

Summary of Research related to Internal and External Locus of Control

Internal Locus

- *Internals* tend to attribute outcomes of events to their own control.
- Believe
 1. the outcomes of their actions are results of their own abilities.
 2. Their hard work would lead them to obtain positive outcomes.
 3. Every action has its consequence
- Accept the fact that things happen and it depends on them if they want to have control over it or not.

(April, K. A.; Dharani B; Peters K. (NaN undefined NaN). "Impact of Locus of Control Expectancy on Level of Well-Being". *Review of European Studies* 4 (2).

- Many internals have grown up with families modeling typical internal beliefs; these families emphasized effort, education, responsibility and thinking, and parents typically gave their children rewards they had promised them

(Schultz, D.P., Schultz, S.E. (2005). *Theories of Personality* (8th ed.). Wadsworth: Thomson).

Internal Locus Benefits

- lowers job stress and turnover
- leads to higher motivation, organizational commitment, and task performance
- Better at:
 - Communicating
 - Problem solving
- Team work – working to achieve mutually-agreed upon goals.
- More active listeners.
- More adept at social interactions.

(Ng, T., "Locus of control at work: A meta-analysis," *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 27 (8), 1057-1087, 2006).

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- Employees who have high levels of control at work are better at their jobs and report more job satisfaction

(Sparr, J., and S. Sonnentag, "Feedback environment and well-being at work: The mediating role of personal control and feelings of helplessness," *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 17 (3), 388-412, 2008).

- Nursing home residents put in charge of their own house plants were happier and mortality rates dropped 50%.

(Rodin, J., and E. Langer, "Long-term effects of a control-relevant intervention with the institutionalized aged," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 35 (12), 897-902, 1977).

- with improved physical health, mental health and [quality of life](#) in people with diverse conditions: [HIV](#), [migraines](#), [diabetes](#), [kidney disease](#) and [epilepsy](#)

(Maltby, J., Day, L., Macaskill, A. (2007). *Personality, Individual Differences and Intelligence*. Harlow: Pearson Prentice Hall).

- Internals tend to achieve at a higher level.
- Internals may perceive they have options from which to choose, thus facilitating more hopeful decision-making behavior as opposed to dependence on externally determined outcomes that require less commitment, effort, or self-control

(Whyte, Cassandra B.,(1975) A Specific Study of the Effects of Three Modes of Counseling on the Academic Achievement and Internal **External Locus** of Control of High-Risk College Freshmen. *Dissertation Abstracts*,.48106. 36 (4).

- An **internal locus** of control won't make your problems go away — but mental toughness can give you the ability to see past them, find enjoyment in life and better handle stress. If you aren't as mentally

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tough as you'd like to be, you can develop skills to become an 'internal.' An **internal locus** of control is the ability to roll with the punches. When stress, adversity or trauma strikes, you still experience anger, grief and pain, but you're able to keep functioning — both physically and psychologically

(Mayo Clinic Staff, "Resilience: Build Skills to Endure Hardship, Mayo Clinic Adult Health Series, Retrieved on March 6, 2013).

- When physical skills are evenly matched – as they tend to be in competitive sport – the competitor with greater *control* over his or her mind will usually emerge as the victor. Mental strength is not going to compensate for lack of skill, but in close contests it can make the difference between winning and losing.

(Crust, L. and P. Clough, "Developing mental toughness: From Research to Practice," *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action*, 2:21-32, 2011).

- I see events as successes or failures of personal control: Most psychologists spend their lives working within traditional categories of problems: depression, achievement, health, political upsets, parenting, business organizations, and the like. I have spent my life trying to create a new category, which cuts across many of the traditional ones. I see events as successes or failures of personal control.

(Seligman, M., *Learned Optimism*, Vintage Books, New York, 2006, pg. 15).

- The optimistic style of explaining good events is the opposite of that used for bad events: It's internal rather than external. People who believe they cause good things tend to like themselves better than people who believe good things come from other people or circumstances.

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(Seligman, M., *Learned Optimism*, Vintage Books, New York, 2006, pg. 50).

- Exerting self-control can make you happier in both the moment and the long run: It turns out that self-control correlates highly with life satisfaction and happiness. In other words, exerting self-control can make you happier in both the moment and the long run. The research, which was published in the [*Journal of Personality*](#), indicates that participants showing the greatest self-control report being in a good mood more frequently than being in a bad one. What is even more fascinating about the finding is that it doesn't seem to be linked to a greater capacity to resist temptation. Instead, the study points to the idea that the practice of self-discipline exposes individuals to fewer situations that might evoke craving in the first place. "People who have good self-control do a number of things that bring them happiness — namely, they avoid problematic desires and conflict," says the study's co-author Kathleen Vohs, Professor of Marketing at the University of Minnesota (Cifalda, L., Self-Discipline Leads to Happiness, *H3Daily*, July 3, 2013)

External Locus

- Externals attribute outcomes to external circumstances.
- Believe many things that happen in their lives are out of their control.

(April, K. A.; Dharani B; Peters K. (NaN undefined NaN). "Impact of Locus of Control Expectancy on Level of Well-Being". *Review of European Studies* 4 (2).

External Locus Hindrances - Disadvantage

- Those who felt they had little control over their deadlines had

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50% higher risk of coronary heart disease than their counterparts. This was as high a risk factor for heart disease as high blood pressure.

(Syme, L., and J. Balfour, "Explaining inequities in coronary heart disease," *The Lancet*, 350, 231-232, 1997).

- Individuals ... have higher levels of psychological and physical problems. These people are also more vulnerable to external influences and as a result they become more responsive to stress

(Roddenberry, Angela; Renk, Kimberly (NaN undefined NaN). "Locus of Control and Self-Efficacy: Potential Mediators of Stress, Illness, and Utilization of Health Services in College Students". *Child Psychiatry & Human Development* 41 (4): 353–370).

- dependence on externally determined outcomes that require less commitment, effort, or self-control

(Whyte, Cassandra B.,(1975) A Specific Study of the Effects of Three Modes of Counseling on the Academic Achievement and Internal **External Locus** of Control of High-Risk College Freshmen. *Dissertation Abstracts*,.48106. 36 (4).

Comparison

Individuals with a high **internal locus** of control believe that events in their life derive primarily from their own actions;

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- if a person with an **internal locus** of control does not perform as well as they wanted to on a test, they would blame it on lack of preparedness on their part. If they performed well on a test, they would attribute this to ability to study. In the test-performance example,
- if a person with a high **external locus** of control does poorly on a test, they might attribute this to the difficulty of the test questions. If they performed well on a test, they might think the teacher was lenient or that they were lucky

(Carlson, N.R., et al. (2007). Psychology: The Science of Behaviour - 4th Canadian ed.. Toronto, ON: Pearson Education Canada).

- Internals tend to achieve at a higher level. Internals may perceive they have options from which to choose, thus facilitating more hopeful decision-making behavior as opposed to dependence on externally determined outcomes that require less commitment, effort, or self-control (Whyte, Cassandra B.,(1975) A Specific Study of the Effects of Three Modes of Counseling on the Academic Achievement and Internal **External Locus** of Control of High-Risk College Freshmen. Dissertation Abstracts,.48106. 36 (4).

Bi-Locals

Though clearly circulating in oral form earlier, the earliest established date for a written form of the prayer is various versions printed in newspaper articles in the early 1930s by or reporting on talks given by Winnifred Crane Wygal, a pupil and collaborator of Niebuhr's.^[1] Wygal included the following version of the prayer in her 1940 book, *We Plan Our Own Worship Services*, attributing it to Niebuhr:

O God, give us the serenity to accept what cannot be changed,
The courage to change what can be changed,

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and the wisdom to know the one from the other

and the wisdom to know the difference.

- Handle stress and cope with diseases more efficiently by having the mixture of internal and external locus of control.
- Can take personal responsibility for their actions and the consequences thereof while remaining capable of relying upon and having faith in outside resources

Example:

an alcoholic who will accept the fact that he brought the disease upon himself while remaining open to treatment and/or acknowledging that there are people, mainly doctors and therapists, that are trying to cure his/her addiction, and on whom, he should rely

(Herbert M. Lefcourt, *Locus of Control: Current Trends in Theory and Research*. Psychology Press, 1982).

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Body Effects Mind

- Glucose: Many things affect one's ability to exert self-control, but self-control particularly requires sufficient [glucose](#) levels in the brain. Exerting self-control depletes glucose. Research has found that reduced glucose, and poor glucose tolerance (reduced ability to transport glucose to the brain) are tied to lower performance in tests of self-control, particularly in difficult new situations. A study carried out in 2010 by The University of South Dakota tested the willpower of participants by offering an instant payout of \$120, or the payment of \$450 at the end of 31 days. The study showed that participants who had previously consumed a beverage with high sugar content were able to resist instant gratification. On the other hand, the participants who had previously consumed an artificially sweetened beverage had more difficulty exercising the willpower to take the offer of the instant payout

(Gailliot MT, Baumeister RF (2007). "[The physiology of willpower: linking blood glucose to self-control](#)". *Pers Soc Psychol Rev* **11** (4): 303–27).

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Mental Toughness

- there is a huge opportunity for leaders to engage and inspire their people, which will be vital as they prepare for future growth –

Organizations need to invest in their people by developing their mental toughness so they can gain a winning attitude and embrace change. Companies appear to be losing productivity because their employees are absolving themselves of taking responsibility for their results by blaming the economy and their leaders for poor performance. This lowers mental toughness and therefore lowers their commitment to execute strategy.

(Middleton, Cory, Centre for Positive Psychology and Education, UWS, retrieved on March 6, 2013).

- "We have a keen interest, therefore, in helping cancer survivors to build their inner strength so they can better manage their symptoms, restore their sense of purpose and live life more fully":

Some women emerge from a stressful event such as cancer with an enhanced sense of inner strength or mastery, which are characteristics of improved quality of life. But, for some women, cancer survival can be accompanied by negative physical and psychological syndromes, such as fear of disease and loneliness that affect their quality of life and impact their health outcomes.

(Roux, Gayle, VCU Department of Maternal Child Health, VCU News Services, retrieved March 6, 2013).

- Additional factors “involved in success and performance other than talent and raw ability.” These factors comprise their 4C Model for overall mental toughness. They are:
 1. Challenge: seeing challenge as an opportunity

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2. Confidence:having high levels of self-belief
3. Commitment:being able to stick to tasks
4. Control:believing that you control your destiny

(Clough, Peter and Doug Strycharczyk, *Developing Mental Toughness*, Kogan Page Limited, London, 2012).

- When you have mental toughness, you harness inner resolve that helps you rebound from a setback or challenge, such as a job loss, an illness, a disaster or the death of a loved one. If you lack mental toughness, you might dwell on problems, feel victimized, become overwhelmed or turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as substance abuse.

(Mayo Clinic Staff, “Resilience: Build Skills to Endure Hardship, Mayo Clinic Adult Health Series, Retrieved on March 6, 2013).

- To **develop mental toughness** we must be gradually exposed to, rather than shielded from, demanding life situations in order to learn how to cope. We should be encouraged and supported in reflecting upon setbacks and failures that occur as a natural part of our developmental process. People with a higher order resilience see negative experiences, as well as confidence-boosting outcomes, as providing opportunities for personal and professional growth

(Crust, Lee, and P. Clough, “Developing mental toughness: From Research to Practice,” *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action*, 2:21-32, 2011).

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(Crust, L. and P. Clough, “Developing mental toughness: From Research to Practice,” *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action*, 2:21-32, 201

Uncategorized Quotes

- Self-efficacy is “concerned not with the number of skills you have, but with what you believe you can do with what you have under a variety of circumstances.” Persuasive mentors must be good diagnosticians of strengths and weaknesses and knowledgeable about how to tailor activities to turn potentiality into actuality. Moreover, to ensure progress in personal development, skilled efficacy builders encourage people to measure their successes in terms of self-improvement rather than in terms of triumphs over others. Mere pronouncements of capacity to shape the course of one’s life without providing efficacy-affirming experiences along the way become empty homilies.

(Bandura, A., *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control*, W.H. Freeman and Company, 1997).

- A person’s attitudes, abilities, and cognitive skills comprise what is known as the self-system. This system plays a major role in how we perceive situations and how we behave in response to different situations. Self-efficacy plays an essential part of this self-system

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(Bandura, A. (1992) Exercise of personal agency through the self-efficacy mechanisms. In R. Schwarzer (Ed.), *Self-efficacy: Thought control of action*. Washington, DC: Hemisphere).

- People who experience more positivity become more optimistic, more resilient, more open, more accepting, and more purpose-driven

(Fredrickson, B., M. Tugade, et al, 2003, "What good are positive emotions in crises?: A prospective study of resilience and emotions following the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 84: 365-376).