

The Jack Petchey **Spark** Programme

a self-discovery programme for young people



**Discover how to be at your best
more of the time!**

Session 6: **The Check–Challenge–Choice** **process**

Introducing the CCCprocess

In this session we will introduce you to an important new resourcefulness tool – **the Check-Challenge-Choice or CCC process**. This is a simple, but very effective process that will help you notice whether you are In the Box (a vital first step), and help you to get Out of the Box so you can Be at your Best more of the time! **Using CCC can make a huge difference to the way you react to triggers and respond to new, uncertain or difficult situations.**

There are three steps to the Check - Challenge - Choice process:

STEP 1 is **Check** – check your thoughts and feelings to tell whether you are In the Box

STEP 2 is **Challenge** – challenge your Pessimist and Judge self-talk and tap into your Realist to find the truth

STEP 3 is **Choice** – recognise the choices available to you and decide the best way forward

See a more detailed breakdown of the CCC steps below

1. Check



Stop

What are you feeling? What are you thinking?

What is your self-talk (Judge and Pessimist) saying about you, others, or the situation?

How is your body reacting?

Are you 'In the Box'?

Write down some lines of self-talk

2. Challenge



Stop

Take a Breath. Then Tell the Truth.

Be honest with yourself about the situation. Be balanced and realistic

Read back a line of self-talk

Tell the truth about the situation. What is really true?

Repeat with each line of self-talk

So what are the helpful truths to remind yourself of?

3. Choice



Stop

Take A Breath. Then Choose.

What do you want to happen?

What are your options? What do you choose to do?

What steps can you take to make things right? Who can help you?

Agree with yourself the action you will take next time.

Top Tip – tap into your Realist

Don't skip the breaths! These are important to help you change your state and connect with your Realist – the wise, balanced and truthful voice – for steps 2 and 3.

Do you remember the Spark moment you identified in Session 2? This was a time when you were Out of the Box, At Your Best and felt fantastic! **Imagine yourself being back in that moment to tap into your Realist.**



Go Do!

Watch this video ([here](#)) to see the CCC process in action. Notice the questions asked by the coach at each step.

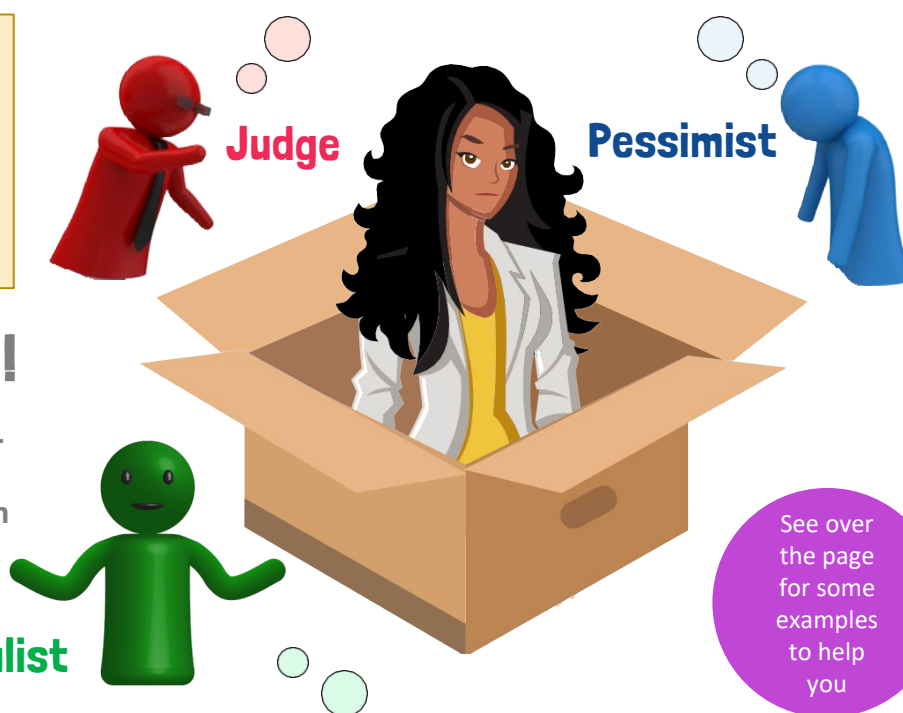
Exercise: work through your own real-life example

Check-Challenge-Choice is a powerful process but it takes practice. If you notice that you've been triggered, try using it in the moment to enable a more resourceful response to the situation. But CCC is also useful as a reflection exercise after an In the Box experience. Have a go now at using it in this way to understand how you can respond differently next time to a particular trigger.

- 1. Check** – start by identifying a recent situation when you were triggered and Not At Your Best. Imagine yourself back in that moment and describe below the trigger, your Judge and Pessimist self-talk and your feelings.

My trigger situation	My Judge self-talk	My Pessimist self-talk

My feelings ...



Now take a breath!

... and connect with your Realist. Think about your Spark moment or another time you were feeling At Your Best. Imagine yourself back in that moment ...

2. Challenge

Realist

Now for each line of your Pessimist and Judge self-talk above, write down the actual truth of the situation here: Be balanced and realistic.

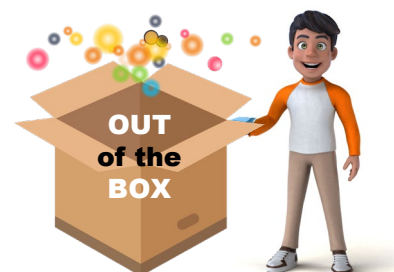
The truth ...

See over the page for some examples to help you

3. Choice

- finally, write down the options you'll have next time for responding to this trigger situation and the action you intend to take.

My options:	Next time I will ...



CCC Examples

Have a look at these examples to help you work through your own:

1. Check

Trigger: My friend didn't answer my call

Pessimist self-talk: *'She doesn't like me any more'*

Judge self-talk: *'I don't care. She's not worth it'*

In the Box feelings: angry, frustrated, tense

In the Box behaviour: sent angry, rude text message

3. Choice I can call again later. I can call another friend to chat. I can go for a walk instead.

Next time I will: text her and suggest we talk in the evening

2. Challenge

The truth:

She is my friend. She was probably busy.

Our friendship is important to me

1. Check

Trigger: I didn't get picked for the football team

Pessimist self-talk: *'I'm going to give up football'*

Judge self-talk: *'That's not fair. The coach is biased'*

In the Box feelings: disappointed, upset, hot

In the Box behaviour: quiet and half-hearted at training

3. Choice I can put extra effort in and train harder and hopefully be picked next time. I can talk to the coach and get his advice. I can think through whether I do want to continue football.

My decision: I will keep playing for this season to develop my skills and hopefully get picked for the team for some of the matches.

2. Challenge

The truth:

I want to keep playing football

I am not the strongest player. There is more competition for places this year.

Remember the more you use CCC, the better you get at it!

Did you know?

Neurons are nerve cells. There are an estimated 100 billion neurons in the human brain. They move information around the brain.

The brain is good at making this transfer of information as efficient as possible by creating neural pathways which means the information can travel quicker. These pathways become thicker and more established as you get older. They become patterns of behaviour and thoughts, in other words habits.

Have you ever heard the phrase "You can't teach old dogs new tricks"? This is because people used to believe that you couldn't change neural pathways once they are fixed. The good news is that we now know that isn't true. Your neural pathways regulate your emotions, thoughts and reactions and they can be rewired and changed, with practice.

According to Michael Merzenich from the book, *The Brain that Changes Itself*, practising a new habit under the right conditions, can change hundreds of millions and possibly billions of the connections between the nerve cells in our neural pathways!



Go Do!

Think of a trigger situation which matters to you – maybe a common pattern of conversation with a particular person that leaves you feeling frustrated, a task or event you feel worried about, or something that always bugs you.

Work through CCC to plan how you will approach this situation in a more resourceful way, and then put your plan into action!

Key Insights

- Check-Challenge-Choice (CCC) is a powerful process for helping us to get Out of the Box and regain our resourcefulness, but it takes practice.
- We can use it in the moment when we're triggered or afterwards to consider how we could respond in a more helpful way next time.
- It's important for the Challenge step to tap into our Realist voice. Taking a breath and thinking about a time we were at our best can help us do this.
- If we keep practising CCC, it becomes much easier and more natural for us.