

One day in our office, my co-workers and I were having a discussion about whether or not I am a perfectionist. They debated on the side that I am a perfectionist. I debated to the contrary, that I indeed am not a perfectionist. When I shared the details of the conversation with my husband later, I was relieved when he said, “No, you are not a perfectionist. Have they ever seen you paint? That is proof enough.” He then went on to say, “A control freak, maybe, but not a perfectionist.” HmMMM.

As I read the Small Steps to Health and Wealth Workbook, which you can get at your local Extension Office, I realize that being a control freak is not such a bad trait. Strategy Seven is to “Control Your Destiny.” There have been many studies on people who are successful at reaching their goals. As it turns out, those who believe they have control over life’s events through their own choices and actions have a higher rate of achieving their goals. People who feel they are masters of their own fate and that their actions change the outcome of events are internally-controlled people.

Internally-controlled people are the same ones who believe that they can change their cholesterol level through diet and exercise and that it is not just genetics or luck that determines health factors. Internally-controlled people believe that, even in challenging times, they can adapt methods of frugality and still save money. Being a control freak is not all bad. People who believe in this kind of internal control would relate well to the theory that life is 10% about what happens to you and 90% about how you choose to react to it.

I had a friend who used to have a banner in her classroom that said, “Your attitude and how you react is your choice. If you want to be happy, simply choose to be happy.” That is a great example of internal control. If you’d like to learn more about how you are geared, you can use an Internet search to find questionnaires to determine your locus of control.

What happens if it turns out that you are not very internally geared? Maybe you have lived your life thinking that fate and chance and other people with power influence all that happens to you. People who are externally geared, the non-control freaks of the world, are more apt to buy lottery tickets, read horoscopes and own “lucky charms.” Unfortunately, they are also less likely to take an active role in shaping their own destiny when it comes to both their health and their wealth.

If you find that you are externally controlled, you *can* change your attitude and outlook. One of the best ways is to set small, quick goals that are fairly easy to attain. When you start to set goals and achieve them, you can see that your efforts are changing your world. You can also review positive and negative events that have happened in your life over the past month and describe how your personal actions affected the outcome.

Carl Bard said, “No one can go back and make a new start, but anyone can start now and make a brand new ending.” I encourage you to become a bit more of a control freak when it comes to your health and wealth goals. If you need more help reaching your health and wealth goals, feel free to give me a call. My husband says I am more than qualified to give control freak lessons!