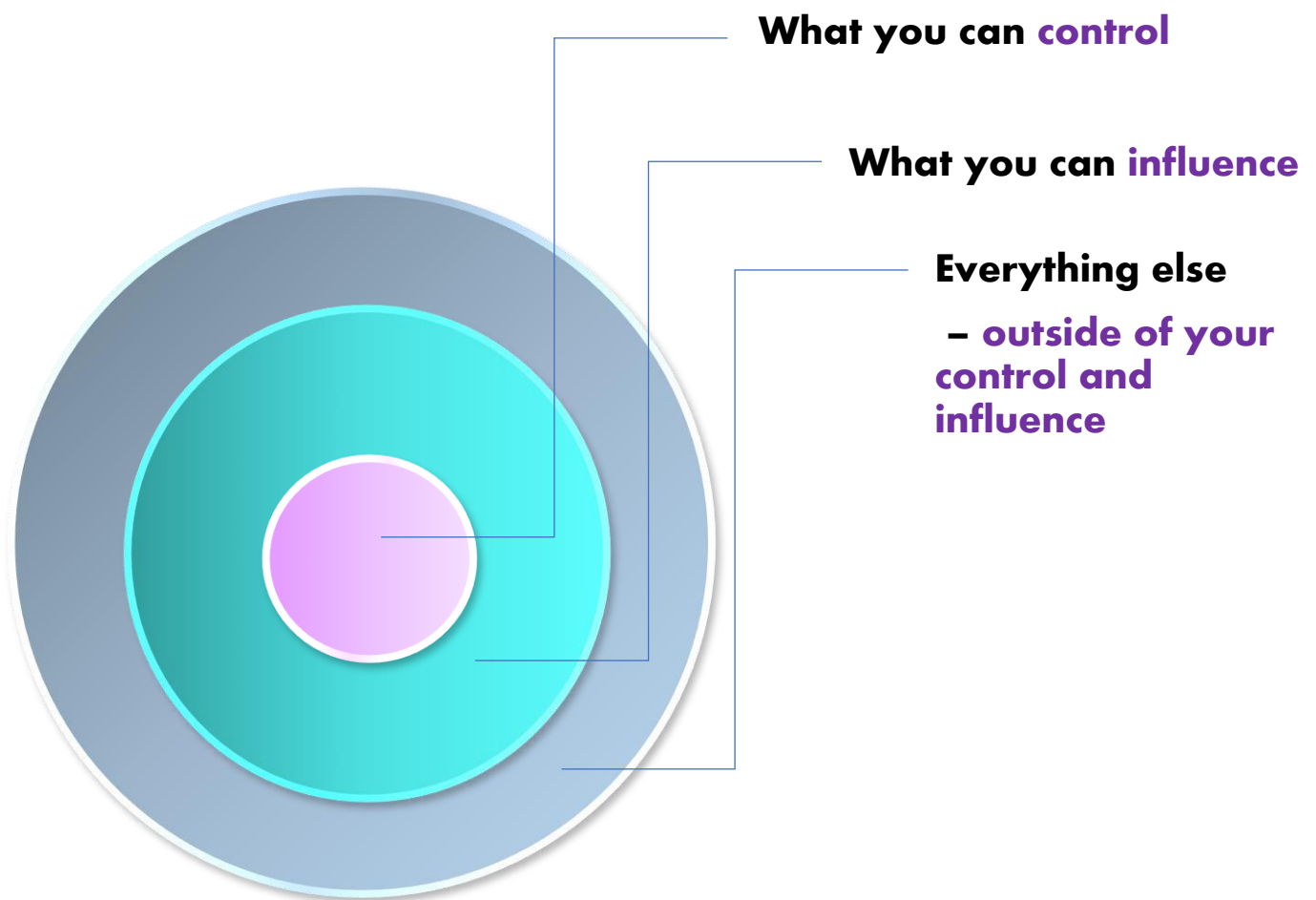


## The Control Rings



### Context

This Life Coaching tool simplifies the things that worry us or that we complain about by categorising them into one of three areas:

- things we have control over
- things we can influence
- things that are outside of our control and influence.

This exercise is all about taking responsibility for our feelings, our choices, and our lives. It helps us move away from blame and into our own power. The bottom line is this: we have a finite amount of energy. The things that we can't change drain us, but we do have control over how we respond to them. Can we reduce the amount of energy that goes into our frustration about those things? Can we shift that energy into something we have more control over? The key is to use our energy where it counts. The more we focus on what's in our control, the more effective we'll feel.

### Step 1

Think about your work life, your personal life, or both and list your worries, issues and complaints about them--as many as you'd like. For example: I don't exercise enough, my mortgage payment is high, I hate waking up too early., and so on.

### Step 2

Write each worry or complaint down and put it into the category that fits. You can do this in a table, colour coded post-it notes, whatever works for you, but remember to label them as either, "Within my control," "Within my influence," or "Outside of my control and influence."

### Step 3

When you have finished categorising your list, have a look at them. What category did the majority of your complaints fall into?

### Step 4

Read the complaints that are outside of your control and influence and notice how your body feels. See if you can feel the emotional impact showing up on your body--perhaps your shoulders feel tighter, your breathing might shallow, and so on.

### Step 5

Of the complaints outside of your control, are there any that you can look at differently so that you can have more control over them? Sometimes we can find ways to influence what feels like something outside of our control, or at least to have a voice in it.

### Step 6

Of the complaints outside of your control, are there any that you'd like to let go of? Try talking it out with someone to see if this lightens the burden of the complaints. If you want to let go metaphorically, try to imagine putting them into a balloon

filled with helium and then watching the balloon rise into the sky and disappear.

### Step 7

Look at the complaints that are within your sphere of influence and control. See if you can identify one concrete action you could do to address each one. Write down the actions and make them into firm plans going forward.



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