

Demand Resistance

What is it?

Demand-Resistance is defined as a chronic and automatic negative inner response to the perception of pressure, expectations, or demands (from within or without) (Mallinger and De Wyze, 1992).

What causes it? Childhood response to...

- overly critical or controlling family – perfectionists demands and rules – resentment of rules and authority figures (including their own wishes and demands)
- overprotective (implying lack of trust in your abilities).

Signs that you might have it

- Resist taking action – get stubborn
- Make a list and don't do anything on it
- Get angry at yourself and others when you think they're judging you, pushing you
- Argue when given advice, give excuses, get mad, procrastinate, move into denial

Results?

- Everything feels like a "should" even things they want
 - Should eat only organic foods
 - Should walk 50 minutes a day
 - Should work out at the gym 7 days a week
- Can't or "won't stick with these perfectionist designs
- Feel self critical, like a failure and give up and go back to burgers and fries

Antidote?

- Become aware of old thought patterns, stubbornness, defensiveness – observe yourself
- Watch your self-talk: should, must, have to, no choice
- Get clear on what you want and why you want it
- Shift your focus from “I have to” to “I want to”
- Take baby steps – if a big list scares you, don’t make one. Set small achievable goals. I call them microbursts
- Work with a buddy – work days
- Respond vs react
- Choose rather than force yourself

What is a microburst?

Microbursts are small bursts of energy directed at extremely small tasks. In other words, they are very short bursts of activity. A microburst can be a complete five-minute project (make a phone call) or the first step of a larger project like cleaning your closet or writing a report. For cleaning the closet, the microburst activity might be to open the closet door and look inside. For the report, it might be to turn on the computer, or make a mindmap.