

Reflecting on Job Stress: Navigating Between Adaptation and Transition

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Throughout our professional journeys, we often encounter moments when our strong sense of purpose is aligned with our work, but it is tested by workplace stress or toxic work environments. In these instances, it's common—and sometimes necessary—to pause and reassess detriments and contributors to career sustainability and our well-being. When our sense of purpose collides with the challenges of a high-stress work environment, we're confronted with a crucial decision: do we adapt or transition? Here are some key considerations as you reflect on this dilemma.

Finding Balance Amidst Fulfillment and Stress

At the core of this reflection lies the paradox of finding purpose and fulfillment in our work while grappling with the challenges of stress. When reflecting on this occurrence, we should consider reflecting on the following questions:

- Am I satisfied with the alignment between my work and personal values, or do I find myself feeling overwhelmed by the demands of my work environment?
- What specific stressors do I encounter at work on a daily basis?
- Are any of my identified stressors within or outside of my control?
- Can I readily label my stressors?
- Are there challenges with colleagues or workplace dynamics contributing to my feelings of strain?
- How do these stressors impact my overall well-being inside and outside of work?
- Have my close relationships expressed concern for my well-being due to how my stress manifests?

Considering Options for Navigating Work Stress

As you contemplate the impact of work stress on the quality of your life and the sustainability of your career, consider your options for navigating this dilemma. Are there coping strategies or support systems you can learn or implement to manage stress more effectively? Are there services you can access for support, such as assistance from a mental health professional? Alternatively, is your well-being being impacted to the extent that you should consider a more significant transition, such as leaving your workplace or changing roles or industries to prioritize your well-being? Is making such a transition a viable option? With these reflections in mind, consider the following:

- How can I establish a healthier work-life balance and protect my mental and emotional health?
- Who can I turn to for guidance and support as I navigate this journey?
- Are the perceived stressors based on facts or solely based on my feelings?
- Is my experience with the identified stressors a shared workplace experience among my colleagues and I?

Cultivating Resilience and Renewed Purpose

As you navigate the complexities of job stress, aligning your sense of purpose and career satisfaction, remember that this journey is a continuous process of growth and self-discovery. With these reflections in mind, consider the following:

- How can I cultivate resilience and self-awareness to navigate challenges gracefully and determinedly?
- What values and aspirations guide my decision-making as I strive to find fulfillment in my professional life?

By asking ourselves these probing questions, offering ourselves grace, and embracing the journey of self-reflection, we can navigate the complexities of work stress with clarity, resilience, and a renewed commitment to our resilience and flourishing.