



Developing Leaders
Managing Stress & Building Resilience
A Workbook

Inspired Executives | Annette B. Czernik, PCC
Robert-Blum-Str. 7 | 60385 Frankfurt am Main | Germany
☎ +49 162 240 40002
🍏 Annette@Inspired-Executives.com
Annette.Inspired-Executives



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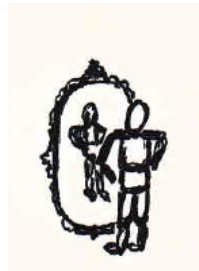
Coaching Office: Annette B. Czernik, Inspired Executives,
Robert-Blum-Str. 7, 60385 Frankfurt am Main, Germany.
www.inspired-executives.com



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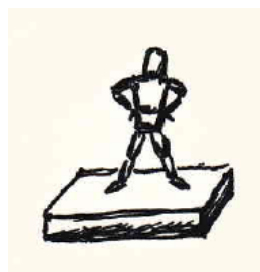
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Introduction



Thank you for registering for the Inspired Executives' 1:1 Coaching on "Managing Stress & Building Resilience". Welcome!

In today's business climate, in which uncertainty is the new certainty, leadership energy is one of the few variables that can still be controlled in the drive for revenue and profits. Leadership energy stimulates connectedness and endorses collaborative behavior, which in turn attract the best people. Once this is achieved on an ongoing basis, a perpetual machine is put in motion that forms the foundation of a collective corporate culture. Reinforcement of positive cultural behavior is one of the most effective yet under-estimated and under-utilized levers executives have to help them deliver on the company's strategic objectives. The combination of a healthy company culture and a consistent strategy fosters innovation and creates a sustainable platform for growth.

A crucial pre-requisite for sustained leadership energy is an optimal approach to managing stress and training your resilience muscle. Leaders and managers who demonstrate leadership energy exhibit these key traits.

- They provide a vision for the future and share the passion they feel. As ambassadors for their cause, they give staff a vision of the big picture and where the company is headed. In doing this, they help employees to connect the dots and see how their everyday tasks contribute to the long-term perspective.
- They communicate, communicate, communicate. Good leaders involve their teams in formulating action plans, pieces of the strategy or the overall vision so that there is immediate support and buy-in from the start. They actively listen like a coach to what people want and need, observe interactions, provide feedback and reinforce collaborative behavior.
- They are facilitators who strengthen connectedness within their teams and across the organization. They allow transparency around the actions and processes that lead to results and decisions and address critical issues immediately; involving the right people to solve them.
- They establish an environment of continuous improvement and open dialogue by providing opportunities for people to grow, both personally and professionally. They are caring and compassionate.
- They act with integrity. As Oscar Wilde put it, "Be yourself, everyone else is taken." Successful managers make a conscious choice to lead and be the person others choose to follow, and are rewarded with trust and authenticity. They are prepared to show courage, stamina, resilience and perseverance along the way.



If you regularly reflect on your own thoughts, emotions and behavior and how their interaction influences not only your own level of energy but also team performance and organizational culture, you will often get the answers you seek. The more positive leadership energy you demonstrate, the more successful your business will be and the smoother your own professional and personal career advancement.

The ability to lead others starts with the ability to lead oneself. The more aware leaders are of their thoughts, emotions and actions, and their potential impact on the team and the organization, the better they are able to shift their energy into more constructive and caring realms.



Overview Winterspecial

Goals

All organizations in today's workplace are working to keep up with a busy pace and ensuring that goals are met and shareholders are considered. To best benefit from a productive workforce, their employees need to understand not only how to manage stress, but to respond with resilience when faced with challenges.

- Identify why stress happens and how it affects you
- Recognize thinking errors and performance interfering thoughts
- Discover your unique stress profile
- Learn new stress control approaches and how to utilize these stress reduction methods
- Develop a range of individual strategies and techniques to tackle stress and to be able to exhibit grace under fire
- Focus on time / life leadership, change management and conflict resolution to eliminate many root causes of stress
- Explore what it takes for you to face personal and professional challenges without losing steam (aka building resilience)
- Learn what matters most for now and for the long term to get better results and achieve without depleting yourself.

Benefits

Enjoy the opportunity to maximize your productivity; boost your motivation and creativity; and improve your health and mental well-being:

- Reflect on your default behavioral stress pattern, to ensure you can avoid pitfalls and give your career a positive twist, important to many first time managers
- Every change or transformation in the outer world presents potential stress triggers that call for a resilient response; coaching helps aligning your inner purpose with outer challenges and goals
- As a leader you benefit from identifying, acknowledging, and managing energy blocks for enhanced leadership skills, authenticity, confidence and executive happiness.



Features

Three-tier approach helps you take a proactive role in managing your stress and building your resilience muscle via the Inspired Executives Workbook, Webinar or personal briefing session, and Coaching Sessions:

1. Education on latest research on the causes and solutions of stress as well as the dimensions of resilience
2. Self-awareness to identify the current stress levels, energy sources, derailers and coping mechanisms via the Energy Leadership™ assessment and stress management questionnaire
3. Experiential exercises to reinforce a positive lifestyle change, e.g. on values and communication, de-cluttering life, motivation, trust, roles, competencies, skills and more.

**Remember the three C's of life: Choices, Changes, and Chances.
You must make a choice to take a chance or your life will never change.**

It starts with you!



The 7-Step-Approach for Managing Stress and Building Resilience



Step 1: Knowing Yourself



Step 2: Creating a Solid Foundation



Step 3: Physical Energy – Learning from the Athletes



Step 4: Emotional Energy – Moving from Fear to Love



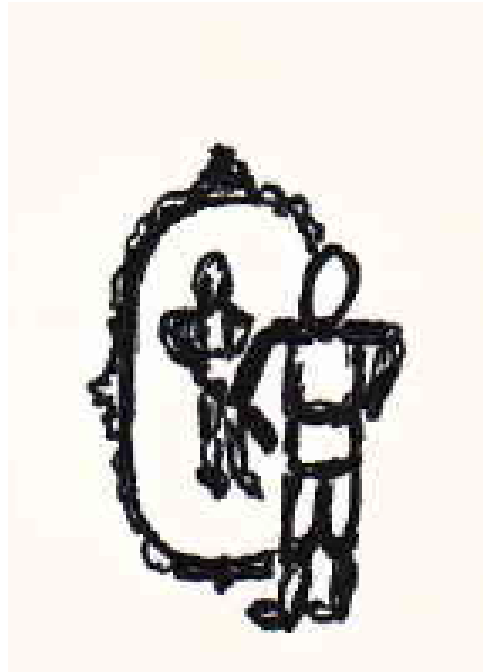
Step 5: Mental Energy – Strengthening Focus & Optimism



Step 6: Spiritual Energy – Defining your Purpose and Vision



Step 7: Taking Actions



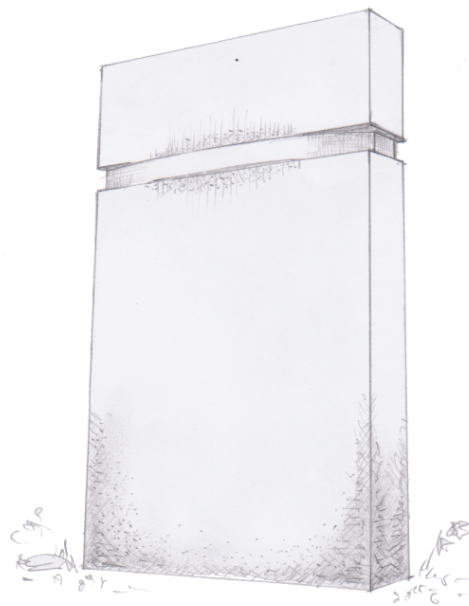
Step 1: Knowing Yourself

Identify your behavioral patterns in stressful situations, recognize that your most valuable resource is energy (not time), explore what's truly important to you in life and at work, dive into the concept of energy management, learn how to shift your energy, and pat yourself on the shoulder for what you have achieved to date.



Create the Inscription for your Tomb

If you were to choose, what would your tombstone say? Which of your values do you want to be remembered by? What do you want people to pass on about you? Which message do you want relatives and friends to bear in mind? Write on the tombstone. Focus on what gives your life meaning.





F.O.G.

In the Fall, there are days when nothing is visible in the fog and it feels like it takes forever for it to lift. An autumnal atmosphere can remind us of letting go of something that might have made us sad or has held us back. F.O.G. is an acronym for

F – Fear:

What is your greatest anxiety right now? Why would you want to keep it?

O – Obligations:

Who asked you to take on the obligation? Which ones could you let go of?

G – Guilt:

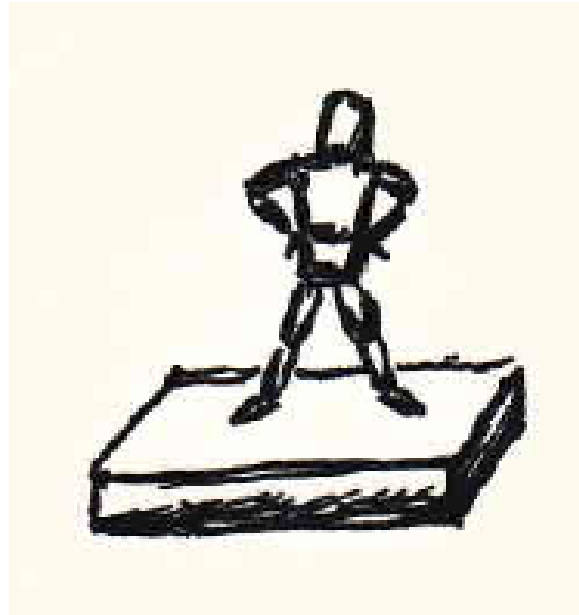
What's your reasoning to live with fear and obligations? What do you feel guilty of?

What do you fear the most? What have you felt obliged to do forever? How well has living with guilt served you? Please fill in the key components of your F.O.G. below.

F _____

O _____

G _____



Step 2: Creating a Solid Foundation

Face the truth and get clear on your strengths and potential. Define your ambition and set goals, and determine your approach towards full engagement. Learn about the interplay of thought, emotion, and action and how mental, emotional, spiritual and physical energies are interlinked.



Manager Checklist for Evaluating the Presence of Employee Stress

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements when considering your direct reports. Responses that you answer with “agree” may indicate increased stress among your direct reports. While the issue of stress management is complex (because it is often more related to the ways that employees respond to situations rather than the situations themselves), the strategies presented during this coach program may also help you take steps to address workplace stress.

Observation	Response	
	Agree	Disagree
Direct reports are arriving later, leaving earlier, and/or taking longer lunches than usual	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct reports have higher incidents of absenteeism and/or “sick” days	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct reports take longer to complete routine tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct reports are producing lower-quality work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct reports often appear anxious or worried	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct reports frequently ask questions and voice concerns about how to “get all of their work done”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct reports appear to have increased health problems (often expressed through informal conversations and absenteeism)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct reports frequently mention “feeling stressed”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct reports have trouble concentrating when you deliver instructions, guidance, or feedback (e.g. they frequently ask you to repeat statements or forget key pieces of information)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Customer complaints about lower-than-expected levels of customer service have noticeably increased	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mistakes or accidents in the workplace have increased	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workplace morale is lower than it was several months ago	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work environment feels increasingly negative (e.g. working relationships between employees are strained)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct reports have trouble prioritizing assignments and strongly resist efforts to re-prioritize their workloads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct reports are hesitant or slow to incorporate manager’s and colleague’s feedback into their work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct reports are resistant to any sort of change (in the workplace, operating procedures, daily work, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: Corporate Leadership Council

If you agreed with the majority to these statements, your direct reports are most likely experiencing high levels of workplace stress.

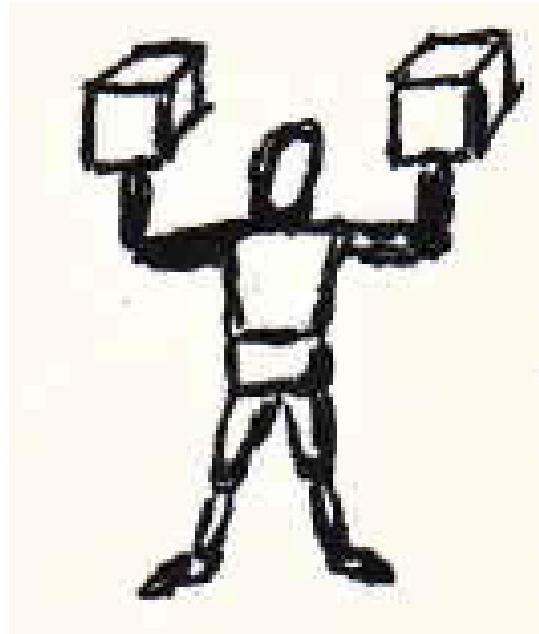


Meditation: Just for Today

Here are ten resolutions to make when you awake in the morning. They are Just for One Day. Think of them not as a life task but as a day's work. These things will give you pleasure. Yet they require will power. You don't need resolutions to do what is easy.

1. Just for Today, I will try to live through this day only, and not tackle my whole life-problem at once. I can do some things for twelve hours that would appall me if I felt I had to keep them up for a lifetime.
2. Just for Today, I will be Happy. This assumes that what Abraham Lincoln said is true, that "most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be." Happiness is from Within; it is not a matter of Externals.
3. Just for Today, I will Adjust myself to what Is, and not try to Adjust everything to my own desires. I will take my family, my business, and my luck as they come, and fit myself to them.
4. Just for Today, I will take care of my Body. I will exercise it, care for it, and nourish it, and not abuse it nor neglect it; so that it will be a perfect machine for my will.
5. Just for Today, I will try to strengthen my mind, I will study. I will learn something useful, I will not be a mental loafer all day. I will read something that requires effort, though and concentration.
6. Just for Today, I will exercise my Soul. In three ways, to wit:
 - a) I will do somebody a good turn and not get found out. If anybody knows of it, it will not count.
 - b) I will do at least two things I don't want to do.
 - c) I will not show any one that my feelings are hurt. They may be hurt, but Today I will not show it.
7. Just for Today, I will be agreeable. I will look as well as I can, dress as becomingly as possible, talk low, act courteously, be liberal with flattery, criticize not one bit nor find fault with anything, and not try to regulate nor improve anybody.
8. Just for Today, I will have a Programme. I will write down just what I expect to do every hour. I may not follow it exactly, but I'll have it. It will save me from the two pests Hurry and Indecision.
9. Just for Today, I will have a quiet half hour, all by myself, and relax. During this half hour, I will get a little more perspective to my life.
10. Just for Today, I will be Unafraid. Especially I will not be afraid to be Happy, to enjoy what is Beautiful, to love and to believe that those I love love me.

(Copyright, 1921 by Frank Crane)



Step 3: Physical Energy – Learning from the Athletes

Understand the role of physical energy in performance, review your eating habits, sleeping pattern and how you breathe, and discover options to fuel this energy reservoir.



The Effects of Stress on Your Body

How about cutting out the overview below? It could serve as your reminder that warning signals for stress are processed through the body first and could help you pay close attention to them.

You can also download the poster online:

http://www.inspired-executives.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Stress_Poster.pdf

The Effects of **STRESS** on your Body

SKIN: pales as blood diverted to vital organs.

MUSCLES: tense in readiness for action.

LUNGS: air passage dilates, breathing more intense to provide more oxygen to feed increase blood supply.

LIVER: glycogen converted to blood sugar to give 'short distance' energy.


DIGESTION: processes shut down as blood diverted elsewhere. Mouth goes dry to avoid adding extra fluids to stomach.

HEART: begins to pound, sending blood around body carrying sugar (energy) and hormones (e.g. adrenalin)

BLOOD: thickens to help it carry more oxygen, fight infection & stop bleeding

SWEAT GLANDS: start up to cool the underlying and overheated muscles.

BLADDER & RECTUM: Muscles relax to release any excess load.



PRIMARY STRESS RESPONSE
IMMEDIATE & URGENT RESPONSE TO SERIOUS THREAT

SECONDARY STRESS RESPONSE
ONGOING RESPONSE TO UNDEALT WITH STRESS

MUSCLES: ongoing tension leads to aches & pains, even muscle strain.

LUNGS: super-oxygenated blood can lead to blackouts and upset heart rhythms.


LIVER: body's own fats and proteins broken down and released to provide further energy.

HEART: racing heartbeat and high blood pressure can lead to strokes or heart attacks.

BLOOD: heart works harder due to thickened blood.

CHOLESTEROL: high cholesterol in blood can cause hardening of the arteries.

DIGESTION: shutdown can lead to stomach problems, particularly if you eat on the run. Increase in acidity can contribute to stomach ulcers.



WARNING SIGNS:
Below are some of the messages our bodies send to tell us we're stressed.
Key: Early Warning Signs, *Secondary Stress Signs in italics*

PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

- Muscle tension / headaches
- Sleep disturbance / tiredness
- Increased 'breakouts'
- Rapid pulse
- Nausea
- Indigestion
- Increased sweating
- Flushing (face feeling hot)
- *Prolonged / frequent headaches*
- *Susceptibility to mild illness*
- *Dizziness / faintness*
- *Breathlessness / Chest Pain*
- *Ongoing Nausea / Stomach ache*
- *Ongoing fitful sleep*

BEHAVIORAL SYMPTOMS

- Appetite changes / compulsive eating
- Impatience, carelessness, hyperactivity
- Poor productivity / low energy
- Avoidance of situations / places
- Change in sleeping patterns
- *Increased alcohol, cigarette and drug use*
- *Increased absenteeism, aggression, irritability*
- *Sudden tears*

EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS

- Anxiety / sadness
- Moodiness / grumpiness
- Loss of sense of humor
- Withdrawal / feeling of isolation
- Low self-esteem
- Feelings of guilt and shame
- *Extreme anger (over-reaction)*
- *Loss of libido*
- *Overwhelming feeling of panic / anxiety*

COGNITIVE SYMPTOMS

- Inability to make decisions or muddled thinking
- Reduced co-ordination / creativity
- Becoming more vague / forgetful
- Negative 'globalization'. Everything seems to go wrong / is bad
- Fear of rejection / defensiveness
- Rushed decisions
- Over-sensitive to criticism
- *Poor concentration*
- *Negative self-talk / fear of failure*
- *Feelings of 'unfairness'*
- *Can't switch off*



The Effects of Stress on Your Body

Exercise Improves Physical Health

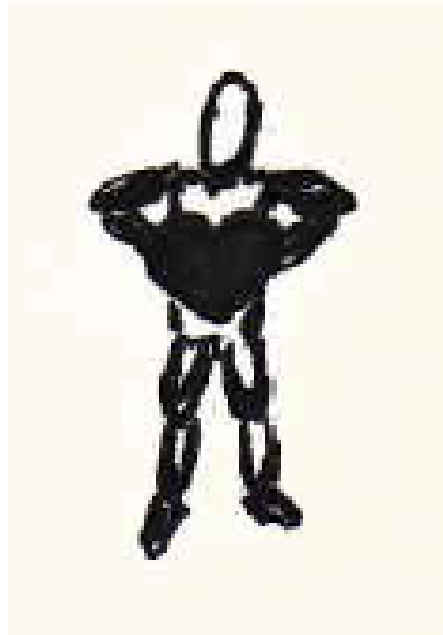
- Exercise increases the blood flow to all body tissues, including the brain. Greater blood flow transports more oxygen and nutrients to the body's cells.
- Active people improve their body's ability to absorb oxygen through aerobic exercise. Due to the increased oxygen in their body's cells they feel more energized. More oxygen translates into more energy!
- Increased blood flow promotes the body's transportation of the byproducts of metabolism and toxins back from the cells for elimination, recycling, or further use elsewhere. People who exercise feel fitter and more energized because of their body's ability to detoxify.
- Active people breathe better and sweat more. Breathing and sweating are great ways to detoxify the body and help it keep itself "clean."

Long-term health benefits of exercise are:

- A stronger immune system! The body's ability to fight disease is improved. You are less prone to colds, allergies, and diseases, including cancer.
- A reduction of type 2 diabetes by increasing insulin sensitivity and improving carbohydrate metabolism.
- A lower blood pressure and an improvement of your cholesterol profile.
- A strengthening of the entire cardiovascular system, including the heart and lungs. The heart develops a higher "pump-activity" while your heart and lungs are strengthened, supporting the prevention of heart disease.
- You are less likely to become overweight and will have better control of your body fat. Overweight people are able to reduce their body weight and body fat due to the physiological effect of burning fat while exercising.

Exercise Improves Mental Health

- Exercise enhances the brain's metabolism. Studies show that active people have improved memory as a result of better brain function.
- Moderate, fun-oriented exercise literally burns off excess harmful hormones and, at the same time, increases the release of beneficial ones. One of the beneficial hormones acts as neurotransmitter for establishing new memories.
- Active people have the ability to concentrate much better, even at the end of a long work day.
- Studies report that exercise decreases anxiety, reduces depression, and improves mood and outlook. In addition, the quality of sleep is improved.



Step 4: Emotional Energy – Moving from Fear to Love

Review your various life roles and identify your energy resources. Explore creative ways to nurture relationships, practice listening and empathizing, and learn how to adapt your communication style to different people and situations.



Amygdala Hijack

Haven't we all had the experience of doing something in the heat of the moment that we regretted later? Wasn't that almost as if our rational mind stopped and what came out not only surprised us but everyone else around? This overwhelming emotional reaction is called 'amygdala hijack' (as described by Daniel Goleman in his book 'Emotional Intelligence' drawing on the work of Joseph E. LeDoux).

The amygdala is the part of the brain's limbic system, which plays a primary role in the processing of memory, decision-making, emotional reactions, and empathy. When threatened, the amygdala can respond irrationally, and a flow of stress hormones streams the body before the regulating prefrontal lobes have a chance to reconcile this bottom-up impulse. An amygdala hijack displays three typical signs: Strong emotional reaction, sudden onset, and post-episode realization that the reaction was inappropriate.

What consequences can a few seconds of an emotional outburst have in the corporate world? Think about your own career. What your bosses, peers and subordinates will always remember is the impression of 'an unmastered moron'. Think about your team. Emotions are contagious (via so-called 'mirror neurons') and designed to be in tune with your surroundings. If one person is emotionally hijacked on your team, others will most likely catch it – like a virus. It's surprising how fast an executive decision can then be jeopardized and collaboration deteriorated. Think about your organization. Today's economy triggers people to feel more stressed out, apprehensive and fearful about the future. Hence, the increased likelihood of emotional hijacks could lead to reduced morale, performance and productivity.

From a neuro-scientific perspective performance is the result of the subtraction 'Potential – Interferences = Performance'. Interferences that can get into your way are emotions, thoughts, cravings, stress, time or social pressure, information overload, multitasking and so forth. Interferences can present a threat to the amygdala and deplete your capacity for cognitive control.

We know from many research sources that the leaders' influence over the climate of the team is significant. Thus, their ability to manage themselves and their emotions is supreme and equals a regulating 'emotional thermostat' for their team.

How does the executive function in the brain regulate top-down control? The Prefrontal Cortex (PFC or 'Perfect Friend Civilization' as Dr. Karolien Notebaert from Goethe University Frankfurt calls it) is the area of the brain that is in charge of abstract thinking, thought analysis, and adjusting behavior. This includes mediating conflicting thoughts, making



choices between right and wrong, and predicting the probable outcomes of actions or events. The PFC also governs social control, such as suppressing emotional urges. The executive function of the brain regulates thought in terms of short-term and long-term decision-making. It allows humans to plan ahead and create strategies, and also to adjust actions or reactions in changing situations. Additionally, the PFC helps to focus thoughts, which enables people to pay attention, learn, and concentrate on goals.

Self-control is a crucial component of emotional intelligence. Neuroscientists define self-control as the capacity to overcome automatic impulses in favor of long-term goals or desired behavior. Thanks to our PFC, self-control separates us from our ancient ancestors and the rest of the animal kingdom. Instead of reacting to immediate impulses, we can plan and evaluate alternative actions, and we can refrain from doing things that we will surely regret. Self-control is an innate human ability enabling us to develop wisdom and willpower.

Emotions provide us with energy and drive, and can communicate important information. Any strong emotion, though, like anxiety, anger, joy, or betrayal trips off the amygdala and impairs the prefrontal cortex's capacity for self-control. The result is stronger reactions to negative situations, we can't think straight and amygdala hijacks can occur.

How can you enhance your self-control? Start with eating regularly to avoid lower glucose levels in your blood. Then include short bursts of exercise in your daily routine; 10 – 15 minutes result in an increased blood and oxygen flow in the PFC. Sleep – it restores the glucose in the PFC; tired executives and employees are not good for business. And remind yourself of the big picture of your plan or project continuously.

The ultimate self-control booster for a sustainable balanced state in the brain is meditating and practicing mindfulness.

As we live in a turbulent world that can be experienced as stressful, we need practical ways to relax and practice serenity throughout the day in order to empower our prefrontal cortex. Please find two tools below that help you bring awareness and attentiveness into your day and appreciate each moment for what it is.

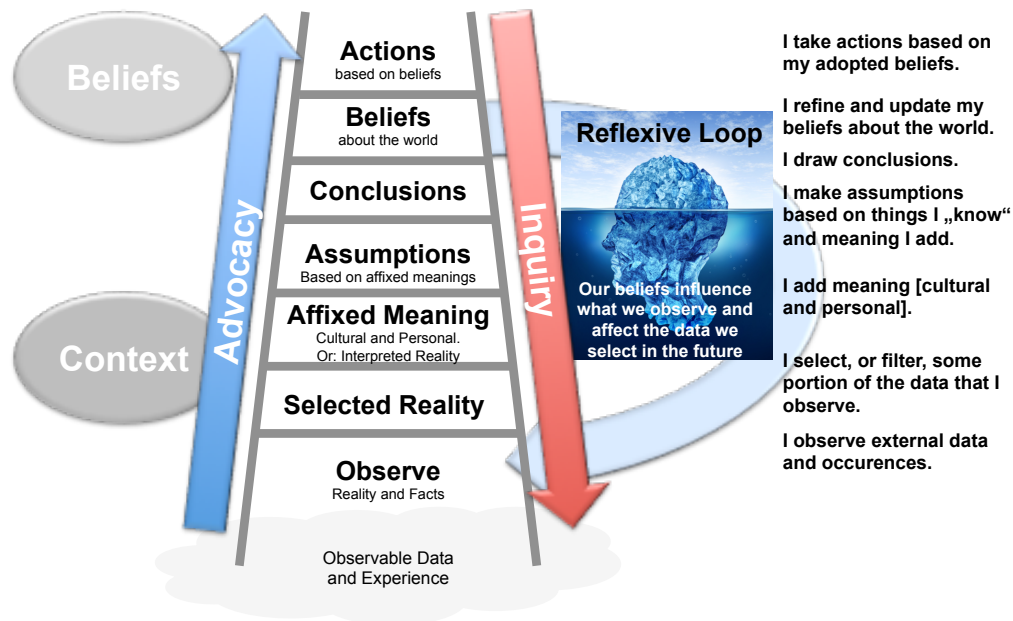
The benefits of practicing mindfulness are manifold. Mindfulness increases performance, creativity, well-being, and promotes happiness; it reduces stress and pain, eases worry and calms the heart. Mindfulness results in a better immune functioning, lowers the risk to relapse (depression, addictions), fosters stability, develops wisdom, and improves decision-making.

Great leaders know themselves well, anticipate situations that may be stressful for them and take preventative measures. They then have multiple constructive solutions to handle the amygdala hijack and maintain their and their team's high performance.



The Ladder of Inference – The Concept

adapted from Chris Argyris and Peter Senge, „The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook“



The Ladder of Inference – In Action

adapted from Chris Argyris and Peter Senge, „The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook“

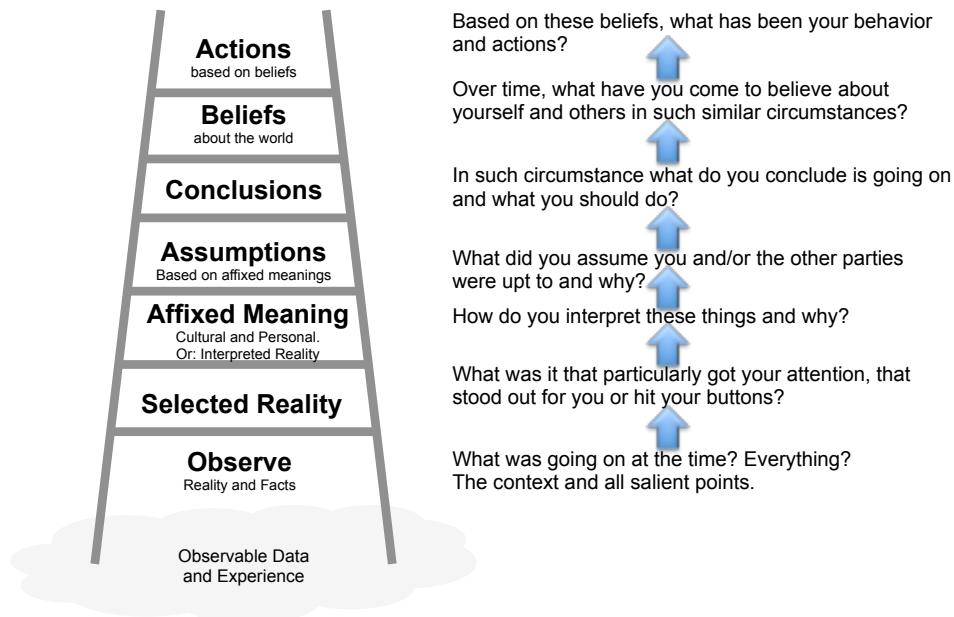
She was emailed about the early meeting, but her email was not delivered. It turned out that she updated her iPad software and her work email needed to be reconfigured.

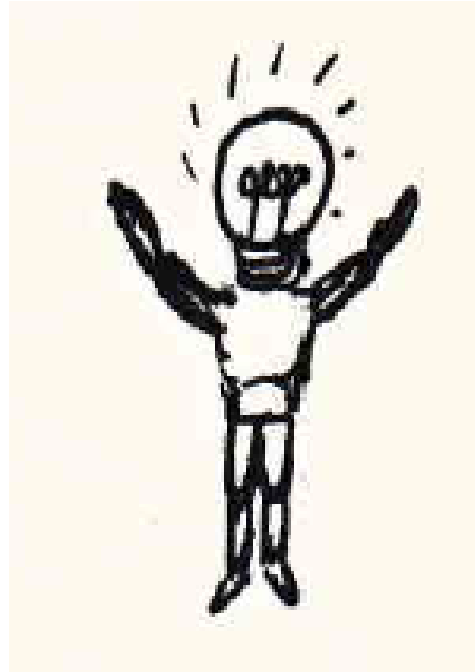




The Ladder of Inference – Advocacy & Inquiry

adapted from Chris Argyris and Peter Senge, „The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook“





Step 5: Mental Energy – Strengthening Focus & Optimism

Explore how realistic optimism – seeing the world as is while working positively toward a desired outcome or solution – enhances your level of engagement. Consciously choose your attitude and manage your positive self-talk. Experience the power of visualization and what it takes for creativity to come alive.



Got an Executive Dilemma? – Tell it to Your Rubber Duck!

Picture this scenario: You are global head of a sales force in the financial industry, confronted with the decision as to whom to promote to the next level. You're feeling very ambivalent about one particular candidate: He has generated the highest revenues, been very successful in pitching for new business and contributed tremendously to the overall P&L.

However, the feedback you have been hearing for a long time is that this sales rep is not a team player at all: He doesn't share information within the team nor with other departments and doesn't help more junior sales people, although he has agreed to mentor them. Basically, he works by himself, almost in isolation. If you were to promote him, what signal would that send into the organization? How would this impact the energy in the team? What effect would any decision on his promotion have on you as his line manager?

Share your problem with a silent friend

Human interaction is – of course – the preferred method to help you get unstuck with any dilemma. However, if you prefer to tackle such problems alone, or nobody is available to bounce your problem off, then what do you do? The answer: Tell your rubber duck!

The rubber duck represents, in the worst case, any inanimate object, and in the best case, a silent friend, and is a particularly useful method for getting to the crux of a problem and working out how you feel about it.

Tell your rubber duck the challenge you face. Explain the situation in detail. Show your rubber duck your emotions. Describe how the problem makes you feel. As you talk to your rubber duck, chances are you will find that an idea or solution comes to mind...

Presuming you find somebody human to listen to your problem, ask him or her to remain silent and just be an active listener. It doesn't need to be anyone who knows about the situation. In fact, it can actually be more beneficial if they don't. The idea is that you solve the problem, not them. Ask the person simply to listen, nod occasionally and make encouraging sounds, but not to offer any comments or try to find solutions. The aim is for you to hit upon the best solution for yourself.

How it works

Rubber ducking is a fast and analytical creativity technique used to solve problems; it helps you think the issue through in depth, structure your understanding and assess your feelings. Your partner – be it your rubber duck or a friend – listens without interrupting. Your thoughts flow and plant seeds in your brain for a potential solution while you get your head around the essence of the actual problem.

Rubber ducking also helps you to release negative energy. You subconsciously process your conflicting thoughts, take responsibility for the current challenge and hopefully come up with a few possible next steps.



Introverts benefit from rubber ducking (using their rubber ducks!) in that they are able to address a pressing issue in a secure and private environment. Extroverts like this method because the rubber duck won't answer back!





The Circle of Influence

The only things you can change is yourself or the situation. Consider cutting out the picture below to put it as a reminder in a place where you frequently can see it.





Step 6: Spiritual Energy – Defining your Purpose and Vision

Identify your personal force for action or purpose beyond self-interest or passion. Embrace the idea that spiritual energy is sustained by balancing commitment to others with adequate self-care. Become courageous to live by your deepest values.



Values in Action

Martin Seligman, the founder of positive psychology, and Christopher Petersen together with more than 50 social scientists have researched character strengths and virtues for understanding, discussing, and describing core capacities in human beings. The following overview shows you the universal ingredients of goodness in human beings across cultures, nations, and beliefs aligned with the six virtues – these are the 24 character strengths:

Wisdom (Head Strengths)	Courage (Heart Strengths)	Humanity (Strengths of Others)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creativity• Curiosity• Love of learning• Judgment• Perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bravery• Perseverance• Honesty• Zest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Love• Kindness• Social intelligence
Temperance (Strengths of Self)	Justice (Community Strengths)	Transcendence (Strengths of Spirit)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forgiveness• Humility• Prudence• Self-regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fairness• Leadership• Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appreciation of beauty & excellence• Gratitude• Humor• Spirituality• Hope

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Please take your free values in action survey now:

<http://inspiredexecutives.pro.viasurvey.org/Account/Register>

Take a look at your VIA report and write down your top five strengths here:

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____



In which situations could you use them more?

How can you let your strengths shine even more?



Step 7: Taking Actions

Pull it all together, push beyond your limits, and prepare a realistic plan based on your purpose and vision that empowers you to rhythmically balance stress and rest in a sustainable way.



Points of You: Finally

Coaching Game for an in-person session

Objective

To observe what has happened over the year, and get excited at what is still to come... A way of summing something up.

Pausing

An end is a kind of opportunity. Let's remember the year that has passed or the coaching process that is drawing to an end. What did we have there? At work? In our relationships? With ourselves? Studies? With money? Socially? With family? What was the most important moment of the past year? What moments would we pass on? What are the moments we are thankful for? And looking at where we are now, what do we wish ourselves for the future?

Expanding

Now we are ready. So let's go... Choose three cards, at random or openly, and set them out in order. How can the cards help us answer the questions?

1. What am I taking on with me?
2. What am I leaving behind?
3. What do I want for the next stage of this journey?

Focus and action

Write down the main insights you have reached. Write down three actions that will express these insights in practice, and advance you to a better year:

One for the coming day, one for the next week, and one for the next month. Have a wonderful journey.



Plans that Really Work

Here are the ingredients that you need to orchestrate to make your plans really work:

- Focus on your goal and be as specific as you can. Vague strategies can lead to surrendering to the temptation of giving up or declaring victory early because you got tired, discouraged or bored. Take your time to think about your goal from various angles. What is the desired outcome that you would like to achieve?
- Know your 'Why' and have a vision. How do you know that you have eventually achieved your goal? Being aware of and aligned with the deeper meaning of what you want to achieve keeps you moving forward when the going gets tough. An effective vision provides you with direction and energy to overcome obstacles and resistance. It also outlines the benefits that are attractive to you; and this is important for the long run.
- Have a detailed plan. Your vision appeals to your emotions and puts you in a positive mood; the downside of which is that you could oversee the magnitude and variety of different actions that need to be accomplished along the way to your goal. Your plan supports your decision regarding the feasibility of your goal. The sooner you want to start going for your goal, the more important the 'What' becomes.
- Apply a sense of realism – always. Don't be a naïve optimist who gets excited and thinks s/he can easily get it done. Rather get creative about potential setbacks, weaknesses and other factors that might prevent your success. And plan for them, even if it feels a little pessimistic at first, it enhances the likelihood of your really achieving your goals. By mentally contrasting the desired goal with potential obstacles, more resources get activated and the likelihood of your success increases.
- Believe in yourself. How do you want to use your brain during the next decades? Whether you think you can do it and change or you think people generally always remain the same, you are probably right. Your potential to learn and grow is endless, and your brain's plasticity enables you for life-long learning.
- Make your goal a conscious choice. Which goal makes you truly happy in a sustainable way? How does your goal contribute to essential human needs like relatedness, competence and autonomy? Human relationships are important for your well-being, and so are goals that are nurtured by this need. Experience your impact in the world through using your social, emotional, artistic, organizational or creative competencies to work on your goal. If you are able to self-determine your goal and have the freedom to choose the steps and actions to achieve it, your intrinsic motivation will do some magic and take care of the 'How'.
- Include the essence of a good plan: If ..., then Woody Allen once said "If you want to make God laugh, tell him about your plans." Plans and goals require a sense of realism and self-awareness. Your best intentions need to be translated into concrete behavior, and you can do that by including the specifics around the location or time in your plan.



Understanding Your Goals – The WHY of Goals

Whether we achieve our goals depends on whether we take action. But what decides whether we take action in the first place? How motivated you are! So, simply **pick your Top 3 goals**, then **answer the questions below**. Keep writing even if you repeat your answers. The information below will help you feel clear, focused and more motivated to achieve your goals.

Write Goal No. 1 Here: _____	Write Goal No. 2 Here: _____	Write Goal No. 3 Here: _____
Why do you want this Goal? What does it give you? _____	Why do you want this Goal? What does it give you? _____	Why do you want this Goal? What does it give you? _____
And why do you want that? What does that give you? _____	And why do you want that? What does that give you? _____	And why do you want that? What does that give you? _____
And why do you want that? What does that give you? _____	And why do you want that? What does that give you? _____	And why do you want that? What does that give you? _____
And why do you want that? What does that give you? _____	And why do you want that? What does that give you? _____	And why do you want that? What does that give you? _____
What will this goal help you feel? _____	What will this goal help you feel? _____	What will this goal help you feel? _____



Complimentary White Paper: The SCARF[®]-Model – A Brain-Based Introduction to Managing Emotions, Change and Sustainable Performance

The impact of stress reduction on an organization

Stress-related workplace absence due to adjustment disorders, burnout, and other stress-related symptoms is an enormous cost factor for organizations these days. In addition, it has been shown that people who are balanced and in a positive mood cognitively perform better and are able to produce more creative ideas and better results. Companies miss out on their employees' creative potential if people are stressed out.

Also, people who are stressed tend to be less empathetic towards others' needs. Hence, in an organization with a lot of prevailing stress, empathy and compassion decrease.

Executives who enjoy working for their employer and who feel that they can unfold their potential in their current position, will be less tempted to accept offers from competitors. Organizations would certainly benefit from an effort to reduce stress levels to save cost and increase productivity.

Neuroscience – the study of the nervous system – has widespread application possibilities, from understanding the genesis and possible cures to such disorders as schizophrenia, autism, and Alzheimer's disease to better understanding the science behind our interactions with each other. By leveraging neuroscience and increasing our understanding of the brain, we can enhance overall interaction effectiveness. Although there is far more to discover, what has been learned so far and framed into the SCARF[®] model can help make positive organizational improvements including more effective leadership skills, successful change management initiatives, better creativity and improved innovation, and a more engaged workforce.

[...]



Resources & Encouragement

TED Talks

Yves Morieux: As work gets more complex, 6 rules to simplify

Why do people feel so miserable and disengaged at work? Because today's businesses are increasingly and dizzyingly complex — and traditional pillars of management are obsolete, says Yves Morieux. So, he says, it falls to individual employees to navigate the rabbit's warren of interdependencies. In this energetic talk, Morieux offers six rules for "smart simplicity." (Rule One: Understand what your colleagues actually do.)

https://www.ted.com/talks/yves_morieux_as_work_gets_more_complex_6_rules_to_simplify?language=en

[...]

Related Blogs

Inspired-Executives.com > News

- Managing Stress and Building Resilience (Interview with the CFA Institute)
- Self-control and what it takes
- You stressed? Take control!
- What's your leadership response to a VUCA world?
- Dealing with hardship and stress: Are you resilient or tough enough?
- Change your story. Change your world.
- Believing in change
- Anger management: Take control and express yourself

Aphorisms

The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.

Nelson Mandela

My actions are my true belongings.

*Thich Nhat Hanh, Vietnamese Zen Buddhist Monk and peace activist, *1926*

We have more possibilities available in each moment than we realize.

*Thich Nhat Hanh, Vietnamese Zen Buddhist Monk and peace activist, *1926*



[...]

10 Quick Tips for Managing Stress

1. **Reduce distractions.** Reading emails all the time, or always being available for informal chats costs a lot of attention and energy. Instead, focus on your priorities. Working from home once a week could help.
2. **Lead, follow, and get out of your own way.** Radically accept and embrace your circumstance. Then take action and go for a small win.
3. **Visualize calm and breathe deeply.** Close your eyes and imagine your safe place or having a hot shower. Take in the sights, sounds and smells; and breathe easily from your diaphragm.
4. **Limit your pity party to 10 seconds.** Don't wallow in self-pity; it increases your feeling of stress and helplessness. Get out of your victimhood by focusing on what you can do and influence. And crack on.
5. **Use the magic word – and just say NO.** Be clear about your boundaries, and stop trying to please everyone.
6. **Smile.** Put a big grin on your face. Your brain processes the nerve impulses so that you almost instantaneously feel better.
7. **Talk to a friend.** A problem shared is a problem halved. It's hug time!
8. **Take a walk.** Step outside for 10 minutes or just go to the bathroom or the coffee lounge. It enhances circulation.
9. **De-clutter your life.** Become aware of how your thoughts and emotions drive your actions. Enhance your awareness on your energy sources and energy killers; identify emotional baggage and areas of procrastination.
10. **Get back to physical basics.** Ensure a healthy amount of sleep. Switch to decaffeinated coffee or have an herbal tea that helps ease some of the tension. Make sure you drink sufficient mineral water. Limit the amount of sugar in your diet. Remember: Leaders are not created from coffee and donuts.



10 Resilience Boosters

1. **Pause and focus on your own needs.** Notice which emotions arise and what you say to yourself in an unfamiliar situation.
2. **Manage your energy and make friends with your body.** Resilient people take a holistic perspective on their mind, body and emotions. When they are confronted with ambiguity, anxiety, and a loss of control that accompanies change, they tend to grow stronger from the experiences, rather than allowing themselves to be depleted.
3. **Clear your life's backpack from superfluous weight.** Resilient people approach life as meaningful, and their optimistic view lets them see each new day as providing a new set of opportunities and choices. Be proactive, and understand when to ask for help.
4. **Tame your inner driver for more balance.** Explore your value system and identify your personal sense of direction on which you can rely to make choices.
5. **Set and preserve boundaries.** Rather than assuming your first answer is the solution, suspend judgment if you are in the middle of a change.
6. **Actively manage and resolve conflict.** Use organized, structured approaches when managing ambiguity.
7. **Focus on your sphere of influence and use it creatively.** Rather than assuming your first answer is the solution, suspend judgment if you are in the middle of a change.
8. **Nurture relationships: your friends and support network.** The quality of your relationships with other people influences how emotionally resilient you can be in the face of an emotional or physical crisis. In general, the more quality social support you can draw upon from family and friends, the more flexible and resilient you can be in stressful situations.
9. **Tap into your inner resources and stay calm.** Maintain a clear sense of purpose for long-term goals and priorities.
10. **Keep an optimistic outlook on life.** Develop a focus for the positive.



Profile: Graphic Designer



Maike Hase

Graphic Design and Illustrations

<http://www.farbidee-mh.de>

kitrinos@gmx.de

+49 (0)174-1854646

The wonderful illustrations in this workbook have been created by my longstanding good friend Maike Hase.

After completing her university entry exam, Maike successfully passed through an apprenticeship program in the financial services industry. This is when we met. Given her desire to learn and grow, she studied economics on the side and graduated with a German diploma from banking academy Berlin. For more than twenty years, she has consulted with clients from regional banks on various complex IT products.

Maike also is an artist who experiments with different materials, objects, techniques, and styles. Her artwork has continuously been presented in multiple exhibitions in the Hanover/Germany area. Maike also teaches not only children but also elderly people how to draw and paint. A few years ago, she went to night school for three years to study commercial art and design that yielded her another diploma cum laude.

To see more of Maike's artwork, visit her website <http://www.farbidee-mh.de> or contact her at kitrinos@gmx.de, +49 (0)174-1854646.



Contact Me



Annette B. Czernik, PCC

Inspired Executives | Masterful Coaching & Consulting
Executive Coach & Storyteller

Robert-Blum Str. 7
60385 Frankfurt am Main
Germany

☎ +49 162 240 4002
@ Annette@Inspired-Executives.com



Annette's qualifications and professional designations

- German diploma in Economics and Human Resource Management
- Professional Certified Coach (PCC) and Mentor Coach, International Coach Federation
- Certified Story Coach™
- Energy Leadership Master Practitioner™
- Graduate Institute for Professional Excellence in Coaching (iPEC)
- Variety of assessment tools including the MBTI®, LIFO®, DiSC®, ELI-MP™, and Lominger Voices™.



*Annette through
the eyes
of her niece (7)*

Coaching with me invites you to a unique discovery tour. The journey will lead us into the depth of your concerns, the sources of laughter and energy, along the solution rock and via an obstacle course to the milestone that you have defined as your goal.

I will hold you accountable for completing your assignments that are required to find your truth and your story. We will take a detour only when the road is closed, otherwise we stay on the highway and deal with traffic blocks when they occur.

Be prepared for some bumps in the road and a lot of beautiful views and perspectives. I strive to create a diversified experience for you that takes you safely to your core and where ever you want to go from there.