



Isle Listen

Circle of Control



In the face of rapid change and uncertainty it can be easy to fall into the trap of worrying about things that are beyond our control. Here are some tips to help you to focus your energy in a helpful way.



Let go

With social media, newspapers, and 24-hour access to news channels – it can be hard to switch off. But, to look after our mental wellbeing, we need to try. If we spend all our time and energy responding to things that concern us but are beyond our control (such as Covid-19) we find our mental energy is depleted and our stress levels can become harmful.

Try to let go of the things that you cannot control, or at least pay them less attention. This might involve choosing to switch off from social media for a while every day, or deciding to only watch the news once a day.



Decide what you can control

There are some things that are not directly within your control, but you may be able to influence. For example, how much time those close to you spend talking about the virus, as well as your perspective and reactions to the situation. Choosing to react positively will not only make you feel better, but will also allow others around you and the community to thrive...a few examples are:

- Offering to support neighbours in a safe and responsible way.
- Role-model a healthy balanced view on the situation in the company of your children, siblings, parents, or friends.
- Making a deliberate choice to shop sensibly, with the hope others follow suit.
- Making a deliberate choice to physically distance yourself from others, and staying at home as much as possible, with the hope others follow suit.



Focus on the process of making positive choices

Decide what is directly within your control to do something about and focus your time and energy toward this. Imagine a circle, and inside that circle you put all the things that you have control over. Things like what you eat, the exercise you do, the routines you have, the goals you set, how you spend your free time...

You have control over all these things and more – and it's far more than you realise once you start to think about it.



Focus on the process of making positive choices cont.

Next, assess the things you put inside your circle of control. Make choices about what you will do about your diet, decide how you will exercise and get creative about how you will socialise, given social distancing. You may decide to tidy up the garden or wash the windows – both great forms of exercise. You may reach out using technology to stay connected. How about cooking a meal from scratch, or making one for someone who is self-isolating?



By switching our focus and our energies to positive activities we regain a sense of control in a world that can feel very messy.

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