Excellence!

It Starts By Making Your Bed with excellence... as if someone was going to take a picture of it and publish it in the newspaper :-)

By Domenic Certa

Many people tell me that they are stressed out by the conditions of their life. Their work overload is about to kill them. They are expected to smile all the time, greet their customer with enthusiasm, answer their phone on the first or second ring and get their reports and other duties done on time. All over the world, work standards are being raised by our employers every day and their performance expectations are at an all time high. From that point-of-view, it makes sense that people are feeling stressed out.

On top of all that, it is easy for our psychologists to tell us "that stress is in our mind and that it is the way we interpret the events that creates our level of stress." Although I agree to a great extent with that concept, it does not assist us in any practical way to deal with the amount of work that we are required to process on a daily basis.

One of my coaches used to say to me "Domenic, the reason you are so stressed out is because of the amount of clutter you create from the sloppy work that you do." Of course, I always had a hard time believing him. That kind of feedback used to plug me in and then he would say "if you are getting plugged in by my feedback, then there is some truth to it, otherwise, why would you get plugged in?" As crazy as that sounds, that made perfect sense to me. Yet in my mind, I was thinking "how dare you challenge the quality of my work. I do everything with excellence. My standards are high. Well, for the most part they are..."Why are you being so nit-picky" As I felt myself getting defensive, I knew though that if I was doing things up to my ideal standard then there would nothing for me to have to defend. Interesting insight! Man, he was a great coach to me!!

The idea here was that when I did a job that was not done with excellence, I was leaving a whole lot of detail to be cleaned up later and that I ended up not feeling really good or proud about the quality of work that I produced. Adding all that up gave me what he called "a consequence." He always said "everything that you do creates a result and that result always has a consequence and a price to pay." In this case, the consequence was that I didn’t feel good or proud of the work I was producing and if I really wanted to feel good, I had to go back and clean up my sloppy work. I always prided myself on my work because I had been in the Navy and I had learned to pay close attention-to-detail. Now years later, that attention-to-detail had faded. I now had to relearn that having to always go back and clean up half done work not only slowed me down, it made me feel less about myself.

He used to tell me "Domenic, if you want to feel good about yourself, it takes work. Experiment by doing something, anything, a simple task, like doing the dishes or making your bed, with excellence and see what happens." So reluctantly, I began to experiment with simple tasks that I did every day. I would wake up in the morning and experiment with making my bed and doing it with excellence. I felt good! Wow! I even felt more focused and energized. Then there were those days when I had stayed up too late, I'd hit the snooze a few time and wind up in a big hurry. I'd quickly pull up the sheets and somewhat straighten the pillow. I would shower, dress, grab a banana and was out the door rushing to my appointment.

It never failed that while in the car driving frantically to my appointment feeling road rage from those idiots that were in my way, that my thoughts would take me back to that "not so excellently made bed." It seemed that every time I rushed through making my bed and did it half-assed that I would carry around that clutter all day and into my life. What I finally realized was that I was creating baggage and felt disorganized! I was horrified! I not only felt less proud of myself, my

ability to focus on the next task was less. If I had got up just a few minutes earlier, I would have had the time to make my bed with excellence and I would not feel like this or be in this situation.

To me, this was an amazing insight. I got to see that I was setting myself up was to feel a little less good about myself and a little more unfocused. And on top of that, when someone challenged the quality of my work, I would get defensive. Now, this really did not make any sense to me. I could not understand for the life of me why in the world I would set myself up to feel bad. I knew I had to shift things around. The experiment was a complete success. I am now grateful to my coach for showing me how to feel better and think clearer.

What I do now and what I recommend is to slow yourself down and begin to think of the events in your life as simple single events that you are able to and can control. When you do that you will see how easy it is to do each single task with excellence. Whether you are at work or at home, begin to look at detail and notice how easy it is to do everything with excellence. When you are on the phone with a client, speak clearly, speak slowly enough to allow yourself to think about how you can provide excellent service to the person on the phone right now. Begin to do that in every area of your life gradually and persistently and you will see how stress will just melt away. You will see how different you feel about yourself and how your credibility with others will improve. You will see how doing the simple little tasks in your life with excellence will eliminate clutter, confusion and stress. You will see that by being committed to excellence will change the quality of your life in ways you would never imagined it could.

For other information about excellence written by Domenic, please login and use the search menu on any page.

Domenic is a professional speaker, writer and coach. He can be reached by email or by phone.

FREE 30 minute Coaching Session with Domenic?
Call 219-614-3027 to schedule your appointment.