

Combating workplace stress and anxiety

Presented by desiree Monroy



WARNING:
The presenter is not a medically
trained specialist...at all.

TODAY'S AGENDA

- ◉ Stress
- ◉ Situational Anxiety
- ◉ Actions





STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE – BURNED OUT

Survey Says!

- 2013 survey results from the American Psychological Association say that the following three things are stressing us out on the job:
 - Not enough opportunity for growth
 - Too much work
 - Too little money



We may have good reason to feel “stressed”

○ Hmm...

- ✓ Layoffs
- ✓ Increased workload because of
- ✓ Furloughs
- ✓ Temporary salary reductions
- ✓ Suspension of tuition reimbursement
- ✓ Decreased training budgets
- ✓ Getting rid of positions you may have applied for



Effects of Stress

Hair: Excessive hair loss & baldness

Muscles: Neck & shoulder pain, musculoskeletal aches, lower back pain

Digestive tract: Diseases of the digestive tract including gastritis, stomach ulcers and irritable colon

Skin: Outbreak of skin problems, such as eczema and psoriasis



Brain: insomnia, headaches, anxiety & depression

Mouth: Oral ulcers & excessive dryness

Heart: Cardiovascular disease & Hypertension

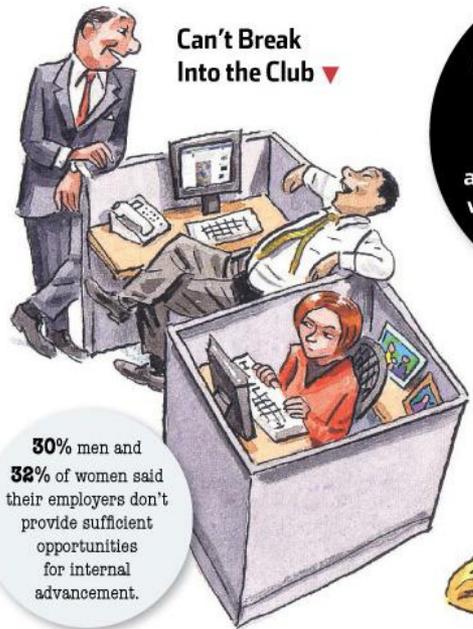
Lungs: Exacerbate asthmatic conditions, difficulty breathing

Reproductive organs: in men and women

Office Stress: His vs. Hers

65% ARE ALL STRESSED OUT BY WORK, NO MATTER GENDER

There are many causes of stress in the workday. Work is a significant source of stress for 65% of adults, though men and women report different levels of stress.



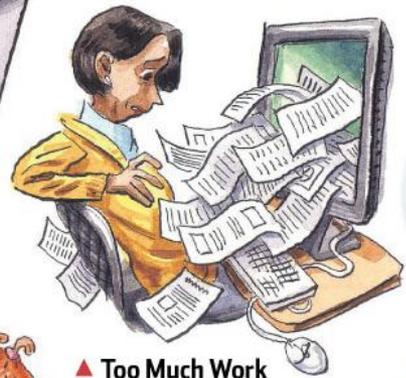
Can't Break Into the Club ▼

30% men and 32% of women said their employers don't provide sufficient opportunities for internal advancement.



Salary Shortfall

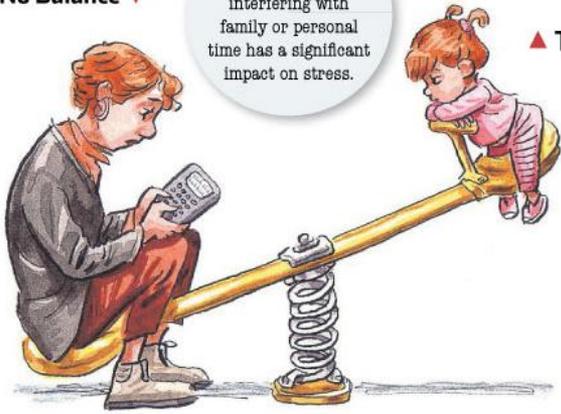
27% of men and 38% of women said they don't receive adequate monetary compensation for their job.



▲ Too Much Work

39% of people said having too heavy a workload is a significant factor in their stress.

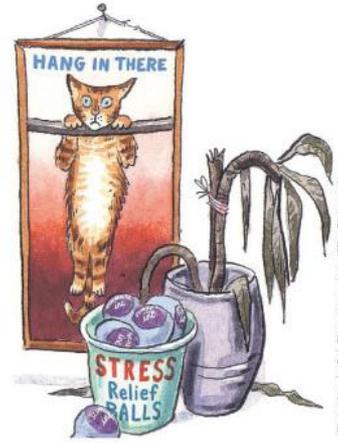
No Balance ▼



33% of people said work interfering with family or personal time has a significant impact on stress.

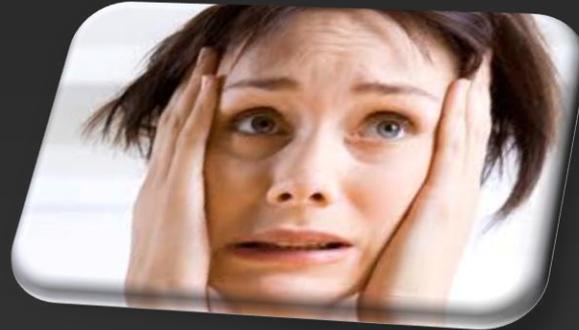
Programs That Don't Help

27% of men and 31% of women said their employers don't provide sufficient resources to help them manage stress.



Illustrations by Rob Shepperson; photo: Giles Photography

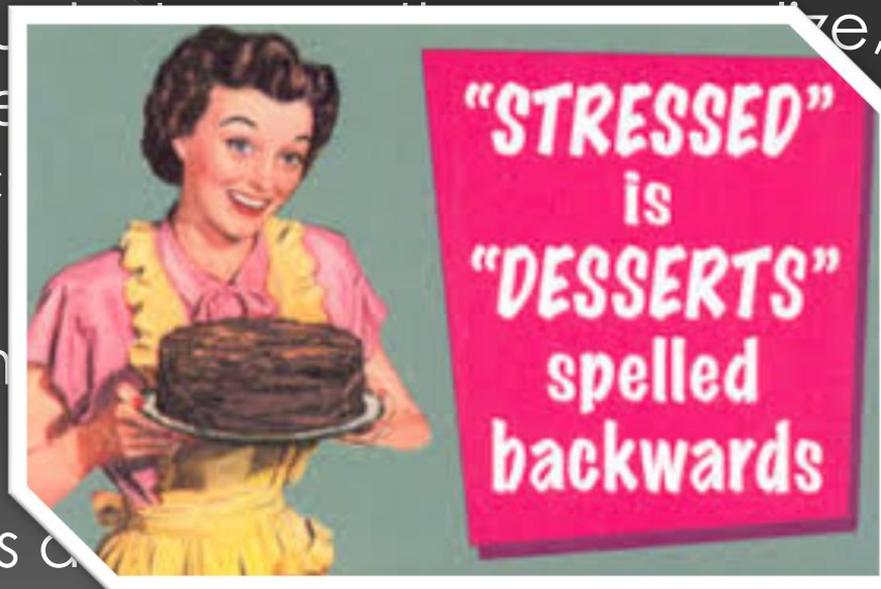
No escape?!?

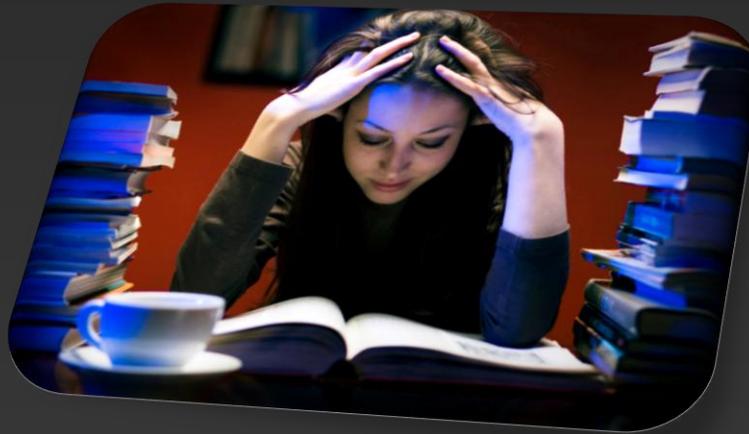


- ◎ 1/3 of employees experience chronic stress related to work, with women reporting higher levels of work stress than men.
- ◎ 71% of people reported checking email while on paid time off; 30% participated in conference calls, and 44% said they use these nominal days off to catch up on work.

Is there anything good about stress???

- Rising to a challenge reveals our hidden abilities. We are much stronger than we realize, and this new appreciation gives us the confidence to take on more challenges.
- Trauma changes our perspective on life.
- Adversity is a test that doesn't just separate the fair-weather friends from the true; it strengthens relationships.





ANXIETY IN THE WORKPLACE

Anxiety can range from:

- ✓ Not being able to stop thinking about something;
- ✓ Over-preparing;
- ✓ Worrying about things;
- ✓ Physical responses like panic attacks;
- ✓ Reacting rather than responding.

Think too much....

...and you'll create a
problem that was not even
there in the first place.

Breathe more think less

BREATHE.
JUST BREATHE.

Taking out the Garbage

Think about how dirty your house would be if you didn't take out the trash.



Your mind is no different. If you don't clear negative thoughts and invite mental clarity, your head just fills up with junk.

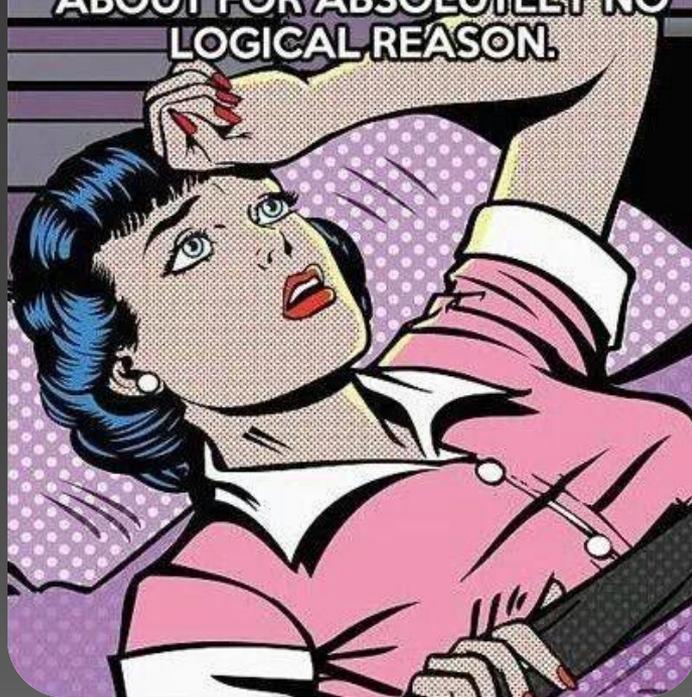
Worrying

- ◉ We feel like we are doing something to solve our problems, but we're not.
- ◉ Worrying, obsessing, and controlling are illusions.

They are tricks we play on ourselves.



**I'VE GOT 99 PROBLEMS AND 86
OF THEM ARE COMPLETELY
MADE UP SCENARIOS IN MY
HEAD THAT I'M STRESSING
ABOUT FOR ABSOLUTELY NO
LOGICAL REASON.**



Worrier Activity...

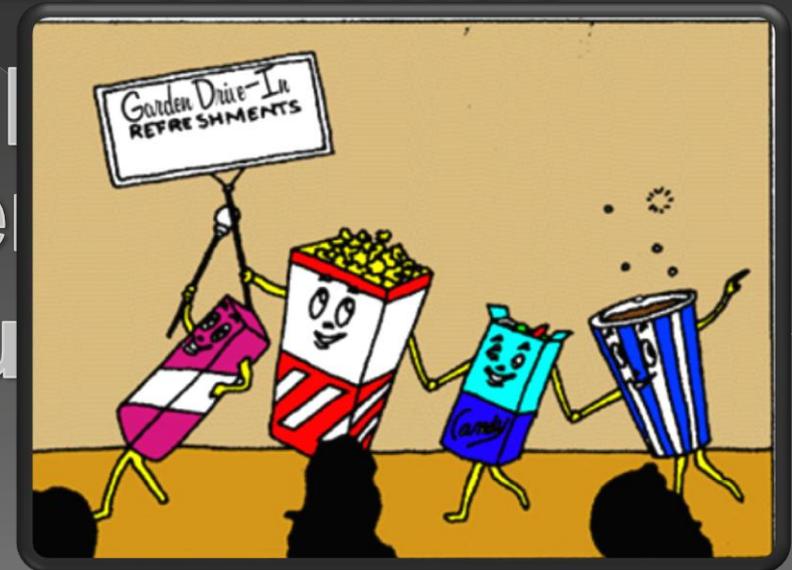
WORRY = FANTASY

Use “phantom excitement”
by replacing worry with an
exciting thought.

Worrier Activity...

CALMING WORRY

Pretend you are at the drive-in.
Play your worry for 20 seconds
on the screen; then
refreshment commences.
Continue to repeat until
you are calmer.

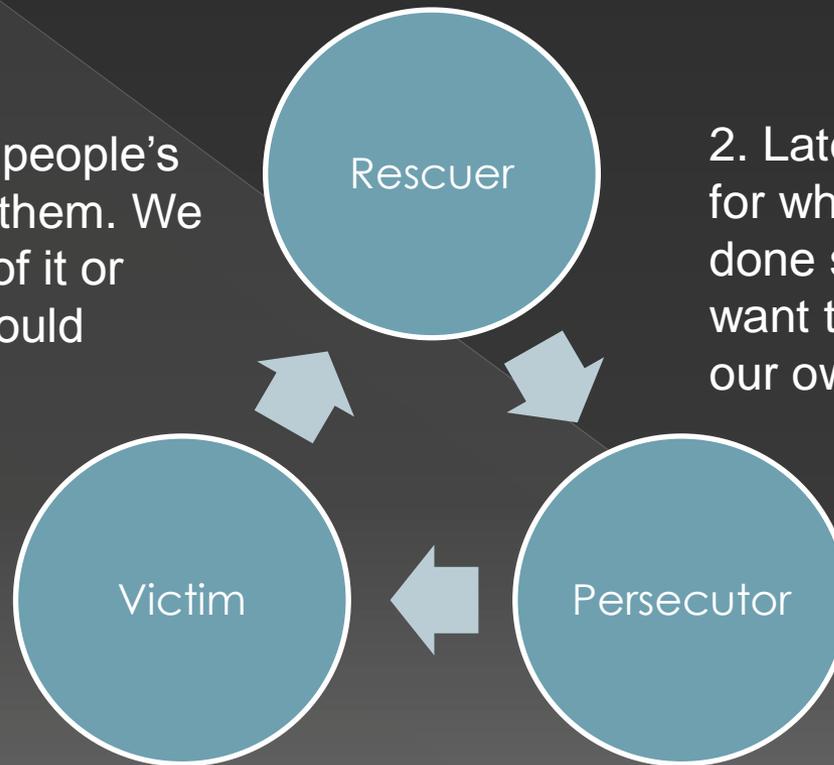


Rescuing

- ◎ We rescue people from their responsibilities.
The following acts constitute a rescuing or caretaking move:
 - ✓ Saying yes when we mean no;
 - ✓ Doing something for someone although that person is capable and should be doing it for themselves;
 - ✓ Meeting people's needs without being asked and before we've agreed to do so;
 - ✓ Doing more than a fair share of work after our help is requested.

The Stephen B. Karpman Drama Triangle

1. We take care of people's responsibilities for them. We "had" to take care of it or something "bad" would happen.



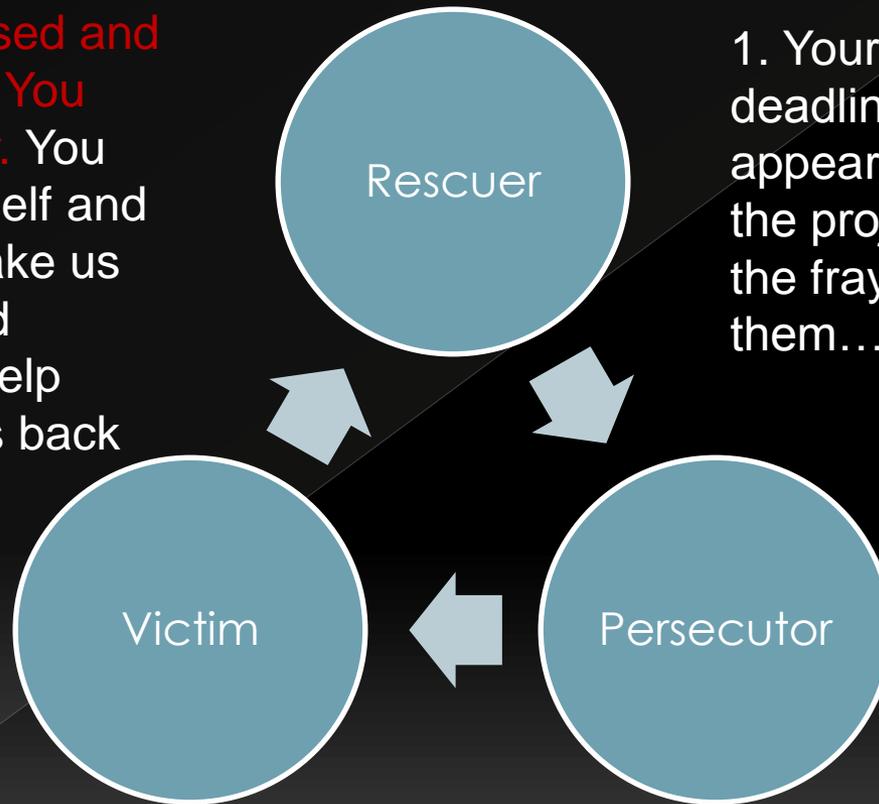
2. Later we get mad at *them* for what we've done. We've done something we didn't want to do and we ignored our own needs and wants.

3. We then move to being the victim. We feel used and sorry for ourselves because they didn't appreciate us enough....so then (to make ourselves feel better!) we rescue again.

Only you can break the cycle

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3. Then **you feel used and underappreciated. You feel upset or angry.** You feel sorry for yourself and the only way to make us feel better is to find someone else to help throwing ourselves back into the cycle.



1. Your co-worker has a deadline but doesn't appear to be working on the project....you jump in the fray and complete it for them...**You're a HERO!**

2. But, instead of thanking you, they criticize how you did it, because it isn't what they would have done.
You were only trying to help them!

Rescue Activity...

Stop rescuing

DETACH



Detachment is....

- ◎ ...based on the premises that each person is responsible for himself, that we can't solve problems that aren't ours to solve, and that worrying doesn't help.
- ◎ We need to adopt a policy of keeping our hands off other people's responsibilities and tend to our own instead. We give them the freedom to be responsible and to grow. And we give ourselves that same freedom.
- ◎ We live our OWN lives to the best of our ability.

Rescue Activity...

LIVE. REST.

LIVE.

Reacting

- ◉ Someone does or says something, so we must do or say something back. Our emotions and behaviors are being controlled - - triggered by everyone and everything in our environment.
- ◉ We keep ourselves in a crisis state – adrenaline flowing and muscles tensed, ready to react to emergencies that usually aren't emergencies.



Lighten up!

- ◉ Give yourself and others room to move, to talk, to be who they are – to be human. Give life a chance to happen. Give yourself an opportunity to enjoy it.
- ◉ You don't have to be embarrassed if someone we love chooses to behave inappropriately. Each person is responsible for his or her behavior, let him or her feel embarrassed about it.
- ◉ Don't take rejection as a reflection of self-worth.

Use reactions as tools

- ◎ Reactions can be useful. They help us identify problems in and around us. Learn to recognize when you're reacting. Spend time making a list or tagging things that trigger you. Usually when you start to feel anxious, afraid, indignant, outraged, rejected, worried, or confused, something in your environment has snagged you.
- ◎ Put the situation in context. What is happening? How the next step will best serve you, the organization, and everyone involved?

Regain your peace

- ◎ Make yourself comfortable. When you recognize that you're in the midst of a chaotic reaction, say or do as little as possible until you can restore your level of serenity and peace.
- ◎ Find a way to emotionally, mentally, and (if necessary) physically separate yourself from whatever is causing your reaction.



Practice responding

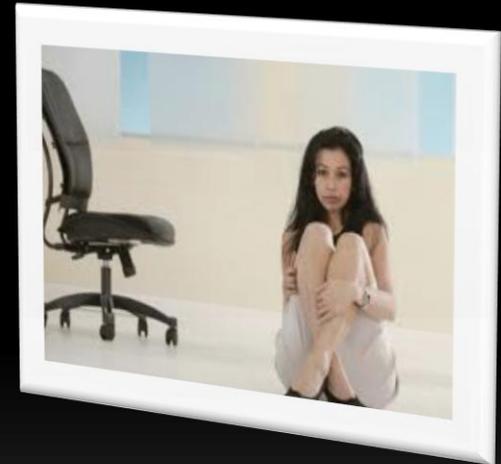
- Reflect and learn from past mistakes and use that knowledge to make positive changes;
- Give your ideas time to grow;
- Swallow the instant reaction and find ways to take action;
- Do not respond for others;
- When you say “no”, tone and gestures are significant use them to emphasize your unwillingness to over-commit or to do others work.



STOP

Stressing out and acting like a psycho!

RECOVERING AND MOVING FORWARD



You're only human. We all make mistakes. Let's recover from reactions, learn from our responses, and become even better from our experiences and mistakes.

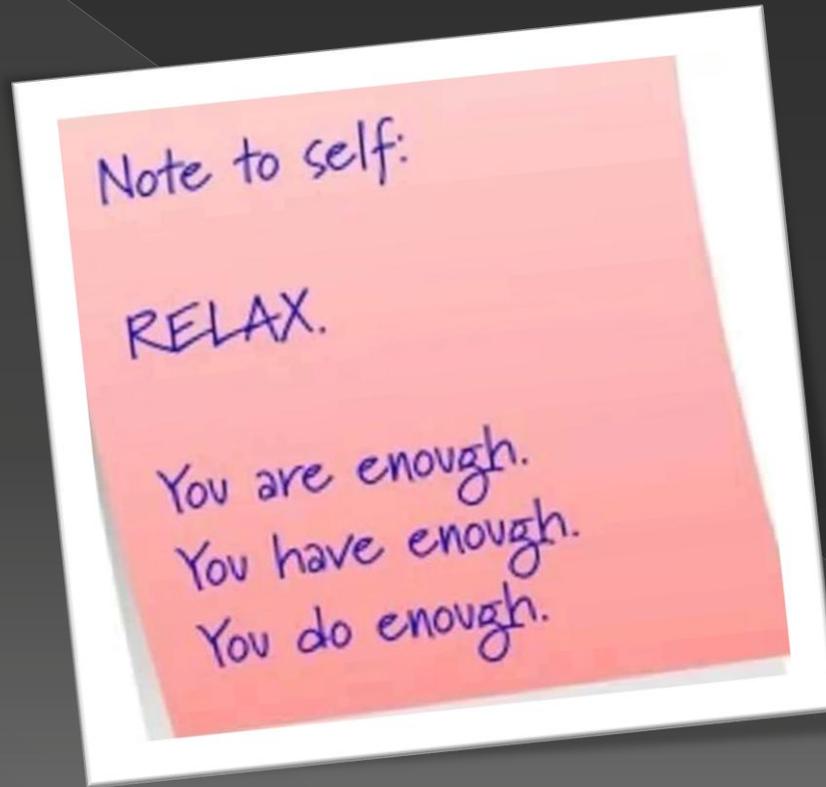
Assess the situation

- Figure out what you need to do to take care of yourself. Make your decisions based on reality, and make them from a peaceful state.
- ✓ Do you need to apologize?
- ✓ Do you want to let it go?
- ✓ Do you need to have a heart-to-heart talk with someone?

The Six A's of a Proper Apology

- Admit - I made a mistake.
- Apologize - I am sorry for making the mistake.
- Acknowledge - I recognize where I went wrong that caused my mistake to occur.
- Attest - I plan to do the following to fix the mistake on this specific timeline.
- Assure - I will put the following protections in place to ensure that I do not make the same mistake again.
- Abstain – Never repeat that same mistake twice.

Taking care of your stress and anxiety...



Stress relief activities



Address the five aspects of health...



These are the five aspects of health...are you addressing each of them in some way?

...sweat...

Stand up! ...once an hour for a few minutes

- ⦿ A study in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* found that not only did people score lower on anxiety tests right after working out, but they also kept their cool 30 minutes later.
- ⦿ Physical activity boosts blood flow to the parts of the brain that keep you calm. But consistency is key: a single bout of sprinting on a day of a high-stress event could cause more strain than relief if your body isn't used to that level of intensity.

...sleep...

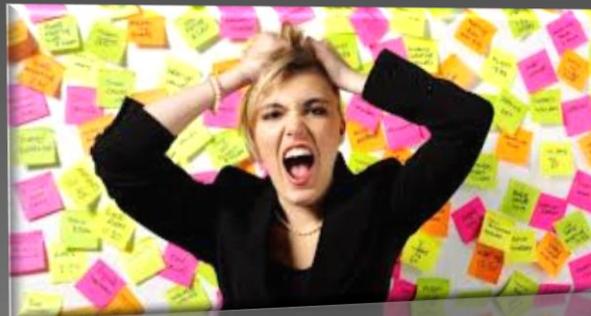
Daydream about sleep because your mind races at night?

- ⦿ Create a “worry list” of things that keep you awake, include how and when you plan to tackle each task.
- ⦿ 1 hour before bed...turn off electronics, dim the lights, and do something you find relaxing. Pick an activity that can be done every night so that your body will begin to recognize it as a signal to wind down.
- ⦿ Once you're in bed do a relaxation exercise to shift your focus and decrease anxiety. Suggestion: counting up in twos or threes.

...self-care...

We need to self-nurture.

- Many of us practice appreciating others, our spouses, children, co-workers...how many of us take the time to appreciate ourselves? Be complimentary at least once a day!
- Feel like you're on the verge of tears...watch a sad movie and get them out. Flush out anger, hurt and frustration. Take care of your emotional needs.



...self-approval...

If you don't value your time...no one else will.

- Learn to receive graciously;
- Say “no” more often when you don't want to do something;
- Take some risks in going from passive to assertive behavior;
- And basically appreciate yourselves.



...shaking worrying (mental)...

Free your mind and enjoy living.

- ◎ Use internal control to be a problem solver instead of an out-of control problem dweller



...SUCCESS...

3 ways of approaching work

- ◎ A job – You do it only for the money.
 - > Pursue hobbies which satisfy your needs more thoroughly than does your work.
- ◎ A career – You have larger goals of advancement, promotion, and prestige.
 - > The pursuit of these goals often energizes you.
- ◎ A calling – **You find your work fulfilling.**
 - > You see your work as contributing to the greater good or as playing a role in some larger enterprise the worth of which seems obvious to you.

...strive...

Reach for your career desires.

- ◎ Write down 2 or 3 career desires...what you would like to see happen in your career?
- ◎ Some ideas:
 - Salary;
 - How you fit in the organization;
 - Growth opportunities;
 - Other ideas?



...social...

Make life more enjoyable.

- ◎ Cherish and build your social support network. Having one or two good relationships help adults face threats.
- ◎ People who expect external fulfillment are usually generous, caring, hardworking, considerate, and attentive.
- ◎ Approve of yourself, no one else can do it for you!

Last thoughts....

- ◉ Workplace stress and anxiety happen, how we respond to it is the only thing we have control over.
- ◉ Our personality type makes us great at our jobs, but it can cause us harm if we don't take care of ourselves.
- ◉ Address your five basic needs so you can be in top form to help those that in return help you.
- ◉ Don't forget to breathe!

If you're ready for more....

You can start by utilizing the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Call toll free 1-877-313-4455
Olympia number 360-407-9490

[http://www.hr.wa.gov/more/EAPResiliencyProject/
pages/default.aspx](http://www.hr.wa.gov/more/EAPResiliencyProject/pages/default.aspx)

