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EXECUTIVE VITALITY™: DANCE WITH THE UNCERTAINTY

Stress and uncertainty are making it hard to focus both at work and at home. Improving this situation for ourselves is key to maintaining/achieving executive vitality.

Many of our coachees are faced on a daily basis with new and unexpected challenges and increasing uncertainty, which creates even more distress and confusion – and difficulty focusing. There is so much upheaval, e.g., uncertainty small businesses face regarding loans – if there will be "forgiveness" or not, and other pressing concerns.

You thought you could go back to work with your kids in school, and the school was closed. You thought you could go to the gym, and the gym was closed. You think you are secure in your home, and the landlord decides he wants to sell the property now; you have two months to find something new. And some of you are having medical issues that you really don't want to address right now, and yet have to. You know that clinicians and medical office personnel are bending over backwards to keep patients safe – but all that is intellectual. That has nothing to do with the uneasiness in your gut—the emotional reaction!

The important thing is to have a mechanism to "dance with the stress" rather than let it hold you down. Try to find a patch of peace and start with that. This isn't easy, yet it is so important to know what ground to stand on when the rest of the world is falling apart underneath you.

Some thoughts

1. You all might need some extra love and care right now. Be gentle. Be kind to yourself and others. Everyone has a lot going on right now. This is a good time to remember who you are and what you have accomplished.
2. There has been much research on the calming effects of nature on mood, stress, and well-being (see references below). So, find that patch of peace – the beach, or woods, or lake, or even your backyard. You can't focus if you are agitated.
3. You not only have to detach from work (even though it is probably taking place at home), but you also have to detach from coronavirus and politics, or whatever it is that raises your blood pressure – which you should probably monitor anyway. *We were not built to take a barrage of negativity 24/7 or 24/7 work pressure.* Taking a break helps you focus.
4. Focus on the very few priorities that you need to get right in the short/medium term. You can see where we (and the country) are headed and how we can navigate our way through for the next three months. You can't focus if you are trying to solve an unknowable future.
5. Everybody needs support in different ways. Are there things you need to continue doing, stop doing, or change the way you are doing them, both at work and at home? You can't focus if you are completely overwhelmed with tasks.
6. As always, get plenty of sleep, eat right, exercise. You can't focus if you are not physically feeling your best.

Some resources you may want to check out:

- If you can't take a vacation get the most out of minibreaks (*Harvard Business Review*)
- The relationship between nature connectedness and happiness, a meta-analysis (Somewhat scholarly review of studies in *Frontiers in Psychology*)
- Stressed out? Science says look at some trees (*Psychology Today*)

What are you doing to improve your focus on the things you should be focusing on at work and at home? What changes do you need to make to ensure you are able to accomplish what you want to/need to accomplish?

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