

2. Has this course made a difference to you and if so, how?

- Yes, this class has made a difference for me. It has taught me to look into my own life and how to determine whether I have control or not. It has taught me to pay attention to my body emotions and how I react to people around when I don't or have control. I now pay attention to what I do and how I handle my different situations now that I am more aware of what I do when I don't have control. It also taught me to look at the faults in my life and how to change it for the positive. This course has really enriched my mind and I'm glad I took it.
- Yes, it was not only about learning about yourself, but also about really noticing your own behaviors and feelings you seem to overlook everyday and take for granted. I learned a lot about myself and how to be more assertive and yielding in my life.
- This course has made a tremendous difference to me. It has helped me cope with what is necessary and to discard what is not.
- This class has definitely made a difference to me. I have learned about myself, and I have had a chance to reflect on my life so far. Academic – this class didn't have too much academic content. It was more based on personal experience. I liked it that way because that was the way I could explore myself the best. The workload was also balanced because we were urged to reflect, and however much work we put into it, we got out.
- Basically this course has put into words and action what control is for me, because before, control was not tangible, just thoughts. However, I am ready to apply what I learned in this class in my life, especially those techniques that relate to control.
- This course has made me more aware of my actions and the rewards and consequences that I may result from it. I have become more relaxed instead of uptight. I know my limits and have worked on my strengths.
- Yes, it has helped me learn values of self-improvement in a psychological aspect. I could not have learned these concepts in any other classes. I believe this course is important, especially with freshmen in college who need guidance to a sense of control.
- It definitely has made a difference. I know myself better than I did coming into the course. This seminar was both educational and motivational.
- This course actually has made a difference, because it was a class that allowed me time to think about myself and who I was.
- Yes, this course definitely made a difference. It has helped me learn about myself and has increased my awareness of my actions. Most importantly, this class has encouraged me to change certain factors unfavorable to myself.
- It made me write in a journal that I wish I had more time for. I had fun putting together my final. I learned a few little quirks about myself.
- This course really made a difference by getting my thoughts flowing. The course also gave me a workable framework for improving self-control.
- This course has really affected me. It has made me really re-evaluate what control I have in my life, what control I want, and how to get it. I have become so much more aware of

myself and my feelings and also very aware of my interactions with others. I feel I've gained insight and maturity.

- I think this class really opened my eyes and enlightened me as to how I can strengthen relationships with myself and others. I think through this course I have learned to be more accepting of myself and more sense of confidence.
- This course came at a critical time in my life where I felt very out of control with my surroundings and my life. It helped to open my eyes to a lot of new ideas.

- This is a great course. You learn so much about yourself and I have matured extremely by being in it.
- I think this course is wonderful for people of all ages because sometimes people fail to realize how important self-reflection can be.
  - For me the control seminar wasn't just an ordinary class. It was an adventure through the scope of my mind. My experience wasn't just that of a student sitting in a three hour lecture...rather it was a quest...This class not only broadened my mind but has changed my life. I am more aware of the effects of control, my perceptions of it, and my means of sustaining it. I am a different person than when I walked into the first class...I walked out with so much: a better understanding of me.
  - I wish all my classes were as thought provoking as this course has been..lively class discussions. The most difficult factor about this class is that we were invited to consider issues that most of us work very hard to suppress.
  - This course has been the highlight of my college career..the first time I have been able to relate the material back to my life...

One important thing I got out of the class:

I'm learning to be more positive assertive than negative assertive.

, my style is more negative yielding, I need more positive assertive.

I'm becoming less controlled by others, more personal control. what i want

others may not like it when you become more positive assertive, but that's ok

I'm a perfectionist, but realized a lot of time i won't have control over aspects of my life, and i can deal with that

i saw that I needed to be gentler with myself

when I lose control, I get very angry and lash out, and I'm learning other ways to address that

control is not easy to achieve, but with practice I can be less emotional and calm myself down in hard situations.

learned not to react so quickly in tense situations; seeing how i want to react, being more gentle

learning to not criticize myself so harshly when things don't go smoothly; being less judgmental with myself and others

Thought I was negative yielding, but realized it was just with one person; and once i let him go, better! also, taking a mental health day from so much work i do was healthy

i realized that complete control is not possible, but I'm not even sure it would be good, it would be boring!

I saw how much I reacted to the external, from a negative yielding place; becoming more aware that I don't have to stay there.

It's kind of embarrassing to admit that I've learned more from this class - in the "personal arena" of my life than at any other level. So often in Graduate school we take courses that provide us information on a theoretical level that in the real world have little utility. In the past ten weeks I think I've learned more about myself than at any other time in my life. I've begun to question my own views about the meaning of life, my ~~own~~ purpose, etc. I've also learned to look at other people with a more global perspective.

(over)

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STUDENT COMMENT:

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I believe I gained more from this class personally, than I have all year at UCI in other classes. This class gave me a chance to reflect on my actions and consciously take control of my life. Although, there is no question that I have a long way to go in self discovery; I know I have begun my journey. The first thing I realized about myself sounds like a cliché but, it is that I don't know as much about myself as I thought I did. On the first day of class I rated how well I knew myself and I rated myself an 8. If I were to rate myself again today I would rate myself about a 6. I realized I don't know why I act many times. I don't know why I don't act as well, many times. The most important thing I have gotten from the class is that you have to acknowledge things before you can change them. I have decided to acknowledge the fact that I don't know myself as well as I would like to, therefore I can now act on it. I think in order to be able to understand and relate to others we must first understand ourselves.



yes!

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*STUDENT COMMENT:*

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As I stated before this class was groundbreaking for me because it opened my eyes. I feel like the opportunity to examine myself, my first year in college was incredible because most people don't ever have this opportunity. I feel that I will be able to have a more fulfilling life if I continue my exploration of myself because I will be more aware of myself and others. I will have more compassion for those who don't understand their actions because I am aware of the difference. The most important thing for me is that this class was a starting point for the rest of my discovery and I am excited to see what I have to offer.

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*STUDENT COMMENT:*

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... I have learned so much about myself and why I do the things I do. Since the beginning of class, I feel like a grown person; not necessarily different, but definitely more mature and sensitive. I learned how to think by myself and with myself on my own time; instead of being forced to. I learned that life is precious and valuable; which means I can take the time to appreciate it as opposed to forgetting to rest and breathe.

I have learned to be more sensitive with myself and that everything I do wrong should not result in punishment. In addition, I now find myself noticing whenever I am being assertive or yielding and from there, consciously deciding my next move. This class taught me to step aside and take a really good look at who I was. I entered the class lost and angry because I couldn't handle life as it was given to me; but now I know that it's ok. I learned how to breathe.

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STUDENT COMMENT:

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This class has been a life changing experience as far as I am concerned because it has opened my eyes to the reasons behind I do what I do. For example I have realized that I am an assertive person. Knowing this fact helps me to understand why I choose to approach things the way I do. I realized that I am partial to the Prometheus way of life.

Although I tend to use this method practically in my day to day life, when I hear both ways of life, Lao-Tzu actually sounds more appealing. It seems relaxing to simply accept things as they are, whereas being assertive takes more energy. Both ways are equally acceptable for a healthy life but I have realized it is important to incorporate both types of control methods to live a balanced, centered life. If I wasn't aware of my underlying method of control I wouldn't understand why I constantly like to act on things and change things of my own will. I now realize that is my way of having control and it can be positive as long as I stay in the positive mode. Now that I know I am assertive I need to be aware of falling into negative and consciously lean toward the yielding mode when I see myself getting overly assertive.

good!



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STUDENT COMMENT:

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... as noted. Amidst the middle portion of the class, I really devoted a lot of time to writing and openly revealing exactly how I felt about my life and situations in my journal. What a load off my mind! I forgot how nice it was to write down your thoughts on paper and get every word out. Aside from tackling the questions of the week that were assigned for homework I wrote in my journal without boundaries and that told me a lot about myself and my uncontrolled emotions. I've actually used the diaphragmatic breathing at key moments when I needed to calm down and relax and while I've reacted to situations, I've consciously watched myself, my reactions, my behaviors and consequences. Its funny that I *do* know myself better. I'm not sure I like it, but I wasn't convinced I could evaluate my feelings anymore than I could feel them. The objective is to come out of the class with something and I did; a lot more than expected. I am very happy I decided to take this class for me. It was appropriate to sum up where I was at the end of this year of adjustment. Thank you for the time, sharing and effort you have put into this class and the time you have given me to understand myself better.

STUDENT ESSAY:

Final Exam- Control Yo'Self Before Ya Wreck Yo'Self

In the beginning of the quarter, my definition for sense of control for this class was self-knowledge and self-discipline in any given situation no matter the emotions and feelings involved. Towards the middle of the quarter, my definition was the power and will to overcome adversity and freely face the consequences of one's actions. From learning about sense of control and control itself in this class, these two definitions seem not fulfilling. As the quarter comes to a close, my new definition of control is *having direction in one's life with goals and values and the ability and humility to make necessary changes towards that direction.* Th-

Wow!  
Great  
inspiring  
and  
useful

The big emphasis on this class I felt was the modes of control: assertive and yielding. I enjoyed figuring out images of these types of control. Also learning how we would react to situations involving positive or negative yielding, or positive or negative assertive allowed me to

see which type of mode of control I use. I believe that I am a positive assertive person like Prometheus. I will repeat myself like in my journal that I would rather *take action and control* of my life than sit around and be told what to do. Not knowing the circumstances involved with this approach, I am willing to take the risks and not be called a wimp. This assertive mindset supports my motivation for control to be high. However, I am in the process of learning that I cannot control everything. This process involves seeing how normally I would act versus how I would like to act in a given situation. I am not saying that I am not a yielder either. This brings me to my enlightened point: that after being positive assertive such as executing the right technique when I pole vault or negative assertive such as when I think too much of what I need to do and how well I should be performing, I learn to accept my performance and congratulate my fellow competitors as a yielder and sportsman

A great  
reflection  
of the  
person

Beautiful!  
very well!

body feels. The diaphragmatic breathing techniques really calmed me down before sleeping. I also used it when I felt rushed or confused during the day to calm myself down. Body awareness with the control mode rehearsal technique made me feel almost "enlightened" and super-calm. I will make sure that I use it in times of stress.

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STUDENT ESSAY:

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Final Exam

5-27-03

Who am I?

How do we ever really know who we are? Will I ever be truly centered as a person? Why can't I be more...? These were all questions I asked myself through the course of this class. These are not typical academic questions, which is why I believe I gained more from this class personally, than I have all year at UCI in other classes. This class gave me a chance to reflect on my actions and consciously take control of my life. Although, there is no question that I have a long way to go in self discovery; I know I have begun my journey. The first thing I realized about myself sounds like a cliché but, it is that I don't know as much about myself as I thought I did. On the first day of class I rated how well I knew myself and I rated myself an 8. If I were to rate myself again today I would rate myself about a 6. I realized I don't know why I act many times. I don't know why I don't act as well, many times. The most important thing I have gotten from the class is that you have to acknowledge things before you can change them. I have decided to acknowledge the fact that I don't know myself as well as I would like to, therefore I can now act on it.



yes!

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STUDENT ESSAY:

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**Exploring How You Gain a Sense of Control in Your Life**

1.

I always thought that I was on the path of excellence. I had gotten into this great university, I was the budding starlet from my high school who was going to be a drama major, I was going to be happy, confident, social, athletic, goal-oriented...I was on overload. Sometime around the same time as I attended my first class of the freshman seminar, "How You Gain A Sense Of Control In Your Life" that perfect dream came spiraling down. I realized I didn't really know what I wanted to do with my life, let alone who I was at that point in my life, and that scared me. And I realized that I was nowhere near attaining this perfect life that I was striving for (nor would I likely ever attain it). Through the seminar, I was able to spend time reflecting on and organizing the most important aspect of my life, and that was, well, me. I had never really thought that much about why I acted the way I did, I just accepted this is how I act, I can't change. In these past nine weeks a lot has changed. I can't say that I have come full circle, but maybe a good 2/3rds the way around. I feel like I am still progressing in discovering, accepting, and controlling my life. I was able to explore and reflect in the three-stage process of the class: discovering where I am now, finding out where I want to be, and finally, learning how to get there.

Go!

😊

great!

**Where I am now (or where I was at the beginning)**

The first couple weeks of class we explored where we were in life. I thought that I knew myself pretty well, what I wanted, who I was. I journaled a lot about how important control and organization was in my life (pg 3). I needed goals and long-term control, as

well as day to day organization and structure. The need for long-term goals I journaled as being really important to me (pg 3). When I decided not to be a drama major, I felt really out of control. I am only eighteen-years-old, but I felt I needed a steady plan for my entire life. I remember that really frustrating me and stressing me out. I would go to bed every night, thinking, *what am I going to do with my life?* I felt I lost control on a daily basis really easily as well, like; one thing off in my day would send me spiraling down. For example, if I ate too much or something, I felt irrationally awful (pg 9). The things that made me feel in control had to do primarily with my eating and exercising as well. I seemed to identify that that was a major aspect of the control issues in my life- my body image. Overall, I wanted perfect control so much in my life that if one thing was out of order, I felt that I had totally lost everything. I wanted to control life more than is humanly possible, leaving no room for exploration, failure, or fate.

} great insight -  
Ahh, thank you  
for Q2  
Laurie!

### Where I want to be

By about week 4 we were exploring where we wanted to be and what our perfect world would be with our perfect sense of control. For eight pages I journaled about what the perfect sense of control would be (pgs 14-21). I touched on all the aspects of life- mid, body, social, personal, existential, etc. I wrote about where I wanted to be. I realized that having a perfect sense of control in all of these areas was impossible. No one can ever have complete stability in every facet of his or her existence. For the first time I decided that I should accept that I would never have perfect control. Being able to accept that felt really good. I felt wiser. I felt like I was actually gaining control by letting go of unrealistic ideals to have this perfect control.

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✓

I also started thinking about how I react in life. I learned about the four quadrants and how I reacted in certain situations, when I was assertive and when I was yielding (pg 26-27). I discovered that I was pretty good at being positive assertive, I was rarely negative assertive, and I could be positive yielding as well. Sadly, though, I was too often negative yielding. It had always been easier for me to just let others have their way or to just mope about feeling sorry for myself rather than actively standing up for myself. I learned that was something I needed to work on. I learned I could my reaction by breathing (diaphragmatic!), looking at the situation, and calmly thinking what would be the best way to react to this situation (pg 31). Overall, I wanted to be able to control how I was going to react in life and be able to positively control the outcome (or accept when I can't control the outcome).

good insight

✓

### How I get there

In these past few weeks, I have learned about how I am going to get to where I want to be: a place where I feel good about the control in my life. I have learned how to do this through a number of techniques and I believe I am making excellent progress. For example, I used to think about homework or food every morning or every night right before I woke up or fell asleep (pg 25). Now, I try to think about positive things, like how sunny it is or my family (that sounds corny, but it makes me feel better). I also go through the self-modeling exercises whenever I am stressing out about or feeling bad about a situation. I imagine myself in that situation, talking to the person, and a weight is lifted off my shoulders (pg 39, 45) and I feel more confident whether or not I then decide to put myself in that situation in real life. The biggest thing I am learning and working on is

Not corny, but wise!

✓

being positive assertive and going after my goals, but then learning to accept when I can't get everything I want, the Dong-Jing example (pg 40, 46). It is a necessity for life. I am learning that I need to be positive assertive and say, ok, I am going to go to the gym and workout and be healthy and at the same time accept that my body won't change overnight and love who I am right now. It is hard to do, but when I do it, I notice it, journal it, and feel better.

*Lowly  
example to  
DongJing!*

I remember when I was young and I thought by the time I was in college life would be perfect. I would look perfect, be incredibly popular, be on my way to being famous. I know now that I am not nor will I ever be any of those things, let alone all of them at the same time. I am okay with that. I am okay with the fact that I will constantly be a work-in-progress. I can sincerely say that I didn't feel that way nine weeks ago. I know that I am out of control a lot and I am irrational a lot. But here is how I feel in control: I now recognize when I feel that way, I try to react in the most beneficial way possible, and no matter what the outcome is, I have decided to accept myself, sometimes flawed, sometimes uncertain, but always as a quality individual.

*Beautiful*

## Impossibility of Perfection

"Everyone thinks about changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself," are the inspiring words of a well-known philosopher named Leo Tolstoy.

At the late age of 19, I finally gained a sense of realization that I cannot make a difference in this world, until I can gain a sense of self.

As I walked in on the first day of class, one thought ran through my mind: "Why am I taking this class?" I felt weak for depending on a class for self-exploration. I always assumed that the best way to find one's self is through experience, not in a jail-like classroom.

Not only did the class help me realize why I desire for this sense of control, but it also helped me in seeing where and how this control is currently distributed in my life.

Through the understanding of the ideas of assertiveness and yielding, I was able to better pinpoint the control influence with other people and within myself. Concerning other people, I found that I was under the negative yielding category. I always catered to other people's happiness before my own. This is good to an extent but I believe that an excess could make one a pushover. I felt helpless and weak when I confronted other people, even if it was for my own defense. Ironically, it is the opposite when it concerned myself.

When it came to me working hard at school and best in everything I do, I pushed myself way too hard. Because of this, I was classified under negative assertiveness. My competitive nature made me lose control of my body and health. I would push myself so hard that I would always be sick. I learned through an evaluation of myself that I was in bad shape and had a little bit of both negative assertiveness and yielding.

Now that I have learned where I am in this road to improvement, this class opened my eyes to where I want to be. Through examples used in class, I found that I want to be in the positive assertiveness quadrant, in both aspects of my life. I was inspired by the story of Prometheus and his positive assertive actions that changed the world with fire.

good in spirit

wow! great awareness



My ultimate goal in life is to change the world somehow. I found that being a Prometheus would be the most efficient way in doing so. But, I also learned that I cannot express frustration in things I cannot change. One must gain harmony and acceptance, like the water passing going around the rock. One cannot only have the qualities of positive Assertiveness one must have a balance of positive assertiveness and yielding in order to have a content lifestyle.

Ahh,  
Balance!!  
Dang!!!

Now that I have realized where I am and where I want to be, I must search for a way to get there. This class taught me many exercises that help me through this journey. *Tai Chi* with its diaphragmatic breathing helped me calm myself This type of breathing is useful when faced in a situation where one must positively yield and accept things. Factors that are out of my power to change should be calmly accepted. I also need to decrease the amount of assertiveness that I have upon myself I should give myself a time to reflect and relax, despite how busy my schedule should be. I am not super woman and cannot be involved in everything in this world. The exercise of writing the first thing I think of in the morning and the last thing I think of at night will help me stop and evaluate my workload. In doing this, I will no longer burden myself with unneeded stress and hopefully maintain that balance of stress and productiveness. I learned that I can use these tools and knowledge I gained from this class in order to gain a perfect sense of control.

well, if not  
perfect, a  
"good enough"  
peaceful one  
③