



# HOAW Newsletter

## QUOTE

*"The Enemy wants to repeatedly remind you of the failures of your past. He often does this by sowing thoughts in a first person voice. For example, 'I'm no good.' Or, 'I have disappointed God too many times.' God, however, wants to bring you to the victories of your future. The battleground is the present. But God is God and Satan is not."* GW Bourgond

## March 2018

HELPING MEN LIVE LIVES OF INTEGRITY AND HONOR

## Circles of Concern vs. Influence

by Dr. Greg Bourgond

How much time is wasted over matters out of our control? How much time is spent agonizing over issues that we cannot change? How much time is spent mulling over concerns outside our area of responsibility? Extended worry over matters we cannot resolve leads down a path to unhealthy fear, misplaced anxiety, and paralyzing paranoia. There is plenty of circumstances for which to be concerned. The key question we need to ask ourselves is what can we do about them that will make a difference other than keep us up at night?

We operate essentially within two circles—the **Circle of Concern** and the **Circle of Influence**.

Within the **Circle of Concern** are issues we are 'concerned' about but have little to no control over the issues that fall within this sphere. For instance, we might be concerned about political or economic issues in Washington, a judge's ruling on an issue that touches us, a decision being made by someone regarding our circumstances, world poverty, global warming or any host of matters that cause us concern. We may

have a limited influence on these matters but for all practical purposes they are out of our reach to do anything about them. In these cases, we have essentially one option—prayer. Once we have prayed about these matters we must release them to the Lord and move on to those issues we can control.

Within the **Circle of Influence** are issues we have some degree of control over. Our direct input or interaction will determine the outcome of these issues. People, events, and circumstances can be changed by our direct involvement. Our influence may be of a direct nature or indirect nature. Our direct influence will address the specific issue directly. Our indirect influence may be to interact with factors that may influence the situation indirectly (i.e., a note to a friend or authority may cause that friend or authority to respond to a set of circumstances over which they have some influence).

Each of us has a finite amount of energy at our disposal (emotional, spiritual, and physical). The extent of that energy will differ for each person. Our circle of

influence can expand as we grow emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually—it can also diminish through bad decisions and/or sin in our life.

If we expend our limited energy on matters over which we have little influence or control, the energy remaining will be reduced. When we turn our attention to issues within our sphere of influence we will find that the circle of influence has shrunk while our circle of concern has grown. Spending our finite energy in this sphere will only increase our anxiety and stress because we can do little to change the outcome.

Focusing our finite energy primarily on issues within our circle of influence and praying about issues within our circle of concern (and releasing these issues to the Lord) will reduce the circle of concern to a more manageable size and therefore cause less anxiety and stress in our lives. This is a far more constructive activity—focusing on what we can change and leaving to God those issues we cannot change to any significant degree.

There are three domains of influence; direct, indirect, and organizational (Leadership Emergence Theory, J. Robert Clinton, 1989). The reach and impact you wield in these domains is defined by your character, experience, authority, responsibility, position, status,

and the power base (positional or personal) you use to exert influence.

**Direct Influence.** This domain indicates a measure of people being influenced by the real presence of the leader, usually occurring in focused and structured situations where feedback between follower and leader is possible and necessary and carries a high level of accountability to God for influence. This type of influence extends to those immediately under the authority and responsibility of the leader and is generally restricted to those 'in front of' or 'face-to-face with' or in close proximity to the leader.

**Indirect Influence.** This domain indicates a measure of people being influenced by non-time-bound miscellaneous influences a leader exerts through others, through media, or through writing, and for which feedback between the leader and those being influenced is difficult, if not impossible, and where accountability is primarily for the content of influential ideas.

When a leader matures and the intensity, passion, and focus of the leader crystallizes (moves from shot gun to laser beam) their direct influence grows linearly while their indirect influence grows exponentially. In other words, their extensiveness (quantity of people influenced), comprehensiveness (scope of areas of influence), and intensiveness (depth of influence) grows linearly in the direct domain while these same measures grow exponentially in the indirect domain. When a leader penetrates the life and heart of a follower more extensively, comprehensively and intensively, that follower and those with whom they interact are affected accordingly. Exponential influence is attained.

**Organizational Influence.** This domain indicates a measure of people of people being influenced by a person in organizational leadership via direct, indirect, and organizational power.

### Spheres of Influence

**Direct:** Individuals, Small Groups, Project Team, Ministries, Seminars, Conferences, Encouragement

**Indirect:** Committee, Advisory Board, Executive Board, Writing, Radio, Networking, Supporting, Blogging

**Organizational:** Supervisor, Program Director, Department Head,

Organizational Head, Policy Formulator, Board Member, Sponsoring, Resourcing

**Biblical Support:** Parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30); giftedness and capacity (Romans 12:3-7); accountability for influence (Hebrews 13:17, Acts 20:13-38; 2 Corinthians 5:10); rewards for leadership (1 Peter 1:1-5).

Take a personal audit of the time you spend worrying about concerns you can do little to resolve. Commit to redeeming that time to invest in matters you can positively influence. Focus on your circle of influence and pray about your circle of concern.

**What concerns keep you up at night?**

**What can you do to influence these concerns?**

**What are your spheres of influence (direct, indirect, organizationally)?**

**How are you leveraging your organizational influence for great impact?**

**What issues can you directly impact that falls within your sphere of influence?**

**How much of your time is spent in the circles of concern and influence?**

**What matters will benefit from an investment of your time?**

### OTHER NEWS

#### Speaking Engagements

May 17th - 20th - Men's Base-camp Weekend sponsored by Grace Fellowship at Trout Lake Camp in Pine River Minnesota. Over 200 men are expected.



#### Donations

HOAW Ministries needs your financial support. Our ability to help men live God-honoring lives depends on the resources we can use to that end. Simply go to the donations tab on [heartofawarrior.org](http://heartofawarrior.org). Thank you for being a subscriber.

### FAST FACTS

10%

Fewer than 10% of U.S. churches are able to establish or maintain a vibrant men's ministry. WACMM

1%

Less than 1% of churchgoing men participate in any sort of ongoing men's ministry program. WACMM

### RESOURCES

Check out The Store on our website ([www.heartofawarrior.org](http://www.heartofawarrior.org)). There are downloadable resources you can use to lead a group through Phases I, II, or III, Foundations of a Warrior, and Bible Study Guidelines.