

Self help matters.

Helping you to find your solutions

Regaining Control

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Life is often about trying to bring some control into a world of chaos, whether it's at University, home or in the wider world. We tend not to like chaos, instead preferring some order, and we think that control creates that order.

There's an unpredictability about everything we do, yet we seem to yearn constantly to exert some control. This causes imbalance, and with imbalance we experience frustration, anxiety, fear and stress. Often, it's not that we actually need control, but the perception that we do. Often we're looking for stability and reassurance rather than control.

Life at University is very different to when we were younger and maybe living at home and going to school. We have much more choice to choose what we do with our time. We can miss that structure and routine given to us by our family or teachers... but that doesn't mean we can't rebuild our own new structure.

Top Tips

Choice. Once you find choice, you find options. How can you be more receptive to options?

Ambiguity. If you can tolerate ambiguity then it takes the pressure needing to have control all the time. Embrace ambiguity as your friend.

Decision-making. Control, or lack of it, is often caused by a lack of decision-making. If you need more information before you can make a decision, seek it out, then act.

Solution-focused. If you woke up tomorrow and suddenly had the control you seek, what would be different? In the past, when you had to tackle a challenging situation, what did you discover about yourself?

Self. You might not be able to influence things beyond you, but you can control how you think, feel and behave toward it.

Behaviour. Do something that you can control, such as exercising, relaxing or meditating. By reintroducing actual control in one area, you may find the need to control reduces elsewhere.

Acceptance. Appreciate that some things you can't control. No amount of fighting will change it. Take a deep breath and let it go.

Flexibility. Prioritisation and scheduling may help you to determine what's important, what to focus on and what to delay or delegate elsewhere.

Consequences. Embrace control and act decisively, rather than worrying about the consequences of making a particular decision. Indecision and denial inhibits taking responsibility.

Opportunity. Turn hopelessness into hopefulness. Regard a tough situation as a potential new beginning, the first day of the rest of your life, an opportunity to reinvent yourself, to reappraise your values and try something new.

Transformation. Release yourself from the anchors of control by learning to enjoy how not needing control gives you freedom, fulfilment and flexibility. This comes with practice and commitment.

Mindfulness. Accept, embrace and stay with the "here and now" rather than getting caught up with the past or the future.

Resources

MOODZONE

Boost your mood, cope with stress, anxiety or depression or simply improve your overall emotional wellbeing.



Opening Hours: Online

www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/low-mood-stress-anxiety.aspx

LIVING LIFE TO THE FULL

Want to know how to feel happier, more confident & worry less right now? Would you like to learn new ways of dealing with what life throws at you?



Opening Hours: Online

<https://littf.com/>

MINDFULNESS FOR STUDENTS

Helping you to stay calm, focused & better manage the pressures of student life.



Opening Hours: Online

<http://mindfulnessforstudents.co.uk/>

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN SERVICES & SUPPORT

A range of support resources for everyone at University



www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/support

THE MIX

Provides free, confidential support for young people under 25 via online, social and mobile.



Opening Hours: Online

www.themix.org.uk

BIG WHITE WALL

Online community of people who are anxious, feeling low or not coping who support and help by sharing what's troubling them. This is a free, online, moderated service and confidential.



Opening Hours: Online

www.bigwhitewall.com

If you are experiencing a crisis - please contact any of the following

- **Emergency Services** - telephone 999 (Free) 24 hours
- **Samaritans** - telephone 116 123 (Free) 24 hours
- **Breathing Space** - telephone 0800 83 8587 (Free) Mon-Thu 6pm-2am, Fri-Sun 6pm-6am
- **Nightline** - telephone 01224 272829 (local rate) term-time only, between 20.00-08.00
- **NHS 24** - telephone 111 (Free) 24 hours

For other support resources, please see - www.abdn.ac.uk/counselling