SORTING YOUR WORLD

PURPOSE

To identify what you can control, what you can influence and what you must accept, so you free up mental energy for what truly matters.

Most of us spend our energy in the wrong circle. Today you find out which of your battles are yours.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Do Steps 1 and 2 before the lesson. Go with your gut.
2. There are no right answers yet. Getting some wrong is the point.
3. Don't change anything until Step 3.
4. After the lesson, check every one and count what you got wrong. That number is the lesson.

Why this works. Stress grows when you push hard on things you can't change and give up on things you could. People who act where they can and accept where they can't cope better. Sorting first and checking after shows you your own blind spots.

CIRCLES OF CONCERN AND INFLUENCE (COVEY, 1989) · STRESS AND APPRAISAL (LAZARUS & FOLKMAN, 1984) · PERCEIVED CONTROL (CHENG ET AL., 2013, META-ANALYSIS) · COPING FIT (CHENG, LAU & CHAN, 2014, META-ANALYSIS) · DICHOTOMY OF CONTROL (EPICTETUS, DISCOURSES 2.5)

STEP 1

Write down 15 things that worry you, stress you or annoy you. ONE PER LINE

Work and home. Big and small. The person who drives you mad. The thing that keeps you up at night. The email you are dreading. Don't sort them yet. Just get them out. Then score how much each one bothers you.

	WHAT WORRIES, STRESSES OR ANNOYS ME	IT BOTHERS ME 0 to 10
1		____ /10
2		____ /10
3		____ /10
4		____ /10
5		____ /10
6		____ /10
7		____ /10
8		____ /10
9		____ /10
10		____ /10
11		____ /10
12		____ /10
13		____ /10
14		____ /10
15		____ /10

WHERE I THINK IT BELONGS

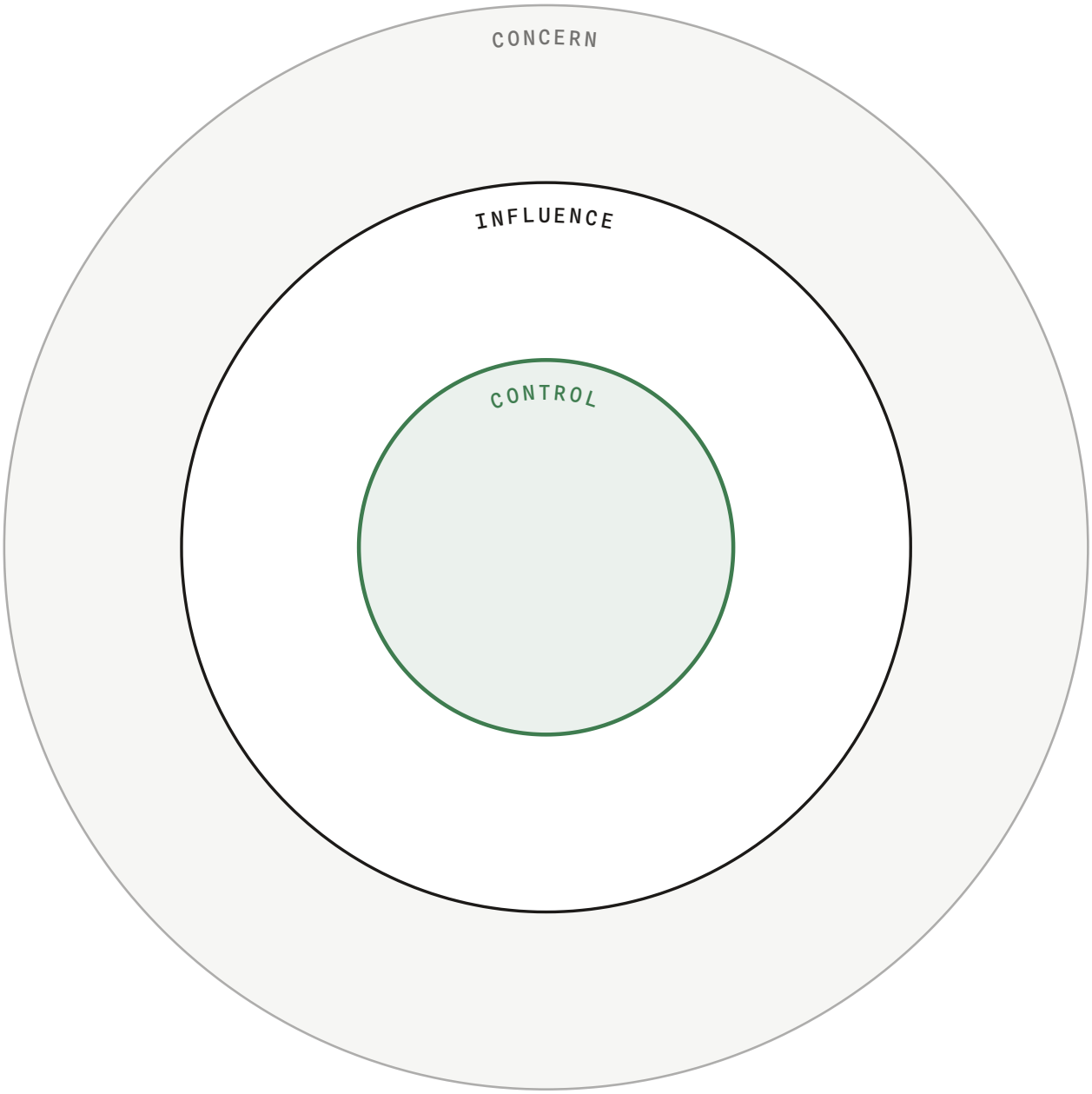
STEP 2 **Put each one in the circle where you think it belongs.** BEFORE THE LESSON

Write its number from Step 1 and a word or two. Go with your first answer. Don't think too hard and don't ask anyone.

CONTROL
I can do something about it myself.

INFLUENCE
I can try to affect it, but I don't decide it.

CONCERN
It matters to me, but I can do nothing about it.



STOP **Wait for the lesson.** Don't move anything yet. You will come back to every one of these on page 3.

"The chief task in life is simply this: to identify and separate matters."

EPICTETUS · DISCOURSES 2.5

CHECK EVERY ONE

STEP 3

After the lesson, check every one. BE RUTHLESS

Go back to your circles. Ask these three questions about each item. If you put it in the wrong circle, write it in the table. If you can influence it even a little, move it in.

1 **Can I truly control this?**

2 **Is there any way I can influence it?**

3 **If not, what would it look like to accept it?**

NO.	THE WORRY	I PUT IT IN	IT REALLY BELONGS IN	WHAT I'LL DO NOW Act on it, or let it go
		☐ control ☐ influence ☐ concern	☐ control ☐ influence ☐ concern	
		☐ control ☐ influence ☐ concern	☐ control ☐ influence ☐ concern	
		☐ control ☐ influence ☐ concern	☐ control ☐ influence ☐ concern	
		☐ control ☐ influence ☐ concern	☐ control ☐ influence ☐ concern	
		☐ control ☐ influence ☐ concern	☐ control ☐ influence ☐ concern	
		☐ control ☐ influence ☐ concern	☐ control ☐ influence ☐ concern	
		☐ control ☐ influence ☐ concern	☐ control ☐ influence ☐ concern	

STEP 4

Count the cost.

I had _____ of my 15 in the wrong circle. **Their bother scores add up to _____**

1 **What has worrying about the ones I can't control cost me?** Sleep, time, energy, mood, people.

2 **What did I give up on that I can actually do something about?**

3 **Where will I put the energy I get back this week?**

Acceptance isn't giving up. It frees your energy for what matters.