



Five Stress Busters I Learned From Eating Dark Chocolate

As a life-long learner, I am a voracious reader. My husband claims that I will read anything, which is simply not true. I am a serious business professional and am discerning in my choice of reading materials. For example, I would never consider reading the instruction manual for setting up or installing electronic equipment. Why bother when I can simply push buttons and figure things out that way? I mean really.

I do however make it a point to read the Promises® messages that can be found on the inside of Dove®. The dark chocolate of course because I need to be sure that I get a daily dose of antioxidants which are known to consume those pesky free radicals, culprits in heart disease and other ailments. At least that's what WebMD says about dark chocolate.

1. **Shut out the world for just a moment.** Grab your beverage of choice. Shut your office door. Plug in your iPod. Breathe. If you don't have an office door, any quiet space will do even if you have to sit in your car or hideout in the bathroom. If that's not an option, make a quick phone call to an inspirational work colleague, family member or friend. Just remember to keep it light.
2. **Let your mind wander and dream.** The media is continually bombarding us with negative messages. Don't drink the media's Kool-Aid and assume victim mode. Instead, take time out and let your mind take you wherever it wants to go. You may be amazed at what secret hopes and dreams unfold. Write these down and refer to them. They will help keep you going during tough times.
3. **Do not look back and ask why, look forward and ask, why not?** Sounds a bit Kennedyesque, doesn't it? Remember, you can't change what happened yesterday. If things didn't work out as you hoped, learn from it and move on. Instead, focus on tomorrow and what you can do that will impact your future. Don't forget to think big and incorporate some of your dreams.
4. **Find little ways to make part of your day like a day off.** No, this doesn't mean that you can come to work in your pajamas and slippers. It does mean you can treat yourself to that special coffee, or go for an energizing walk in the morning, or read your book during lunch hour. Life is short and should be lived a little bit everyday. Don't save the best for the weekend.

5. **Think of something that makes you laugh.** Laughter is the best medicine for just about anything. Think you can't find anything to laugh about? Try this. Imagine your boss or the president of your company walking around the office in a Ronald McDonald clown suit with the red wig and big shoes. Okay, if you already think your boss is a clown that may not be funny to you but I think you get the picture.

These are serious times and we all need to find ways to take care of ourselves. I think dark chocolate should be part of everyone's diet. Satisfy a craving, learn a stress busting tip and lower your blood pressure in one fell swoop. What's not to like? Everything in moderation of course.

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