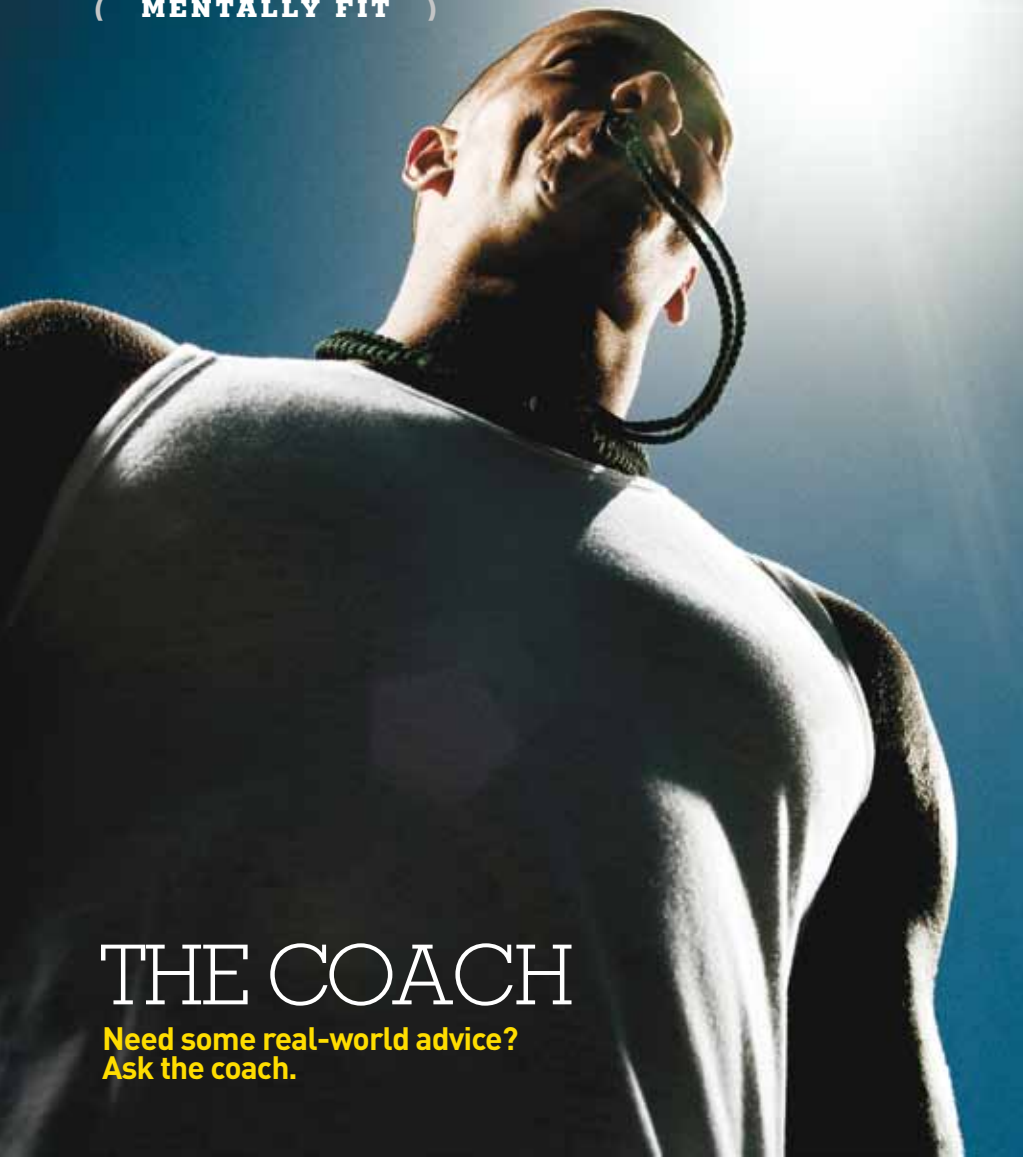


(MENTALLY FIT)



THE COACH

Need some real-world advice? Ask the coach.

THE PROBLEM

Coach, I've lost the lot. Everything. A year ago I had a nice house, two cars, a boat, a high-paying job, a holiday house and stock portfolio. It's all gone thanks to the economy going pear-shaped. My wife, baby girl and I are living at my mum and dad's house. I feel so ashamed and depressed.

SOLUTION: Jesus H Christ, man. Give yourself an uppercut. You've got the love and support of your family, your health and it sounds like you've got your parents. Crikey, that's more than many a man, and the only things that are really important in life. The rest is garnish, useless crap you collect. Stop dwelling on its loss. So, your wealth's gone. Boo, freakin' hoo. Get it back again. Get a job at Bunnings, if

"Don't let anyone intimidate you. You might be carrying a few too many kay-gees, but you're still a man. Stand tall!"

need be. Deliver pizzas. Spend your spare time training or with your baby daughter. Stay positive, for the sake of your wife. She'll look toward you in this time. Now is the time for you to shine. My dear old dad gave me a poem I live by, *If*, by Rudyard Kipling. Google it. I suggest you read it several times. In part it reads: "If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster, And treat those two impostors just the same; ... If you can make one heap of all your winnings, And risk it all on one turn of pitch-and-toss, And lose, and start again at your beginnings, And never breath a word about your loss; ... If you can fill the unforgiving minute With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,

Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it, And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!"

THE PROBLEM

Coach, I'm 18 and I just don't understand my new girlfriend. She's awesome, but she goes ballistic over something stupid like not noticing her new hairstyle, then thinks I'm wonderful if I do the smallest thing like make her a playlist. I just don't get women.

SOLUTION: Welcome to the club, son. Every bloke reading this will be smiling and nodding right now, because understanding women is a lifelong challenge for men. Mrs Coach and I have been married 20 years and she still discombobulates me sometimes. Here are my five golden rules for women. 1) Never take a woman for granted. She won't hang around long if you do. 2) Treat all females with respect, even the nasty bitchy ones. Just avoid them like a cut snake. 3) Never surrender your independence to a woman, or she'll resent you for being piss-weak. 4) Never lie to a woman, unless you absolutely have to. Then make damn sure you take that secret to the grave with you. 5) Compliment her daily, and mean it, or buy her gifts of appreciation—flowers, perfume, dinner out, etc—often. Son, just accept the fact you'll never understand women—believe me, you won't—but apply these strategies and you will find happiness with one.

THE PROBLEM

I want to get a personal trainer, but I feel so intimidated. They're all young, lean and healthy. I'm 115 kilos, a drinker and smoker, and in my late forties.

SOLUTION: Mate, a personal trainer would be an excellent idea for you, but remember they're service providers: treat them as such when choosing one. You're judging them, not the other way around. If they immediately give you grief about your bad lifestyle habits or intimidate you about your weight, you've got one word for them: "Next!" See a few of them, ask them questions about their methods. The thing is 99.9 percent of personal trainers have never been fat, or old for that matter. Or smokers. But the good ones will appreciate your plight and work with you to not only change your body shape, but also to build self-confidence. If they don't, piss 'em off and get another one. Don't let anyone intimidate you. You might be carrying a few too many kay-gees, but you're still a man. Stand tall!

KEEPING COOL

3 EASY WAYS TO DE-STRESS

1 Blow off some steam

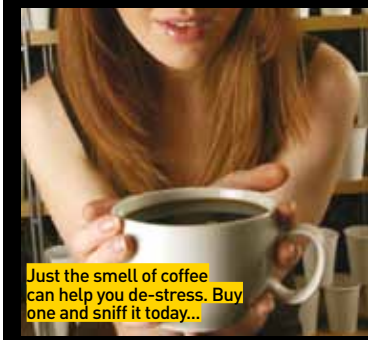
A recent Swedish study found that when stressed-out healthcare workers got together with others in similar situations to vent, they significantly reduced their levels of work-related stress and burnout. In other words, while friends and family are good for unloading, the best stress relief comes from talking shit about your job with someone who has experienced the same type of stress.

2 Order a large coffee

But don't drink it! You may be able to de-stress by simply sniffing the aroma. When Korean researchers gave a bunch of sleep-deprived, stressed-out rats a whiff of java, it sent the levels of stress-related activity going on in their bodies plummeting. Already have a daily Gloria Jean's habit? Pop the top off your cup to really free up that relaxing coffee scent. And buy skinny.

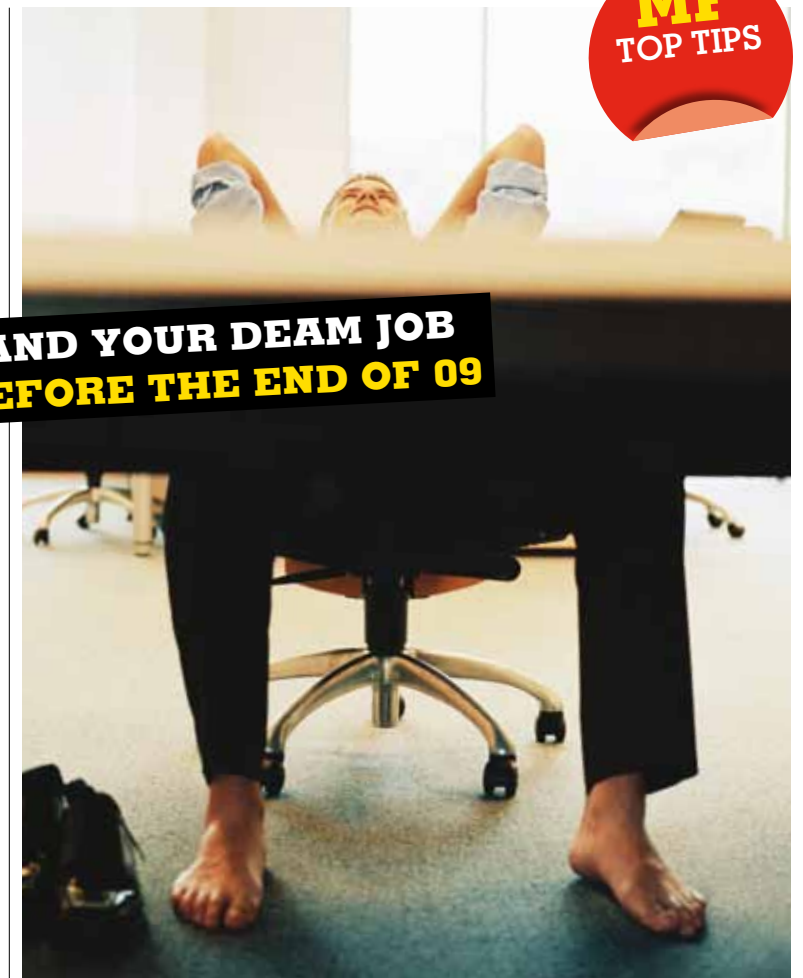
3 Buy some good headphones

Research has repeatedly shown that violent video games increase stress levels in players. But Canadian researchers made an interesting finding recently. When they had gamers turn off the sound while playing, their brains produced significantly lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol—meaning the noise of the game is what may have been setting off the stress response. Work in a noisy, hyper-loud office? Crank up your iPod or find some other way to block the noise, and your stress may ease up as well.



Just the smell of coffee can help you de-stress. Buy one and sniff it today...

CORBIS



LAND YOUR DEAM JOB BEFORE THE END OF '09

The economy may stink — but work doesn't have to. We asked career coach John McKee for some tips on how you can land the job of your dreams before the end of '09:

MAKE SPECIFIC GOALS.

It's harder than it sounds because it requires extreme honesty. Ask yourself some pointed rapid-fire questions: How much money would you like to be making by this time next year? What job in the organisation do you ultimately want? Why — truthfully — haven't you accomplished what you want in your career? Can your industry satisfy your professional goals? Sometimes to achieve the career success we desire we actually have to change industries.

DO A "PERSONAL S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS."

S.W.O.T. stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats you face. What do you do well (strengths)? What could you work on (weaknesses)? Does your boss have any vulnerability that you could use to your advantage (opportunities). Finally, what's preventing you from getting promoted (threats)?

PROMOTE YOURSELF.

When times are tough, you need to become more adept at the art of self-promotion. We assume our bosses know all the great things we are doing on the job. But they can be just as overworked as we are. A good tactic is to schedule regular meetings with your boss to give him an update on what you have done, what you're doing and planning. It's the kind of thing that makes your boss look smarter when he checks in with his boss and that's something you may be rewarded for later on.

IGNORE THE GOLDEN RULE.

The office golden rule: be a team player. That common advice does not make sense in a shrinking economy, McKee warns. Instead, look after your boss's needs. The more successful you can make him, the more successful you'll end up. Everyone loves a guy who makes their job easier and that could be the key to the career success you're craving.

