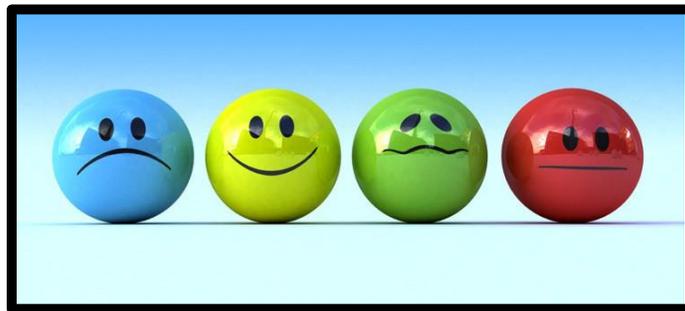


Mindset Matters!

This resource consists of a variety of exercises designed to help you examine your thinking in this transition period and to make positive adjustments as required.



Lessons from the Past

Like it or not, life is full of changes. Some big, some small. Change is an ever present feature.

You are riding the waves of change right now and it may feel more than a bit overwhelming. You may be thinking at times, *“I’m not going to make it through this!”* But, you will. Just as you have made it through other major life changes in the past.

1. Take some time to note below at least three major life changes (e.g. leaving home, having children, the passing of a loved one, moving to a new city or country...) that you have experienced in the past.
2. Rate each experience in terms of how easily you were able to navigate the transition from the old state to acceptance and functioning within the new state. For those that went smoothly, what facilitated this? For those where the transition was difficult, what was getting in the way?
3. Once completed, review your answers below for insights which may help you navigate this transition more successfully.

Transition: _____

Age: _____

Degree of Difficulty: *(not difficult)* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *(very difficult)*

What Helped	What Hindered

Transition: _____

Age: _____

Degree of Difficulty: *(not difficult)* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *(very difficult)*

What Helped	What Hindered

Transition: _____

Age: _____

Degree of Difficulty: *(not difficult)* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *(very difficult)*

What Helped	What Hindered

Transition: _____

Age: _____

Degree of Difficulty: *(not difficult)* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *(very difficult)*

What Helped	What Hindered

Transition: _____

Age: _____

Degree of Difficulty: *(not difficult)* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *(very difficult)*

What Helped	What Hindered

What are you telling yourself?

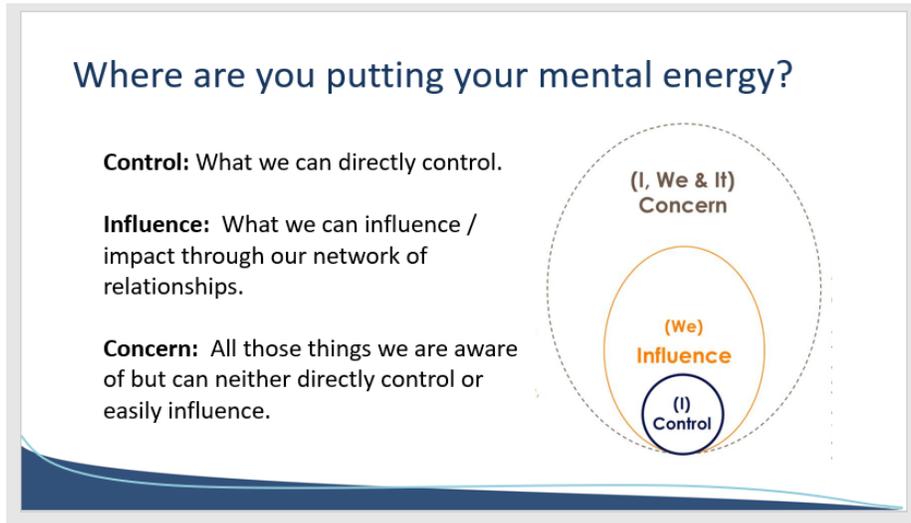
Take a day - or even a week - and be intentional about listening to your self talk. What are you telling yourself? What beliefs are you working from? What consequences is this having? If the consequences are negative, what could you do to reframe what you are telling yourself so it helps vs. hinders you?

Record your ideas below.

Belief / Self Talk Statement	Consequences	Reframe (as required)

Where are you focusing? Circles of Control, Influence and Concern

Source: Stephen Covey - 7 Habits of Highly Effective People



1. What are you focused on lately? Are your thoughts within the Circle of Control, Influence or Concern? Note them down and mark their circle in the chart below.
2. Are there any smaller aspects of the thought topics sitting in Concern which could be added to your circle of influence or even control?
3. With those aspects that remain in the Circle of Concern, what could / should you try and do?

Thought / Focus	Control	Influence	Concern	For concern items, can any elements be shifted to influence or control?

5

Emotion Regulation

Emotions are important and useful but, if we let them overwhelm us, vs. learn from and manage them, they can have negative consequences for ourselves and those around us.

In this section, we are going to look at strategies for emotion regulation. Before any strategy can be applied, we first have to notice what's happening — awareness is absolutely the first step in emotion regulation. Noticing the reaction you are having, and developing the skill of being able to instead choose the response you want to have, is what emotion regulation is all about.

The approach is proactive, takes practice, and roughly has three parts:

- You observe how you tend to react.
- You decide that this is not how you want to behave.
- You make the effort to change what you do in order to get to the desired result.

Dr. James Gross, a professor at Stanford University, specializes in emotion regulation. One aspect of his work is reappraisal. He describes four ways in which one can re-appraise a situation.

Emotion Regulation Through Reappraisal

Reinterpreting “How can take the threat away from this situation?”	Normalizing “It’s OK because others feel this way too”
Reordering “I’m going to think about the value I’m putting on this.”	Repositioning “I’m going to consider this from another perspective.”

Dr. James Gross, Professor, Stanford University

1. **Reinterpreting** — Finding a way to take the threat out of a situation. For example, in social situations, assume positive intent.
2. **Normalizing** — Acknowledging that it’s ok to feel as you do – that it’s a normal response.
3. **Reordering** — Understanding the value you are putting on the situation and adjusting as needed. Are you blowing this out of proportion? Giving it too much attention?
4. **Repositioning** — Looking at the situation from another point of view— can you see it from the other person’s point of view, from the point of view that someone you respect might take, or how you might view it one year from now?

Reflection:

How have you been reacting to this transition period? How might you put one or more these strategies into action to adjust any feelings or behaviours that are not serving you well?

Meta -Thinking

Essentially, “surviving” change, or better, “thriving” in change (and life) is facilitated by staying aware of and managing your thinking.

An emotional response is a good trigger for you to pause and ponder your focus and self talk. Once paused, you can assess whether or not this is the most productive / beneficial approach and take the opportunity to adjust if required.

Meta-Thinking

Learn to think about how you think!

- How am I thinking about this problem?
- What perspective am I taking in this situation and why?
- How might I choose a positive action or response to this circumstance?

Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.

Viktor Frankl

We have already used the Circles of Control, Influence and Concern to help us examine and adjust what we are thinking about. The matrix below adds an additional element - the need to consider also what we might not be thinking about, that we should be!

Where Are You Putting Your Mental Energy?

	WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL OR INFLUENCE	WHAT YOU CANNOT CONTROL OR INFLUENCE
THINKING ABOUT	CONSTRUCTIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING OPPORTUNITY SEEKING	STRESS ENDLESS WORRYING
NOT THINKING ABOUT	MISSED OPPORTUNITIES LIVING IN A FANTASY WORLD/DENIAL	CONSERVATION OF ENERGY ACCEPTING REALITY

Is there anything you are not thinking about / focusing on that you should be?

The Power of Questions for Focus

One powerful way to manage your mindset, is by paying attention to the questions you ask yourself and by purposefully asking yourself more empowering questions.

Consider the impact of asking yourself the two questions in the first group below vs. the two questions in the second group...

- *Why did this have to happen to me? (endless worrying)*
- *What if I never find another job? (endless worrying)*
- *What are my friends going to say? (endless worrying)*

- *How can I thrive and feel alive in my job search? (constructive problem-solving)*
- *How can I plan my days to be successful and satisfying? (constructive problem-solving)*

Challenge yourself to ask more positive empowering questions, even for one week – you'll be surprised where it can take you!

To make it easy, write them down and post them where you will see them several times a day.

My positive and empowering questions:

The Power of Quotes

Surround yourself with positive people and positive messages at this time (well really, always :)

One way to do this is to find quotations that help you focus your energy, thoughts and attitudes in a productive direction. Keep them somewhere where you can see them often.

See some samples below and a few links to more!

"Some people are always grumbling because roses have thorns; I am thankful that thorns have roses."

-- *Allophones Karr*



<https://www.themuse.com/advice/50-inspirational-career-quotes>

<https://motivationping.com/quotes/>

My favourite positive and empowering quotes: