


SHOP TALK

A Bi-Weekly Letter For SONOCO Professionals Working in the Gulf

April 15, 2021

"The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team."

Phil Jackson

"It is literally true that you can succeed best and quickest by helping others to succeed."

Napolean Hill

"If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else."

Booker T. Washington

"Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships."

Michael Jordan

"There is no such thing as a self-made man. You will reach your goals only with the help of others."

George Shinn



National Stress Awareness Month

It seems somehow appropriate that April – a full year since the world began COVID lockdowns – would be devoted to stress awareness.

It's been a trying year for everyone, and although there is hope for a return to "normal", the ongoing effects of stress in our lives has to be recognized and managed. In this issue, we will dig a little deeper into what we can do to reduce our personal stress level, and what we can do to help others.

It's a good time to say thanks to all of you who have struggled along with the entire SONOCO team this year. Lockdowns, tests, infections, quarantines, shutdowns, hurricanes, and more were just a few of the things we all dealt with this past year. Oh, and cancelled flights too!

So, please know that we appreciate each of you for your devotion and personal sacrifice. Thank you!

Bangin Brussels Sprouts!

Yes, we can get them to eat their veggies. This is a flavorful, spicy side dish. Serves 10 – 12

2 lbs Brussels sprouts
¼ cup Cooking oil
¼ Cup Sriracha sauce
½ Cup Thai sweet chili sauce
Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 375 F

- Thaw sprouts and let them drain very well. Cut in half.
- Toss in the oil until coated well; then salt & pepper
- Drizzle on the Sriracha and toss to coat.
- Sheet out on a prepared pan and bake until lightly brown.
- Remove, transfer to a bowl and add the Thai sweet chili sauce. Toss to coat.
- Return to oven for 5 minutes
- Remove and transfer to a serving pan.

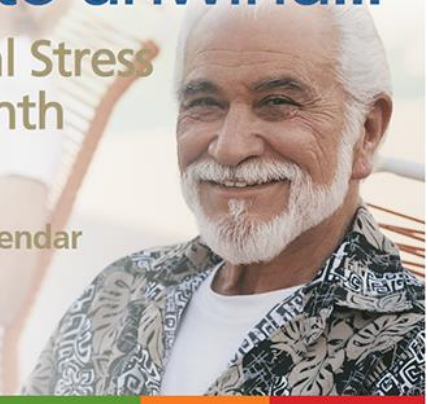


Take time to unwind...

April is National Stress Awareness Month

More information and resources are available online at:

www.FOH.hhs.gov/calendar



Stress can keep you from feeling and performing your best — mentally, physically, and emotionally. But no one's life is completely stress-free. It's important to know how to manage stress in your life. Try these three simple techniques for dealing with it.

1. Positive Self-Talk

Let's be honest, we all talk to ourselves! Sometimes we talk out loud but usually we do it in our heads. Self-talk can be positive ("I can do this" or "everything will be OK") or negative ("I'll never get better" or "I'm so stupid"). Negative self-talk increases stress.

Positive self-talk can help you calm down and control stress. With practice, you can learn to shift negative thoughts to positive ones. For example:

Negative to Positive:

- "I can't do this."> "I'll do the best I can. I've got this."
- "Everything is going wrong." > "I can handle this if I take one step at a time."
"I feel helpless and alone."> "I can reach out and get help if I need it."
- "I can't believe I screwed up. > "I'm human, and we all make mistakes. I can fix it."

To really make it work, practice positive self-talk every day whenever you notice negative thoughts.

2. Top 10 Stress-Stoppers

Stress stoppers are actions to help you defuse stress in the moment. You may need different stress stoppers for different situations, and sometimes it helps to combine them. Here are some ideas:

1. Count to 10 before you speak or react.
2. Take a few slow, deep breaths until you feel your body unclench a bit.
3. Go for a walk, even if it's just to the restroom and back. It can help break the tension and give you a chance to think things through.
4. Try a quick meditation or prayer to get some perspective.
5. If it's not urgent, sleep on it and respond tomorrow.
6. Walk away from the situation for a while and handle it later once things have calmed down.
7. Break down big problems into smaller parts. Take one step at a time, instead of trying to tackle everything at once.
8. Turn on some chill music or an inspirational podcast to help deal with anger or road rage.
9. Take a break to pet the dog, hug a loved one or do something to help someone.
10. Work out or do something active. Exercise is a great antidote for stress.

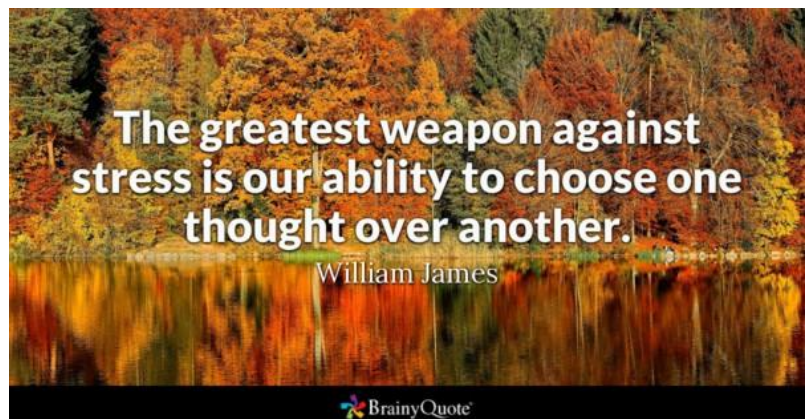
3. Stress-Busting Activities

Doing things you enjoy is a natural way to relieve stress and find your happy place. Even when you're down, you may find pleasure in simple things like going for a walk, catching up with a friend, or reading a good book. When stress makes you feel bad, do something that makes you feel good, even if only for 10 or 15 minutes. Some of these activities may work for you:

- Make art -- draw, color, paint, or play a musical instrument.
- Work on a scrapbook or photo album to focus on good memories.
- Read a book, short story, or magazine.
- Meet a friend for coffee or a meal.
- Play a favorite sport like golf, tennis, or basketball.
- Do a hobby like sewing, knitting, or making jewelry.
- Play with your kids or pets – outdoors if possible.
- Listen to music or watch an inspiring performance.
- Take a walk in nature.
- Take a relaxing bath and feel the stress wash away.
- Meditate or practice yoga.
- Work in the garden or do a home improvement project.
- Go for a run or bike ride to clear your head.

The key is to find your groove and make it a practice. You'll be amazed at how quickly you may start to feel better once you disrupt the cycle of stress.

Source: American Heart Association





A STEAK WITH SIZZLE

We all have our great steak secrets, right? Marinade it for days in Italian dressing, Coke, or some mysterious home brew that we've concocted.

But what do top chefs say is the secret to serving the juiciest steak?

Bobby Flay says to use only salt and pepper and add them just before putting the steaks on the grill.

Anthony Bourdain says we're cooking steak all wrong:

"No one knows how to grill a backyard steak in this country. They cook it too high, but the biggest mistake — what everybody does — is they're poking it all the time, they're jabbing it and poking it, checking to see if it's done inside."

"Let the thing sit, because what's going on inside that unmolested steak is all sorts of magical recirculation of its juices, and it comes out perfect."

What does science tell us?

Let's look at a few (possible) myths:

Let steaks come to room temperature. Myth, as study after study shows. In fact, what we know is this:

Don't leave food out. Ever. It's potentially unsafe. So, keep those steaks nice and cold until you start cooking.

Don't poke and cut the steaks. That one is pretty much true. Leave the juice in the steak. 😊

Don't salt ahead of time. Sort of, but it's not that simple. Salt doesn't just flavor; it's also a preservative, working by drawing the moisture out of cells (which kills bacteria). If you've ever salted a sliced tomato, you'll see it's all wet on the surface shortly afterward. That's the salt doing its thing.

The same applies to a steak. And why does this matter? Meat cells brown at around 310 degrees. Water on a steak's surface boils and turns to steam at 212 degrees, so a wet steak can turn gray and cook through before its surface can brown.

When salt contacts protein, the protein changes shape on a molecular level. In its new form, it can absorb more water than normal and softens. Thus, a salted steak can be juicier and more tender. But salt needs some time to work - about 45 minutes. So, season your steaks about 45 minutes to an hour before you grill them. And how do we prevent those steaks from turning gray?

Just pat the surface dry just before you put it on the grill. And don't overload the grill. That gives you a nice, brown steak with sizzle.

By the way, SONOCO steaks are aged, USDA Choice Black Angus, so you can serve them with a great deal of confidence that our customers will be really happy with them – without home brew marinades.

(reprinted from September 2017 Shop Talk)

Your Hand Knows How to Cook the Perfect Steak

Did you know that you need nothing but your hand to know a steak is cooked to perfection?

Try this next time you cook steaks: Touch the tips of your thumb and index fingers together gently. Now feel the fleshy area at the base of your thumb with the other hand. This is what a rare steak feels like.

Next, move your thumb across to touch the tip of your middle finger. The fleshy area at the base of your thumb now feels just like a medium steak should when it's done.

Finally, to see what a well-done steak should feel like, touch your thumb and ring finger together.

Easy, see?

QUICK TIPS

- ✓ Keep those steaks nice and cold while thawing.
- ✓ About an hour before serving, lightly salt both sides and put back in the cooler.
- ✓ Just before putting on the grill, pat steaks dry.
- ✓ Add a bit of pepper (but remember our customers that may not want any).
- ✓ If you pre-grill, don't overcook, and pat the steak dry again before returning to the grill.

Just Keep Cool!



Thawing food, and especially meats, can be a challenge on many of our job sites. Refrigeration is limited and we often have to thaw in sinks or in other unapproved situations. Yet, we must be sure to thaw food safely, so here are some thoughts to help in these situations:

It is critical to keep the outside of what we are thawing as close to 40° F as we can while we thaw. This helps slow the growth of harmful bacteria during thawing.

The most important thing is to control the temperature around the food.

Thawing in cool, slowly running water is the next best thing to refrigeration. It keeps the meat's exterior cool and also washes away anything that may be on the packaging. It also uses a lot of water and that may cause problems on a location.

If you have a sink that you can spare, this is the best. DON'T use a hand sink, or a sink that's also used for dishes and such. If that's all you have, then on to the next option.

USE A COOLER / ICE CHEST

No, they're not ideal. But they are good for several reasons:

- They can be sanitized
- They keep a cold envelope around the product
- They keep the product covered
- They can be elevated off the floor

If you are critically short of cold storage space to thaw food in a cooler, consider this alternative:

Set up a thaw station:



A 100 qt. cooler is placed on a 7" bus pan (or something similar) to keep the cooler off the floor.

A plastic cooler is best. You don't need a Yeti; a cheap, large cooler will work quite well. In a pinch, a styrofoam chest like we ship product in will work just as well. But line it with a large can liner first. It will prevent leaking (the styrofoam is porous).

Place the food inside with room for air flow. Add some cold water. Change the water every shift.

Don't reuse the styro coolers more than a few times, and sanitize them between uses with Sani-Tyze.

Have enough coolers for a couple of days thaw. Don't overload.

Check with the OIM or Lead to be sure that they are comfortable with this process, and to approve. For a small investment, we can all assure a better way to thaw meats and prevent foodborne illness.

COPING WITH STRESS: WORKPLACE TIPS

- By Mayo Clinic Staff

The workplace is a likely source of stress, but you're not powerless to the effects of stress at work. Effectively coping with job stress can benefit both your personal and professional life. Here's help taking charge.

IDENTIFY YOUR STRESS TRIGGERS

Your personality, experiences and other characteristics all influence the way you respond to and cope with stress. Situations and events that distress your colleagues might not bother you in the least. Or you might be particularly sensitive to certain stressors that don't seem to bother other people.

To begin coping with stress at work, identify your stress triggers. For a week or two, record the events, people, and situations that lead to a negative response. Include a brief description of each event, with details such as:

- Where were you?
- Who was involved?
- What was your reaction?
- How did you feel?

Then evaluate your stress level. You might find obvious causes of stress, such as the threat of losing your job or obstacles with a particular project. You might also notice subtle but persistent causes of stress, such as a long commute or an uncomfortable workspace.

TACKLE YOUR STRESS TRIGGERS

Once you've identified your stress triggers, consider each situation or event and look for ways to resolve it. Suppose, for instance, that you're behind at work because you leave early to pick up your son from school. You might check with other parents or neighbors about an after-school carpool. Or you might begin work earlier, shorten your lunch hour, or take work home to catch up in the evening.

Often, the best way to cope with stress is to find a way to change the circumstances that are causing it.

SHARPEN YOUR TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

In addition to addressing specific stress triggers, it's often helpful to improve time management skills — especially if you tend to feel under pressure at work. For example:

- Set realistic goals. Work with colleagues and leaders to set realistic expectations and deadlines.
- Make a list. Prepare a list of tasks and rank them in order of priority. Throughout the day, scan your master list and work on tasks in priority order.
- Protect your time. For an especially important or difficult project, block time to work on it without interruption. Also, break large projects into smaller steps.

KEEP PERSPECTIVE

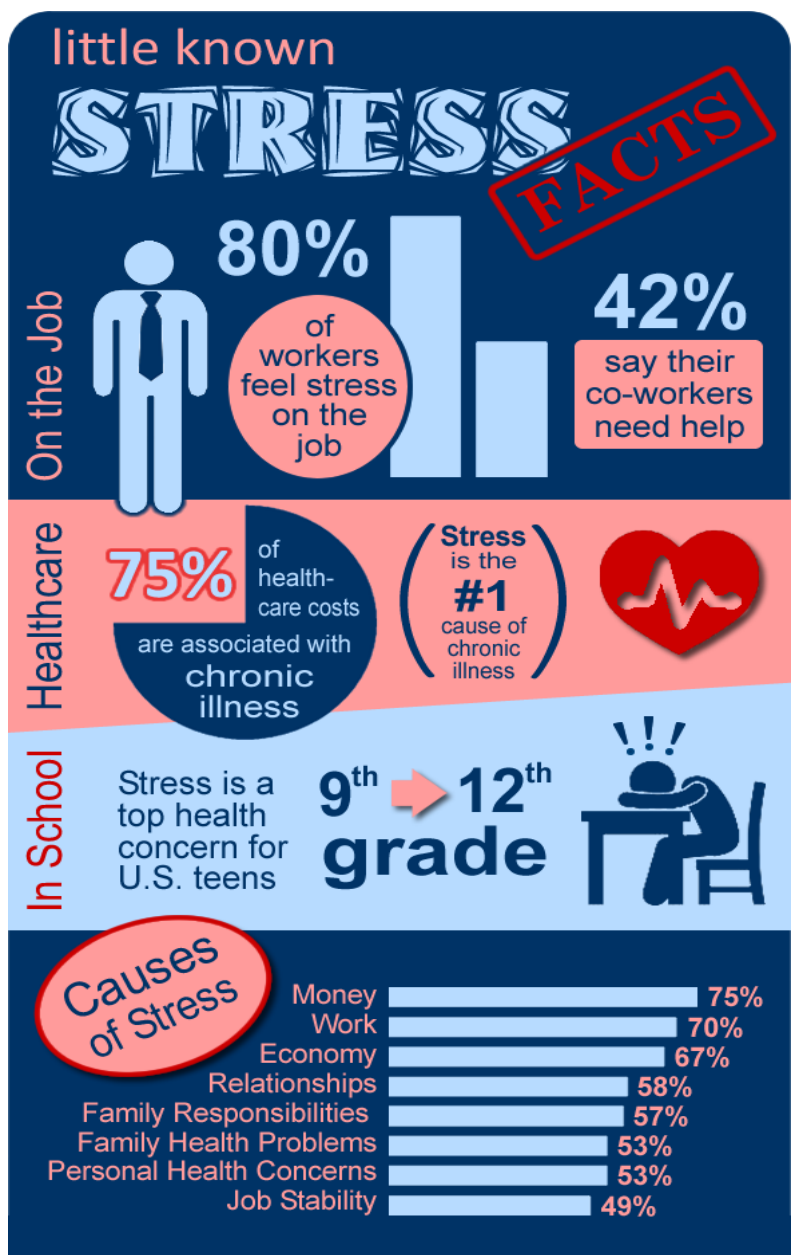
When your job is stressful, it can feel as if it's taking over your life. To maintain perspective:

- Get other points of view. Talk with trusted colleagues or friends about the issues you're facing. They may be able to provide insights for coping. Sometimes simply talking about a stressor can be a relief.
- Take a break. Make the most of workday breaks. Even a few minutes of personal time during a busy workday can be refreshing. Also take breaks from thinking about work, such as not checking your email at home in the evening or choosing times to turn off your cellphone at home.

- Have an outlet. To prevent burnout, set aside time for activities you enjoy — such as reading, socializing, or pursuing a hobby.
- Take care of yourself. Be vigilant about taking care of your health. Include physical activity in your daily routine, get plenty of sleep and eat a healthy diet.

KNOW WHEN TO SEEK HELP

If none of these steps relieves your feelings of job stress or burnout, consult a mental health provider. Through counseling, you can learn effective ways to handle job stress.



THIBODAUX RETIRES

Boudreaux picked Thibodeaux up for work every day. One morning Thibodeaux didn't answer so Boudreaux left without him. On his way out, he noticed Thibodeaux out in his cow pasture just standing there with his hands in his pockets.

On his way home from work Thibodeaux was in the same spot. Boudreaux didn't think much of it until the next morning. Thibodeaux didn't answer again so he went on down and there he was still in the middle of the pasture. This got the best of Boudreaux, so he stopped to see what had gotten into his friend.

"Hey Thib, you gonna go to work bruh?"

"Nah cuz, I'ze retired."

"Retired!?" Boudreaux asked shocked.

"Mey oui, Boudreaux, I'm gonna win dat dere Nobel prize...it's a million dollars."

"How you plannin on gettin dat, Thibodeaux?" Boudreaux asked scratching his head.

"Well, turns out Boudreaux, da last fella that won it... dey sez he was outstandin' in his field."

A BETTER BURGER (Battle of the Bulge)

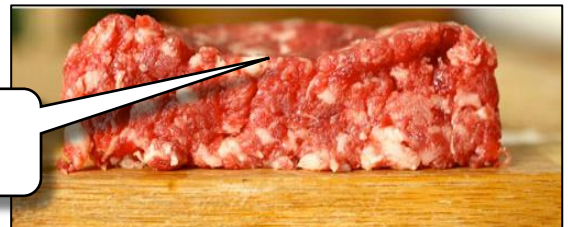
It starts with the patty. Whether you're making hamburger steak or just a good burger on a bun, try these tips for the best looking, best tasting patty.

- Don't overwork the meat. It makes it tough. Great for meatballs. Burgers? Not so much.
- Pre-measure – or weigh - your portions before you shape the patties.
- Press from the center out to the edges, making a "dimple" in the middle.
- Seasoning? Salt and Pepper. That's all you need.

Do this :
press into
the center of
the patty to
create the
"dimple".



Results in this
(dimple)



And prevents
this. The Egg
Burger.

Please Help
Stamp out
Egg Burgers

