



## ACTIVITY: Take Control

What if there was a way to boost your happiness, motivation, productivity, career success, and even extend your life expectancy? You'd want to give it a try, right? What's even more interesting is that research has found that to experience everything mentioned above you really only have to start thinking differently about the world around you. It's all a matter of control.

"Feeling that we are in control is one of the strongest drivers of well-being and performance." (Achor) Notice that the statement says feeling. Believing that you have influence on the world around us leads to be more proactive and take action rather than be reactive.

Most importantly, the feeling of being in control in our lives reduces the dangerous physiological effects of chronic stress leading to better overall health.

### Try This!

1. Identify situations in your life where you feel stuck, helpless, frustrated, or generally stressed. Choose one that has the biggest effect on your day to day.
2. Make a list of the items that are completely out of your control. These are the areas that you have permission to set aside. If they are truly out of your control there is nothing you can do to change them. No point in ruminating on them.
3. Make a list of the items where you do have influence or control. You may find that many of the items on the list revolve around your beliefs about the situation.
4. Revisit the list of items that are out of your control and verify that there is no ability to influence or change.
5. Be Proactive! Looking at your list of influence or control (#3) take one action to improve your feelings of helplessness.

Achor, Shawn "The Happiness Advantage"

Spector, P (2002). Employee control and occupational stress. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 11(4)