

I need to reflect on a challenge

Often we find ourselves with challenges relating to many different aspects. Challenges can be related to how we connect to others (at home, at work, at university, at church). As a student, you may also experience challenges regarding how you relate to your studies. It is normal to feel overwhelmed when challenges arise, but as the challenge persists, we may start to feel helpless and wanting to give up. Panic may set in and we start to doubt our own capabilities to resolve the issue. As challenges arise, we often find ourselves spending a lot of time focusing on what we cannot control. Instead, we could shift our focus to appreciating the things we can control.

There are some aspects you can control, despite your challenges. Spend more time to strengthen what you can control.

An example: Despite the fact that you have limited financial resources, you managed to start with your studies and you are doing well. This gives you a sense of hope that you could in future change your (and your family's) circumstances. You now have the motivation to find a part-time job that allows you for enough study time and also to save for study fees for your next semester.



Things I
CAN
control

There are some aspects you cannot control. As you focus on thing you cannot control, you become more aware of your challenges and could feel overwhelmed and even helpless about your situation.

An example: You are struggling to pay your study fees. You can acknowledge the impact of this on your studies, but if you only think about the hopelessness of the situation, you may become even more overwhelmed and this will impact on your motivation to study.



Things I
CANNOT
control

HOW DOES THIS WORK?

- 1 Listen to the [Thinking differently about challenges](#) podcast.
- 2 Then take time to reflect on your challenge and to identify the things you can and cannot control by answering the following questions. If you download this document and open it in Adobe Reader, you can type your answers in this document and save it.
- 3 Submit your completed document and then have a follow-up conversation with a counsellor or send your answers to counselling@unisa.ac.za. The purpose of the conversation would be to help you identify other study options.

What is the challenge you are currently experiencing?

What are the things you can control about your challenge?

What are the things you cannot control about your challenge?

How did listening to the podcast help you to identify challenges that may not have been that clear to you?

How did you feel as you were listening to the podcast? how have you been feeling since listening to the podcast?

What are your thoughts now about the challenge(s) you have?

How did listening to the podcast and reflecting on your challenge impact on your thinking about how you could manage your challenge?

What is the first thing you would want to focus on now?

A counsellor will contact you shortly to have a discussion about the way forward.

Directorate: Counselling and Career Development

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