



LEVERAGING YOUR SPHERE OF INFLUENCE IN A PANDEMIC



Draw a stick figure with a circle around it. Next, draw a circle around the first circle and then draw one more circle around your second circle. You should have a stick figure in a circle and two more circles around that.

You are the stick figure. Inside the first circle with you are all of the things you can control. You can control what you eat, when you refill your water bottle, how you write your next email, and what you buy during your next grocery store run. In the next circle you have the things you can influence. These are things in which you can have some impact, but cannot fully control. Examples include the outcome of your next team based work project, or the way in which your child completes their homework. In both of these examples, you have influence in the situation, but you do not have entire control.

In the last circle you will find all of the things that are outside of your control. In a pandemic, you may be wishing you drew it a little bigger because it feels a lot bigger. For example, right now, it is out of one's control whether their grocery store has toilet paper or if work hours are reduced. There are a lot of things that are very much out of our control during a global pandemic.

This exercise is helpful in centering on the things you can control and influence. For many, anxiety increases when there are a lot of unknowns and a lot of things out of our control. The tendency when things feel out of control is to start planning for the worst. Instead, take a moment to complete this exercise and be intentional about how you exist in the things you can control, like how you respond to your next email. Focus on what you can positively influence and allow yourself to release the things in that last circle, which you cannot control.