


# Time and Control (TC): Self-Care that Works for Me

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During these extraordinary times, I realize there is a strong demand to be self-aware to keep myself okay. As I reflect on what I need, I always end up with these two things – time and control (TC).

With the uncertainties that the world is experiencing, TC might come across as a major challenge. However, this does not mean that hope is lost. Instead of wishing for TC to simply fall on my lap, I try create TC opportunities for myself.

Here are five things that work for me: 

## *I slow down*

If it takes me 10 minutes to take a shower, I add another 5. If I need to respond to an urgent matter, I hold off for another 30 seconds. If I only have one hour to be ready, I steal 10 minutes from it and just sit still. There's a certain degree of tranquility achieved when I release myself from the pressure associated with time. It becomes a moment of realization because I regain focus. What may seem muddy before becomes clear. Chaos settles down, surprisingly, I get things done faster.

## *I fix my stuff*

The first thing that I do is organize my files. Nothing can beat the satisfaction of seeing a clean table and well-stacked papers with individual post-its colorfully coordinated to indicate their status. The same feeling happens after deleting the cookies and caches in my hard drive and defrosting our refrigerator and making sure that all leftover food is assembled based on their dates of expiration. Of course, I have no control over the big stuff. And that's completely okay. But for things that I can work on like my ref and my table? I make sure that the littlest detail is according to my call.

## *I write things down*

What may seem overwhelming settles down when they are brought on paper. The pen has the power to organize my thoughts. It makes me understand what I feel. It allows me to see connections that have been lost in the storm of thoughts. It helps me label feelings I could not articulate. One mentor said to me once that I needed to write things down, and she was right. It may seem profound at first but when you are one with your pen, you will realize that you need not think much. I just start writing to begin to understand myself better.

## *I let my mind wander*

There may be times that I wonder about where I am in my life and what things could have been if I had chosen a different path. These thoughts lull me to sleep most often. At times though, they also wake me up and allow me to see how the world is bigger and how possibilities are endless. Imagination becomes more exciting.

## *I stick to my schedule*

I start and end my day by connecting with God. I attend to my devotions in the morning and meditate while in the hot shower immediately after arriving home. Studies show that stressed people usually start their day by checking on their phones. I think the exception is if you grab your phone to check the latest episode of Kape't Pandasal – a YouTube channel that offers 2-3 minutes of daily reflection. It reminds me that it's not about me after all. Instead, my efforts should be channeled to understanding what He wants me to fulfill. Things are not clear all the time. Sometimes, I get my answers from my pen during my devotion time, while other times, I get my answers from the most interesting people. God has His ways of making you pay attention and remember the lessons He would like you to learn.

Survival is already a luxury in this day and new age. It is the personal barometer to which I have been subjecting myself to whenever I am asked "Are you ok"? As long as there is tomorrow that I can look forward to, as long as I get TC from the weirdest to the simplest opportunities, I am already grateful. Take care!

