This introductory Factsheet provides an overview of managing our emotions. This overview includes understanding the importance of self-awareness, managing negative emotions and how to focus on positive emotions.

**Introduction**

**Managing our emotions & good emotional hygiene**

The term ‘emotional intelligence’ refers to our capacity to be aware of, control, and express our emotions appropriately, and to handle interpersonal relationships with good judgment, understanding, care and empathic common sense.

We know when we are good with managing emotions when we can recognise what emotion we are experiencing and can change it if we need to, and know when we need to cheer up another or calm them down – when we can recognise this we can then manage it!

**What are the benefits?**

Studies have shown that people with higher emotional awareness and control have greater mental health less stress, greater personal control and job performance/satisfaction, and are better leaders and managers.

They also see things in perspective are easier to get along with so benefit from better relationships with others and make better decisions and exercise good judgment.

**How do we do it?**

It starts with ‘awareness’, of self and others, it’s our capability to recognise our own, and other people's emotions to be able to discern different feelings and label them appropriately, and to use this information to guide thinking and behaviour, and to manage and/or adjust our emotional responses to adapt to changing circumstances or even to achieve a goal. When recognising the emotions you are experiencing, rather than labelling them positive or negative, think in terms or appropriate or inappropriate.

Then we need to exercise self-control, especially when the emotion could be deemed as inappropriate and think about how we will process it. STOP, which means STOP/Sit down, THINK, OBSERVE, PLAN. Whilst you are thinking ask yourself What is the emotion I am experiencing? How is it making me feel? What actions is it encouraging me to take? Then move on to ask yourself what is the opposite, appropriate emotion? Can I focus on that now? How can I continue to focus on that more appropriate emotion? How do I feel now that I have made that decision?

To experience more of the benefits of emotional control choose your own personal constructive emotion of the day. Consider making the decision that when you get up in the morning you will choose a constructive emotion and focus on that throughout the day, so for example ‘today I will focus on the constructive emotion of gratitude’ and will think about all the things in my life I can be grateful for. Other constructive emotions you might want to consider are: joy, hope, pride, inspiration, amusement/fun, satisfaction, relief, happiness, calmness, determination, passion, satisfaction. Consider now making a list of the constructive emotions you will focus on over the next 7 days. At the end of the 7 days consider how the focus on these constructive emotions has made you feel, then repeat the exercise for another 7 days. You are now on the road to emotional control and experiencing the benefits this will bring into your life.

**Summary**

Emotional control can literally transform your satisfaction and mental wellbeing – do it!!

Before putting this factsheet down, spend a few minutes reflecting on some of the emotions you have experienced over the last few days. So STOP – Stop (this is reflecting which I’ve asked you to do), Think about the emotions you’ve experienced and give them a name, Observe how they made you feel and Plan to replace them with the opposite emotion (assuming they were inappropriate emotions). If you can do this now it shows that you can take control of inappropriate emotions the next time they come along.

**Further information**

Our facebook group has videos about emotional control and EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique) <https://www.facebook.com/groups/216645969611627>