

STEP 3

HOW TO BALANCE HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND PRODUCTIVITY CHECKLIST

STRESS AWARENESS

Answer these questions on the website and calendar:

- ☐ Have you checked how many days each month you feel frustrated? Fatigued? Stressed?
- ☐ What are your danger zones and your health risks?
- ☐ Is your personality type making you more stressed?
- ☐ Can you accept who you are and still learn new ways to respond to job stress?
- ☐ Is Competitive/Reactive Type B Anger increasing your cardiac risk?
- ☐ Does Anxious to Please Type C Suppression of anger make you sick?
- ☐ Can Conscientious Confident Type B people balance competing demands?

STRESS CONTROL

- ☐ Even if I aim to remove the external causes of stress I can try to alter my internal emotional responses to stress.
- ☐ Take action soon because prolonged stress can decrease your mental, emotional or physical health.
- ☐ Participate in the relaxation training programs to learn how to let go tension.
- ☐ Stop worrying and feeling guilt
- ☐ Decrease emotional fatigue, frustration and threat

WORKPLACE MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST TO PREVENT STRESS

Evaluate management with this checklist

- ☐ Can employees see how their jobs contribute to overall company goals?
- ☐ Do they have clear timelines and enough time to complete each task?
- ☐ Could long or complex tasks be better organised or prioritised?
- ☐ Are staff encouraged to make decisions and control their own actions at work?
- ☐ Are disputes and conflicts quickly resolved?
- ☐ Do workers take regular holiday leave? Meal breaks?
- ☐ Do injured workers feel supported or stigmatised when they return to work?
- ☐ Does the workplace have a response plan for bullying, sexual harassment or violence?

HOW TO DECREASE EMOTIONAL FATIGUE

The prolonged tension of physical effort is likely to make us emotionally rather than physically exhausted. By working “smarter not harder” we might even feel refreshed at the end of a day’s work

Plan to work smarter

- ☐ Divide the days chores or work tasks into clear groups of achievable parts
- ☐ Arrange these in order of importance and start at the top
- ☐ Decide on reasonable time to finish each group of tasks
- ☐ Recognise each completion with its own reward
- ☐ Relax with a short break after finishing each group

Practise by making your own plan for tomorrow’s tasks

HOW TO REDUCE EMOTIONAL FRUSTRATION

Endlessly trying to work harder using methods that can never succeed produces extreme frustration that can overwhelm our logical thinking even leading to violence or rage.

Take time out to cool down and think logically

- ☐ Recognise when your brain is getting over aroused and stop whatever you’re doing
- ☐ Talk over with someone why your method may be the wrong one to use
- ☐ Recognise that you may be pressuring others as much as yourself and get their cooperation instead
- ☐ Lower your expectations, slow down your pace

HOW TO REDUCE EMOTIONAL CONFLICT AND THREAT

- ☐ Prolonged exposure to real or perceived conflict or threat can sometimes undermine confidence and disempower us, producing depression, panic and recurring hostilities where everyone loses and someone usually gets sick.
- ☐ Our natural instinct is to run away or attack in the face of threat but in modern life this may only cause greater stress. If the conflict is real ask your employer for mediation or if the conflict is really dangerous call the police.

If you are experiencing emotional conflict and threat socially or at work, try this self help approach

- ☐ **Take a closer look at your opponent.** Take off your topdog (or underdog) glasses and notice all the little and big ways they resemble you. Consider that they may be feeling just as threatened and defensive as you are
- ☐ **Take a closer look at yourself** and notice all the qualities that have contributed to your success and survival of threats in the past
- ☐ Try a short puffed up display of your strengths and actively visualise your successes
- ☐ See the power struggle as an equal one between fallible and vulnerable humans. Even when your opponent has the title of Boss he can’t undermine your own dignity and worth – only you could do that to yourself
- ☐ Insist on a WIN-WIN solution – but don’t try too hard. If it’s not working go off and do something else that’s going to be more fun and more rewarding than work.

HOW TO STOP WORRY AND GUILT

1. WHY TO STOP WORRY

- ☐ Worry is repetitive, using up lots of the time and energy you could be using to take control of your health, happiness and productivity.
- ☐ Worry can make you sick and disrupt your life or career.
- ☐ The more you worry, the more you feel compelled to worry because it stops you seeing your own circular thinking which can never produce a solution. Just like filling a broken bucket with water prevents you noticing the holes.

2. HOW TO STOP CIRCULAR WORRYING ABOUT YOUR REAL PROBLEMS

- ☐ Draw some straight lines on a page and divide real problems like losing your job, from ridiculous ones like losing the war in Iraq.
- ☐ Draw up some action plans FOR THE REAL PROBLEMS and decide on your goals. For example:

<i>Realistic Worry</i>	<i>Possible Goals</i>	<i>Actions</i>
If my performance review is bad I'll be out of a job.	Make sure I keep my job.	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for my next performance review. <input type="checkbox"/> Overcome my weaknesses by EAP counselling. <input type="checkbox"/> Take a course to develop my strengths.
	Make sure I have some alternative jobs to go to if it happens.	<input type="checkbox"/> Delay my next performance review. <input type="checkbox"/> Take annual leave to apply for jobs. <input type="checkbox"/> Network my contacts and update my resume.
	Minimise negative effects if dismissal happens	<input type="checkbox"/> Speak openly to management about problems. <input type="checkbox"/> Work more effectively. <input type="checkbox"/> Finish up in a highly professional way. <input type="checkbox"/> Ask the right person for a good reference.

3. HOW TO STOP FUTILE / IRRATIONAL WORRYING

- ☐ Stop filling up the broken bucket, throw it out, and use your time to do something more useful or enjoyable.
- ☐ Explore the power of imagination by visualising a roadblock or stop sign that just detours your thinking onto a more pleasant, calming or amusing scene.
- ☐ If self-help isn't helping, talk to your doctor or consult a Clinical Psychologist at Psychelp.

4. GUILT WORRIES are especially unhealthy and according to research can even lower immunity to disease. It's OK to enjoy yourself without GUILT provided NOONE is being harmed.