

Less Stress, More Time

4-Session Mini-Course

By Elizabeth Eckert, PhD

Create more time for the things you love!
Catch & apply just one simple secret.
Hint: Stress and time are intimately connected.



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Change Your Language – Change Your Health

Less Stress, More Time Mini-Course

Part 1 of 4: The Stress / Time Connection

Ever notice how the more stressed-out you get, the less resourceful you become?

- It seems like you get stupid.
- You forget things.
- You're careless.
- You overlook problems you'd normally spot in an instant.
- You lose focus. Instead of finishing one thing, you start three.
- Eventually, you crash.

Result: A project you'd normally finish easily in an hour takes two. Even worse — you never finish it at all. Instead, you spin out of control, getting even more and more frustrated.

Bottom line: People around you start to think you're a bozo. You start to believe they're right. The worse things get, the worse you feel. Ultimately, you exhaust yourself.

Solution: Time management? Don't think so. What you need is to manage your energy. (It's the best way I know of to get a permanent handle on stress.)

“Exhaustion comes from the root word for ‘empty.’ It means ‘to consume entirely.’ You’re spent. Your energy is used up. When your energy is too low, there isn’t a time management technique in the world that’ll bring you up to speed. At that moment, it’s recharge or die.”

— *Manage Your Energy*
(Let time take care of itself)

**Next Step – Go to Part 2: Consult an expert
(hint: it may not be who you think).**

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Part 2 of 4: Consult an expert — you!

The trouble starts. You do what all good school-children have been trained to do. You look for an expert to fix it.

You may think, well, this person is a counselor, that person is a financial advisor, and the next person is a doctor. Fine. They'll share what they know about relationships, money, or medicine. Those opinions can be extremely valuable. Tapping into an expert resource can save you literally a ton of time!

But an outside expert is rarely the best person to tell you what to do. No matter how much knowledge they have about their subject, they are not you. Their suggestions come from one of three perspectives: what they've been taught, what they've observed with other people in similar situations, or what they think they might do if they were you. These views can be invaluable. But they will never be yours.

Result: Either you get great advice and don't take it because your mind argues that "the expert might be wrong." Or you blindly follow the expert advice you think you heard, no matter how odd. Should things go bad, you blame them. "It's not my fault," you lament. "I did what they said."

Bottom line: You don't understand the complicated subject as well as the expert. But the expert, no matter how brilliant, can never know every detail about your life. You do. You're the one in the shoes at the check-out line. Both perspectives count.

Solution: Tune in to your own intuitive problem-solving side. You'll need to cultivate objectivity and creative thinking. A creative "hit" feels very different from your normal rational logic. It may also be outside your comfort zone. Just remember this: nobody else can live your life any better than you can.

"You have to see the solution for yourself. If somebody else figures the problem out for you, there will always be a little part of you that suspects they didn't get it right. No matter who they are.

"Yet when you have the 'aha' for yourself, you get it. Right."

— *Incubate Your Best Solution: How to Answer Perplexing Life Questions by Connecting with Your Voice of Wisdom*

Next Step – Go to Part 3: Set your own course.

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Part 3 of 4: Take life personally. Set your own course.

“People are really stressed these days.”
“Nobody has enough time.”

Generalities (myths) like these can put your life on hold faster than you can say “auto-pilot.” When you allow them to take hold in your mind, you feel powerless. It seems nearly impossible to change “everyone.”

Thank goodness we enjoy the benefits of an interdependent society! If we each had to assemble the life skills to do everything for ourselves, most of us would be living a subsistence lifestyle centered on food production.

That said, it’s the “personal” part of your life that has you soar with the eagles or stay in the dumps. It’s *your* job performance, *your* state of health, *your* knack for managing money, *your* social skills, *your* willingness to stay the course when things get rough, and *your* stress level that makes or breaks the lifestyle you aspire to.

Result: When you focus on generalities, you miss the opportunity to speak, choose, and act for yourself.

Bottom line: In this context, taking things personally means being responsible for you. It’s totally empowering to take the driver’s seat in your own life.

Solution: Assess your life. What’s your next step? What area can you impact for the greatest results? Place your attention there.

“Everybody else’s stress may be regrettable. We live in a high-stress world. But it’s not general, generic stress that gets you in trouble in life. It may be true that ‘people are really busy these days,’ but that does not impact your health and well-being. What impacts your quality of life is stress that gets personal. When you are too busy yourself.”

— *Power Questions: A Virtual Workshop*

Next Step – Go to Part 4: Get there fast!

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Part 4 of 4: Once you know where you're headed, get there as quickly as possible!

“Change is so hard!”

Monitor your mind for this myth, too. Challenge it like this: Change itself isn't so difficult. It just takes a moment to choose something different — even radically different! You and I both have the ability to “turn on a dime” any old time we want.

What's difficult is the torture we put ourselves through deciding to make the change.

Result: You “know” you should do something other than what's become the norm. Yet you don't do it. Double jeopardy. Not only are you not getting the benefit of the new behavior (more money, greater vitality, better relationships, updated wardrobe) but you feel like a loser — because you know better!

Bottom line: Once you get the “aha” to take a turn in your life, save yourself a massive amount of anxiety and guilt. Skip the drama. Take immediate action. Go full out and don't look back. Monitor your progress and tweak as you go.

Solution: Be smart, though. You need to manage your energy. You need a solid plan. A few other strategies will help, too. Consider the benefits of finding a mentor, some key master-mind partners or accountability holders, and a supportive community of peers with similar goals and values.

“Lots of us seem to have an ‘addiction’ to hard work. We figure that as long as we keep busting our backs with hard work, the ‘Universe’ will decide for us what we deserve to receive... But somehow, the Universe never seems to get it quite right.”

— *Saboteur's Guide to a Productive Life: 7 Simple Steps to Freedom*

Ready for action?

Intuitive Brainstorming might be a good place to start. It's interactive and gets you into working through your single most pressing predicament.

<http://www.wordcures.com/ProductsServices/IntuitiveBrainstorming.html>

Or check out that **Word Cures book** for a broader perspective.

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