

## Our Path to First Choice No. 33

Everyone,

Here is Path Note No. 33. Will April showers bring May flowers this year?

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### Our Path Topic

This week seems to be a good time to take a break from goals, objectives, ADLI, measurement, so on and so on. This time of the school year is a tough and challenging one for all of us. Winter is trying to break into Spring, and we all get cabin fever. This time of the year people get grumpy and cranky about everything. All different members of our team of employees are susceptible to this phenomenon. It isn't the full moon or the stars, but stress. Some scientists say it is the lack of sunshine and clean air.

This Path Topic is about us as WASD's Team. It is a good time to start taking care of yourself and trying to cope with the stresses of testing, end of the year tasks, etc. WASD is trying to look for programs and other services that can be available to staff to help improve our lives. We hope to at least start to see more of that next year. Again, although Relationships is one of our focus points this year, we will continue to work to improve in that area in an ongoing manner.

Sydney J. Harris once said that "The time to relax is when you don't have time for it". So true. Let's look at some tips for working through stressful times.

1. One thing at a time—it is easier to focus and to do a higher quality job. If you have to multi-task a few things during your day then set off some time for that.
2. Write everything down—if your memory is like mine then it might be a bit like a leaky roof. Don't worry about remembering. If you have a phone, put your list in your phone if it's easier.
3. Don't make mountains out of molehills. Don't create extra drama, overthink or create a problem out of something that doesn't matter much.
4. Spend 80% of your time focusing on a solution and only 20% on dwelling on your non-molehill issue or problem. Live less pessimistic and powerless if you focus on solutions.
5. Create better processes. If you continue to look at how you do things and try to improve your process, the "doing" becomes more effective and easier.
6. Be very clear what needs to be completed for the day.
7. Accept that you cannot control everything. Put stress in perspective: is it really as bad as you think?

Okay, now some things on the personal end.

1. Make sure you take time to do what you love to do. If you don't, life becomes more stressful and a chore.
2. For some, it is hard to disconnect over the weekend due to who we are and what we do. Nevertheless, it is healthy to disconnect from your job over the weekend.
3. Try to build an environment zone with as few distractions as possible, your cell phone, email, texting, etc. can add stress to your life.
4. Ask for help, talk things out with people, and do a quality job but not try to be perfect.

5. Breathe, get enough sleep, eat healthy and exercise a few times per week.
6. Maintain a positive attitude.
7. Learn what triggers your anxiety. Write a journal when you're feeling stressed, and look for a pattern.
8. Take a time out, listen to music, meditate, or get a massage (finally someone who rubs us the right way!!).

There are so many variables we deal with each day that some are being worked on for improvement by others, but we see no progress. It can be very stressful. Just know, it is about ongoing improvement, and together we can improve WASD so it is First Choice for everyone. Unfortunately, we have a long path to travel.

Nevertheless, we care about you, and want you here every day. The reason? No matter what you do for the District, you make a difference that impacts our students...and, that's why we are here.

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#### Review for You

- What is anxiety and stress?

#### Events

- The WASD School Board held a meeting last night. An overview of the meeting.
  - PA School Board Association presented their services to the Board.
  - Dr. Sterner-Hine presented an overview of the new Future Ready program of PA.
  - Eric Holtzman and Don Miley presented a Facilities Update
  - A student expulsion was approved.

#### Piece of the Puzzle

- Principals Kelly Musser and Megan McGuire have been nominated for the Piece of the Puzzle this week. Both of these outstanding administrators have a passion of curriculum and instruction and have been facilitating the WASD Curriculum Committee that is composed of 23 secondary and elementary teachers who also share an interest in refining and developing WASD curriculum. We are confident that under their leadership, WASD will continue to make key curriculum changes to help all of our student on their *First Choice* path. If you see these ladies, congratulate them for being the Piece of the Puzzle.

#### Review Answers

- Anxiety and stress are two different things. Stress is frustration and nervousness that we experience almost on a daily basis. Anxiety is fear, unease and worry.

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#### Final Thoughts

- *It's not the load that breaks you down, it's the way you carry it.*—Lou Holtz
- *It's not stress that kills us, it is our reaction.*—Hans Selye
- *No one can create negativity or stress within you. Only you can do that by virtue of how you process your world.*—Wayne Dyer
- *Don't let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.*—John Wooden

- *Stress is basically a disconnection from the earth, a forgetting of the breath. Stress is an ignorant state. It believes that everything is an emergency. Nothing is that important. Just lie down.—Natlaie Goldberg*
- *Stress is not what happens to us. It's our response to what happens.—Marureen Killoran.*

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Have a great rest of the week. Could the end of winter finally be near? Take care!  
Tod