



# MAFES Dawg Tracks

November, 2012



*Tips for Handling  
Work Stress*



We all realize that some stress in our work is normal, but excessive stress can cause physical and emotional problems - which ultimately can interfere with our quality of life at work and outside of work. We can't control all the factors in our work, but we can handle them rationally by conditioning ourselves to the one that we can and that is: **YOU!**

Following are some tips that can help us to control and condition ourselves to cope with stress:

**Attitude assessment or adjustment-** Work at adjusting your attitude to handle different scenarios at work. Reassess those that you can control and try to not worry about those that you have no control over. My Dad use to tell my brother and I, "**Don't chase a rabbit that you can't catch!**"

**Think about something else-** Work at putting those negative thoughts in the back of your brain and concentrate on the positives that will help you "catch that rabbit," making your day more enjoyable and more compatible with your fellow workers and family members.

**Think positive-** This is a little more complicated, working to be positive minded and to think positive. Work at the positives and work at discounting the negatives.

**Take a mental vacation-** Think about places or trips that you would like to be with your soul mate or "significant other," or that ultimate hunting, fishing or golf trip that you someday will make.

**Count to 10-** This is a method that will relieve stress, similar to "kicking a bush." Once you have counted to 10 or kicked a bush, you will feel differently - your mind has changed to another avenue of thinking.

**Use affirmations-** Work at concentrating on positive thoughts and affirm them in your mind - stamping out the negatives.

**Yell or cry-** Sometimes in frustration or a situation of stress and you're in a private setting, it helps to let out a yell; or in a public situation, drop a tear or two and you probably will realize that the situation wasn't as bad as you had imagined.

**Press on your temples-** This, in medical terms, is referred to as acupressure. Apply pressure to the points on your temples and extend to the frontal lobe and back lobe on your head, which will relieve pain and stress. Massaging the nerves in your temples relaxes muscles elsewhere, especially in your neck.

**Relax your jaw-** Drop your jaw and roll it left to right. People under pressure have a tendency to clench or grit their teeth. Dropping the jaw and rolling it helps to relax those muscles. If you relax those muscles, it tends to reduce the sense of tension.

**Practice deep breathing-** Take several deep breaths or "belly breathing" as some people refer to it. Dr. Bradley W. Frederick, Director of the International Institute of Sports Medicine in Los Angeles states that the belly breathing idea is to "act calm - be calm." When you're experiencing stress, your pulse races and you start breathing very quickly. Force yourself to breathe slowly. Convince your body that the stress is gone, whether it is or isn't.

Many professional golfers do the belly breathing as part of their set up to prepare to hit their balls, which calms the body and lets them swing more calmly instead of with a jerky motion.

The correct way to breathe - Abdominally - feeling the stomach expand as you inhale and collapse as you exhale.

**Look away-** If you look out a window at a far distant object or setting just for a few seconds, away from your current problem or situation the eyes will relax - if the eyes relax you probably should relax as well. Take a pot of water off the burner and it quits boiling.

**Recite an Anti-stress litany-** When you get into a stressful situation, whether you're at work, home or in a recreational environment, to help you relieve this stressful mood, try to remember the litany below:

*~There is no place I have to go at this time*

*~There is no problem that I have to solve at this time*

*~There is nothing that I have to do at this time*

*~The most important thing I need to do at this time is relax*

If you can remember these 4 items and get them imbedded so that when a stress attack happens, you can apply these to that situation; you will forget what is bothering you and think of these.

**STILL WATER DOESN'T ALWAYS  
RUN DEEP -**

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**LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP!**

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*Excerpts: [www.safetyxchange.org/health-safety](http://www.safetyxchange.org/health-safety)*