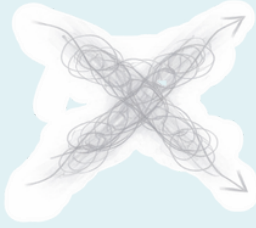


The Circle of Control: Helping Kids Focus on What They Can Change



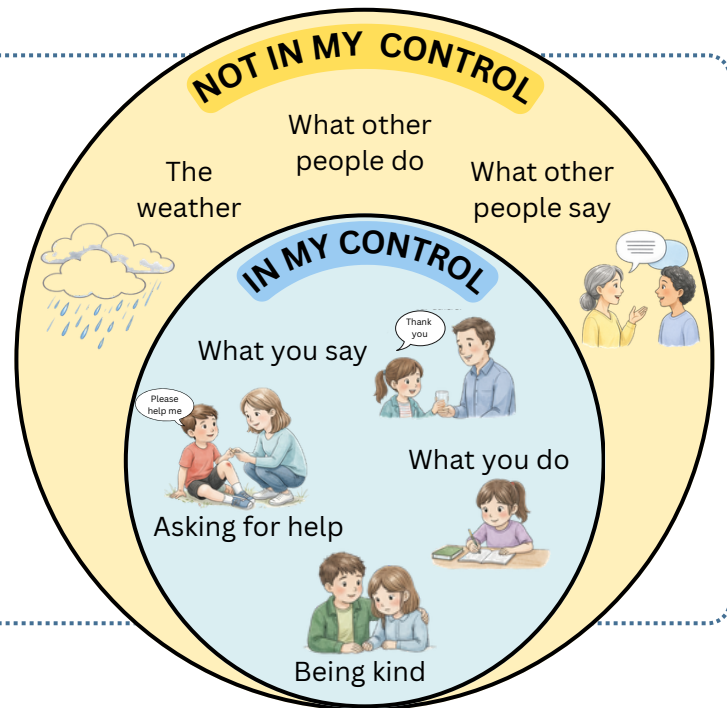
When kids get caught up in things they can't control—like a classmate's comment, a cancelled plan, or a past mistake—they **waste energy that could be used to improve how they feel and the situation itself.**

The Circle of Control is a tool that helps kids focus on what they can change, redirecting energy in a positive direction.

HOW TO INTRODUCE IT



Imagine two circles around you. The **outer circle** holds things outside your control, what other people say or do, or how things turn out. The **inner circle** inner circle is for things you can control, like how you react, the choices you make, and what you decide to do next



STUCK IN THE OUTER CIRCLE?

- ➡ When you notice a child stuck in the outer circle, **say**:
"That sounds frustrating. Is this something you can change, or is it outside your circle?"
- ➡ Then, **redirect** their focus:
"What is something inside your circle that you can control right now?"

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Watch for signs like repetitive complaining, saying "it's not fair," or shutting down—these can indicate the child is stuck in the outer circle. Acknowledge the feeling first before redirecting to the inner circle.

For younger kids (under 7), keep it physical. Draw the circles together, or have them physically write or place their worry in the outer circle.



This isn't about telling kids to accept everything or ignore what's unfair. It's about helping them see when they're focusing on things they can't change and guiding them to focus on what they can control.

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