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Stress Prevention in a Word – "No"

By Robert Cooper

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We teach our pets the meaning of the word. We quickly learned its meaning as toddlers when we reached for mommy or daddy's car keys. Even an anti-drug campaign was built around the word. Yet, now that we're older, wiser and more responsible, the word struggles to break free from our own lips when we need to use it the most. That word? "No".

Just saying "no" is essential in dealing with, managing, and even preventing stress. Knowing your limitations can prevent you from digging yourself into holes when you realize you can't live up to the commitment you took on.

It's funny, when we were children, no diplomacy was required. Little Joey would decide that our favorite toy was to become communal property, without our prior notification. When he grabbed for our precious play-thing, "no" just seemed to flow from our lips, and if that didn't do it, we added about 5 more no's . How easy it was back then.

Of course, just saying "no" (and nothing else) to your boss is not wise when they drop one more project on your desk -- adding to the 5 they've already given you. Just saying "no" can be mistaken as subordination. More diplomacy is required!

But, there's a point when we can only take on so much. In order to prevent stress, we have to know our limitations.

What if my performance on the job, reputation amongst co-workers and friends is unfairly based on one instance of "just saying no"?

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If you are known for being a responsible and reliable person, people tend to take you more seriously when you just can't do something for them. Your reputation of integrity and reliability won't disappear in a "poof" of smoke if you say no to one request.

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One thing I never hesitate to do is let people know the exact reasons why I have to turn down a request — essential when refusing a request from people over you in authority.

Doesn't the pile of work in my in–box say I can't take another assignment?

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Having a desk with piles of work doesn't say you're busy – it just says you're unorganized or possibly inefficient – and that you need time management and organization help!

Think of yourself as a manufacturing plant

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Treat your schedule as importantly as the job schedule in a manufacturing plant. A plant production manager always knows what needs to get done, what's been accomplished and would never increase production if the workers can't keep up with the workflow. It would look bad on their ability to manage

the workers, the employees would get disgruntled and the inability to fulfill orders would erode the company's integrity and reputation.

One idea to clue others in to your current work load is to keep a very visible dry marker board near your desk or in your office. Use it to write down the tasks or projects you're working on. Check off the items completed and leave the one's yet to be finished on the board until you've done them. Add new requests to the board as they come in. A visible check–list will keep you from procrastinating on simple tasks — acting as a constant reminder. And, you might deter someone from giving you another project if it's obvious you've already got more than you can handle.

Pass the buck when the buck needs passing

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If your task and assignment list is built from internal office assignments and a new request comes in from your supervisor, use their authority to your favor. Allow them to adjust your priority list for you. Allow them to bump a project or move back it's deadline. If necessary, allow your supervisor to take responsibility for promises you can't keep to others (if they are the reason that you can't). If you do that — it is very important that others are notified of the schedule or deadline changes and that the changes were made by those in authority over you. This will relieve you of unnecessary pressure and stress. Is this passing the buck? If you were in a car accident that was clearly not your fault, knowing all of the implications that go along with responsibility, would you take the blame for it? Probably not. The same should hold true for less complicated situations.

Put yourself in their shoes

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What if you ordered a product as a holiday gift — if it didn't arrive in time because the company couldn't meet the demand of orders, wouldn't you rather them be upfront and honest and tell you no — that they can't delivery the gift in time? Think about how upset you would be! Think about how upset others would be if you took on more than you can handle and didn't have the time or energy to fulfil the request.

Maybe that anti–drug campaign slogan "Just Say No" should get a new face for the 21st century.

Instead of bumper stickers, maybe it should be printed on coffee mugs or flash as screen savers. And if we find ourselves still struggling to say no when we've already maxed out our to-do list, maybe we can just add it to the to-do list as priority number one.

Robert Cooper is the creator of BeProductive.com – a web site which provides resources, advice and tips on topics that affect personal organization and issues relating to becoming a more productive individual.

You Are What You Eat

By Dr. Tara Barker

You really are what you eat. You are also very much affected by the lifestyle you live. Every item that enters your mouth will be digested and reconstructed into your living cells for use. Although it is true that everything is broken down into general building blocks necessary for life (such as sugar, fat, proteins, etc), the quality of what you eat really affects how healthy each of your cells are. A diet high in processed foods, sugars, fats, chemicals, additives, preservatives, and low quality nutrients is harder for your body to process and leads to the building of lower quality cells. If you rarely exercise, experience high stress, do not sleep well or enough, and do not partake in favorite leisure activities, this also stresses the body and reduces its effectiveness in maintaining balance and health.

It can be difficult in today's world to fit in all that is conducive to an optimal life. Missing one or two steps occasionally will generally not be a problem, as your body is very resilient and made to work under less than optimal conditions for a time. Many people take advantage of this, however, and conclude that since they live the way they do and no signs of illness have appeared thus far, that they are living well enough. It can take days, months, or years for various signs of body 'dis-ease' to begin to appear. By the time these signs appear, it can take just as long to reverse the damage, if reversal is possible. The key is prevention. Although it is nearly impossible to anticipate exactly which prevention measures should be taken for each individual, there are general prevention methods that can be included in a healthy lifestyle that are useful to ward off the majority of common complaints.

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You Are What You Eat

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Residential Crime Prevention Starts With Taking The Proper Steps To Secure The Outside Of Your Home.

What is Stress?

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The Truth About Diabetes
Time Stretching Tips
Over 185 Delicious Italian Dishes
Money Making Flashy Designs in a Box



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