



The ENGINEERING CAREER COACH PODCAST SESSION #22

How to Identify Burnout in Your Engineering Career Before it Happens and What to Do to Get Back on Track

Show notes at: engineeringcareercoach.com/wellness

Anthony's Upfront Intro: You are listening to *The Engineering Career Coach Podcast* with Anthony Fasano session #22. In this session I'm going to speak with Stephanie Cook, Environmental Engineer turned wellness expert and she's going to give you several tips for identifying, avoiding and recovering from burnout and stress in your engineering career. Lets do it!

Episode Intro: Welcome to *The Engineering Career Coach Podcast*, where it's all about helping real engineers to overcome real challenges and get real results. And now for your host, who is on a mission to inspire as many engineers as possible, professional engineer and certified career coach, Anthony Fasano.

Hello everyone. This is Anthony Fasano, your engineering career coach and as a thank you for listening to my show you can visit engineeringcareercoach.com/freegift, enter in your name and email and I will send you a list of the three top resources that I utilized to become a partner at the age of twenty-seven as an engineer.

Alright, I hope everyone's doing well out there. We are getting into those hot days of the Summer here in the Northeast but for me it's an exciting time this Summer because people tend to, I don't want to say bother you less but you know there's less correspondence going around. There's a lot of time to focus and develop and do things that I always want to get to for other parts of the year that I can't.

I have an excellent show for you today. I'm very excited about it. We have an Environmental Engineer turned wellness expert, who's going to help us talk about stress and stress reduction. But before I get into it I want to mention one thing. I am putting in an event in sunny San Diego in late September for engineers that really want to take their career to kind of that next level. Those of you out there that feel like you're technically sound but don't have the other skills that you need, specifically communication skills, networking skills, leadership abilities the event is going to totally focus on that. You can check out the website at iecdfallmeetup.com.

We already have several Executives that are going to be coming to talk about communication and sitting on a communication panel. We have experts that are VPs of Business Development in the engineering world that are going to come and sit on a panel about networking and building

The ENGINEERING CAREER COACH

WITH
ANTHONY
FASANO 

relationships. I'm going to do a talk about specifically the words and phrases that you might use in your conversations and then we're also going to have a whole day on leadership, which Chris Knutson is helping me plan, who's been on one of my shows before, known as the engineer leader in the blogging world.

So I'm very excited about it. I hope you'll consider joining us there. Registration is open and we are expecting the event to sell out. So please check it out at iecdfallmeetup.com and if you have any questions about the event you can email me directly at afasano@powerfulpurpose.com. Alright, so enough of that.

Let's get into our show for today and before we go into our coaching segment with Stephanie let me give her an introduction. Again, today's guest is Stephanie Cook from stephaniecookwellness.com. Stephanie is an Environmental Engineer, as I said before. She is now a wellness and lifestyle coach. She is extremely passionate about helping people who are really on the verge of burnout in their career to kind of create all day energy so they can really rock and roll in their career, which is something that I'm real passionate about doing - having that energy. Her philosophy is one that I really, really like and it's not just that you have to go on a diet; it's not just about finding the right way to eat as far as a diet goes. It's really about nourishing your body, fuelling the body, incorporating fitness that works with a busy schedule so you could really have that career that's engaging and inspiring. And that's why I wanted her to come on the show and share her enthusiasm and her energy and I think you'll see that. So without further delay, let's jump right into the coaching session with Stephanie.

Coaching Segment:

Anthony: Alright, now it's time for the coaching segment of the show, where I either coach a younger engineer on how to succeed in their career or have an expert on the show to kind of provide some advice.

Today we do have an expert with us, Stephanie Cook, who's going to talk about a topic that I think is very important for engineers based on the questions that I get on a very regular basis, which is burnout and stress and how do you deal with that, and I guess more important than how do you deal with it, how do you recognize it? So what I'd like to do first off is welcome in Stephanie. Hi Stephanie. How are you?

Stephanie: Hi, good morning. I'm really good.

The ENGINEERING CAREER COACH

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ANTHONY
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Anthony: Good. Great to have you on the show and this is an awesome topic that I know engineers need help with. So what we're going to do today, for those of you listening, is first of all Stephanie's going to run through five signs of overwhelm to help you recognize that you are burnt out because a lot of the times engineers get so focused in their project deadlines and it becomes normal that we don't realize that we're stressing ourselves out. So that's the first part of the show and then on the flipside Stephanie's going to cover eight different tips that you can use to deal with the overwhelm once you've identified it.

So Stephanie, before we jump into these signs of overwhelm - I gave you a bio already but - why don't you just briefly, for a minute or so, tell us about yourself kind of in your own words and a little bit about your career and what brought you to doing what you're doing as far as getting into the whole wellness realm.

Stephanie: Yeah, so this topic of overwhelm and burnout and how to deal with it is very close to my heart because I am an Environmental Engineer and I was working in consulting and I totally burnt out. And it has been kind of a catalyst for me to help other people to deal with that because I had to take a step back and leave the industry and leave work that I was really passionate about because it was destroying my life.

And now that I am on the other side I have some tools and tips that I can use to help other engineers because I definitely understand what it can be like to have those project deadlines, clients that are needing things ASAP, dealing with Project Managers, budgets, all of those things.

I am very intimately familiar with that whole realm and honestly everything that I'm going to talk about today are things that I have experienced personally and that I have helped not only myself but many others to come through the other side and to recognize that they can have fulfilling careers but also have this balance and be healthy. So that is, that's kind of where I'm coming from.

Anthony: Okay, awesome. And for those of you listening, we're going to talk about a lot of different things. We might reference some links or different things. Everything will be listed in the show notes for the show for today and you can find the show notes at engineeringcareercoach.com/wellness and that'll give you all the information about today's show and, of course, links to Stephanie's site and other links.

Alright, so with that Stephanie let's jump right in and why don't you give us these five signs of overwhelm. We'll take them one at a time.

The **ENGINEERING CAREER COACH**

WITH
**ANTHONY
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Stephanie: Yeah, so the first sign is being distracted and this is I think something that all of us can relate to in this world, where we're doing 'ten million' things at a time and you know there's this idea that multitasking is the way that we should be working.

You know if you're a good multitasker you're effective and really actually that is a sign that you are overwhelmed; if you're having trouble focusing on more than one thing at a time. It actually can really harm your work product and it is overwhelming for your brain and is taxing to your body.

Anthony: That's a good one and that's something that I struggle with or actually I've been working on a lot. For example, for those of you out there, I'm sure if you had a phone call or a meeting that you went to and you take a bunch of notes and then what happens to me is I take a bunch of notes and I go right on to the next task.

So instead, what I've been trying to do is process those notes, understand what action items I need to take, put into my - whether it's my to do list or whatever system I happen to be using at that time and then I move on to the next task so that I'm kind of staying focused on one thing at a time and I've found that since I've started to do that I've definitely gotten much better results and have been much more productive and definitely there's less stress there. So I just wanted to share that. But that's the first point. What's the next one Stephanie?

Stephanie: The next one is being easily irritated and this definitely comes from my own personal experience and I'll share that in a second, but if you find yourself being kind of abnormally aggressive or snapping at coworkers, family or friends that is definitely a sign that you're overwhelmed.

For me, part of my story that I'll share is that when I was in the midst of all this my husband actually would work late so that he didn't have to come home to me because I was so awful to be around. Like he just couldn't stand being around me. And that is something that, it's not just affecting your work life but this is something that affects your whole life. It affects all of the relationships in your life. So if you notice that you're abnormally irritated or more easily irritated then it's definitely a sign of being overwhelmed.

Anthony: Okay, yeah excellent and I can certainly agree with that too. Especially with little kids, when you come home at night I know for me when you've had a stressful day sometimes you can kind of snap at the kids and stuff. So I need to usually, we need to usually get outside and work that off and I know you're going to probably mention that when you get into some of the tips for dealing with it. So let's go on to number three.

Stephanie: Number three is brain fog. So you know it kind of, the name kind of says it all. But if you are experiencing anything like being confused, having lack of clarity around your ideas, having trouble

The ENGINEERING CAREER COACH

WITH
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making simple connections or being forgetful, that is a sign that you are overwhelmed and that you have brain fog. And we're going to talk when we get into the what you can do, again about specific things that you can do to deal with that.

Anthony: Okay, great. What's number four?

Stephanie: Number four is, the best way to describe it is a tired but wired feeling. For a lot of us we might be exhausted all day long and we're kind of just going through the motions or pushing ourselves through but really we're feeling very fatigued. And then at the end of the day, when it's time to go to bed you are absolutely wide-awake, your mind is racing, you can't settle down.

And the next point that I'm going to talk about is adrenal fatigue. That's a sign that your hormones might be out of whack and this is more of a sign of kind of you're getting into some extreme overwhelm and some chronic stress.

Anthony: Okay, so that's four and five. So four is you're that tired but wired feeling, which I have experienced. You're exhausted from the day but then you try to go to sleep but then you're just kind of wired and you can't because your mind's really going. And then lastly is the adrenal fatigue, which I guess you said is more hormone related.

So that covers our five signs of identifying if you're becoming burnt out or overstressed. And just to summarize them real briefly:

- First of all, being distracted and not having the ability to focus necessarily on one thing, which I've heard from a lot of engineers.
- Secondly is you're easily irritated. You snap at people quite a bit.
- Third, having that brain fog that comes over you, which I know is also common from just feedback that I've gotten from people.
- And then the last two, number four was being tired but wired.
- And number five was the adrenal fatigue.

So those are all great ways that you can recognize stress. So now let's get into kind of the real important part of the show, which is how do you deal with it? How do you deal with overwhelm? How do you get back to yourself? How do you be able to focus again?

The ENGINEERING CAREER COACH

WITH
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Why don't we run through these seven tips and what we'll do here is I'll have Stephanie do one at a time and then after she's done I'll also kick in a little bit from my experience with these because I've looked at her list and I can definitely relate to a lot of them. So go ahead Stephanie. Let's start off with number one.

Stephanie: Okay. So the first one if you're feeling overwhelmed, you're feeling like, "Oh my God, I have so much to do. I have no idea how I'm going to get it all done. The first thing to do is a five-minute brain dump and it sounds so simple and that's why it works. So what I want you to do is set your timer on your phone for five minutes and literally take those five minutes, don't do anything else, write down everything that you think of that you need to do - whether it's big or small, whether it's, "I need to go to the dry cleaner. I need to finish this report. I have to approve this purchase order." Whatever it might be, just get it all on paper. It'll really ease your mind to have it all out there in a way that is tangible for you to be able to process. The other thing along those lines is it's actually really helpful when you write that down to write those action items down with verbs attached to them. So instead of just writing 'haircut' you want to write something like 'schedule a haircut appointment.' That makes it more action oriented and it is easier for you to accomplish it.

Anthony: Alright, that's awesome and that's very helpful for me. I know I have a lot of different projects going on, a lot of different things going on and when I get overwhelmed one of the first things I do is I go back to kind of the to do list that I do use and I look over everything. I print it out. I prioritize it. And it just makes me feel better. And I do tend to do it with verbs as well.

Sometimes I'll just put a dash after the task and put kind of what the next step is and that is extremely helpful because it just, even though you have the same amount of things going on I think when you can see it all in front of you it just makes you feel better and it seems like it's something that's easier for you to handle or at least you can see it. So that's a huge help for me. That's a great one. So let's go on to number two.

Stephanie: Yeah, so the second is to remember that you aren't alone in this, whether it's work or at home, and that you don't have to do it all by yourself so think about who you can ask for help and where. So at home maybe it's you're asking, if you're married, you're asking your spouse or your partner or a roommate to help with some of the tasks at home like doing dishes or laundry or something like that. If it's at work, maybe you start delegating more of your responsibilities to other people.

The other thing to think about is what in your life can you outsource? So you know, as an example for me, I recognize that my time is very valuable and it's not valuable for me to be spending time cleaning my house. So I brought in a housecleaner. You know I pay them to do it but that is a good use of my money because my time is better spent doing other things and I'm making more money

The ENGINEERING CAREER COACH

WITH
ANTHONY
FASANO 

when I'm spending time doing the things that bring an income in as opposed to just doing some of these other tasks that I can pay somebody else for.

Anthony: Excellent. Just to follow up on that as well is along the same lines that I talked about before, with my to do list. One of the first things I do after I have it organized, whether it's on Monday morning or sometimes I do it on Sundays for the week, I'll go through it and I'll circle or I'll decide which tasks I can delegate out, which will be very helpful for me to get to keep myself working on the important projects and that's a big one and I like that.

You know I'm a big believer in the 80/20 rule, which basically says that 80% of our results are generated by 20% of our efforts. I believe in that so I try to focus on the 20% of things that are going to get the biggest results for myself, for the engineers I'm trying to help and so on. So that's an excellent one.

Stephanie: Yeah, absolutely and I think as engineers too we tend to have this mindset about working smarter not harder. So I think that goes into that as well. Right?

Anthony: Definitely, yeah. I mean working smarter is a huge thing that's really, really, really important, especially in the days of burnout. And for those of you that didn't hear one of my last podcasts, it's called *How To Work Smarter As An Engineer By Utilizing Both Sides Of Your Brain*. That's session 19 if you go to engineeringcareercoach.com/session19 and we talked exactly about that for a whole show. So definitely check that out. Alright let's move on to number three.

Stephanie: Okay. So the next one is actually hands down my absolute favorite time management technique and it is called the Pomodoro Technique and if you just Google it there's like tutorial videos and there's a Wikipedia page and stuff.

But basically what it is it's a system that allows you to eliminate distractions. And what you do is you work in twenty-five minute intervals on a single task without distraction and then you take a five-minute break.

So you know, say you're working on a report, you work on it for twenty-five minutes and while you're working on that report if something else comes up you don't do that other thing. You make a note to adjust that in your five minute break and then you repeat the process and once you do four of those twenty-five minute intervals then you take a little bit of a longer break.

This is really, I found this to be really crucial in my work as far as allowing me to focus and not be distracted and it's really hugely beneficial to the quality of the work that I produce as a result.

The **ENGINEERING CAREER COACH**

WITH
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Anthony: Yeah, I'm glad you mentioned this when I actually had this on my notes to bring up later if you didn't mention it because I run a community for very motivated engineers. We help each other succeed and one of the members sent a message to me actually and he told me about the Pomodoro Technique recently and I had never heard of it. And he explained it to me and he told me that he's used it and it's made dramatic changes for him by simply using a timer and staying focused. So it's definitely something to try. I've tried it myself on small tasks and the impact it has is really profound. So that's a great one. Alright, number four.

Stephanie: So now we're going to get into more of I guess the health-based things. So the next thing is staying hydrated. Hydration can really or dehydration can really affect that brain fog, it can affect your mental clarity and any fatigue that you're having and I know that this, you know we've all heard this before but so many of us still aren't doing this.

I think part of it is that people don't actually know how much water they should be drinking everyday. So a quick rule of thumb is to take your body weight and divide it by two and that will give you how many ounces you should be drinking in a day. So as an example, if you weigh a hundred and fifty pounds you divide that by two and you get seventy-five so you should be drinking seventy-five ounces of water a day.

And that might feel like a lot of water. You might have to work up to that, like over the course of a week, if you're not used to drinking that much water but that's what your body needs to stay hydrated. It will keep you feeling clear. It will help reduce that brain fog. So that is my next tip.

Anthony: One thing I want to say about the water thing, which is important is or at least a helpful tip because I did this - I wasn't drinking enough water because you know you get tied up in your day, you don't think about it. If you get a big water bottle, a large water bottle and you fill it up and keep it on your desk and you drink it kind of as you're working, it's helpful. Because for me, I had a small cup of water and I would finish it and it would sit there for hours finished rather than having a big water bottle that I could drink all the way and then I only have to fill it up every so often and it stays in front of me. So that's just a tip on how you can maintain that, be hydrated and drink as much as you're really supposed to because it is a lot to drink.

Stephanie: Absolutely, and another great tip along those lines if you have that big water bottle, if you need to drink more than one of them is if you take rubber bands and every time that you drink the full water bottle you put a rubber band on it so you can keep track of actually how many you're drinking throughout the course of the day. That is also really, really helpful.

Anthony: Oh that's cool. Cool.

The ENGINEERING CAREER COACH

WITH
ANTHONY
FASANO 

Stephanie: Yeah. Okay, so the next one - again this really helps with brain fog or with mental clarity - take a fish oil supplement or omega 3 supplement. Omega 3s are really, really important for our bodies. They fight inflammation and in the standard American diet people are not getting enough of them.

Now there's three different types of Omegas. There's Omega 3s, Omega 6s and Omega 9s and we get a ton of Omega 6s in the standard American diet but we don't get the proportional amount of Omega 3s. So it's really important to be supplementing those. I mean obviously you can get them in fatty fish and in nuts and seeds but most of the time that's not enough.

So it is one of the supplements that I recommend that everybody takes and I'm going to give you just a couple of tips for selecting a supplement that's a high quality and one that you want to be taking. So fish oil can be called the sewer of the sea, which you know I'm talking to engineers here so I'm sure you will appreciate this. We all hear about Mercury in fish and things like that. When they make fish oil they distill that down and it can become really concentrated in toxic metals.

So you want to be looking for something that is molecularly distilled and it'll say that right on the label. That is the way that they purify the fish oil. There are a few other methods but you really want to look for molecularly distilled. That's the absolute best one. And you also want to be reading the labels and you want to select something that is high in EPA and DHA. Those are two different kinds of Omega 3s. And usually the label will give you like a milligram of EPA and a milligram of DHA and a milligram of other Omegas. So you want the EPA and DHA to be the majority of what is in the supplement that you're taking.

Anthony: Okay, excellent. Yeah, I take fish oil myself. I take a tablespoon each day. Let me ask you a question about this and I don't know if it matters but is there a better time of the day to take it, because I've heard different things? I've heard like morning or at night. I mean my wellness practitioner that I go to from time to time told me to take it at night before I go to bed but I don't know if you've heard anything.

Stephanie: You know I haven't heard anything. I think the more important thing is that you're taking it but I take it in the morning and I think also it's just important to take it, definitely if you're taking like a pill as opposed to an oil, to be taking it with food.

Anthony: Okay.

Stephanie: Because that helps you to digest it and absorb it better. But otherwise I think just finding a time that works for you and your schedule.

The **ENGINEERING CAREER COACH**

WITH
ANTHONY
FASANO 

Anthony: Okay, so that was number five, fish oil. Let's go to number six.

Stephanie: Yeah, so the next one is steering clear of alcohol, sugar and caffeine. So I talked about the Omega 3s and why they're important because they fight inflammation in the body. Alcohol, sugar and caffeine can all cause inflammation in the body and they also increase acidity and what we really want to be feeling healthy and well is for our body to be in a more alkaline state.

And as far as these three things, I think the alcohol probably is the most clear but I want to talk about a few interesting things about coffee and sugar really quickly because I know working in an office, those are two of the things that we kind of battle against all day long.

So coffee - I'll be honest, I love coffee and I will never give it up. I know there's a lot of health people that say give it up but it's delicious first of all and it can be really beneficial for you in moderation. So one to two cups a day can be really good. Coffee is loaded with antioxidants so it's really good for you but it is acidic so it's going to cause that acidic state in your body. And coffee - this is a really interesting thing I just learned about it - it has a half-life of six hours.

So if you're just drinking one cup of coffee in the morning you still have caffeine in your system when you're going to bed eighteen hours later. So you know, that's just from one cup so think about if you're drinking coffee all day long you are going to have still a ton of caffeine in your system when you go to bed and that really messes with your sleep and that can cause some of that tired but wired feeling.

And then the other thing that I want to mention really quick is sugar. So I'm sure people have heard about the sugar spike and the crash that you go through. If you are eating like a sugar breakfast or something like that you'll feel really great for an hour and then you'll crash and you'll need to eat more sugar to feel better.

But the thing that I really want to talk about is that sugar nowadays is in absolutely everything. They add sugar to things you would just not believe. So I want you guys to, if you can, be reading the labels to find out how much sugar you are actually eating or is in the things that you're eating. For women, you really want to be shooting for twenty grams a day and for men thirty-six grams a day. And when you start to read labels you'll realize that that is not a lot or that you're consuming a lot more. So you know, as an example, a bagel has five grams of sugar, soda has nine grams of sugar per can and a granola bar or like a Clif bar - I know when I was working in an office I would eat a Clif bar almost every morning for breakfast - they can have over twenty grams of sugar in them. So this sugar is kind of like sneaking into your diet and it can really mess with your hormone levels and your energy levels throughout the day.

Anthony: Hey Stephanie, just one thing I want to add to that - this is obviously a huge one, this whole point. As far as the sugar goes, one of the things that you can do to cut down your sugar immediately is to drink water. Just drink water. Cut everything else out you drink besides water.

Obviously have a cup of coffee or two, that's fine but I'm talking about just from your whatever soft drinks you drink. Like if you eliminate the sodas or juices, that's a huge deal. Just the water is like it's just, we need water, like we talked about before. So it can really help you in a lot of ways.

And another thing to add just in sugar in general is a lot of times we think that sugar is going to give you a boost, and it might temporarily. It's funny, my daughter who's seven years old plays a lot of soccer and they tell you, even they tell you when you go to the clinics and stuff that you should give the kids like carbs and sugars before the games but in reality what they're doing is they're going to crash like after they get the boost.

So what my wellness practitioner tells me - and obviously I'm not a doctor in any way but I'm just giving you, sharing some feedback that's been helpful for me - is he told me to load up, at least in situations like that, more on like healthy fats, which would be like, he mentioned like avocados and olives and different oils instead of just going for sugar and thinking that that's going to give you a boost or a short-term boost because the crash is worse than before if you tried to take some sugar to get a boost. That's just some of my own advice from some things that I've dealt with on that point.

Stephanie: Yeah, absolutely. That is a really great tip. I love that.

Anthony: Alright, so number seven.

Stephanie: So number seven is to eat real food. And I know this can kind of be a little bit, it's kind of like a vague tip. It's not necessarily very specific. But if you focus on eating food that doesn't come in a cardboard box or is not processed; things like fruits and vegetables - proteins like chicken, fish, pork, eggs - nuts and seeds - and whole grains, rice, quinoa, millet - things like that, you are getting vitamins and minerals that are better absorbed into the body than when you're eating foods that are fortified.

So any of those processed foods that says 'contains vitamin d', 'contains vitamin e' or even something that you're getting from a multivitamin, your body absorbs them better when you're getting them from natural, real food sources.

And also when you're eating fruits and vegetables specifically you're getting things called phytonutrients and antioxidants that you really aren't getting anywhere else. You really just get them from fruit and vegetable sources.

Anthony: Excellent and I agree a hundred percent. I changed my diet a lot and I eat a lot of - at night especially - I try to eat a lot of fish and I try to eat a lot of greens, usually leafy greens like kale, chard, collard greens. These are a lot easier for your body to digest and it can help you to get a better night sleep because you're not digesting heavy meats and carbohydrates overnight, which takes your body a lot more energy to digest. So that's something to think about. Try to eat some of that stuff earlier in the day if you want to eat some of those other things.

Stephanie: Absolutely, yeah. Leafy greens are some of the best things that you can eat and I definitely recommend eating vegetables over fruits because again, fruits even though they're natural they do contain sugars so they're also going to lead to that sugar spike and crash that we talked about earlier. Vegetables give you all the same benefits but without the higher sugar content so they're a really, really great choice.

Anthony: Alright, awesome. And then now point number eight, the last point.

Stephanie: Yeah, so the last point is exercise. So I know when you're stressed out, you're overwhelmed adding in one more thing to do can seem like impossible but adding in exercise is really crucial. It's not only an instant energy booster but it's definitely a stress reliever and I think if you have ever experienced having a stressful day and maybe going out for a run or going to kickboxing class or going to yoga, you can recognize the stress relieving benefits of that.

So if it's possible for you, block out some time in your schedule to workout. Whether you're getting up a little bit earlier in the morning or doing it after work, just putting thirty minutes a day in your calendar is enough. But if you can't do that there are still other things that you can do to be getting this in during your day. So for example, if you make a point to get up for five minutes out of every hour and whether that's stretching, walking around. If you're like me maybe you're doing burpees or jumping jacks for a few minutes every hour. You can maybe do some lunges.

Whatever that might be, just get up and move - it's really, really helpful. You can think about taking a meeting outside, so having a walking meeting. When you're on the phone, standing instead of sitting. You burn more calories when you're standing and it's really great for your spine and all of that. So that is a really great thing to do.

Also, making it a social experience. When I was really stressed and working in an office, the number one way that I destressed was to go to happy hour with my coworkers. But I found, through my own experience, that actually finding another way to connect with those people, a healthier way actually supports us all better. So instead of going to happy hour, maybe we're going rock climbing or going to a yoga class together.

And lastly, kind of as part of this, is just getting outside. Vitamin D, which is you get it from the sun mostly - you can take supplements but it's really best to get it from the sun - is crucial to you and your health and your energy levels. So being able to just get outside in nature, going for a walk or even just sitting outside for a little while is really beneficial as well.

Anthony: Awesome, awesome. Yeah and I agree a hundred percent. And just real quick again I'll give a couple tips for me that's been helpful with exercise. I get up early in the morning, every morning. I do some tai chi, which for those of you that don't know what that is it's kind of like a cross between karate and yoga. It's a lot of movements in the body. It gets you really flowing, gets the blood flowing.

I usually try to take like a half an hour walk sometimes during the day. Usually I do it at lunchtime. I take a walk. Maybe I listen to a podcast or something and I take a walk. And lastly, my wife and I do some dancing, like ballroom dancing and different types of lessons that we take. We usually do that at night.

So and I emphasize the times because obviously as busy engineers you might not have too much time in the day but I do something early before work, I do something at lunch and I try to do something in the evenings. It doesn't work out that I do them all everyday but I do definitely do the tai chi every morning to get me going. So those are just some tips and everything that Stephanie said there, I'm on board with a hundred percent.

So what I want to do right now, I just want to do a quick summary of the eight points that Stephanie went through to kind of help you deal with stress essentially.

- The first one is to write down everything that's on your mind. Get it out of your head and onto a piece of paper and write it down in a sense with verbs so you're prompting action and you can see what you actually have to accomplish.
- The second tip was to ask for help, whether it's friends, family members, maybe you outsource some of the tasks or delegate some of the tasks. That's a big one.
- Number three, she mentioned the Pomodoro Technique, where basically you set aside, you get a timer and you put the timer on for ten or fifteen minutes or thirty minutes or however long you want to focus on one task and you focus solely on that task until that timer goes off.
- Fourth point was to stay hydrated. Try to drink an ounce for half of your body weight. So if you weigh two hundred pounds try to drink a hundred ounces a day.

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- Number five, try to get some fish oil in your body to get some Omega 3s, which is very important for how your body operates.
- Number six, no alcohol, sugar or caffeine, which is obviously a tricky one. I mean it's one point here but it's a boy of a challenge. But we gave some tips on how to give up some things like soft drinks and other ways to help you to deal with that a little bit because it will definitely reduce stress levels.
- Eat real food was number seven, which is basically you know avoid fast food. Eat a lot of vegetables and proteins.
- And then lastly we just talked about exercise and Stephanie went through some of the benefits of exercise and like the vitamin D from being outside. And one thing that I can tell you for sure is that I know half an hour to take a walk might seem realistic for many of you, giving up two and a half hours from your work week for walking but what I found for me by doing that I'm actually more productive in the hours that I'm in front of my computer because of the way I feel. So it actually kind of makes up for itself.

So what I'm going to do now is we're going to end off the coaching segment of the show. I'm going to keep Stephanie on with me and we're going to come back and give you one kind of career changing tip that you can take one thing and implement it right away.

Anthony's Career Changing Tip:

Anthony: Alright now it's time for our career changing tip. Today I'd like to take one of the tips that we just talked about and go into it in a little more detail. Basically this portion of the show is I want to give you a tip that you can take and start to do immediately and see results and I think the one that I'm going to pick from the ones we just went through is the idea of getting outside and taking a walk.

The reason that this is so important is because it's had monumental changes for me for multiple reasons. I think one, it totally breaks up your day, where you stare at a computer screen all day and talking to people all day, when you can get out and kind of reset and kind of collect yourself. It's a positive, positive thing, not to mention that if you walk and the longer you walk - I mean try to walk at least thirty minutes - that's a lot of exercise if you can do it at a good pace. You're going to feel so much better. I think that Stephanie can also chime in a little bit here.

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Yes, you can go to the gym and you could lift weights and you can do a lot of stuff but for a lot of people that's not realistic because you don't have the time to do that. But what I've found in my life, especially having three kids that are seven years old and younger, I don't have time to go to the gym anymore.

So by walking at a fast pace at a half an hour a day it's an amazing feeling and it's been so helpful for me. And I also do either take an audiobook on my phone or I listen to a podcast. So it's helpful in multiple ways. Stephanie, you want to add anything.

Stephanie: Yeah, I will just agree with that. I think it's really crucial. You know so many of us we're kind of trained to just keep our heads down and keep plugging away but stepping away from your work for even ten minutes, if you can do thirty minutes that's great, but really stepping away to get a fresh perspective to kind of renew and refresh yourself is really, really crucial to actually improving the work product that you're putting out. Not just for your stress levels but it allows you to come back fresh. You have some new creativity, some new ideas and I just think it's hugely, hugely beneficial.

Anthony: Alright, I'll give you one last sort of bonus tip here along the same lines is if you want to implement this habit what I recommend that you do is make a commitment that for the next ten days you're going to walk. You're going to take a half an hour walk for the next ten days and then do whatever you have to do to make that happen regardless of what time of day it is. Ideally if you can do it the same time of day each day, that'll be more helpful. But I've talked a lot about developing habits and you have to do it consistently for it to become normal for you. So don't go outside today after listening to this and take a walk for a half hour and then never do it again.

So I want you to really commit to it, however you do it. Write it down. Put it on your calendar everyday with a pop up. Try to take a walk for the next ten days at about half an hour a day and I promise you you'll feel a lot better.

Anthony's Closing Remarks:

So with that a big thanks to Stephanie again. Thank you Stephanie for joining us today. I really appreciate it and I want to say to everyone out there thank you for listening. Our listeners have been awesome. I've gotten a lot of good feedback and if you ever have any questions, comments that you want to send me you can email me directly at afasano@powerfulpurpose.com and be sure to take advantage of all of the free resources on my website at engineeringcareercoach.com. I will catch you all on the next session of ***The Engineering Career Coach Podcast***.



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