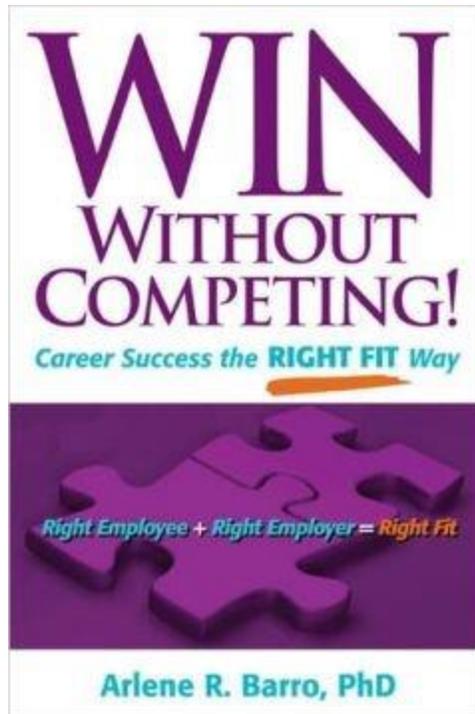


Conquering Stress! With Dr. Arlene—New Beginnings Cause Stress



Posted: Wednesday, November 8, 2017 – 11:51 AM

By Dr. Arlene Barro

Birth is the first new beginning for everyone, which sets the stage for a lifetime of new beginnings. For me, each birthday initiates a fresh start.

Resist Rigidity, Choose Change

Do we experience stress with each new beginning? Yes. Every person has a different response depending on the type of stress, degree of self-awareness, and coping strategies. Changing our behavior quickly can diffuse stress, especially in situations which are unexpected and require immediate action.

Suddenly unemployed for some is a shock, but they bounce back fast because they focus on capturing the next job, not on the former employer. For example, one of my clients called me right after he was downsized. Here is what he did. When he left his office he stepped into his car and started calling his network searching for a new opportunity. I have other clients who retreat and take downsizing as a personal affront. Some stay unemployed for many years. Others, never take a full-time job again.

Focusing on the next step, not the past is critical to lowering your stress. Shut the door on the past, open the door to the future.

Are You the Imprisoned Librarian?

Commenting on human behavior award-winning Author Erica Jong observed we make our own prisons. Playwright Glen Berger wrote *Underneath the Lintel* about a librarian who spent 40 years “imprisoned” in a library. I recently saw this unforgettable play at the Geffen Playhouse.

From the first moment that the nameless librarian appeared on stage, I was intrigued. He was a dedicated bureaucrat who discovered that a book had been missing from the library for 113 years. He calculated the fee owed. Curious and creative, he then decided to travel the world, searching for the book and the story behind it.

After many months of travel, the librarian felt like a different person. He was ready to return to work. Upon his arrival, he was fired and told that he had lost his pension. Unfortunately, the librarian had never told his boss that he was going away and assumed his job would be waiting.

Believing that his identity and existence had been deleted, he carves on his desk, “I was here.” He then reflects on his personal life and wonders why he never married the love of his life Rosa. Recognizing that he cannot recreate his past, he moves on relying on his travel experience to propel him. Holding the library stamp in his hand, he leaves his office for the last time, feeling confident and uplifted. He was no longer the imprisoned librarian.

Eliminate Four Roadblocks to Success

The end of the year is the perfect time to evaluate our personal and professional success to determine what worked and did not work, keeping in mind that each of us has different goals.

Often, we do not examine the impact of stress on our success. Let us look at that now in order to start thinking about how to change our behavior to usher in 2018, an important new beginning.

There are a wide array of roadblocks to success, which I have been discussing in my column. Four of them have a fascinating perilous relationship with each other. They are: denial, delay, fear and indecision. Fear lurks behind denial and delay. Indecision reigns supreme. The interplay of all four can deflate your brand and suppress your success. This quartet can cause enormous stress and ignite significant health issues.

Take charge of these four bad actors now. The root causes are doing nothing, making wrong decisions, and not managing Right Fit decisions that turn sour. The key is understanding how to make Right Fit decisions and fixing or eliminating Wrong Fits. Never choose the “best,” only select the Right Fit. To do that, create a

blueprint and match to that blueprint. You will be in the driver's seat traveling down the Right Fit Road to Success, leaving stress behind. It is all up to you.

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

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