



Timely Information for Personal Success

When the Going Gets Tough . . .

By Michael Gould

Rising gas prices, declining housing sales, a stagnant economy – the famous proverb, “*When the going gets tough, the tough get going!*” could never be more applicable than it is today. But regardless of outside influences, most of which are out of your control, you still have a business to run, bills to pay, etc. So, take the attitude that even in an economic slowdown, people are still going to need your services – and no one is going to satisfy these needs more than you! Here are some ideas for putting these words into action:

✓ **Live by the Serenity Prayer.** You’ve no doubt heard, “*Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.*” In business, the wind is either going to blow against your back or directly in your face, but rarely will it blow neutral. Remain calm and keep sailing ahead.

✓ **Ignite passion for what you do.** Remember what got you into your profession in the first place. Passion lifts morale and productivity. Conversely, negativity

drains, deflates, and fatigues.

✓ **Commit yourself.** “If only” are self-defeating words that provide a built-in excuse. Write your goals down; visualize them.

✓ **Have a plan.** “*If you don’t have a map, any old road will get you there.*” Set mini-goals and timelines that will keep you focused on that road; ignore distractions that get you off track.

✓ **Provide a world-class customer experience.** When competition increases and business slows, there is a knee-jerk reaction for businesses to reduce prices to match or beat the competition. Instead, focus on the unique value that you provide through outstanding customer experience, with value-added benefits that customers and clients can’t get anywhere else. Reinforce the value that you provide.

While ideas like these are important in any economic environment, they are imperative in tougher economic times! Business is cyclical, and those who dig deep to plant strong roots will not

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Balance is Overrated

By Kerul Kassel

We seek balance when we’re stressed. We gravitate toward balance when activities aren’t aligned closely enough to our values. But trying to find perfect “balance” is a pipe dream.

The balance we’re looking for is more like the balance that nutritionists talk about; not a daily thing. For instance, if we don’t eat the proper numbers of a food group *each day*, but if we still get a proper balance over a *month*, this is still healthy eating.

Likewise, there are times when we need to work more than usual, and other times when we can take more time off – and that’s OK!

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Healthy Recipe: Barbecue Turkey Burgers

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 tablespoons fat-free mayonnaise
- 4 tablespoons barbecue sauce
- 1 pound lean ground turkey
- 1/2 cup fresh, diced tomatoes
- 4 large leaves of fresh lettuce
- 4 whole-grain sandwich buns
- salt and pepper to taste

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION:

- Calories per serving: 262
- Fat: 4 g.
- Protein: 32 g.
- Sodium: 495 mg.
- Carbohydrates: 25 g.
- Fiber: 2 g.
- Saturated fat: 1 g.

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a small bowl, stir mayonnaise and barbecue sauce together.
2. Preheat grill.
3. Shape turkey into 4 patties, about 1-1/2-inch thick. Season with salt and pepper. Refrigerate until ready to cook.
4. Grill burgers on both sides until cooked through, about 6 minutes per side.
5. Toast rolls on the grill.
6. Top burgers with the mayonnaise-and-barbecue sauce, lettuce, and diced tomatoes. Serve on the toasted rolls.

Serving size: 1 burger. ✓

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A Few Ideas to Beat Burnout!

Q: What tips can you offer about preventing burnout?

A: We all have our bad days, weeks, or even a rotten month. What distinguishes burnout from exhaustion is an *extended, long-term* inability to renew oneself. While we can't always do a lot about the circumstances in our lives, there *is* something we can do about how we look at things. During my trainings, I like to ask participants, "How many crises have you been involved in?" The answer is often laughter and responses like, "*Too many to count!*" or, "*All the time.*" The reality is that it's impossible to relax if we're in crisis mode all the time. While it's easy to perceive something as a crisis, the reality is that most people have only been in a few life-and-death situations that demanded a split-second/no time to think reaction. Let me stress, I am *not* implying that we take a nonchalant view of problems or responsibilities! Rather, I'm saying we greatly overestimate what an *actual* crisis is as opposed to the many everyday issues we deal with that we *perceive* as being a crisis. What burns us out is often not the situation itself, but our reaction to it. ✓

Source: trainer Jeff Cotton.

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only survive a down cycle, they will thrive when the economy improves. Hunker down, get back to business, and take control of your destiny. You are in good hands ... your own! ✓

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The following are some additional tips:

1. **Get mindless.** The "other side" of work isn't just family time, it also includes other activities that rejuvenate you – sports, fishing, walking, meditating, etc. "Mindless" time isn't a "waste" of time – it's crucial!
2. **Use your calendar.** You schedule lots of work into your life, why are people reluctant to set aside time for other activities? Setting aside time for something automatically makes it more of a priority.
3. **Don't complicate it.** "Quality" time needn't be difficult to pull off. You don't have to schedule elaborate vacations or spend a lot of money. Unstructured time and spontaneous activities are fun and often more memorable. Go for a bike ride, a walk, or anything else that's easy and can be done on the spur of the moment.

4. **Be realistic.** If a stress-reduction technique (meditating, journaling, etc.) isn't already part of your daily routine, it probably won't work to do it each day, at least not right away. Shoot for once or twice a week, at least at first, and build up from there. Remember, even *some* progress represents more than you were doing before!

The pursuit of balance is an admirable goal, but the idea isn't to overload yourself with unrealistic expectations that will only add to pressure. If the pursuit of balance is actually putting you off balance, you must adjust your plan to what works for *you*. ✓

Kerul Kassel is the author of "Productive Procrastination" and "Stop Procrastinating Now." For more information, visit www.procrastivity.com.