

**A**re you stressed out? Stress can become your friend and can add to the quality of your life. By applying the W I S E approach to stress management, you can master stress instead of being a slave to it.

The external stimuli that initiate stress are called stressors but you can develop productive, powerful and positive patterns of emotional and physical de-stressors that can convert the feeling of being "stressed out" to the feeling of being "motivated", "invigorated" and "emotionally charged for peak performance."

Job stress is a leading cause of illness, depression and work place violence. It is estimated that stress costs US industry a staggering US\$300 billion a year in absenteeism, health costs, and programs to manage stress. With an estimated 1,000,000 workers absent daily due to stress, more than 80 percent of workers feel stress on the job and nearly half say they need help coping with it.

Stress can manifest itself in many ways, from chronic headaches, to back pain, to obesity, insomnia, depression and violence. Identifying stress and equipping



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can interrupt your existing formula to handling stress, can shift your focus from the stressors and can lead to a deeper understanding of stress.

Four excellent de-stressor questions are: 1) What specifically am I feeling? 2) What specifically is causing these feelings? 3) How do I want to feel? 4) How does this experience contribute to my growth and development? By asking these questions you will be able to shift away from focusing on the stressors and seamlessly move the conscious and subconscious minds to focus on empowering solutions.

### **S - Smile into Stress**

Change your physiology and you change the resources available to you! One way to change your physical state is to SMILE! By smiling your body releases natural hormones or endorphins that make you stronger, healthier, and more resourceful. By harnessing these natural secretions, you are able to tap into the power from within, the power that can make you even more confident, certain, and capable to tackle challengers or opportunities.

# STRESS MANAGEMENT

workers with superior communicative tools, strategies and techniques will lead to a more balanced personal and professional life.

### **W - Watch your Words**

W is for words we use. Take note of the words you use when describing stress. In a survey I conducted most participants used words such as "frustrated", "fed up", "exhausted", "agitated", "angry", and "pissed off" to describe what feeling is conjured up by the mere mention of the word "stress"! When I asked a group of elite athletes, they responded to the same questions with words like "in the zone", "psyched", and "pumped". Same question, very different words, very different experience with the same word.

As a single word can shift your entire emotional framework, be very careful of the words you use. This is called transformational vocabulary and by having greater awareness of how stress is impacting your life and by changing your existing disempowering patterns of communication, it is possible to look at stress, feel stress and work with stress very differently. Stress can become your friend. Call it your friend and see how the shift in transformational vocabulary works for you.

### **I - Interrupt with Intelligent Questions**

One of the most effective stress management tools is to ask resourceful intelligent questions. A quality question

During a workshop a participant encouraged me to move from the SMILE methodology to the laughter technique as a special stress buster bonus for the participants. The "Laugh Your Stress Away" module was born that day as we moved from smiling to laughing and the results were astounding. Laughter is a wonderful stress buster as it lets all participants feel good, feel great and feel terrific!

### **E - Exercise with Enthusiasm**

Move your body and it is amazing what happens to stress. I was sharing with an elite class of entrepreneurs, coaches, and athletes one insight into impact coaching in Hong Kong. I had just come back from a ferocious run in a blistery rain storm and during the run decided to use one of my favourite incantations — every day, in every way I am getting stronger, everyday in every way I am getting healthier, everyday in every way I am getting wiser, everyday in every way I am even more loving. The run was invigorating, inspiring, and an incredible release and conversion of stress energy. Exercise with Enthusiasm. Try it, it works and it feels terrific! **XL**

*Dave Rogers is keynote speaker, author, and Chief Coach of the XL Results Foundation. For more about Dave's explosive motivational talks, personalized coaching programs and speaking topics including Leadership - What it takes to be #1, visit his website at [www.daverogers.net](http://www.daverogers.net) or contact Dave at [dave@daverogers.net](mailto:dave@daverogers.net)*