

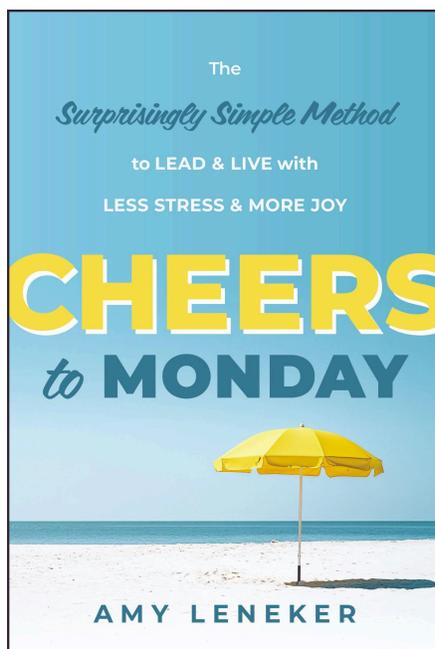
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CHEERS TO MONDAY

The Surprisingly Simple Method to Lead and Live with Less Stress and More Joy

by Amy Leneker



How can we stress less and live more? [Cheers to Monday](#) (Wiley // March 24, 2026) is the joyful rebellion against stress and burnout you've been waiting for. In this transformative book, Amy Leneker reveals a liberating truth: stress isn't the price of success – it's the thief that steals it. And she proves it with sharp wit, refreshing honesty, and laugh-out-loud stories. Amy is a former C-suite executive and now a trusted leadership advisor to Fortune 100 companies and public sector organizations. In this book, you'll get the same coaching and science-backed strategies Amy shares in boardrooms, workshops, and conferences around the world.

Stress is embedded in today's workplaces – disguised as drive, rewarded as resilience, and even praised as passion. But chronic stress isn't a strength; it drains leaders, divides teams, and damages entire organizations. If you've ever woken up on a Monday already exhausted – or spent Sunday night bracing yourself for the week ahead – the problem isn't you; it's stress.

And there's a surprisingly simple, three-step method to break free and lead and live with less stress and more joy.

In *Cheers to Monday*, readers learn how to:

- See stress differently – and finally break the cycle of exhaustion, overwhelm, and self-doubt
- Sort stress into five clear categories – so you know exactly what to do with each one

- Solve stress with a simple framework to reclaim your time, energy, and focus – at work and beyond
- Celebrate the shift – because reducing stress isn't just a wellness strategy, it's a joy strategy
- ...and much more.

Cheers to Monday isn't just a book – it's a movement to transform how you lead, live, and work. It's for every leader quietly falling apart, every team crushing goals while getting crushed in the process, and every human who's tired of pretending they're "fine." Whether you're just starting your career, climbing the corporate ladder, or reflecting on the legacy you'll leave behind, this book gives you three simple steps to finally break free from stress – and reclaim the life you were meant to live.

About the Author



Amy Leneker is an optimistic, joy-seeking, recovering workaholic. She's also a leadership consultant with over 25 years of leadership experience, including a decade in the C-suite, who has helped over 100,000 leaders, teams, and organizations (from Fortune 100 companies to the public sector) thrive at work through keynotes, coaching, and training, centered on less stress and more JOY.

A first-generation college student, Amy earned both her undergraduate and graduate degrees while working full-time and later raising a family. She has studied leadership at Yale, neuroscience at the NeuroLeadership Institute, and stress resilience at Harvard Medical School.

Amy has appeared in Fast Company, Inc., CEOWORLD Magazine, and other prestigious outlets. She is the author of the first national study on joy at work, *The State of Stress and Joy at Work 2026: America's Joy Problem*, and *Cheers to Monday* is her first book.

She lives in the Pacific Northwest with her husband and their two amazing kids.

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Advance Praise for CHEERS TO MONDAY

"Amy Leneker has crafted a beautifully honest and immensely practical guide that reminds us we are built not just to work, but to live—and to live with joy. Cheers to Monday invites us to trust ourselves, care for what matters most, and reclaim the parts of life that make it meaningful. For those who care about both people and performance, I highly recommend this wonderful book."

—Stephen M. R. Covey, New York Times and #1 Wall Street Journal bestselling author of The Speed of Trust and Trust and Inspire

"This book is both profound and practical! Read it and do it, for yourself and the people around you."

—Patrick Lencioni, national bestselling author of The Five Dysfunctions of a Team and The Six Types of Working Genius

"In Cheers to Monday, Amy Leneker bursts onto the scene with a smart, witty, and eminently practical guide to finding more joy and impact at work. Drawing on extensive research and her own hard-won journey through burnout, she shows you how to transform stress into productive energy. If you're ready to turn work from a burnout experience into one that builds up you and others, this is the book."

—Liz Wiseman, bestselling author of Multipliers and Impact Players

"In Cheers to Monday, Amy Leneker offers a powerful roadmap to combat the stress and burnout so many are experiencing — and actually make work joyful again."

—Dorie Clark, Wall Street Journal and USA Today bestselling author of The Long Game

"This book is a masterclass in how to achieve more with less effort. Amy Leneker's simple, three-step framework provides the clarity and courage to break the cycle of stress and overwhelm. Cheers to Monday is an essential read for every leader and team ready to stop surviving and start truly thriving."

—Greg McKeown, New York Times bestselling author of Essentialism and Effortless

"In a world that glorifies hustle and burnout, Amy Leneker offers something radical: a practical method to reclaim our lives. What gives me hope is knowing that this book will help leaders trust their own wisdom over external validation — and that changes everything."

—Jen Fisher, Founder and CEO of The Wellbeing Team, bestselling author of Work Better Together

"For years I've shared that workplaces shouldn't just deliver happiness — they should go beyond it. Amy Leneker offers a fresh, practical roadmap for doing exactly that. Her joyful rebellion against the dread of Mondays is both needed and doable. This book reminds us that work can feel meaningful again — not because it's perfect, but because we show up differently."

—Jenn Lim, cofounder of Delivering Happiness and national bestselling author of Beyond Happiness

"Don't like Mondays? This compassionate guide will change your mind. Discover how to stop dreading and start living your week instead of just surviving on caffeine and cortisol. Read it, apply it, and prepare to say 'Cheers!' to a more fulfilling life."

—Mark Bowden, body language and behavior expert, bestselling author of Truth and Lies

Q&A with Amy Leneker, author of CHEERS TO MONDAY

- “Cheers to Monday” is such an optimistic title - what inspired it, and what do you hope readers feel when they hear it?

I want people to hear Cheers to Monday and think, *Wait, did she really just say Monday?*- and then feel a spark of possibility. Most of us will spend about 90,000 hours at work over our lifetime - that's 2,109 Mondays! When we resign ourselves to dreading Mondays, or even despising them, we are dreading or despising 2,109 days of our life. Why in the world would we do that?

- You describe yourself as a recovering workaholic. What was your personal turning point - the moment you realized the hustle wasn't working anymore?

My body made the decision for me. For years, I had been telling myself (and everyone around me) that I would slow down, but I never did. My body had finally had enough and I burned out to the point where I was unable to work for several months.

- You call stress “the thief that steals success.” What do you mean by that, and how have you seen that myth - that stress is the price of success - play out in workplaces?

I call stress the thief that steals success because when we're feeling excruciating

amounts of chronic stress, we don't feel well. We may have reached "success" by landing a certain job or position, but if we're miserable, or making others around us miserable, that's not success. I see the myth play out in workplaces everyday - people assume that chronic stress is simply part of the workday but it's a lie. There's a better way.

- The Un-Stressing Method - See, Sort, Solve, Celebrate - sounds deceptively simple. What makes it so powerful in practice?

Its simplicity is what makes it powerful. The last thing we need is something to complicate our already complicated lives. The Un-Stressing Method is easy to remember and easy to use throughout the day. It's not meant to be a one and done fix - it's meant to change how you work and live. That's why it works just as well if you're drawing the framework on the whiteboard at work, or on a napkin at happy hour.

- In your book, you write that the goal isn't just to stress less, but to live more. What does living more look like for you now compared to earlier in your career?

Back then I was surviving a form of success that I thought I was supposed to have. In this season of my life, I'm savoring a form of success on my own terms, and it feels great.

- You've worked with thousands of leaders around the world. What are some of the most common "stress stories" you hear from them - and which ones are the most damaging?

Two common ones that I hear all the time - and I used to believe them too - "If I slow down, everything will fall apart." The truth is, things fall apart because we never slow down. And also that stress is something we need to figure out on our own. I work with leaders every day who try to hide their stress from their teams. You can't. Your team doesn't need you to hide your stress - they need you to manage it so there's nothing to hide.

- You talk about helping organizations move from managing stress to leading life. What does that shift look like in real terms for a manager or team leader?

We've made stress management a full-time job. It can be all consuming. But that's not the goal - you're meant to do more than simply manage your stress - you're meant to lead your life. The shift is when you un-stress your work and it transforms your life.

- You mention that many organizations expect managers to "do it all" - from strategy to mental health support - without proper training. What would better manager training look like?

The first priority is to provide it. So often people are promoted into management roles without adequate training. It happened to me - suddenly I was promoted and didn't have a clue what I was doing. The most effective management training includes self-awareness. I'm a firm believer that you can't lead others if you don't know how to manage yourself. We need to let go of the term "soft skills" and call them what they are - people skills.

- In your experience, how does chronic stress ripple through an organization's culture, and what can leaders do to stop that spread?

It absolutely spreads and the research backs this up. Emotions are contagious and although stress isn't technically an emotion, it spreads like one because of the emotions associated with it. Very rarely can someone be feeling high amounts of stress or anxiety and others around them not pick up on it. It's why the American Psychological Association calls it the emotion of community. Leaders, managers and team members all have a role to play and it starts with managing our own stress, and not contributing to the stress of others. There's no question that managers have the biggest impact on employees' daily experience - they are the strongest leverage point.

- You say reducing stress is a joy strategy. How can organizations make joy a shared value without it feeling fluffy or performative?

The first step is not to mandate it or force it! I think of joy the way I think about icebreakers - I can't count the times I've gone in to work with teams and they will say, "whatever you do, no icebreakers" and then they'll describe wanting a light-hearted activity to start the meeting where everyone feels more connected. People want connection. They don't hate icebreakers - they hate forced vulnerability on a timer. The same is true for joy - people don't want to be told to feel joy, or even worse, to be shamed for not feeling joy. What they want is a workplace that honors their strengths and lets them do their best work. Then joy is simply the byproduct.

- You share that you had over 100 panic attacks in one summer. How did that experience shape your relationship with stress and recovery?

That summer (and into early Fall) changed everything for me. Healing was a slow process and I had to be patient with myself because I didn't have any other choice. I left my job and embarked on a whole new career change. And I wish I could say that I only burned out once, but I didn't. Years later, after that summer, I burned out again. Turns out that while I had left my earlier job, I had kept the patterns that led to burning out. And that's the tricky thing about patterns - they keep repeating until we do the work to interrupt them.

- You encourage people to identify their stress “warning lights.” What are yours, and how do you check in with yourself now?

For me, my top stress warning is when I'm feeling exhausted but also unable to sleep because I can't turn my mind off. That's my wake up call that I'm on the wrong track. I use the Stress Ruler every day, sometimes multiple times a day.

- You emphasize the idea that joy isn't a reward for surviving burnout - it's a resource for preventing it. How can people start accessing that joy right now, even if they're deep in exhaustion?

Here's the best news about joy. It doesn't need to wait for the weekend or for your co-worker to stop being annoying. It's always available in the smallest moments of awareness. I use an ABC cheat sheet for joy - A is awareness of one good thing. You don't need 100 but start with one - it trains your brain to stop only seeing the negative. B is breathe. It sounds silly but pausing to breathe is one of our best ways to access joy and the C is for connection. Connect with people who light you up, and don't burn you out.

- You talk about the “joyful rebellion.” What does that phrase mean, and how can people join that rebellion in their own workplaces?

To me the joyful rebellion is that we've had enough stress and burnout, and we're ready for something new. Many of the teams I work with are stressed and burnout from dealing with stress and burnout. They are tired of talking about it. But it's not over! Over 80 percent of workers report feeling stressed at work, and half of them say it impacts their lives outside work. And the most recent burnout numbers are at a 6-year high. What we've been doing isn't working. That's where the joyful rebellion comes in - less stress and more joy.