



CIRCLES OF CONTROL

There is so much in life that we can't control and it can be frustrating! Help your students learn to distinguish between the things they can control and the things they can't and discuss different strategies for dealing with the things we can't control.

PREPARATION

- What do you need?
 - Instruction sheet
 - Worksheet for each student
 - Follow up reflection sheet (optional)



ACTIVITY

- 1 Have a discussion about things that can be frustrating in life. Make a list on the board or a piece of poster paper.
- 2 Distribute a worksheet to each student.
- 3 Students will write the things they can control inside the circle and the things they cannot control outside of the circle. This might be tricky, some of these could fit in either spot!
 - If you teach young students who can't write yet, you can draw a large circle on the board and let students vote on where something should go. Students should raise a closed fist to indicate that a thing is in their control or an open hand to show that a thing is out of their control.
- 4 Read the following list and give students time to decide if it's in their control or out of their control:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The weather ● What is in my lunch box ● What my friend does at recess ● What shoes I'm wearing ● My teacher's mood ● My thoughts ● How tall I am ● What house I live in ● What's being served for lunch today in the cafeteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How much time I spend playing video games ● Things that happened in the past ● What will happen at the end of the movie I'm watching ● My reaction to a friend who says something that hurts my feelings ● Someone else's reaction to things I say ● My words ● What grade I get on my classwork ● The color of my hair
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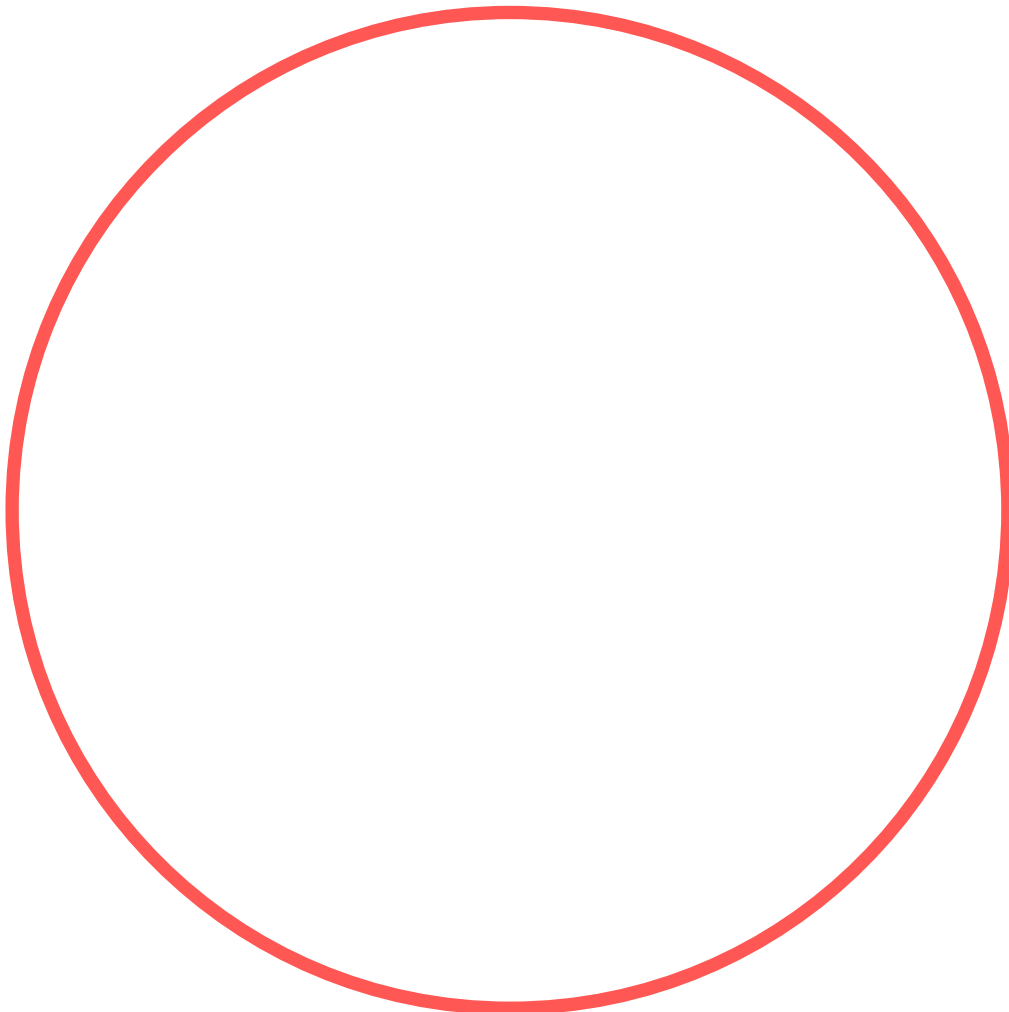
ACTIVITY (continued)

- 5 After reading through the list, talk about each item briefly. Ask if there were some things that kind of fit in both categories.
- 6 Ask students to look at the things that **are** in their control. If they don't like something that is in their control, what can they do about it?
- 7 Ask students to look at the things that **are not** in their control. If they don't like something that's not in their control, what could they do about it?
 - Discuss coping strategies like deep breathing or counting for self-regulation, leaving a situation, making an alternate plan, or finding help.
- 8 Distribute the Reflection sheet (optional)



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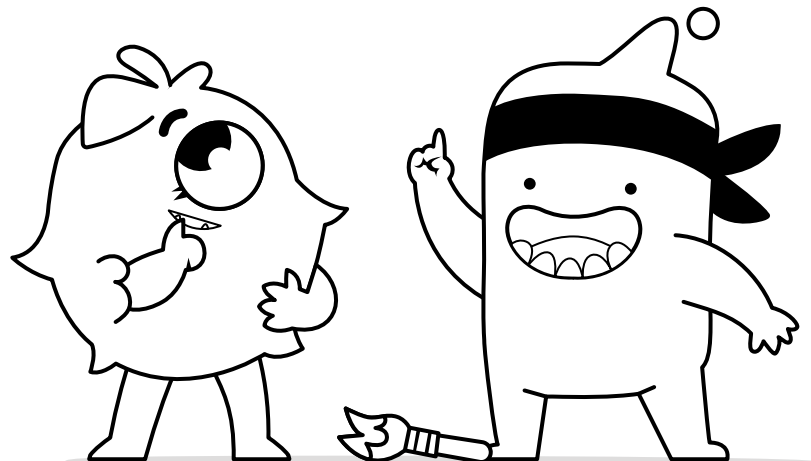
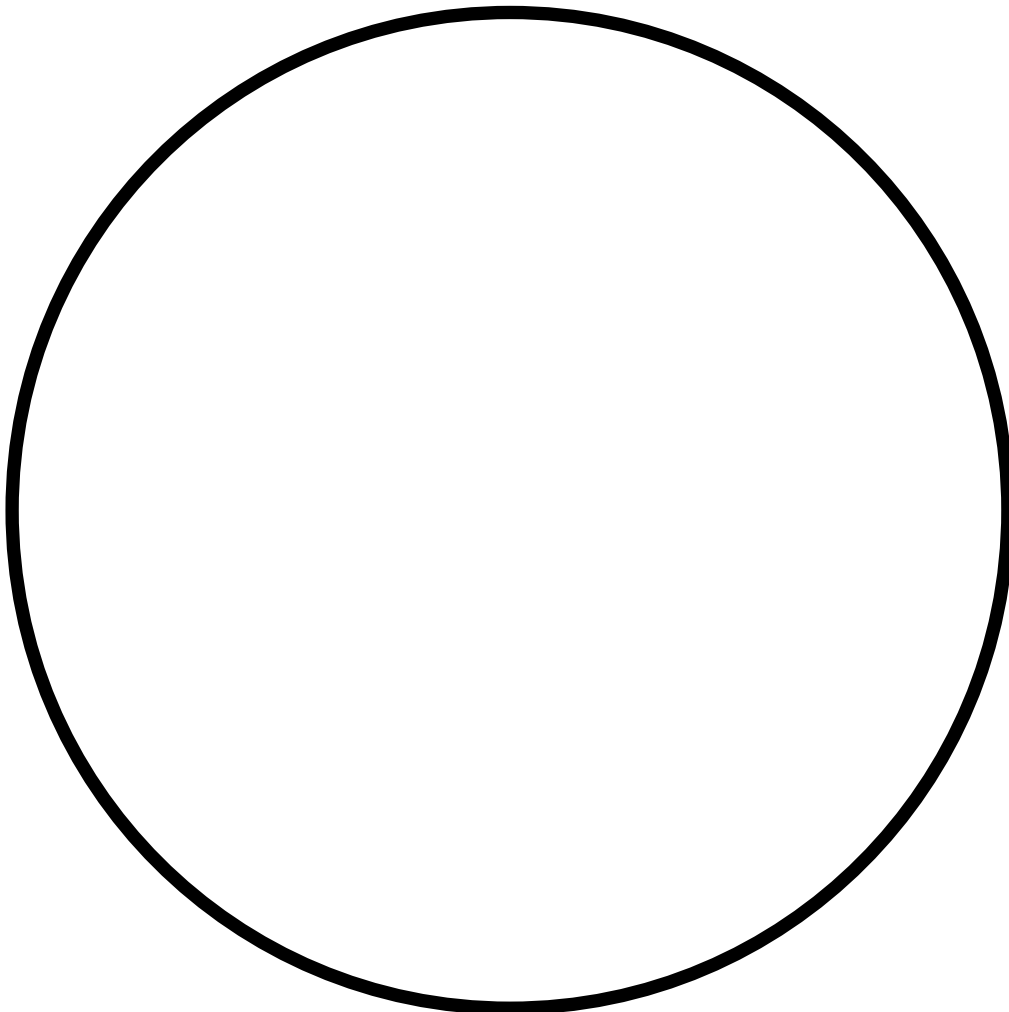
Think about the things that you can control and the things you can't. Write things that are in your control inside the circle. Write things you cannot control outside of the circle.



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REFLECTION

Some things in life are in your control, some aren't. Do you know the difference?

QUESTIONS

You get home from school and find out that your little sister or brother has broken your favorite toy.

- 1 What is out of your control in this situation?
- 2 What is in your control?
- 3 What can you do to cope with the part that is out of your control?



You are planning a trip to the beach for your birthday and you're so excited! But on the morning of the trip, you wake up and there's a rain storm outside.

- 4 What is out of your control in this situation?
- 5 What is in your control?
- 6 What can you do to cope with the part that is out of your control?



Name: