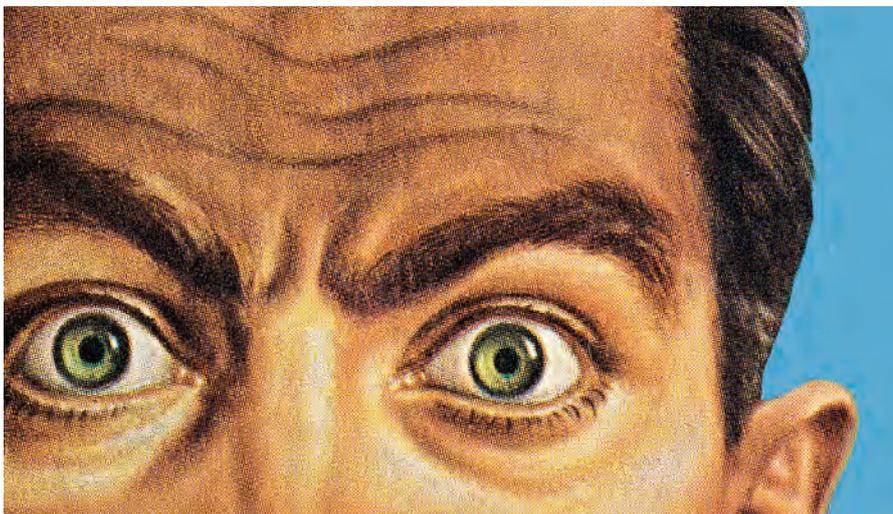


Stress less

In the business world, stressful situations such as the loss of a major customer may pop up at any time. Learning creative ways to manage your reactions is useful if you want to retain a sense of control.



overlooked. In the case of the loss of a major client, there may be several issues that are causing worry - the outstanding amount the closed company owes, the loss of future earnings, meeting the payroll in the weeks ahead, what to do with now unneeded raw materials on hand, and the list may go on.

Once issues are identified, a plan to deal with them one at a time can be devised. As you work through each problem, you are taking back control and working with positive, creative, solution-focused thoughts rather than a dialogue of doom and gloom.

Break issues down

Controlling what is happening in your business or private life is key to reducing the feeling of stress and resolving the actual problems causing the stress. Managing stress takes daily practice, discipline and a deliberate effort. You need to understand how to manage your stress, accepting the uncontrollable factors and working on those you can control.

Remember, the saying: 'How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time.' In other words, try not to look at the large issue that is stressing you, but break it down to smaller segments and action it accordingly, asking 'Will this situation matter to me in 3, 6 or 12 months' time?' ◀

STRESS IS A FEATURE of modern life. People may not like it yet, as a society, we accept it as a necessary evil of living in the 21st century. For some, expressing how busy and stressed they are is a statement of how in demand and successful they must be. For others, the detrimental effects of continuous and excessive stress on their health and lifestyle can be devastating.

Feeling loss of control

Stress is a feeling state brought about by one's perception and thoughts about a situation. We could say that, if a person simply changed their thoughts from worried to

relaxed they wouldn't experience any stress, but try telling that to the businessperson whose major customer has just gone under, owing them thousands.

Often as not, stress is an overwhelming feeling of being out of control and powerless. As a business owner, accepting what you cannot change is often difficult to swallow. You want to be in control, and if you are not, your stress level increases.

Identify the source, then make a plan

Reducing stress starts with identifying the source. Sounds easy, but frequently the true source may not be obvious and can be easily