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Dealing With That Stressful Job



Mary Ann Masur

Problem: The phone on your desk hasn't stopped ringing in days and the work continues to pile up. With the amount of work continuing to increase, so is your stress level.

Fix: Attempting to decrease your stress level isn't easy. Mary Ann Masur, a professional business coach at Synergy Consultants LLC in Baltimore, says to consider the following tips which may help you the next time you find yourself pulling your hair out at work.

1. Take care of yourself: Lay an early foundation that can help you deal with stress when it may occur. Get enough sleep, wake up early in the morning to allow yourself extra time to do things for yourself, meditate if you need to, or read a book of interest to you.
2. Be present in the moment: when you have 20 things to do, you get stressed. But focusing on the moment will leave you no room for stress.
3. Change your geography: Stepping outside for lunch, changing your posture when in a meeting with someone, or physically standing up when talking to people can lower your stress level. Also be sure to notice your breathing habits. Do you usually breathe heavy, or are you generally relaxed?
4. Choose your perspective: Notice how you are viewing the situation. You can choose how you want to look at the situation. Choose the place you want to stand in. You can be a victim of stress, or you can choose to be positive about the situation. Ask yourself: Will this matter a year from now?
5. Call a friend, colleague or coach for support: Having someone to talk to can cope with your stress level. The person you speak to can be a good person to vent to and can help you brainstorm about how you are so stressed.

Don't dwell on the past or future.

Dr. Hinda Dubin, a clinical assistant professor of psychiatry at the University of Maryland Medical Center says to "take a deep breath and roll up your sleeves" when stress hits. Dubin also lists some techniques for dealing with stress in the workplace:

- Make a list of the tasks which you need to complete and break them down into more manageable pieces.
- Don't wait until you feel "motivated" or "inspired" to take on a large task. That day may never come. Put at least 15 minutes into a task that is frightening you and you will quickly see that it is not nearly as bad as you think and you will soon become more motivated.
- Be aware of perfectionism getting in the way of getting your task done.
- Remind yourself of past situations where you have coped well and drawn on those strengths.
- Be kind to yourself.

Mary Ann Masur, president of Synergy Consultants, LLC, is a professional coach, serving organizations and individuals. She was one of Maryland's Top 100 Women in 2000. She can be reached at ma.masur@verizon.net or at 410-377.7323.