



4 Tips to Cope with Overwhelm

In a world of get-it-done, stay-connected, and do-it-now, it's easy to get on a treadmill of life. Regardless of your plan, you may find unexpected demands pulling you in many directions. For whatever reason, you may feel like you need to put in more hours.

At some point, you begin to feel overwhelmed. I've not only been there, I've gotten what I believe to be messages along the way that serve as reminders to slow down, such as the computers going down and even health challenges. Can you relate?

I've come to realize that when there is an interruption to the flow, it's a message that's something is off track. If you've ever gotten the flu during an especially busy schedule, you know what I mean. Whether it is your health or your computer crashes, there's an interruption.

Over the years, I've learned a few things that have served me and a number of my go-getter clients not only prevent overwhelm but keep an improved flow to life:

Be Committed to Serving Yourself. "You must first serve yourself to sustainably serve others." This is something I've often said especially to those of you who have a tendency to put yourself last. You know who you are. Whether you're not reserving time for your exercise, not setting boundaries, or being the "yes" person, you can easily get caught up serving everyone else but yourself. It takes a commitment to take care of yourself first. I used to put off exercising until I made the commitment to myself. Now it's the first appointment on my calendar and part of a daily routine.

Build Downtime in Your Schedule. First, have a plan and schedule your plan. Second, as you plan out your schedule, build down time for those activities that bring you joy. Simplify things by keeping only one calendar. One calendar allows you to prioritize what's most important. You will also be able to easily determine what needs to fall off.

Drop Activities that Zap your Energy. Let your feelings be your guide. If you're feeling resentful by investing time with a networking group where you aren't getting referrals (and you're always giving them) or spending time listening to colleagues complain, your feelings may be telling you it's time to move on. It's amazing what opens up for you when you let go of an activity or a relationship that no longer energizes you.

Delegate. For perfectionists of the world, this is a challenge. While you may think only you can do it best, you are denying someone else an opportunity to learn when you do everything yourself. Being the bottleneck serves no one, including you. You might have to create boundaries when delegating, too. If you delegate something and it's not done to specifications or standards, you may have to send it back a couple of times before it gets done correctly. This is the learning process of delegating: for you and for them. Remember, what seems in the short term like it would have been easier if you did it yourself, with a little bit of patience, will lead to long-term gains for everyone. You learn how to set clear expectations and they learn a new skill.

The next time you're feeling overwhelmed, take out these tips and do a self check. Before you know it, you'll conquer (and prevent) overwhelm while creating the desired flow in your life and in your business. Do you have a tip that has worked for you? Share it!

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