

BY

BEASLEY HAWKES, a practising financial advisor with a firm he'd rather not name. Beasley Hawkes is a pseudonym; he can be reached at advisorsedge@rmpublishing.com

WORK: LET IT WAIT

Manage your stress before it manages you.

If I can just get this e-mail sent out, then I can finish my to-do list and finally get to those phone calls. Now where's that blasted ampersand? Can never find it on this stupid contraption.

Damn, it's the phone, again. How do I answer that, now? "Hawkes here ... uh-huh ... sure ... what time? Hmm, I've got an appointment then, but I'll juggle it around. I'll get back to you in a few minutes. Thanks."

Shoot, now two more calls to make. And what if that Smithers has gone off to the W.C. again without his BlackBerry? What's with that guy? If I didn't take my little friend with me, I'd never get half my e-mails returned.

Jeez, it's hard to do uppercase with one hand. How does Jordy do it? OK, that's done. Now, who do I call first to move around for Friday? Either way it makes me late. Ooh, Mrs. Hawkes isn't going to be too happy with another dinner cancellation. Add to list—*Call florist.*

Bam! Oh, crap! I didn't see that guy's brake lights. What the hell is he doing stopping for a yellow light? Just what I don't need, a bloody insurance claim to buy out. And I'm already late. Didn't the kids have some-kind of graduation ceremony today?

Sound like a typical day? No, I'm sure it doesn't for you. I'm certain you radiate a kind of calm that naturally attracts people to you. You have an assistant who handles all your e-mails and scheduling, makes sure you're prepared and protected, always has you early for appointments, floating on a cloud of serenity. Although your schedule is full and you accomplish the work of three mortals, you never get double-booked or feel harassed—you're insulated from the types of surprises that confound the rest of us.

If life simply lays out its red carpet for you to gently tread on, then please, read no further. (Unless, of course, it is in your pristine and totally comprehensive schedule to read "Closing Bell" at this particular moment—I wouldn't want to fuss with *that.*) For the rest of us, let's collectively think about whether or not the exercise wheel is spinning even faster. Does it sometimes feel that the treadmill got plugged into a 220 outlet instead of 110?

If so, then let's consider slowing down just a bit, and taking a breath once in a while.

Aaah ... isn't that better already?

Do you (or your assistant) view your schedule as a wasted vessel if it isn't filled to the brim? Are you like an airline, which counts on no-shows and cancellations to make it all fit?

I used to like it better when we were measured by the number of toys

we were able to amass. Nowadays, the true measure of a man seems to be how little downtime he has, and how many activities, trips, adventures and experiences he can pack in. And guess what, we still have to pay for those toys.

Here's a suggestion, one I hope to follow myself:

Put a little SPACE in your life.

It won't kill you, and will probably help you live longer. You can even be like Bekins, who actually has to schedule his free time. But for Pete's sake, take some. And I'm not just talking about taking time off to do things like marathon training, power-boat racing or dance lessons. I'm talking about genuine, do-nothing-but-think, curl-up-with-a-good-book type of time. Get someone you love to take you to a botanical garden—find out what a rose really smells like—you'll find out they're not just something you pre-order in a bouquet to make up for past mistakes.

It's been a while since you took that jaunt, hasn't it? I'm not surprised—I used to get migraines when I would take a day off. The doctor said it was some kind of decompression.

Don't allow yourself to get to that point. Don't be like my two friends who keeled over in their 40s when their tickers conked out. Unless you are George Sigurdson, or some sort of advisor superhero, take it easy on yourself, at least once in a while. **AE** **HAWKES**