

Stressed for Success - Get over it!

The need to succeed and the “disease to please” is a significant cause of stress in life today. In this fast paced, high tech, ‘catch your breath’ life, we often are chasing dreams at the expense of our health and well-being. Many people today enjoy a high standard of living, have achieved financial success and received accolades from colleagues and peers for professional accomplishments. But something is missing – often it is a sense of themselves and more frequently a sense of peace in their life. They are clear on their role - but lack clarity on their personal identity. External success can leave a vacant hole that has people asking “Is this all there is?” and wondering who they are at their core.

Our society has achieved incredible advancements in many areas – but all these external symbols of achievement have left a residue of inner emptiness that far exceeds the space the success fills. More and more people today are checking out of “corporate life” and seeking a personal life – one with a sense of meaning and purpose not just money and profits. Dealing with long commutes, electronic mania, a demanding career, kids with a greater need for and less time with parents than ever before, and aging parents who need assistance are just a few of the daily demands facing most people today. There’s a mad scramble, amid the Twitter tweets and new connections or friends in our Social Media world, just to keep all the balls (or electronic devices) juggling in mid-air without colliding with ourselves.

Dr. Jennifer Whitaker, Executive Coach and Business Strategist, specializes in guiding executives to become inspiring leaders in their own life AND at work. She teaches her clients personal leadership precedes and shapes professional leadership and developing inner resources to deal with outer circumstances is foundational to authentic success. She offers a few tips to help people find a quiet place within to deal with the noise ‘out there’.

1. Have rituals and interests that replenish and refresh --perhaps a daily time of quiet reflection, a manicure, or physical exercise could soothe and slow the frenetic pace. Find activities that engage the spirit and soothe and replace what was lost in the daily grind of it all.
2. Give up the need to succeed at all costs. Someone once said “Perfection is the highest form of self-abuse.” Loosen up the high standards that restrict and bind and ask “In the overall scheme of things, how important will this be five years from now?”
3. Set boundaries in your life. Saying No to others can be the best Yes to yourself.
4. Stop confusing activity with achievement - they are not the same. Anyone can fill a calendar - filling your life with joy and meaning is another matter and yields a much greater return on your investment - a more relaxed and fun YOU.
5. Develop an attitude of gratitude. Gratitude opens you up to the small gifts the day offers if you are open to receive them. The gorgeous budding daffodils, the laughter of a child and a brilliant sunset are daily reminders that miracles abound and surround. Don’t miss them!
6. Watch your thoughts because what you put in your head you create in your life. Your world is a direct reflection of your thoughts. You create your thoughts and your thoughts create your life.
7. Nurture yourself as much as you do your relationships and commitments. If you do, you’ll soon discover both you and those you care for are better for it. Self care ALWAYS precedes quality other care. When you provide better care for others than yourself, you’re running on fumes not fuel and everyone is short-changed in the process.
8. When people take control of their life rather than being controlled by their circumstances, they are amazed at the dramatic improvement of their life personally and professionally.