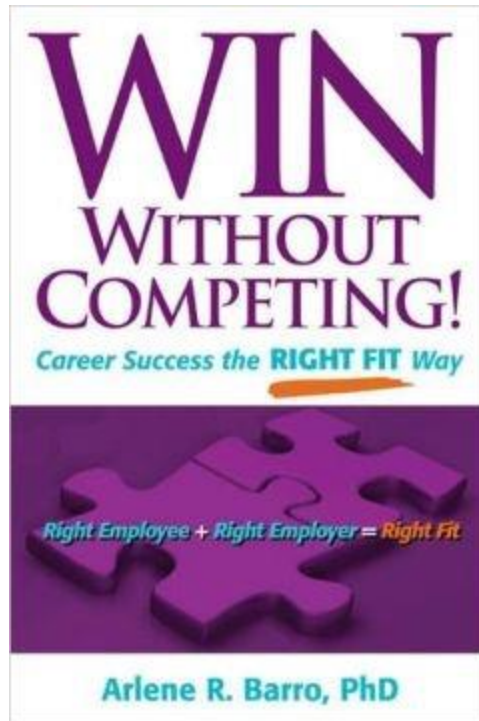


Conquering Stress! With Dr. Arlene — Inauguration Causes Stress



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By Dr. Arlene Barro

The world is watching Donald Trump become the 45th President of the United States. During the Inauguration Ceremony, I hear John F. Kennedy's voice as if it were January 20, 1961, "My fellow Americans ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." His words remain true today and forever.

For those celebrating Trump's presidency this is a day of rejoice. For those overwhelmed with stress, mourning the loss of their presidential pick and fearing the new president, they have no solution. They do now. Honor Kennedy by following his advice. Focus on what you can do for your country. Work to unite, not to deny or divide. As Michelle Obama said, "We're stronger together."

Our country has significant domestic and foreign challenges. Joining together will strengthen our ability to face the expected and unexpected. You can change yourself and the country concurrently. Here is how.

Say, no to isolation

The Surgeon General of the United States said that our number one health problem is not cancer or heart disease but isolation. He referred to it as a disease. Social isolation has been linked to shortened lives, cognitive impairment and verbal fluency decline.

When you go to the Internet for all your needs, you eliminate opportunities for human interaction. Moreover, social networking is not a substitute for talking to people in person. Not only are adults experiencing the negative impact of social isolation, but also our children are exhibiting poor written and verbal skills.

What happened to human qualities, ie. empathy. If adults and children had the capacity for empathy, would they bully others online? Perhaps not if they can visualize themselves as the victims of bullying and reject it. Those who feel totally isolated and anonymous will not experience empathy.

Interested in stepping outside the isolation booth? Repeat this mantra to yourself, “I came here to live out loud.” Who said that? At the Golden Globe Awards, Viola Davis, in her tribute to Meryl Streep, quoted her.

I believe if you focus on living out loud, you can eliminate social isolation. To do that, start reducing the time you spend on the Internet, including social networking. Plan activities which you can enjoy to meet new people and reconnect with friends. By engaging in social interaction, you will distract yourself from focusing on Trump. The fear and stress will significantly decline. You will be ready to consider a new attitude toward Trump. Yes, you can! It is easier than you think.

Avoid the Trump tweets

When Trump thinks it, he tweets it. The media reports every tweet as if each one is of equal importance. Do not make the erroneous assumption that all tweets deserve your attention. They do not.

If Trump’s tweets ignite your anxiety, ignore them. It is not necessary to watch every move Trump makes which could heighten your distress. Instead let Congress and a wide array of federal agencies do that job.

Frequently, I am asked why Trump tweets. He does not want the media and others to speak for him or misrepresent his messages, nor discuss unproven allegations about him. Protecting the Trump brand is especially important, when he walks on to the world stage as Mr. President. The power of his brand is critical to reinforce and strengthen his leadership.

Evaluating Trump’s achievements

The media reports minute by minute the activities of the president and all those key appointees that support him. If you want to reduce your stress, do not focus on those accounts. Instead, watch for the

results. Presidents are judged by their achievements. Trump has already decided how he wants historians to evaluate his presidency. That vision will guide Trump to strive for success. In his mind, every achievement will become a new building which deserves praise.

Questions about presidential stress? Email drbarro@barroglobal.com. Responses could appear in her next column.

Dr. Arlene Barro, the creator of the Right Fit Method, is a UCLA-trained behavioral educational psychologist and professional speaker. She is the author of WIN Without Competing!, a business, career, and personal strategist and founder/CEO of barro global search, inc. on Wilshire Boulevard. Episodes of her radio show are available at www.winwithoutcompeting.com.