

Circles of Intimacy, Responsibility, and Impact

Summary

The Circles of Intimacy, Responsibility, and Impact is an instrument to ensure you are maintaining a healthy, balanced life. This tool helps identify your true values and priorities and assess whether your behaviors are congruent. It is designed to help you become a Healthy Balanced Person by providing a framework for evaluating your relationships and responsibilities.

The diagram resembles a bullseye, with concentric circles labeled 1, 2a, 2b, 3, 4 and so on. Each circle represents different levels of intimacy, responsibility and impact. If you are healthy and balanced, your circles would align as described below.

- **Circle 1: God/your Higher Power and You**
Your primary responsibility is your personal health—physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual. No one else can make you healthy but you. Your #1 circle also acknowledges that having a strong relationship with God or a Higher Power is essential for long-term, meaningful change. Your #1 circle is not about creating narcissism – it is exactly the opposite. It enables you to have strength and energy to benefit and help others. Remember: *You cannot give away that which you do not have.*
- **Circle 2a: Parents or Primary Caretaker** (when you are a child)
2b: Siblings (when you are a child)
- **Circle 2a: Spouse or Significant Other and Children** (when you are an adult)
2b: Minor Children (living at home)

It is okay to have an empty Circle 2 if you do not have a significant other or minor children.

- **Circle 3: Closest Family and Friends** This circle is reserved for people with whom you feel safe and can share deeply, such as adult children, supportive family members, and close friends. It is a small circle because close, intimate relationships require time and effort. Flexibility is essential as relationships evolve over time.
- **Circles 4, 5, and Beyond: Extended Relationships** These circles include everyone else in your life—other family members, work colleagues, acquaintances, and people you interact with in daily life. These relationships are less intimate but still impactful.

Your job, addictions, codependency, sports, hobbies, caretaking, cell phone, computer, TV, video games, social media and so forth also can be in your circles. These “invaders” force out

the people whose rightful place is in your circles – including yourself and God/your Higher Power.

This instrument is titled The Circles of Intimacy, Responsibility and Impact and emphasizes the importance of each of the following:

- **Intimacy:** The phrase, “You cannot give away that which you do not have,” especially applies to the Circles. Therefore, genuinely knowing and understanding yourself is a primary goal because as you become intimate with who you were innately created to be – then you genuinely can become intimate with your loved ones. Even your relationship with God/your Higher Power will change
- **Responsibility:** Your primary responsibility is your own health, then family and closest friends. Many people have allowed their job, addictions, technology and care for people who should be in outer circles to crowd in and take over their Circles 1, 2, and 3. Be aware of the importance of being responsible first and foremost to your Circles 1, 2, and 3.
- **Impact:** Many things can impact and disrupt your circles - health issues, family crises, addictions, codependency, financial and world problems. All these can displace your own health, important relationships, and responsibilities.

Evaluate your circles to prevent burnout and ensure you maintain a healthy balance. Adjust relationships and activities as needed to prioritize your health and well-being. Share this concept with your children to help them develop wholesome relationships and priorities from a young age.

By using the Circles of Intimacy, Responsibility, and Impact, you can ensure your life is congruent with your values and maintain a healthy, balanced approach to relationships and responsibilities.

Questions

1. **How can you prioritize your personal health to ensure you are able to give to others out of abundance rather than depletion?**
 - Reflect on your current self-care practices and consider ways to improve your physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual health. Think about how maintaining your health enables you to support others more effectively.

2. **What steps can you take to ensure that your significant other and children (if applicable) are appropriately prioritized in your Circle 2?**
 - Evaluate your current relationships with your significant other and children. Consider any adjustments needed to ensure they are receiving the attention and care they deserve in your life.

3. **How can you identify and address any individuals, addictions, or other activities currently occupying inappropriate places in your circles?**
 - Reflect on your relationships and activities to determine if any are taking up too much time energy and commitment in your inner circles. Are they conflicting with your stated values? Seek support and set boundaries to maintain a healthy balance in your circles.

4. **Is there a person or a situation you have allowed to invade and strongly impact your #1 circle causing you to worry constantly and feel under great stress?**
 - Realize you cannot change anyone else – you can only change yourself. Daily repeat the Serenity Prayer: *God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.*
 - If this issue continues, seek counseling and support to remove the intruder while emphasizing the importance of caring for your own physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual health.