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**How to Be More Focused**

**RETURN OF THE JEDI**  
**A Dad, a Son & Star Wars**

**Teens Learn to Take**  
**Charge of Their Lives**

# mindful

taking time for what matters

## Eileen Fisher

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Designer on Why Kindness  
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**HOW'S THE WEATHER?** See if you can find something to enjoy about it even if it isn't ideal. What's the deal with "ideal" weather, anyway? Find more on Twitter @mindinterrupter

## Office Space

**When it comes to work, a lot of us are** not exactly satisfied these days. So says a Gallup report called *State of the American Workplace*, which surveyed 150,000 full- and part-time workers and found some staggering results: only 22% of those polled reported being engaged and thriving in their workplace, while a whopping 70% identified themselves as either "not engaged" or "actively disengaged."

Of course, there are always factors beyond our control: horrible bosses, difficult coworkers, poorly organized workplaces. But in a slow economy, leaving may not always be an option.

"I think many people are feeling a lack of choice right now," says Jeremy Hunter, who teaches in the MBA program at the Peter F. Drucker School of Management in Claremont, California. "Add to that, we're living with the fallout of years of downsizing. One person is doing multiple jobs, which is creating a chronic level of stress."

So what's the best way to make the most of your current situation?

When it comes to stress of any kind, Hunter suggests mindfulness techniques to help improve things. Here are ways to get back in the driver's seat when it comes to your 9 to 5:

**Skill #1:** Learn how to watch your own emotional responses. We can change the way we deal with situations we don't have control over. "Your organizational environment may not be particularly healthy, but you can be," Hunter says. Recognizing and acknowledging what you're really dealing with at work is an important first step.

**Skill #2:** Learn to relax. When stress is hitting you daily, the idea of relaxation may seem impossible. "But taking time for yourself is absolutely key," says Hunter. That doesn't mean you have to take a three-week vacation. Stress relief is as close at hand as a few five-minute pauses throughout your day where you are quiet and reflective, just being in the moment.

**Skill #3:** Take into account that if you're stressed out at work, others in your organization probably are as well. That doesn't mean cutting others more slack than you allow for yourself, but it does mean learning how to lower reactivity and raise responsiveness. In stressful atmospheres things can escalate, but they don't have to. Any of us can opt to be the first to dial it down. ●

**70%**  
of American employees polled say they're "not engaged" at work



### OVERHEARD

"There's the very real danger that 'succeeding' will take up your whole life, while the big questions go untended. Do the ambitious things... but as you do, to the extent that you can, err in the direction of kindness."

—Novelist **George Saunders'** advice to the Syracuse University class of 2013

## This Bread is Priceless

**With 1,700 locations across** the country, bakery-cafe Panera Bread is one of the biggest restaurant success stories of the past decade. But CEO Ron Shaich says it's the company's five Panera Cares outlets—the pay-what-you-can cafes that provide job training for at-risk youth—that give added meaning to the for-profit business.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture reports that one in six Americans struggles to afford food. When Shaich realized the extent of the problem, he was inspired to do something that went beyond simply donating to food banks. "There's something about the physical experience of actually doing something to help that's different from just writing a check," he says.

The first Panera Cares cafe opened in Clayton, Missouri, in 2010. It had everything you'd find in any Panera Bread—except the cash register. Instead, a donation box sat on the counter with a sign telling customers: "Take what you need, leave your fair share." Customers could also donate an hour of work in lieu of payment.

Four more cafes have opened since then. They're

operated by Panera's nonprofit foundation, with the goal of each cafe generating enough donations to cover direct costs. Dozens of at-risk young people have graduated from the job-training program to paid positions at Panera Bread.

Panera Cares has served more than a million customers while navigating the challenges that come with such an unorthodox business model. It has taken a while to educate customers about pricing, and staff members who have experienced tough times themselves initially got upset when apparently well-off customers skimped on their donations.

Shaich says his staff went through a lot of emotional ups and downs when they saw people who didn't need the money take advantage of a good thing. But gradually people came to see that for every one who scammed the system, "there were many more good people who touched you with their generosity."

According to Shaich's records, on average, 60% of Panera Cares customers pay the suggested price, 20% pay more, and 20% pay less. ●



Panera Bread CEO Ron Shaich talks with an employee at the Panera Cares Cafe in Boston.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID ELMES

## Contact

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## What Have People Who've Worked With Me Said?

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"In more than thirty years, I have never seen this group this attentive for so long. It was a testament to both your content and your presentation skills. Well done."

–Barry S, Chairman

"Of all the programs I attended during the conference, yours was the most thought-provoking. It opened windows for me and I know it would do the same for some of our board members. I tried to approach you so on several occasions during the conference to tell you so, but you achieved rock star status and it was hard to get through the mob."

–Cindi Y, Executive Director

"Yesterday's retreat was outstanding and precisely what the staff needed at this juncture."

–Rachel F, Executive Director

"We are SO appreciative of your time and your expertise. I've been getting nothing but rave reviews, both in person and by email."

–Dita S, Principal

"I am sure that by now Dena W. has contacted you and shared the evaluations from your presentation. The ratings were off the charts! You really hit a "home run" with our staff. Thanks again for your presentation."

–Dan O., Executive Assistant to the President

"Jeremy was especially engaging and energizing. Jeremy was fantastic. Could have heard from him longer. Jeremy Hunter was great and his session applied to my business needs."

–Human Resources Personnel and Strategy Conference Anonymous Evaluations