



Choice or Chance: Understanding Your Locus of Control and Why It Matters

Stephen Nowicki

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How Much Do You Believe That What Happens to You Is the Result of Your Own Actions—or Do Circumstances Beyond Your Control Largely Determine Your Fate?

Locus of Control (LOC) is a phrase used by psychologists to describe a widely effective way of assessing an individual's potential for success—personal, social, and financial. LOC measures how much you believe what happens to you is the result of your own actions or, conversely, of forces and circumstances beyond your control. People who accept that they are largely in control of their lives tend to do better than those who feel that fate or external factors rule what they do, especially in novel and difficult situations.

This book explains LOC research, until now mainly confined to academic circles, in terms easily understandable to the average person. The author, a clinical psychologist who has spent nearly five decades investigating and writing about LOC, helps the reader to explore his or her own locus of control and what those orientations might mean for how life is lived. He discusses the extensively documented relationship between LOC and academic achievement, personal and social adjustment, health, and financial success.

Dr. Nowicki notes that there has been an increasing tendency among Americans to feel as though their lives are slipping out of their control, and he identifies ways to reverse this negative trend.

He describes how the Locus of Control is learned and demonstrates ways in which it can be changed to yield higher levels of achievement, success, personal satisfaction, and better interactions with others.

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Melinda Gregory:

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