

The Dow Jones Stress Index

We hired a stress coach to assess the anxiety levels of some of our colleagues at a high-stress point of the day (deadline time). Here's what he recommended for five different personality types:

SITUATION	REMEDY
Editor who makes unrealistic demands of others	This can result in hostility. Needs to delay her responses so she can express them more positively.
Emotional worker, makes mountains out of molehills	Get some perspective. The stress doesn't necessarily stem from "what's on your plate, but more from your own personality style."
Type-A personality, never leaves the office	Take lunch breaks and walks—and get more of a life outside the office.
Frustrated manager who wants to do everything himself	Give up. Relax and make peace with the fact that you have to delegate.
Reporter who can't seem to relax	Needs to develop some cues—like a post-it note on the phone—as a reminder to take deep breaths. Should also do periodic stretching exercises and "self massage" using the right hand to knead knots in the left shoulder.

Of course, getting perspective is easier said than done. Allen Elkin, director of the Stress Management and Counseling Center in New York, has one technique. When stress hits, just rate the situation on a scale of one to 10, with 10 being a catastrophic event, like a death. It can help put inconveniences into perspective.

Shedding stress also involves cultivat-

ing a certain amount of pessimism, to avoid constant disappointments. Don't expect to find a parking place immediately, and acknowledge in advance that computers crash.

If all else fails, try laughing. It opens up the blood flow. Sometimes, "I prescribe 'Frasier,'" says Michael Miller of the University of Maryland.