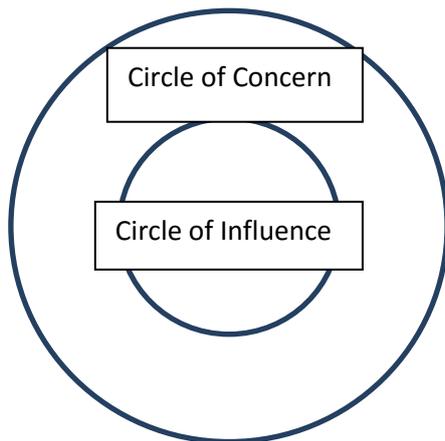


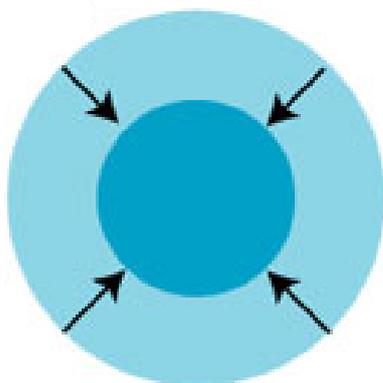
The Circle of Influence

All of us have a wide range of concerns in our lives – our housing, our health, our finances, our friends and family, the environment, how to lose weight, animal rights, addictions, the list is endless.

Within this whole universe of our concerns, there are some things we can influence (such as in our role as landlords, which are within our boundaries) and some things we can only stay concerned about (which, as landlords, we cannot influence and are outside of our boundaries). Now we have a CHOICE about where we focus our attention and energy.

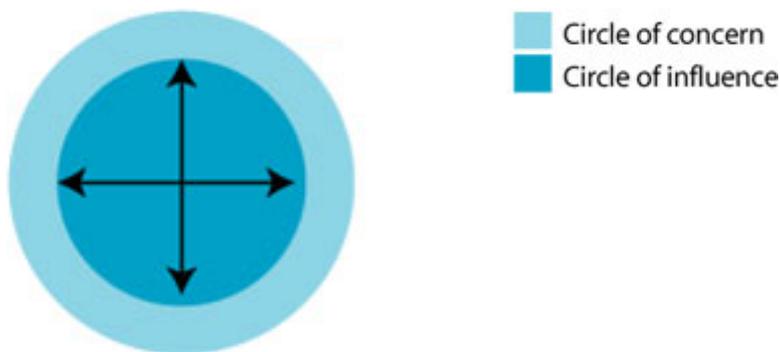


We can choose to focus all our attention on the area that is outside our influence (or which are beyond our boundaries as landlords). We can get annoyed about the shortcomings of other people, we can blame the government, other departments, globalwarming, the 'system', a rotten childhood, bad luck or sugar in processed foods. This focus leads to more and more blaming and accusing, to feelings of victimisation, 'poor me'. This negative way of thinking, accompanied by inaction to CHANGE things, results in the circle of influence shrinking.



Alternatively we can choose to focus on things that we CAN influence (or which are within our power as landlords). This does not mean just the more immediate or 'trivial' concerns. It might mean focusing on those aspects of really huge problems that we can exert some influence over, and 'influence' does not mean direct 'control'; we can influence things in an indirect way, for example in our own personal daily behaviour.

By focusing attention and energy on our circle of influence, we can become increasingly proactive. The energy we expend is enlarging; each little victory motivates us to find new ways of exerting influence. We don't waste energy on things we can do nothing about, but direct it towards what we can change. With each step we feel stronger and more creative and so our circle of influence expands.



It often happens that in widening our circle of influence we also widen our circle of concern, it becomes worth caring about some of the really challenging things in our world if we learn we can influence them.

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

WORKED EXAMPLES:

1) Concern: Aggressive Tenant

Makes me feel scared of being assaulted

I want to avoid dealing with them

I ignore work related to them and their property

I ignore the situation and don't speak to anyone about it

Circle of Concern:

I can't change the tenant's behaviour (they own their behaviour)

I have to manage work related to this tenant as they are on my patch

Circle of Influence:

I can raise the matter with my line manager and discuss my concerns

We can carry out a risk assessment

We can put safety measures in place

Choose to deal positively and confidently with the situation

It may be appropriate to consider Anti-social behaviour

Result: ASB order helps reduce incidents. Sharing the problem with my manager has enabled me to come up with a strategy and my positive and confident management of meetings with the tenant results in a positive outcome.

2) Concern: Council wants to put speed humps in road outside my house (I don't want them)they have sent me a voting slip to fill in:

They don't slow traffic down

They will ruin my cars suspension

They create extra pollution with people breaking and accelerating

It's not worth voting, it's already decided

Circle of Concern

I can't change it

I can't beat the council's decision

Voting won't help

Circle of Influence

I will use my vote to confirm I will not vote for speed humps

I will talk to my neighbours and try to influence their thinking and encourage them to vote against it

I will think positively about the impact my actions may have

Result: Only 9 voting slips were received by the Council, 4 in favour and 5 against speed humps, therefore my vote potentially swung the decision in my favour and the speed humps didn't go ahead. I now feel more positive and optimistic about the power of using my vote more regularly

This model "Circle of Influence" is taken from Stephen Covey's The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People (1989)