



# *Work Smart Live Smart*

## **Handling Job Stress**

**By**  
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Almost half our waking hours are spent earning a living. For many people, a job provides more than just an income; it is a significant portion of their identity. It can determine their self-worth, their accomplishments, and successes.

It is not surprising then, that many Canadians experience an enormous amount of stress from their workplace. In fact, the Ontario Division of the Canadian Mental Health Association stated that, 43% of Canadians reported feeling overwhelmed by their job. The Conference Board of Canada in 1999 reported that, Canadians are feeling more stress than they did 10 years ago.

Pessimism, dissatisfaction, lowered concentration, decreased motivation, accidents, absenteeism, and poor health are all symptoms of job stress. Lost wages, decreased productivity, and increased medical bills have a negative financial impact on the person, their family, company, and society as a whole. Managing job stress makes sense.

Simple strategies can be employed once the sources of stress have been clearly identified. The top 6 sources of workplace stress tend to be job dissatisfaction, physical conditions, work overload or underload, scheduling, unclear demands or lack of control, and job security. Matching appropriate and positive coping strategies to these sources can help to decrease the stress felt by the person.

A person can best minimize job stress by utilizing a number of different kinds of strategies. Coping strategies should help to decrease the effects of the particular source of stress, while some techniques should be focused directly on personal well-being. These types of strategies could include ensuring 'me' time, eating well, adequate sleep, hobbies, exercise, and/or talking about difficult issues to a confidant.

Many opportunities exist to learn more about stress management. The local library or bookstore has many interesting and informative resources, as well, the internet has all kinds of tidbits around particular sources of stress. Information workshops help to build skills, while learning and sharing with others who may also be dealing with similar issues. More interactive assistance may be received by contacting human resources, a community counselor or therapist, or your family doctor or psychiatrist. Remember, there is never a shortage of solutions, when pointed in the right direction.

Stress and wellness specialist, **Beverly Beuermann-King** translates current research and best practices information into a realistic, accessible and practical approach through her dynamic stress and wellness workshops, on-line articles, e-newsletters and media interviews and through a collaboration called *Awakening The Workplace*. Visit [www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com](http://www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com) for more on Beverly and her wellness work.

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