The Circle of Control, Influence and Concern.

"Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."
Serenity Prayer by Reinhold Niebuhr

Life can be challenging. Lots of things is our lives cause us difficulty – whether it is people, situations, or the environment we live in. However, some people seem to deal with adversity better than others, why is it? One factor is their ability to focus their time and energy on things that have control over, instead of wasting time and energy on things they do not. This time can often lead to an increase in anxiety and isn't great for our wellbeing.

The Circle of Concern vs The Circle of Influence

In the book 'The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People', Stephen R. Covey talked about the concept of the Circle of Concern and the Circle of Influence. The 'Circle of Concern' includes all the concerns you have in your work and life. Everything you include in this circle is a concern and matters to you. However, when you start to look at the contents of your Circle of Concern, you realise that some of things you are concerned about are outside of your control. E.g. the economy, health of a family member.

Your Circle of Influence are things that you can do something about. E.g. if you're concerned about climate change (Concern), your influence is about changing your behaviour to support climate change such as recycling, using green energy, signing petitions etc.

More latterly, the Circle of Control has been added to Covey's original model. It really highlights the things we can control (our own behaviours and actions) as opposed to just influence (other people's behaviours and actions).

Use the next page to bring this to life.

- What are your concerns and worries?
- Where do they sit in the model?
- Where are spending most of your time?
- What could you change to make yourself more effective?
- How will this make you feel?

Hopefully, by completing the exercise you will begin to take back control over your thoughts, which should in turn help to reduce anxiety and boost your self-esteem and wellbeing.

O·R·L DEVELOPMENT & COACHING

THE WELLBEING PROGRAMME

Circle of Concern
Things you can't do anything about.

Circle of Influence
Things you can influence but not control e.g. other people's actions and behaviours

Circle of Control
Things you can control e.g. your actions and behaviours.