

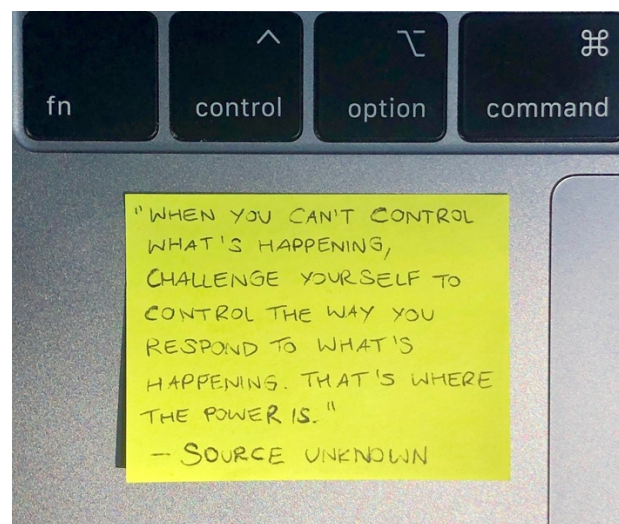
HPCG High-Performance Coaching Newsletter #20, Ralf Wolter



Dear Reader,

I am challenging you to consider two possible mind shifts:

1. “When you can’t control what happens, challenge yourself to control the way you respond to what happens. That’s where the power is.” (source unknown)
2. Our response to challenges makes a big difference in how they affect us.



source: Lydia Wolter

Challenge 1: Lack of Control

When was the last time you felt that you had no control over a critical situation?

In a TV interview at the beginning of the pandemic a psychologist explained what made the situation so particularly threatening for us: combining the unknowable with the uncontrollable. By now we already know much more about the virus, still we are far from controlling it.

Longing for control is a natural human instinct. Being in control means less risk and more safety. However, that safety comes at a price: it leaves little room for surprises. We might escape the bad surprises, but we also rob ourselves of the good surprises. Which in the long term leaves us mentally unchallenged.

Consider this analogy: what makes a good movie? The unpredictable.

Surprises make life exciting and interesting – they make us feel alive. Like anything could happen at any time.

Put simply: *embrace a lack of control and the liveliness that comes with it.*

So how can we deal with the surprises that we now start embracing? No matter the mind-set, we cannot control some situations. Still, we can always control our response. Attempting to control the uncontrollable is a recipe for frustration. So instead of focusing on the things you cannot do, focus on the things you *can* do. I believe this approach will fully occupy our time and resources – leaving no time for destructive thoughts.

Challenge 2: Our Response

How we **think** determines how we **feel**.

How we **feel** determines what we **do**.

What we **do** ultimately determines who we **become**.

When being faced with the uncontrollable we have two mind-set choices that will determine our experience:

- a) challenge or
- b) threat.

“The Challenge Mindset is when we view a stressful situation as an opportunity to increase our resources. In contrast, a Threat Mindset considers a stressful situation as a danger to lose some of our already existing resources.”

Read the full text here:

<https://www.competitionosciences.org/2017/12/07/challenge-vs-threat-mindset-how-to-empower-yourself-and-your-students-to-rise-to-the-challenge/>

The next question is: how can we switch towards the Challenge Mindset?

For once, there is a magic word: Adaptability. It releases us from the need to control everything. It is the key to be okay whatever the circumstances. Being able to cope with situations we are unable to change is an extremely useful skill. When change occurs, we can readily adjust to new conditions and behaviors.

The willingness to adapt enables us to approach any situation that comes our way with a Challenge Mindset.

Still feeling a little nervous about dealing with the unknown variables in life?

Here are 3 steps to get started:

1. Take some time and write down past challenges / unknowns that you successfully overcame.
2. Make a habit of writing down prospective overcoming stories.
This gives you the ultimate pep-talk resource for upcoming uncertainties.
3. Train your adaptability in safe places and start with little things.
A simple business example: your customer cancels a meeting at the last minute. Do you complain or use the free time for strategic initiatives?

Changing your mindset isn't a destination, it's a continuous journey that requires daily mind-recalibration. Is it worth it? Absolutely. Working on your adaptability skills is the best favor you can do yourself.

Have a nice weekend! And if you need to work during the weekend, make sure that it is fulfilling.

Best regards,

Ralf Wolter

HPCG® Founder, Coach and Consultant

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