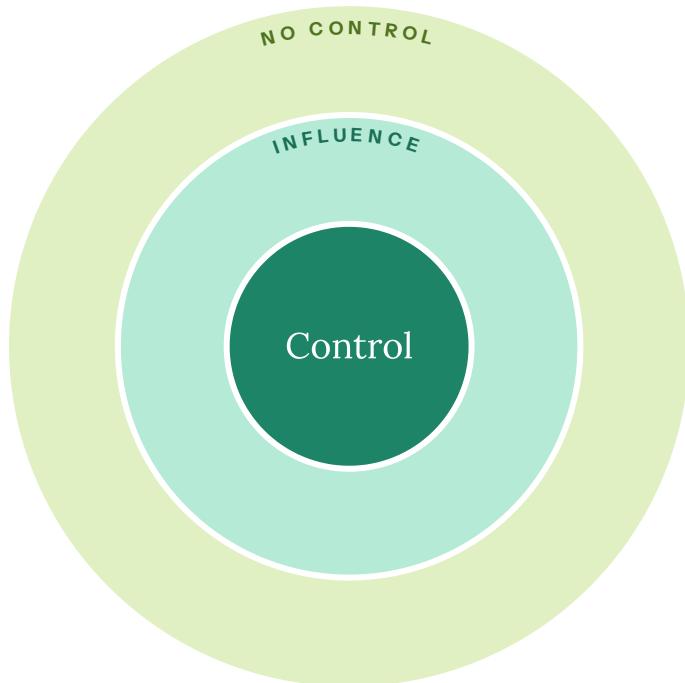


The Circle of Control

DIRECTING YOUR ENERGY WHERE IT CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Not everything that concerns us is something we can change. This way of looking at a situation separates what is within your control, what you may be able to influence, and what lies outside your control, so you can put your energy where it is most likely to help.



No control

Things you can't change directly, such as other people's choices, the past, or world events. Noticing that something sits here may help you spend less energy struggling against it.



Influence

Things you may be able to affect without fully controlling them, through your actions, words, choices or relationships with others.



Control

Things within your own power: your actions, choices, effort and responses. This is where change is usually most direct.

Examples

Where different concerns often sit

NO CONTROL

- Other people's opinions and choices
- What has already happened
- The economy or world events
- How others feel about you

INFLUENCE

- How a conversation unfolds
- Your relationships, through how you act
- A team or group outcome
- How others understand a situation

CONTROL

- Your own effort and preparation
- How you respond to a situation
- Your own words and actions
- Where you choose to put your attention

Putting it into practice

Three steps to try when something is on your mind

1

Sort the worry

Ask which circle it belongs to. Bigger worries often have parts in more than one circle, so it can help to split them up.

2

Redirect your energy

Turn your attention towards the inner circles, where your effort is most likely to make a difference.

3

Let the rest be

For what's outside your control, practise acknowledging it, and the feelings it brings, without trying to solve or fix it.

A sense of steadiness often comes not from controlling everything, but from seeing clearly what you can.