



# **Lack of Stress Management Can Hurt Your Business**

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## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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Imagine what would happen if you had a vehicle that you never looked after properly. You would drive and drive and drive it without ever changing the oil or doing regular maintenance checks. If you had any accidents you wouldn't fix the body but instead just leave it to rust. A cracked windshield would remain broken. When your shoes were muddy and you tracked it in or spilled something, you wouldn't wipe it up.

Instead of purchasing good gasoline you would make a mixture of sugar and diet soda to put into the tank.

How long do you think that you could depend on the vehicle and how far do you think that you might be able to go with it?

Well, that is how some people treat their bodies. They run them full-out without any rest or time for restoration. When there is an injury or illness, they ignore it and keep pushing. Instead of having a good nutritious diet, they continually eat fast foods and drink sodas.

And then they wonder why they feel tired and stressed most of the time.

When I was doing my Master of Education degree, I studied stress and the effect that it has on people. It can be like layers of paint on a piece of furniture that build up and build up and build up without notice and then, when there is a chip in the paint, one notices how thick the layers are and how difficult it is to strip it down to the original wood.

Stress management consists of three separate processes:

1. Dealing with the "old" stress that has built up - Often there are strong feelings of anger, upset, resentment or fear that have accumulated because issues have never been properly resolved. The person has worn down physically and emotionally so much that they can no longer function the way that they wish they could. Dealing with this involves a process of putting things in perspective, letting go through forgiveness and taking deliberate care to revive or replace specific things that were damaged. Seeking help from a professional therapist can be just as powerful for that person as finding a mechanic and auto body expert to help someone who wants to restore their vehicle.
2. Protecting yourself by being well - Self care practices will allow you more stamina and ability to be well over through the daily journeys that you make in life. Appropriate exercise, good nutrition, adequate rest and time for both laughter and friends will help you to be more resilient. This is similar to doing your vehicle maintenance and having regular detailing so you shine!
3. Dealing with the "new" stress as it happens - There are some specific strategies that will help you to deal with things as they occur so that they don't pile up again. Assertiveness, good organizational skills and learning how to communicate effectively will help you with this just like a driver education program will help you to learn to drive in a safer and more confident manner.

A lack of stress management can hurt you and your business as it leaves you vulnerable, emotional and at risk of losing your health but the above three steps will help you to turn the corner so that you can safely enjoy travelling on the road ahead for many miles to come.