

## Day 1: Tutto sotto controllo

Hi,

Welcome to day 2. Today's tip is: 'Tutto sotto controllo'.

I think you understand what I mean: 'everything is under control'.

This is the way we like things to be. Unfortunately that's not always the case and that's when we get stressed.

You've probably heard the serenity prayer before:

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
the courage to change the things I can,  
and the wisdom to know the difference...*

This is my tip to you today.

Whenever you're stressed, have a closer look at your stressor and check if it's under your control or not.

If the stressful situation is under your control, do something about it. That's easy.

But if it's not, for your own peace of mind, it's going to be very important you find a way to live with it.

Let me give you an example:

I'm Belgian and I live in Belgium and I often work in multicultural environments. There I often meet people who come from a different climate and some of them are completely obsessed with the weather. I've met people who have lived here for 20 years and who complain every single day about the weather in Belgium. Now, it's true, it can be bad: rainy, grey, cold... But it can also be good.

If you're complaining about it all the time, what's going to happen?

1. You are probably not going to notice it when the sky is blue.
2. You are probably making it worse and you are causing stress for yourself.
3. You might even be a stressor to the people around you...

So, accepting that this is the weather here - take it or leave it, and if you don't like it, you can always go elsewhere – is probably going to be better for your stress management...

I know it's easier said than done. What works for me is remembering what happens in my body when I am or get stressed: hormones are being released, which in the long term could damage my health ... Do I want that? No! So when I find myself obsessing or stressing about something that is out of my control I say: do I really want this? Is it worth damaging my health? I don't think so! And it works for me.

This whole thing (=concept) is also mentioned by Byron Katie. She has a book called 'Loving what is'. Loving what is means, whatever the situation,

that's the way it is, that's what you should love.  
Loving could be a bit exaggerated for some people but accepting could definitely be a start.

Let me give you an example:

Suppose you've lost your job. I think we will all agree that losing your job is going to be a stressful situation. I get it, tough! And I can understand you are going to be down and you are going to be stressed for a while. The problem is when you get stuck in that situation, you get stuck in the mode of 'Why me? And it's not fair! They shouldn't have done this! I've been there all the time! It should have been somebody else!' And you stay in that 'mode' and you get stuck in this feeling of frustration and anger. When that happens, you are probably going to feel more stressed, you are winding yourself up and you keep on releasing these hormones in your body...

Now, again, I get it. It's stressful. So give yourself some time to get over the initial shock but then... love what is. Maybe not 'love' but... accept what is, as in: Ok, I've lost my job, it's a fact, now what? That attitude is going to help you to be more efficient, to take action and ... experience less stress.

What would I like you to do today?

Think of a stressor: something that is bothering you at the moment or was on your mind the past week. And ask yourself: is it under my control or not? And then you know what to do!

See you tomorrow for tip 3!  
Bye!