



## Five Steps to Overcome Work Related Stress

When you are stressed in the workplace, how do you show up for others? And that goes for homelife too. It may be that you work in a small, medium, or large organization. OR... You may be an entrepreneur trying to get your business off the ground. Stress has a way of seeping into most areas of your life. While mild stress, perhaps encouraged by events that drive up anxiety to some degree, can actually work to an advantage for some individuals, it does not for all. We each have a threshold as to how much stress we can perform effectively with before we start dropping the balls as we say. Under high levels of stressors, particularly when the conditions that bring it about are chronic:

- A. We start to lose our ability to see patterns.
- B. We lose our ability to be a creative thinker.
- C. We can react inappropriately to deadlines and demands.
- D. We may be delivering hard messages without consideration or notice of how they land for others. That in itself is damaging to relationships, which brings about even more stress.
- E. If we feel out of control internally, we typically try to exert more control over our external world. This may not bode well for others around us.
- F. We may not notice the nuances that are going on around us. Or for some, it might be the complete opposite and you notice every little detail which may produce even more concern for you.



While working with clients I find that self-awareness of personality type and emotional intelligence are key items to help us understand what stressors impact us and why. And, such information can help one create an action plan to better support yourself to manage your stress.

Of course it may not be possible for you to have access to personal assessments or a professional to support you with a worthwhile debrief of such reports. But it may be something you wish to consider doing in the future.

So, here are 5 Action Items you can do now to help you better manage your stressors! And... anyone can do these!

1. **Schedule yourself into your weekly calendar** – Many of you who are reading this will be reacting to what I have just put down as the #1 action item. You are not alone... my clients do too! You are likely so busy doing...so busy going to meetings...so busy trying to meet the expectations on you...so busy managing relationships. Where is the time for you? Schedule 2 one-hour sessions during the work week, time to catch up on your business reading, or



get through that pile of paperwork to be looked after, or complete reports that are sitting on your desk or in your computer and always in the back of your mind, OR just take the time to do the much needed thinking as to how to move forward with an initiative or decision.

**Question:**What time of the day are you less likely to be interrupted by meeting demands, etc.? \_\_\_\_\_

**Question:**What might get in your way of this action item being successful?

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**Question:**What else could you do that will ensure you are committed to this time for you each week? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Question:**How will you let others know that this time is booked?

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**Question:**What will you do to give yourself permission to take the time for you?

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- 2. Recognize what relationship repair work you may need to do.** Avoiding those difficult and challenging relationships will only seek to feed your stress. It is time to deal with this and clear the slate for a fresh start. The most difficult conversation... is the one you are not having.
- 3. What activities seem to help give you energy in times of stress?** Identify these and make certain you put them into your daily schedule. You really need to take care of yourself in such times to maintain a balance.
- 4. Treat others with respect... all the time.** You are adding to your stress with that relationship if you do not. You will set up a situation for relationship repair work to be done. Relationships – you have to invest to withdraw!
- 5. Get on your follow up!** If you are making promises of follow up to others, make certain you do just that. Failure to do so will generate emails and calls to you as people are trying to check in to see where things are at. This just increases what is coming at you...and it won't stop until you get back to them. A delay in such follow up will erode the relationship, which means it is eroding trust of you... and possibly your team, your division, and/or your company. The only way to do this is to get in front of it; deliver on your promise to get back to them, even if you have to deliver not so great news.