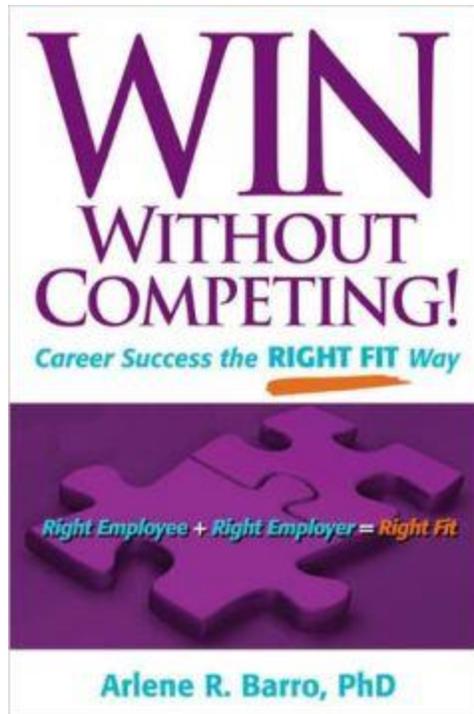


Conquering Stress! With Dr. Arlene — Changing Standards Cause Stress



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By Dr. Arlene Barro

Remember Barbara Walters and her “fascinating people”? I am fascinated by standards and their impact on stress. Here is why.

Adhering to Standards

We have written and unwritten standards. As an example, traffic laws are written but many people don't comply. How many drivers have you seen cruising through stop signs and looking at pedestrians as nuisances? The driver is self-absorbed and looks through the “me lens” to view the world. Crossing the street is stressful. Pedestrians understand driver behavior. They cannot make the assumption that the driver will obey the stop sign, nor can anyone else on the road make that assumption.

We start recording unwritten standards in our brain when we are children. Our parents plant those standards. They say, “Be honest. Don't cheat on a test at school.” Even siblings plant standards. I remember my brother telling me, “nice people finish last,” which implied a standard to me. I knew that my father would disagree, and I deleted my brother's advice from my head.

Ideally, we learn how to filter standards and continue to do this throughout our adult life. We can then take a core standard and transfer the concept to create other standards. Unfortunately, we have a significant potential source of stress: others do not subscribe to our set of standards and we clash. What then? Set the standard.

Impact of Declining Standards

Human behavior has dramatically changed since the rise of the internet and social media. The internet is flooded with shoppers who want to save time and money. Many may not be sticking to their standards and willing to sacrifice quality to avoid traffic and parking issues, thereby eliminating stress.

The brick and mortar stores are searching for sales. Can the large expensive malls survive using their current marketing strategies?

What should the stand-alone Beverly Hills stores do? Will Mayor Bosse's B.O.L.D. short-term initiative scheduled for the month of August on Rodeo and Cañon lure visitors away from the large struggling shopping malls? Are longer hours a solution? To maximize profitability, the stand-alone stores in Beverly Hills as well as the shopping malls need new marketing models to broadcast their brands to WIN Without Competing.

If the current marketing models and brands continue with lower profitability margins, in-store service will suffer. Self-service in expensive stores will not work. Customers who want personal service will experience lower standards which will cause them stress. Solution. Turn to the internet?

Social media has had a profound impact on human interaction, which includes brain hacking as discussed on *60 Minutes*, Sunday, June 11. For many, empathy is a lost human feeling. The decline in humanness is the result of spending hours a day interacting on social media leading to feelings of isolation that cause significant stress. Social media can become an addiction. Can you kick the habit and restore your humanness? Certainly, a standard worth the fight. Watch your verbal skills gradually return. Yes, isolation has a significant impact on verbal skills.

Set the Standard

Florence Ajamian, age 100, featured on the front page of the *Beverly Hills Courier*, May 19 edition sets the standard. Every day, with a smile on her face, she continues to work at Stop Cancer. What fascinates me is that Ajamian said it is not until recently that she started thinking about her age. Why? She has been too busy to think about the past. Perhaps that strategy has helped her keep her stress low. She is not yearning for the higher societal standards she experienced in her earlier life. Think about how you can set the standard.

Upcoming seminar: Conquering Stress With Dr. Arlene Ignites Success, on June 20 or July 18. See more on the Conquering Stress page at www.winwithoutcompeting.com

Questions? Email drbarro@barroglobal.com Responses may appear in her next column.

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