



The OSUAP Connection

Issue #23

October 26, 2017

Know an Admin who is
new to OSU?

Please forward this
Newsletter to her or him!

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"Pessimism leads to weakness, optimism to power." – William James, American philosopher and psychologist.

OSUAP Goals

- ◆ Encourage professional development
- ◆ Develop leadership skills
- ◆ Network with peers

Special Notes:

- 2018 Benefits Open Enrollment Nov. 1-14 ([More Info HERE!](#))
- Bucks For Charity Runs through Nov. 30! Please choose what is important to you and [Pledge Now!](#)
- Happy Halloween! 
- Bi-Monthly OSUAP Meeting: Paper & Bytes [Register Here](#)—Nov. 17

Feeling Good Works: Why Optimism Injects New Life into Productivity by Laura Stack

Pessimism is trending nowadays; the old can-do Horatio Alger attitude has been deemed old fashioned. Of course, some segment of the populace has always found it fashionable to sneer at the "naive," but the ranks of the disaffected have swollen in recent years due to the disappointment of the Great Recession, a long-static job-market, and the failure of the old employer/employee social contract. And that's understandable.

But any assumption that most modern workers, especially the up-and-coming Millennial generation, are simply unwilling to work hard is simply *not true*; and it's a mistake to ever think otherwise. Now more than ever, workers want to feel like what they do matters. They want to enjoy what they do for a living; and they're willing to reach for just about any tool to achieve it, including applying the power of optimism to their own work—and their team's. **Idealism may be**

something the workplace grinds out of you, but you don't have to let optimism go with it.

In fact, optimism can inject new life into your productivity efforts—and it's proven to work. [Some observers](#) claim up to 75% of all success is based on job optimism. Even if that's an—ahem—*optimistic* estimate, reasonable, eyes-wide-open optimism still boosts productivity; how can it not, when you're always seeking the silver lining?

My father used to describe me as "bright-eyed and bushytailed." I like to think of that as my default state and believe it boosts my productivity. Here's why:

1. **Positivity is contagious.** When you maintain an optimistic attitude, you cheer people up and improve your social connections. Think about it: is it easier to work with the churlish curmudgeon or the smiling optimist? Optimism doesn't mean you're a pushover or you believe you can do anything; it

just makes it easier to get things done because people appreciate your pleasant nature.

2. **Optimistic people are physically healthier.** You can't do your best work when you're feeling ill, tired, or worn out. Several long-term, large studies have shown that people who do their best to remain optimistic—whether it's a natural thing, or they're deliberately trying—[stay healthier overall](#), and find it [easier to cope with health issues](#) that do occur.

3. **If you feel optimistic, you do better work.** Positive thought energizes you, making it easier to push through difficulties and disappointments. This is especially true if you know you and your team are all in it together and are all willing to do what it takes to reach your goals.

(Continued on page 4)



'Stressed out' is no way to live

By Bernadette Mazurek Melnyk

Stress is a normal physiological response to exciting, challenging or unexpected events. We all face stressors every day: busy schedules, relationship problems, traffic jams and even positive challenges such as a new job assignment.

During a stressful event, our bodies release a rush of adrenaline and cortisol into the bloodstream to ignite our "fight or flight" systems. These hormones help us react quickly in response to stress by spiking our blood pressure, elevating our blood sugar, and increasing our heart rate and blood pressure.

While being in such a state is good for addressing the source of our stress, too much of it can have negative effects on our bodies and minds. Prolonged increases in adrenaline and cortisol levels are linked to a multitude of serious health problems, including heart attack, stroke, high blood pressure, depression, anxiety, immune system suppression, memory loss and weight gain.

If you're feeling stressed regularly or for prolonged periods, it's time to take stock and take action to safeguard your health. The good news is that relieving your stress and minimizing its effects on your well-being takes just a few steps each day. The results are worth it.

Start a journal. Keep track of stress symptoms you're experiencing daily, such as anxiety, irritability, trouble sleeping or concentrating, or habits like nail biting or overeating. Make a list of what might be causing you the most stress and ways you might reduce or avoid that stressor. Sometimes a counterintuitive answer is best;

you might choose a route to work that takes longer but is less stressful to drive. Setting aside a little extra time to identify and avoid stress triggers is worth it! Journaling about stressful events also can help release tension.

Positive thinking: Even if you can't control the events that trigger stress, you can control your response to them, beginning with your thoughts. How you think affects how you feel and how you behave. With awareness and practice, you can start to recognize patterns of negative thinking and replace them with positive thoughts. That, in turn, will change your behavior and how you feel. For instance, as you start paying attention to how you feel, you might notice that interacting with a particular co-worker causes you stress. Perhaps when you see him you automatically think, "Oh no, it's going to be trouble!" Once you've identified this trigger, you can decide ahead of time to tell yourself, "I can handle this interaction well." Reading a positive book just five minutes every morning also can ward off negativity during the day. The result: less stress, happier you.

Physical activity: Any activity such as running, walking, swimming or yoga is great for reducing cortisol buildup. If you're short on time, stretch your muscles with a resistance band for a few minutes, go for a short walk or learn a few simple yoga postures you can do anywhere.

Stay in the present moment. Worry about the future and guilt about things in the past can cause stress. Learn to stay in the present moment by chewing a piece of gum and counting the number of chews it takes before the gum runs out of flavor. The book *The Present* by Spencer Johnson is a great quick read that teaches the value of learning to live in the present moment.

Meditation can calm your mind and ease anxious, negative thoughts. Even a few minutes of visualizing a calm environment can release tension. You can find apps and recordings that guide you through meditations of varying lengths, too.

Proprioceptive (body awareness) techniques are calming, too. Try leaning against a wall, or



simply pressing your palms together. These moves give your mind a reassuring sense of where your body is positioned in space.

Sleep: Get at least seven hours a night to refresh your mind and allow your body to repair and heal itself.

Breathing exercises can help to slow down heart rate and decrease blood pressure. Try this: Breathe in through your nose for a slow count of five, then out through your mouth for a slow count of five. On the inhale, think to yourself, "I am calm"; on the exhale, think, "I am blowing all stress out." Just a few minutes of deep breathing can calm both your physiological and mental states.

Get help. If you are feeling overwhelmed and it is making it hard for you to function normally, it is time to get help. There is nothing to be embarrassed about. Mental health professionals can help you strengthen your coping skills and find relief.

We may not be able to avoid all stressful situations, but we can cope more positively with stress if we get moving, get it out and let it go. You'll feel more relaxed, healthier and maybe even ready for new challenges of the good sort!

Bernadette Mazurek Melnyk is the university's chief wellness officer, vice president for health promotion and College of Nursing dean.

Upcoming Important Dates

11/10/2017	Veterans Day (observed) (Offices Closed)
11/17/2017	Bi-Monthly OSUAP Meeting: Paper & Bytes (Completely Revamped) Register Here
11/23-24/2017	Thanksgiving Day (Offices Closed) - Columbus Day (observed) (Offices Closed)

Things Have To Change by Michelle Woodward



The more I live this life the more I am sure that in order to get anything I have to be willing to let some things go. Sometimes what I need to let go feels very precious – until I release it and realize that what shows up afterward is even better. I often tell a parable to illuminate this point:

Let's say you're walking down the road one day, completely minding your own business, carrying a gold coin held tightly in each fist because they're the only gold coins you've ever had and you want to keep them safe. And, as you're walking down the road, minding your own business, you happen to meet the leprechaun at the end of the rainbow, sitting by his pot of gold.

He says, in his best Lucky Charms voice: "Good day to you! Dip your hands into this here cauldron of shining gold coins and you can keep whatever you can hold."

Now is the moment of decision for you.

Do you hold tightly to the two gold coins you have – hey, they're a sure thing! – and

try to scoop with closed fists? How much gold do you think you can gather when your hands are closed?

Or, do you open your fists – maybe losing your two precious gold coins – so you can use your open hands to gather as much as you could manage?

I know myself and I know that I would, without hesitation, make my hands as big as they could be and attempt to scoop up twenty or thirty gold pieces – even if I ended up losing the two I came in with. This is probably why I've been able to keep my business running since 1997 – I have a high tolerance for risk and for not knowing how things will turn out.

[The truth is I generally assume things are going to turn out all right and you know what? They almost always do.]

However, if you have a high need for certainty, control, comfort – well, you might just tip your hat to the leprechaun and keep walking down the road. Because, for you, the assurance of your two gold coins matters more than the risk of losing them.

And this is where people get stuck. The proverbial bird in the hand. The demon you know. The at-least-I-know-what-to-expect.

The comfortable.

For all of us, though, there are times when the comfortable becomes uncomfortable. When the demon you know becomes a demon who's destroying you. When the bird in your hand flies away. When the rules change abruptly or no longer apply.

And those are the moments when you have to – **must** – let go.

It's so hard. It can change your definition of yourself. It can hurt.

But to become unstuck – to be happy and fulfilled – you must let go of those two gold coins you've been clutching in your tight little fists for so long, and begin to claim the treasure that's being offered you.

Open your heart and mind. [Rethink your assumptions.](#) Allow your open hands to scoop as much as you can hold.

I promise you – it's right here for the taking.

Michele Woodward is the author of several books and has appeared as an expert in The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, Harvard Business Review, PsychologyToday.com and other key outlets. She's a sought-after speaker, leads workshops and classes around the country, and writes a [popular blog](#).

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THE OSUAP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Effective Sept. 1, 2016

President: Tricia Hohl
Vice-President: Quanetta Batts
Secretary: Peggy Rader
Treasurer: Brian Keller
Membership Chair: Roxann Damron
Member-at-Large: Matt Sikora
Immediate Past President: Elaine Pritchard

Have suggestions for the Newsletter?

Want to share some good news?

Let us know!

Email: [Michelle Pennington](mailto:Michelle.Pennington@osu.edu)
Chair, Communications Work Group

Please be sure to submit suggestions by the 1st of each month to be included in the Newsletter!

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<http://u.osu.edu/osuap>
Columbus, Ohio 43210



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Make YOURSELF a priority for a change.
~ Joan Burge



A Little Bit About: Ohio State University Administrative Professionals (OSUAP) Work Groups—Interested Individuals for Communications Work Group

We are looking for anyone interested in participating in the Communications Work Group. Have you decided to Join?

Please email [Michelle Pennington](mailto:Michelle.Pennington@osu.edu) to be listed as a member and receive all the current info about the Communications Work Group. We will be meeting on **Nov. 30 at 2:00 P.M. at 650 Ackerman Road, Suite 100—CR 100R.**

We'll share more about OSUAP and what's going on behind the scenes in our next newsletter!

Click [here](#) if you would like to join OSUAP!

(FEELING GOOD Continued from page 1)

4. Optimism prevents depression. Positive emotions broaden and build rather than tear down what you've accomplished. Sometimes something must be torn down and disposed of before you can start anew, but most of the time, it's a waste—especially when you're talking about the goodwill and positive human relationships that take so long to build. The result? When things are bad, you get more depressed. If you can maintain optimism even in the worst of situations, you can at least minimize that destructive depression

5. Optimism increases curiosity, sparking creativity. As the *Harvard Business Review* points out, [positive work cultures are more productive](#). Not surprisingly, cutthroat work cultures, as encouraged by the Great Recession, generate destructive stress and strain destroying not just individual health, but the health of the team, straining ties necessary to move ahead productively. Positive companies where everyone cares about and looks out for each other, and who share an optimistic vision of the future? Not so much. Their employee healthcare costs are about 50% less than those of high-pressure companies. According to the American Psychological Association, high-pressure jobs cost the economy [about \\$500 billion](#) a year.

Smiles, Everyone, Smiles

We all have our bad days, but no one has them

constantly. Rather than deliberately feeding a bad vibe or letting yourself spiral downward because you think you're too busy or don't care, take the time to take a good look at the world and, as the song says, "ac-cen-tu-ate the positive." Is it really so hard to smile?

Laura Stack, MBA, CSP, CPAE is an award-winning keynote speaker, bestselling author, and noted authority on productivity and performance.



Contact Laura Stack directly when you need commentary, tips, or perspective on workplace and performance issues at Laura@TheProductivityPro.com or 303-471-7401. Widely regarded as one of the leading experts in the field of productivity, Laura has been featured in the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *Fast Company*, *Entrepreneur*, and *Forbes* magazine.

Laura blogs at [The Productivity Pro](#), [the Huffington Post](#), [the Business Journal](#), and [LinkedIn](#). Laura has provided 3rd party influencer and spokesperson services for organizations such as Microsoft, Dannon, *beVita*, 3M, Skillsoft, Fellowes, Office Depot, Day-Timer, and Xerox.

Laura is a current spokesperson on productivity, office organization, and shredding for Fellowes. For more information, visit www.Fellowes.com.

Click here for a listing of articles featuring quotes and advice from Laura: <http://theproductivitypro.com/laura-articles>

Association for Staff and Faculty Women (ASFW) Membership Recruiting Event

Friday, Dec 8, 2017 - 12 to 1:00pm

Overview

Learn about the benefits of being an ASFW member! During this informative session, ASFW

board members will provide the perks to joining our dynamic organization. *Light snacks will be provided.*

www.asfwohiostate.org

Flexible Work Policy edited to incorporate information about taking classes: Opportunities Abound so take advantage of these two benefits!

Ohio State supports flexible work arrangements to achieve a productive, predictable and stable work environment that enables staff to balance work and personal needs, including taking classes at Ohio State.

[Flexible Work Policy 6.12](#) outlines all types of flexible work arrangements and the process for establishing a flexible work schedule. It has been edited to include information about taking a class during normal business hours. Enrollment in Credit Programs Policy 2.35, which previously included this information, is being retired.

The process for taking a class during normal

business hours remains the same, including meeting performance expectations and completing the form [Request for Course Enrollment During Regularly Scheduled Work Hours](#) for approval prior to registering for the class, but the content is now included in the Flexible Work Policy.

If you are interested in establishing a flexible work arrangement, review the policy and work with your supervisor.

Learn more about [Flexible Work Policy 6.12](#) and [Faculty and Staff Tuition Assistance](#).