



USING THE Circle of Control TO PRACTICE ACCEPTANCE

Often in life we find ourselves in situations that feel unfair, uncomfortable or frustrating. Some of us spend a lot of time and energy worrying about situations and outcomes we have no control over. To minimize emotional suffering, it is a good idea to practice acceptance of *what is* vs. fantasizing about *what if* and how a situation could be different.

Pain is an inevitable part of life, but practicing acceptance allows us to move forward in a calm, logical way. Acceptance is a skill we can exercise to help us manage potentially stressful situations in a manner that will encourage us to worry less and remain present. Rather than thinking about how things *could* have been, we can focus on the fact that there are causes for the reality that are outside of our control. We can accept the situation for what it is while allowing ourselves to feel an emotional response. It's important to pay attention to how those emotions feel in our bodies while recognizing triggers and any resistance we are experiencing.

The following statements may help with acceptance:

- I will survive and this feeling will fade even though it is painful at this moment.
- It is possible for me to feel anxious but still manage this situation in an effective way.
- When I remain rational, I am better able to make good choices and solve problems.
- I can accept the present moment exactly as it is.
- I can't change the things that have happened to me in the past, but I can choose to remain positive about my future.

Being present and practicing acceptance allows us more control over our thoughts and in turn, our mood. It also helps us better manage stress and anxiety. For further guidance on using the Circle of Control to practice acceptance, reach out to the USPS Employee Assistance Program.

Our EAP professionals are here to assist you in your efforts to utilize the circle of control. Give us a call at 800-327-4968 (800-EAP-4YOU), TTY: 877-492-7341 or visit EAP4YOU.com to learn more.