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Having one of those days? Remind yourself how totally cool your dog is and get back to work. Photo: GETTY IMAGES

## When 'negativitis' strikes at work

Like tropical storms or celebrity deaths, feelings of inadequacy have a way of coming back-to-back. One mild mishap can turn into a workplace downward spiral, a scenario that is as familiar to the waiter who drops two dishes in a single shift as it is to the CEO who drops two awkward jokes in a single speech.

Career gurus say there's an easy way out of that personal prison: When you feel like you can't do anything right, just take an instant to not do anything at all. "Focus on something beautiful," life coach Melanie Fuscaldo says. "A moment of appreciation like, 'Oh my God, I love my dog. I love my kids.' That can do a reset."

Fanciful as daydreams of tots and puppies may seem, there's a science behind her wisdom, Dr. Pam Brill notes, explaining the neurological clockwork of failure.

"When we perceive a threat, all that stress chemistry shuts down the front part of our brain that allows us to think strategically and objectively," the Boston-based peak performance consultant says. "We get into this trap of saying, 'Woe is me, I'm not as good,' and we focus narrowly and negatively." A little outside perspective, she says, can spin panic into spunk.

### PLAY ON WORDS

Rewording the vocabulary flooding your inner ear can help the situation.

"When you hear yourself using phrases like 'I can't do that' or 'I should've done that,' turn it around," Brill advises. "Find the language of desire instead of the language of disaster."

"And be candid," she adds. The worse thing a self-doubter can do, she warns, is keep top-secret a project lurching toward disaster.

### CHUCKLING YOUR WAY TO SUCCESS

When you really start to feel the pressure, Fuscaldo recommends that you "throw in a little humor."

"Laugh about it," she says. "Just let the thoughts roll into peaceful, loving gratitude."

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