

CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE.

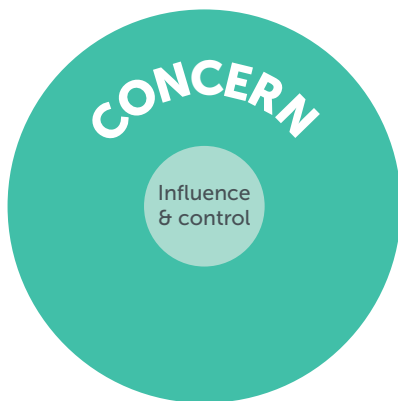


All of us have a wide range of concerns in our lives – our housing, our health, our family, the price of petrol, how to lose weight, job security...

Circle of Concern

In a change situation, anybody can be affected by anxiety and stress. This is particularly apparent when colleagues feel that they have little or no control over changes that impact their life.

Each colleague has a wide range of personal concerns: family members' health and actions, personal health and mental wellbeing, people and operational situations at work, house/home matters etc. These are described as being within a Circle of Concern.



- "If only I had better employees/co-workers..."
- "If only I had a boss who wasn't so demanding..."
- "I'll be happy when I get some answers"
- "What does the future hold?"
- "I'll be happy when I have my house paid off"
- "If only I had a more patient spouse..."

Within this whole universe of things that concern us, there are some things that we simply can't do anything about, and some that we can influence or control. Now, we have a choice about where we focus our energy and attention.

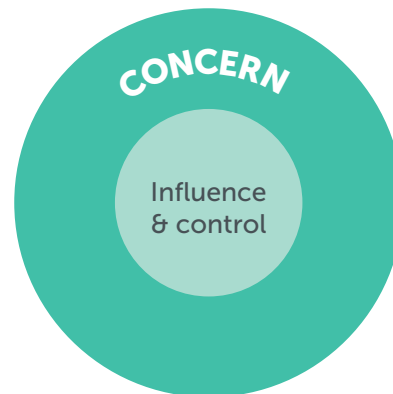
It can be incredibly liberating to realise that, in choosing how to respond to circumstances, we affect those circumstances.

Circle of Influence

We can identify those concerns that we can do something about by putting them into our Circle of Influence.

The problems all of us face can be placed into one of three areas:

1. Direct control (issues involving our own behaviours)
2. Indirect control (issues involving others' behaviours)
3. No control (problems/issues we can do nothing about, such as our past, or situational realities)



- "I can be more patient..."
- "I can be a better employee..."
- "I can be wiser..."
- "People are bringing me down - I can be more positive than those around me."

☞☞ Ultimately... there are no problems. Only situations – to be dealt with now, or to be left alone and accepted as part of the present moment until they change or can be dealt with.

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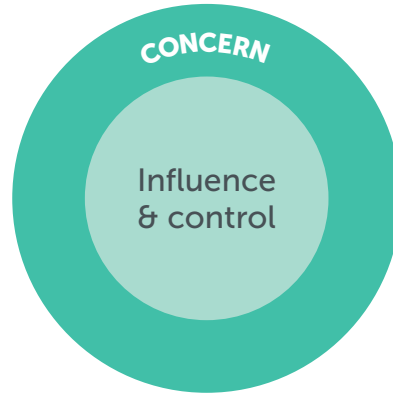
Being proactive

A proactive approach is the first step to the solution of all three kinds of problems within our present Circle of Influence and Control.

Proactive people are smart, values driven, they read reality and they know what's needed. They focus on their efforts within the Circle of Influence, they work on the things they can do something about.

The nature of their energy is positive, enlarging and magnifying, thus increasing their Circle of Influence.

By believing "I can be more resourceful, I can be a better listener, I can be a better leader", we can feel more in control of what's happening to us. Naturally, there are things that our Circle of Influence will never include. As proactive people, we can try to accept those things that, at present, we can't control while we focus our efforts on the things we can.



- "I can focus on the here and now"
- "I can be more resourceful"
- "I can be a better listener"
- "This isn't worth worrying about yet"
- "Who else can I talk to?"

How can this support you through change?











In order for you to lead others effectively through a change, you need to understand your own thoughts, feelings and reactions and manage them appropriately. When you go through a change, you will experience different reactions at different times (see the change curve below). Understanding the Circle of Influence will help you to manage yourself through change.



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Hints & Tips

-  Concentrate on things you can directly influence
-  Try something new to keep your mind active
-  Avoid moaning about things you can't change
-  Keep track of how your influence grows when you are proactive
-  Take one item from your Circle of Concern and decide not to spend energy on it
-  Don't get dragged into negativity by others
-  There is no right or wrong way to react to change or move through the change curve – emotions are natural human reactions
-  You, and your colleagues, will exhibit different emotions, depending upon the nature and number of changes occurring
-  Realising where you and your colleagues are on the change curve will help you to respond effectively
-  It's OK to be slow or fast as long as you are moving and you're planning on arriving sometime.

Links & References

1. Covey, S. (1992) *Principle-centred Leadership*. London. Simon & Schuster
2. Tolle, E. (1999) *The Power of Now: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment*. Hodder and Stoughton
3. Kubler-Ross, E. (2005) *On Grief and Grieving: Finding the Meaning of Grief Through the Five Stages of Loss*. London. Simon & Schuster.