

Be Accountable: Do You have AP's?

by **Barbara J. Faison**

Have you ever needed to do something and lacked the motivation? I have struggled with this in the past. I would start a project and in the middle of it I would find something more interesting to do and move on to it before I finished. My I(idea) to I (implementation) ratio was very low. It was around 5:1. I needed help. I had to find a way to increase my I:I. I came up with the idea of having an AP™.

An AP™ is an accountability partner. The AP is who you report to about the status of your project, idea or task to be sure that you are held accountable. Here's my example: I needed to recreate my script for my meditation cd before I could record it in the studio. My AP for this project was Wendy Y. She is one of my regular AP's so I called her and told her what I needed to do and by when. The role of the AP is simple and specific.

The AP needs to know two things; 1. What needs to be done and 2. When it needs to be done. When I started using an AP™ my ratio was much better, it was 2:1.

Why did I need an AP? I needed to be held accountable. I knew that I couldn't depend on motivation and inspiration to get me through, I needed discipline and commitment. Knowing I had to call Wendy Y on April 29th kept me focused and I was determined to call her and say, "Wendy Y, I finished my cd script early." And I did. I often complete things faster when I have an AP involved.

Why does this strategy work? Often time we are more accountable to someone else than we are to ourselves. The AP approach works very well for me and I encourage you to try it. There are three easy steps, here's what you do:

- 1. Who- decide who will be your AP™.**
- 2. What - decide what you need to get done.**
- 3. When - tell your AP when you need to have your project/task completed- be realistic.**

What happens if you don't get your project/task done by the timeframe you desired? Let your AP know the new timeframe, if you are still interested in completed the project/task.

If things have changed, you can always find another project/task. There is always something to be done.

Your AP can be different people based on what you are trying to accomplish. If you are on a team with people, you may choose to pick someone involved on that team. An AP is a great way to develop and enhance discipline around specific projects and get things done more timely.

Let me know if this helps you by contacting me at Barbara@dontstress.net.

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