toxic behaviors, such as manipulation and exploitation for personal gain. Despite the emergence of models like authentic leadership, instances of abusive supervision persist.

Understanding these phenomena requires consideration of contextual factors, especially the organizational culture. Toxic behaviors and abusive supervision cannot be solely attributed to individual shortcomings but are often rooted in systemic issues within the organizational environment. Boredom, a prevalent experience in many workplaces, further complicates this dynamic. Proactive behaviors may serve as coping mechanisms to alleviate boredom, but punitive supervision can exacerbate feelings of dissatisfaction and disengagement among employees.

Thus, the intersection of these themes sheds light on the intricate interplay between individual agency, leadership dynamics, and organizational culture. By examining how proactive behaviors, punitive supervision, and boredom intersect within group processes and social cognition, we gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of organizational behavior. This holistic perspective underscores the need for interventions that address both individual well-being and systemic issues within the organizational context, ultimately fostering a healthier and more supportive work environment for all.

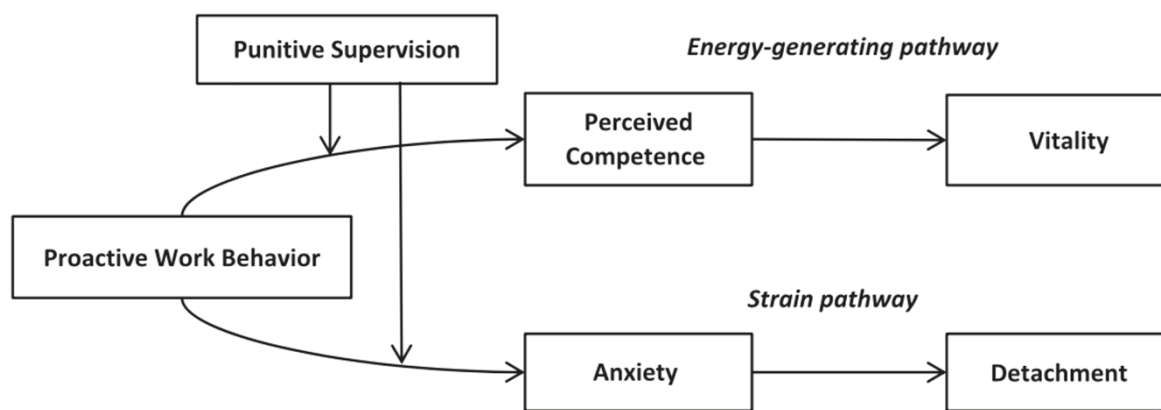
To summarize, all of these inquiries are of utmost importance to theory because many of these subjects have reconsidered some leadership models, such as those seen as ‘friendly’ leadership, charismatic leadership, and transformational leadership, which have often turned out to be toxic leadership with metrics of this nature. Even at the supervision level, supervisors referred to as ideal models, who are believed to have the ability to mobilize groups and teams for great results, often exhibit toxic behaviors (manipulating, promoting exploitation for personal gain). This has given rise to models called authentic leadership, but even authentic leaders

sometimes exhibit abusive supervision. For this reason, we cannot explain these phenomena strictly in terms of personal issues, but rather in contextual factors, especially the culture of the organization itself.

### 3.2. Future Challenges

In order to better contextualize and strengthen the conclusions in terms of future challenges, we perceive the title as something observed from both past and future perspectives, serving in this case to address constraints on the topic covered in Cangiano et al.'s (2018) research, "Does Daily Proactivity Affect Well-being? The Moderating Role of Punitive Supervision" (see Figure 2), and to discuss issues and paths yet to be explored or worthy of exploration.

Figure 2. Hypothesized Research Model (Cangiano et al., 2018)



Cangiano et al. (2018) highlighted questions that require further investigation. For instance, although they found a significant indirect effect of proactive work behavior on vitality through perceived competence, they did not detect any main effects. This implies that other moderators may affect the relationship between daily work proactivity and vitality. For example, engaging in proactive work behaviors for extrinsic reasons (impression management) may deplete resources rather than generate them (Bolino et al., 2010a, as cited in Cangiano et al., 2018). Thus, research could explore whether controlled forms of proactivity ('pressures' for proactivity) are less likely to increase vitality than autonomous forms of proactive behaviors (Bolino et al., 2015, quoted in Cangiano et al., 2018; Bolino et al., 2010b, quoted in Cangiano et al., 2018). In the view of Cangiano et al. (2018), someone who feels compelled (coerced) by the organizational environment to behave proactively may develop a controlled motivation to be proactive, which is less self-determined and therefore less likely to be beneficial for well-being (Nix et al., 1999, quoted in Cangiano et al., 2018).

Regarding the consequences of proactivity, it is worth noting that not all proactive behaviors are 'created equal', so different forms of proactivity may yield different results in terms of well-being. For example, changing a work procedure implemented by the supervisor is arguably more psychologically risky (as it may be seen as a personal attack to discredit the leader) compared to proactively helping a colleague without being instructed to do so. One could argue

that the riskier a proactive behavior is, the more likely it is to generate anxiety in the context of a punitive supervisor. Thus, future research could explore how different types of proactive work behavior (e.g., proactive help vs. taking charge) impact employees' well-being and how different supervisory styles shape such outcomes.

Other factors that could be explored in future research include the impact of successful execution (Cangiano and Parker, 2015, quoted in Cangiano et al., 2018). Although in this study Cangiano et al. (2018) considered how employees' perceptions of punitive supervision moderated the extent to which daily proactivity causes anxiety, they did not assess whether successful task completion (or achieving desired outcomes) diminishes the feeling of anxiety. For example, not achieving the proactive goal may significantly weaken the effect of proactivity on perceived competence. Additionally, they focused on supervisors' negative reactions to errors. It is plausible to expect that receiving praise and intrinsic incentives for proactive behavior itself is likely to yield positive outcomes for employee well-being. For instance, receiving positive feedback and appreciation from colleagues and supervisors can increase individual self-esteem and self-efficacy feelings, as well as enhance feelings of competence and mastery.

Another direction concerns the long-term effects of proactive work behavior on well-being. Cangiano et al. (2018) focused on the daily effects of proactive behavior on short-term well-being. In the long run, the affective outcomes considered in this study may be exacerbated and create more prominent effects. For example, an individual who feels anxious due to their proactive work behavior in the context of a punitive supervisor may eventually have to change their strategy and adopt a more passive/reactive approach at work to reduce their anxiety. From a darker perspective, the anxiety induced by being proactive with a punitive supervisor may result in burnout or higher turnover intentions. Future research could explore how proactive work behavior may trigger virtuous or vicious cycles for employees' well-being over time.

### 3.3. Given the Aforementioned Notions, What Is the Relevance of Punitive Supervision to the Field of Theory and Research in the Areas of Group Processes and Social Cognition?

I argue that this is a topic that has been studied for a long time, both in the field of Organizational Behavior and in the areas of Group Processes and Social Cognition, Social Psychology, People Management, and Human Resources. Initially, psychology discussed this topic only in terms of personal aspects, that is, 'I am an abusive supervisor because in terms of my personality traits, I probably have high scores of narcissism, neuroticism, or even some perverse aspects in my way of treating others'. This was closely associated with toxic leadership, where inevitably a triad of personal traits emerged, including neuroticism, Machiavellianism, and hubris, all personality traits that when frequently controlled, in abusive supervision, show some explanatory power. What has particularly drawn attention is that there are many organizational context variables, from culture itself to how those famous indicators called KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) are measured and defined, that is, whether they are profitable; if they have a performance that allows creating value for the organization and if in the end the team has positive financial results, (relevant factors for us to be able to explain the appearance of abusive supervision, even in people who do not have any weight of those traits, of that black triad [dark side, flee the ship, dark side of supervision]).

In view of addressing the topic of abusive supervision so often, it is worth considering the relevance of conducting research similar to that of Cangiano et al. (2018), but instead of focusing on punitive supervision, it should focus on abusive supervision.

Just as Nikolaievitch Tolstoy (n.d.) stated that some people go through the forest seeing nothing else but firewood, we too can fall into the same mistake if we look at the universe of Group Processes, Boredom Studies, Daily Proactivity, and Social Cognition and think they are areas without firewood to burn.

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