



**The Consulting Team, LLC**  
Facilitating Positive Change

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Leadership Tips  
November-December 2023:

## Your Holiday Stress Survival Guide

*Give yourself the gift  
of Compassion over the Holidays*

### Happy Holidays from Marilyn and The Consulting Team



Hi Friends,

As we enter this holiday season, we may be facing more duties and deadlines, feelings and frustrations that accompany family plans, gift-giving, long lines, shorter days, and longer nights which researchers link directly to increased stress.

What better time than now to return to focusing on our own wellness so we can model joy for others at work and home. I extend a special invitation to you to join our next free quarterly noon webinar on December 8. Our timely topic is "Work-life Balance." To enroll, click on the Registration link is at the end of this ezine.

In this issue, discover tips for finding joy and showing compassion toward yourself and others as we celebrate the season.

This edition is dedicated to you, your well-being, and reminding you that you can radiate joy to your teams, colleagues, clients, customers, family, and friends while you lower your stress.

Happy Holidays!

Marilyn Manning, Ph.D.  
Owner, The Consulting Team  
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## Your Holiday Stress Survival Guide

### **Give yourself the gift of compassion over the Holidays**

You've spent the first 11 months of this year attending to the various needs of your team and organization, your colleagues, clients, constituents, as well as your personal relationships. As a leader and dedicated professional, you've done well.

And now while the countdown begins for the holidays, you may be feeling additional pressure to not only manage additional "demands", but to be joyful, compassionate, and energetic. It's a big ask.

This edition is devoted to reminding you of ways to care for yourself and find joy and compassion in this special time of year.

### **Take Time For Yourself**

The first gift should be to yourself. You may be at the bottom of your own gift list, but giving yourself the gift of self-care is far from selfish. It's a selfless act. Taking care of your needs gives you energy to serve others.



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## Use Positive Energy

*For Lakshmi, this entails an early morning calming meditation or yoga stretching before heading off to work. She also focuses on healthy eating and exercises she will use that day, letting her have positive intentions in her work as a supervisor for a local municipality.*

## Contemplative Partner

*For Gregor, his daily dog walk is a time to focus on all that's positive in his life, relationships, and work. He enjoys the happiness of his pooch taking in the sights and smells of the neighborhood, regardless of the weather. This walk gives Gregor positive momentum for the day.*

## Water Works

*For Jennifer, the calm and solitude of lap swimming at the nearby gym between work and home washes away any daily annoyances and clears her mind of work issues so she goes home in a positive state. The pool is her "third place" between work and home that cleanses.*

Whether you use exercise, meditation, positive self-talk, affirmations, or other methods of reflection, we recommend you practice regular self-care.

- Nourish yourself
- Express gratitude
- Tap into joy
- Be compassionate with yourself and others

Your commitment to caring for yourself allows you to be fully present with others, expressing gratitude, empathy, and compassion.



## Strive for Balance

During any challenging time, it's helpful to seek balance in our schedules and routines. Notice when you are staring at your screen for too many hours. Step away from your work and take more breaks.

Intersperse your daily routines with solitary time, social time, or physical exercise. Or try a short walk every few hours to clear your mind and burn a few calories.



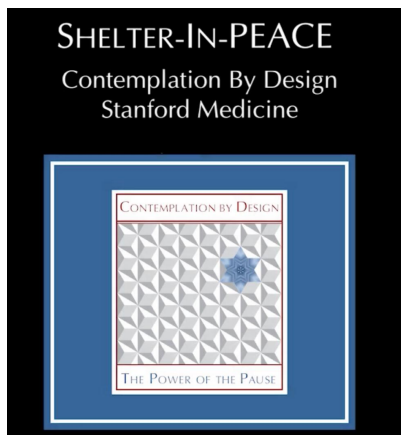


*Mike enjoys scheduling several meetings a week with team-members to be walk-and-talks on their civic campus. They literally face their topics together and craft strategies while enjoying fresh air, greenery, and sunlight on their strolls. Spending time outside meeting rooms, square boxes, or florescent lights offers them a change of perspective.*



*For Khadija and Kelly, informal meetings in the breakroom are welcome respites from the stresses of staffing the customer service lines. These short breaks allow both colleagues to celebrate successes, commiserate about challenging callers, and confer about how to remain positive while fielding daily complaints over the phone.*

## Discover the Power of the Pause



Self-care includes designating time each day, week, and month for reflection. Consider adding a daily reflection practice like keeping a daily or weekly log to remember what you have said and done.

Recently I had the pleasure of attending Stanford University's annual 2-week online **Contemplation by Design (CBD)** summit where many resources were shared regarding contemplation, mindfulness, and self-care.

Founded nine years ago, Contemplation by Design is a campus-wide, multidisciplinary program designed to encourage all members of the Stanford community to enjoy the power of the pause for the purposes of re-establishing balance, tranquility, compassion, and energy to support our creative excellence.

At this summit I learned numerous new tips and a 5-step reflection process called **Shelter in PEACE**: Pause, Exhale, Attend, Contemplate, Express. Their website is full of videos, resources, classes, and free events. Links can be found at the end of this ezine.

*Consider giving yourself the gift of attending all or some of this annual event next year.*

## Name Your Feelings

This is another effective tool for self-compassion that can be applied whenever we are having negative emotional reactions.

When you become aware of your strong feelings, whether positive or negative, don't suppress them, but rather identify them by name. Once we can label our emotions, we can address them, their source, and how we want to react to them. Labeling emotions makes us pause for a moment which gives us a choice on how to act.

### **Declaration brings Independence**

*For Marylou, when she feels unheard or undervalued, she senses cramps in her leg and a pain in her stomach. That's her cue to name that feeling and identify what triggered it, before reacting.*



*Once triggered, her body reacts almost involuntarily, and a verbal outburst of anger or anxiety could happen.*

*This naming activity allows her rational brain to resume control. After Marylou identifies her emotion, she replaces the thought "I AM angry" with the sentiment "I FEEL Angry" which allows her to pause and observe rather than react.*

### **When you attend to your own needs, good things occur:**

1. You will be calmer
2. Your calm demeanor's ripple effect will positively affect those around you
3. Your capacity to focus on others and their needs increases

### **In Conclusion**

1. Take time out each day to praise yourself and others
2. Schedule time at the beginning or end of each day to list things you are grateful for
3. Listen to yourself and others with empathy and compassion
4. Try this reflection practice:
5. Pause, Exhale, Attend, Contemplate, Express (PEACE)

**LINKS to related TCT training  
to relieve stress, create balance and instill calmness:**

<a href="#">Using Stress Positively</a>	<a href="#">How Listening Lowers Stress</a>	Emotional Intelligence = 😊
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*See related links at the end of this ezine for more resources to relieve stress and support contemplative practices.*

We offer coaching for managers, executives and individuals, including one-to-one career development and success coaching for executive team members and mid-managers.



In Person: Initial intake session

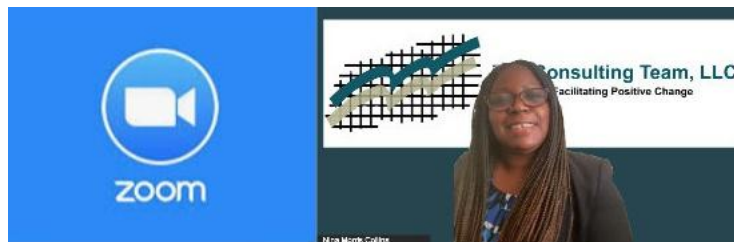


Virtual coaching sessions

**Areas of focus** include may setting and achieving professional development objectives, clarifying goals, gaining self-awareness, inclusive and empowering leadership, operational planning, team effectiveness, collaborative emotional intelligence, and communication skill building. [Learn more here.](#)

Register for our next complimentary 30-minute webinar on Friday, Dec. 8, Noon Pacific

## The Myth of Work-Life Balance



Facilitated by Nina Collins, J.D.

Do you often feel overwhelmed? Work-life balance is complicated. Join us for insights and tips for more productivity and better balance

- Setting boundaries
- Sources of the challenges
- Actionable steps

Friday, December 8, 2023  
12:00-12:30 PM Pacific

Confirm your seat and receive log-in details  
when you register using the button below.

Register for this free 30-min. webinar coming up Friday, Dec. 8 at Noon Pacific

### Recommended Reading and Resources

- *Non-violent Communication* by Dr. Marshall Rosenberg

- [Stanford's Contemplation by Design Summit and Resources](#)
- [Download P.E.A.C.E. Contemplative Practices](#)
- [Videos from a past Shelter-In-PEACE session](#)

### Recommended Apps for contemplation and mindfulness:

- [www.headspace.com](http://www.headspace.com)
- [www.calm.com](http://www.calm.com)
- <https://www.simplehabit.com/>
- <https://www.themindfulnessapp.com/teachers/jon-kabat-zinn>

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Contact The Consulting Team to learn more about our online [training](#), team and [one-to-one virtual coaching](#), and [consulting](#) for leaders and employees.

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