

# BeyondNumbers

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BRITISH COLUMBIA

## Reducing Stress—It Takes Mind, Body, and Heart

**Editor:** In anticipation of spring, which we know is a particularly stressful season for many of you, here's a brief refresher about keeping your stress in check. **Maureen Fitzgerald** is a lawyer, speaker, and conflict and collaboration expert. The author of four books, including *Mission Possible—Creating a Mission for Work and Life* (Quinn) and *Hiring, Managing and Keeping the Best* (McGraw Hill), Fitzgerald is dedicated to helping organizations, teams, and individuals have "fierce conversations" to resolve conflict and create collaborative cultures. See the box below for details about her upcoming seminar hosted by the Women CA Group.

**We cannot change the wind, but we can adjust our sails.**

—Anonymous

If you're trying harder and harder to reduce the stress in your life but it doesn't seem to be working, you're not alone. Stress seems to have reached epic proportions, as research indicates that only approximately 2% of the population thinks their lives are in balance. Moreover, recent research from Health Canada reveals that Canadians are suffering from a serious decrease in job satisfaction and organizational commitment, compounded by a significant increase in job stress and absenteeism. The direct cost of high work-life conflict is estimated at somewhere in the range of three to five billion dollars annually.

So why is a stress-free—or even stress-reduced—life so elusive?

Over the last few years, I've come to realize that fundamental change must occur on three

basic levels: mind, body, and heart. In other words, we must: a) determine what changes are necessary; b) adopt habits to bring about desired changes; and c) commit to these changes.

Here are some specific strategies:

### Level 1: Mind – Describe your ideal life

The first step in achieving a stress-reduced life is to define what this means to you. This definition is yours and yours alone. Try to recall the last time you had a reasonably balanced life. What did it look like? What were you doing? What made it so great? Now think of times when your life was out of balance. What did it look like? What made it so terrible? Now, write out your definition.

### Level 2: Body – Eat, sleep, and be merry

In my presentations I urge audiences to "eat, sleep, and be merry." To reduce stress, you must, at the very minimum, eat well, sleep and take breaks, and enjoy an active life. Eating well usually involves being more aware of what you put into your body and trying to eat healthier foods at more regular intervals. Sleeping well and taking breaks means sleeping at least six hours a night and getting the relaxation you need to rejuvenate your body. And being merry means doing activities that bring you joy.

### Level 3: Heart – Adopt positive beliefs and values

In order to make long-lasting change you must also shift at the level of "heart." This relates to motivation, which is driven by hidden beliefs and values that can either propel you into action or prevent you from even starting. Without the proper beliefs, your efforts will never be fully effective. For example, many professionals believe they must work 60+ hours a week in order to succeed. Such beliefs, if not addressed, can drive you to keep working long

hours despite any intentions you may have to the contrary. Try replacing these beliefs with more constructive ones: for instance, "Being happy and healthy is critical to my personal and professional success." In short: If your beliefs do not support your goal to live a balanced life, they must be challenged.

If you truly wish to live with less stress and more balance, you must create change at all three levels: mind, body, and heart. Do something about balance today. After all, if not now, when?

## Mission Possible

(as mentioned in January mailing)

**Date:** Thursday, February 17, 2005

**Time:** 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

**Place:** Hyatt Regency  
655 Burrard Street,  
Vancouver, BC

**Cost:** \$50/person. Includes hors d'oeuvres, coffee/tea, and a copy of *Mission Possible* (\$19.95 value)

**Please register by Friday, February 14, 2005**

To reserve your seat, mail a cheque payable to the **Women CA Group** with your name and email or contact number to the following:

**Alison Fuller, CA**

c/o BC Securities Commission  
PO Box 10142, Pacific Centre  
701 West Georgia Street  
Vancouver, BC V7Y 1L2

For further information, please contact:  
Alison Fuller (604) 899-6801 or email:

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Evelyn Lee (604) 899-3594 or email:

[evelyn.lee@ca.ey.com](mailto:evelyn.lee@ca.ey.com)

### MISSING MEMBERS

We're trying to locate the following members. If you know of their whereabouts, please contact **Reba Pat** in member records at [pat@ica.bc.ca](mailto:pat@ica.bc.ca).

Mr. Keppel C. Boulton, CA  
Mr. Denis V. Burnett, CA  
Mr. John R. Ducharme, CA  
Mr. William R. Fairgrieve, CA  
Mr. A. Robert Godwin, CA  
Mr. Alan M. Jones, CA  
Mr. Alan R. Laing, CA

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