



## **The Circle of Control**

### **Quick recap**

Layli, a stroke survivor and Berkeley graduate, shared her personal recovery journey and presented on the concept of "circles of control" as a framework for managing anxiety and stress. The group discussed various coping strategies and personal challenges related to stroke recovery.

### **Summary**

#### **Group conversation**

The group discussed personal matters and events in members' lives and offered support to each other.

#### **Emotional Recovery in Stroke Survivors**

Layli, a 29-year-old stroke survivor who graduated from Berkeley in 2020, shared her personal recovery journey and the importance of addressing emotional aspects of recovery. She discussed her ongoing therapies, including weekly therapy sessions, physical therapy, and ceramics, as well as her efforts to improve her speech and physical abilities. Layli emphasized the need to focus on emotional recovery and proposed discussing strategies to cope with challenges, aiming to improve overall well-being and recovery rates.

#### **Circles of Control for Anxiety Management**

Layli presented on the concept of "circles of control," a framework for managing anxiety by distinguishing between what is within one's control, what can be influenced, and what is out of one's control. She explained that focusing on controllable aspects can help reduce stress and improve coping skills. Layli shared examples of what falls into each circle, emphasizing the importance of



preparing for difficult situations and practicing self-care. The discussion included a brief exchange about participants' familiarity with the concept, with Michael sharing his experience finding it helpful in a partial hospitalization program.

## **Circles of Control and Influence**

Layli shared her experience with a speech impediment and discussed the concept of circles of control, explaining how recognizing what is within one's control can help manage stress and focus energy effectively. She emphasized the importance of distinguishing between the circle of influence, where one can take action, and the circle of concern, where one cannot control outcomes. Layli emphasized that within the circle of influence, one can influence the situations to make it more manageable. She shared a specific example of sharing or disclosing her speech impediment when talking with someone over the phone. This is a great example where she can't directly control the other person's ability to understand her, but she can influence the situation by sharing that information beforehand. Susan shared a personal example of using this concept to cope with worry about her husband's health, and Layli answered questions about breaking the cycle of worry and where to learn more about the circles of control concept.

## **Stroke Recovery Coping Strategies**

The group discussed coping strategies and personal challenges related to stroke recovery and managing control over different aspects of life. Layli shared her experience with speech impediments and suggested focusing on what can be influenced rather than controlled, while Rita expressed challenges with dependency after multiple strokes. Nicole highlighted the importance of differentiating between controllable and non-controllable aspects of life, and the group discussed self-care practices, including baths and treating oneself to small pleasures.