

Introduction

We do not only form behavioural habits but also habits of mind. In Part 1 you became aware of how your thinking can either empower or disempower you. Renewing your thinking takes practice. Do this activity with an open, reflective mind.

Activity: Controlling what you can

Recall one thought you had recently, or a statement you made about your current challenges with remote learning. Make the statement again out loud and 'think about the thinking' that is displayed in that thought or statement.

- Does it reflect **internal or external control** over the situation at hand?
- How has your mind-set affected your academic engagement so far?

If it reflected a 'victim' mind-set (thinking that the control solely resides in external factors), explore the issue by finding out from a few other students how they handled the issue.

Collaborative reflection is a powerful tool, providing that you reflect with someone with a positive outlook on things. What resources or strategies have they used? Now rephrase your statement to be reflective of the power that you do have over the situation (internal control).

As you take on your next academic task, take control with a more empowered mind-set throughout the process. Consider each of the following questions carefully and add some of your own.

- **Planning ahead:** What is required? What resources are available? What strategies / approaches are appropriate? How can I structure my time around my available resources and work load? Where can I find out more about resources and strategies to apply? What potential challenges do I foresee? What is within my control and what is not?
- **Monitor your progress as you go along:** Am I utilising my resources effectively? Are my strategies bringing me closer to the learning outcomes? Do I need to ask for help? Who is in the best position to assist me effectively?, etc.
- **Evaluate and adapt where necessary:** Reflect on what worked well and what needs adjustment. Factor this into the next planning phase and repeat the cycle.

Summary

Take some time to be aware of your thinking when you encounter a challenge. Actively and collaboratively explore resources and strategies and options. If you are stuck, consider the assistance of support services at UJ.

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