How to Feel in Control When Things Are Out of Control

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First Let’s Focus
The Realities of the Challenge

1. Most of life is beyond our control.
2. Human beings are wired to function best with certainty.
3. Human beings are not wired to respond to uncertainty.
4. Feeling in control comes from controlling what we can and letting go of the rest.
“Life isn’t about waiting for the storm to pass. It’s about learning to dance in the rain.”

Viviene Greene
Feeling in Control Comes Down to:

“I CAN handle what life throws at me.”

Versus

“I CAN’T handle what life throws at me.”
How to Feel More in Control
Get Clear on What You CAN Control
1. List what you’re trying to control that you can’t control.
2. List what you’re trying to control that you can control.
3. Create a plan to control what you can.
Get Enough Sleep
1. Be honest about how much sleep you really need.
2. Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day.
3. Set a bedtime alarm.
4. Establish an evening routine that eases you into sleep.
1. Eat well.
2. Exercise sufficiently.
3. Enjoy a healthy relationship with technology.
4. Get outside!
5. Connect regularly with your favorite people.
6. Practice balanced escapism.
Get Organized
1. Clean up.
2. Get rid of anything that’s just taking up space.
3. Keep/bring in only what brings you joy and/or serves a purpose.
4. Develop efficient systems and routines.
Set Smart Limits
1. Establish firm boundaries with negative people.
2. Restrict your news intake to reliable sources.
3. Access the internet on your terms.
4. Keep toxic temptations out of the house.
5. Stick to a sensible budget.
Consider Your Feelings and Thoughts
1. Accept that you can’t control your feelings and thoughts but you can influence them.
3. Review your options before responding.
4. Make a list of every “out of control” experience you’ve already gotten through in your life.
5. Meditate (Headspace, Calm)
Go with Your Natural Rhythms
1. Do high level work when you are most alert.
2. Use your strengths.
3. Mix up your tasks.
4. Don’t push or rush yourself.
5. Allow yourself to not feel like it.
6. Take regular work breaks.
Rely on Your Intuition
1. Create space and time for your intuition to rise up.
2. Retreat when you’re feeling overstimulated.
3. Get quiet and listen to that small, still voice within.
4. Take back your weekends and use your vacation time.
Take Charge of Your Environment
1. Recognize that interior control comes from outer circumstances.


3. Design the environments you function in most – home, car, workspace – to encourage inner equilibrium.
Take Action
1. Pinpoint something you can do to reduce your stress.
2. Work on a project with a beginning and end.
3. Help out someone vulnerable.
4. Run an errand.
Make Goals Manageable
1. Toss goals you’re no longer passionate about.

2. Identify goals that will really make a difference.

3. Break goals down into small, workable steps.

4. Just do that one thing.

5. Reward yourself for how hard you are working.
Embrace the Certainty of Right Now
1. Make a list of everything in your life you can count on in this moment.
2. Ground yourself in your sensations.
3. Be grateful.
4. Express appreciation.
Cultivate a Growth Mindset
1. Look at adversity as a chance to learn.
2. Embrace opportunities to be flexible, collaborate, go with the flow, celebrate change.
3. Get used to being out of control by taking smart, fun risks.
4. Look at life as an ever-evolving adventure.
Allow for a Positive Force Beyond Yourself
1. Practice letting go whenever possible.
2. Take comfort in the cycles of nature.
3. Remind yourself it’s temporary.
Seek Help if....

Your psychological distress is interfering with your relationships, self-care, and/or home and work responsibilities.

PsychologyToday.com
“The Master sees things as they are, without trying to control them. S/he let’s them go their own way and resides at the center of the circle.”

*Tao te Ching*
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