

Working Smarter, Not Harder

Most of us have been taught since childhood, that to get ahead, we must work hard. You may recall such sayings as "no pain, no gain," or "the early bird catches the worm."

Hard work is not a bad thing in itself. However, it can become unproductive when life becomes an endless struggle. When this happens, it is hard to retain a positive outlook and expect life to get easier or to sometimes be able to enjoy the fruits of one's labor due to an endless pursuit of "I'll enjoy life, when ..."

Sometimes, people find themselves struggling only to pay the bills. Some unsatisfied people work in jobs they have had all of their life and never got the chance to explore careers that would better suit them based on their talents, skills, and values. When this is the case, this makes a person unhappy, dreading getting out of bed to go to work in the morning, or finding themselves resentful at a boss, themselves or life in general.

Some people may feel they have lost their creativity and don't feel in touch with themselves or with life. Maybe your current job or career doesn't allow you to take advantage of all of your skills and talents. Perhaps it doesn't align with your values.

As our economy currently stands, it is difficult to change jobs or find new employment. However, if you are feeling unsettled in your job or aspects of your job, you may wish to create a different or more positive outlook. For example, ask yourself in what ways your job fulfills you (finding gratitude), or if there are ways that you can streamline your duties or responsibilities (increasing productivity), or reaching out to get to know a fellow team member or assisting them (appreciating others and yourself).

Anything you can do to notice a positive difference can improve your outlook on your current circumstances.

If you feel it difficult to create a fresh perspective in your current job, you may also wish to consider becoming involved with an organization or donate to a cause that aligns with your beliefs and values.

If you are unsure of what to become involved with, write down what you value as well as your positive attributes. What makes you feel good about yourself? List those positive traits that a former teacher, a parent, or a friend have complimented you on over the years.

You may consider taking up a new or old hobby that brings you joy, or volunteering for a cause that you believe in or even using your talents to build or create something for a friend, family member, neighbor, or someone in need.

Once you feel that you have made a difference in the lives of others, you may feel a sense of hope or purpose and feel better about yourself as a result. You might also experience a fresh outlook on your current job or career and find yourself feeling more productive or optimistic, looking for new ways to

use your skills and talents, or even opening up to the positive aspects of your job or yourself that you may have previously overlooked.

As this new appreciation blossoms, you begin to adopt and "attitude of gratitude" and life feels less like a struggle.

GARY BREUER, MA, LPC



My private practice is located in North Scottsdale, within the offices of PsychArizona. I work with children (ages 6 and older), pre-teens, adolescents and adults. I work with individuals, couples and families with issues of anxiety, depression, trauma, grief and loss, career, academic and workplace issues, relationship issues, LGBT concerns, personal growth and spirituality.

I use various therapeutic approaches depending on the needs of the client. These approaches include developmental, humanistic, cognitive-behavioral, existential, family-systems, mindfulness-based, transpersonal, and EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing). EMDR is a model used for the treatment of trauma, and has also been found to be successful in the treatment of various other disorders as well.

I have experience providing professional counseling in clinical, business, and school settings.

Apart from my private practice, I am also a Reiki Master and have a great appreciation and respect for alternative as well as conventional treatment approaches.

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