



## Reducing Your Stress NOW

When I was 36, I was diagnosed with clinical depression and told by my doctor that I had been living with it for over 30 years.

Being a stoic and hardy New Englander, I was determined to figure out how to move out of depression as quickly as possible. Many of the lessons I learned along that path are applicable to quickly getting out of stress:

1. Ask yourself, “Is everything okay right this minute?” If the answer is yes, then you are likely engaged in forecasting the future or, as it’s more commonly known, *worrying*.
  - a. ACTION ITEM: Turn your focus from what *could* go wrong to what’s going right and your shoulders will naturally relax.



- Your brain does not know the difference between pretend and reality.
  - ACTION ITEM: Spend the rest of your day (even when alone) smiling. Your brain will get the message that you’re in a good mood and flood your system with some yummy chemicals.

2. I’m certain that, if asked, you could quickly come up with a list of 10 things you dislike about the current situation that’s causing you stress. Let’s reverse that.
  - a. ACTION ITEM: Make a list of 10 things that are (or could be) good about the situation.

What I learned from battling depression is that I have a mind that, left to its own devices, will harm me. Therefore, I have to be proactive about feeding it thoughts that help instead of hurt. I learned that I have a choice about what I can focus on but IT TAKES PRACTICE.

Using the tool of focus, I have turned around my natural tendency to look at what’s wrong and have re-trained myself to look at what’s right. Am I perfect at it? I wish! But think about this: what if you could shift the percentage of time you’re focused on things that make you feel bad? Instead of, say 85% of the time you reduced it to 75%? Then 70%? Then 65%? That’s what I did and I can honestly say that today (after over two decades of practice), I focus on the negative only 5-10% of the time. Would that be worth it?

You have a choice. Start today to focus on what makes you smile versus what makes you stressed and you will be blown away by the difference in your life—both at work and at home.

***Change Your Focus; Change Your Life!***

To schedule a FREE 20-minute phone consultation about how you can make your work environment less stressful, call 480-560-9452 or email [Silver@SilverSpeaks.com](mailto:Silver@SilverSpeaks.com)