

Wellbeing in leadership: Strengthening yourself to support others

Jon Staley, Institute of Community Directors

Thursday 17th July, 2025





Join in via chat

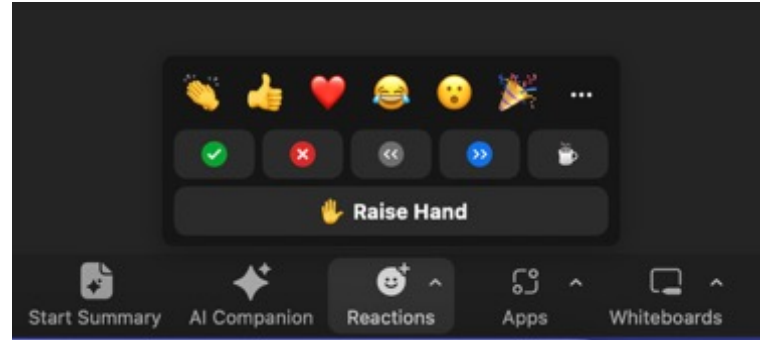
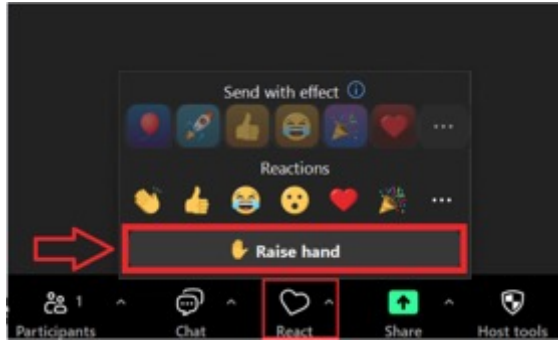
'Hi I'm Jon from Our Community and I am joining today from Wurrundjeri woi-wurrung country in Melbourne...'

Acknowledgement of Country



Housekeeping

- When you'd like to share with the group on mic, please use the raise hand function.



- Chat function is for everyone to use. Feel free to share your experience and advice, respond to prompts and answer any questions that arise if possible.
- You will receive the slides and the recording via the email you registered with.
- Please don't use AI to summarise or record this session.
- Please mute yourself unless you are speaking to the group.

Jon Staley

- 25 + years community leadership
- 10 + secondary/vocational teacher
- Founder Youthworx (non-profit social enterprise)
- Filmmaker/writer
- Community board member



WHAT WE WILL COVER

Know thyself

Circle of control, influence & concern

NFP Leadership

Systems, culture & you

Burnout – moving from survival to sustainability

Scenario

Maria is the manager of ConnectUp a mid-sized NFP that delivers community services. She's deeply committed to the mission and often steps in to cover gaps caused by limited resources, staff turnover, and unclear direction from the board. In the past few months she has been feeling exhausted and emotionally scattered and consumed by worry about sector-wide changes, funding cuts, and public expectations.

At the same time, the workplace culture seems to reward overwork and self-sacrifice, and Maria feels pressure to always be available. As stress builds, she notices she's becoming less clear-headed in her decision-making and is withdrawing from her team. She knows she's close to burnout but feels trapped—like stepping back would make things worse.

Join in via chat

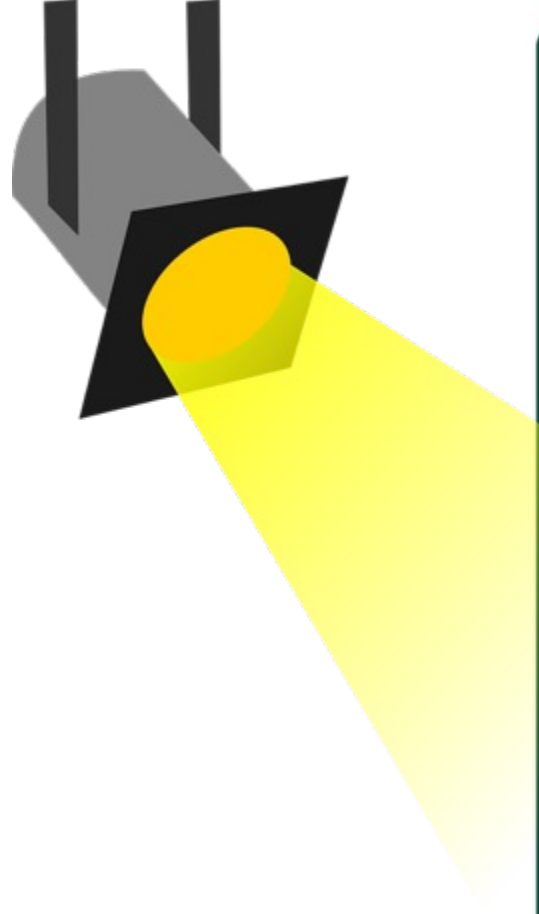
What are some of the issues here and does this sound familiar to anyone?

‘Know thyself’



Cultural Iceberg

(Edward T Hall)



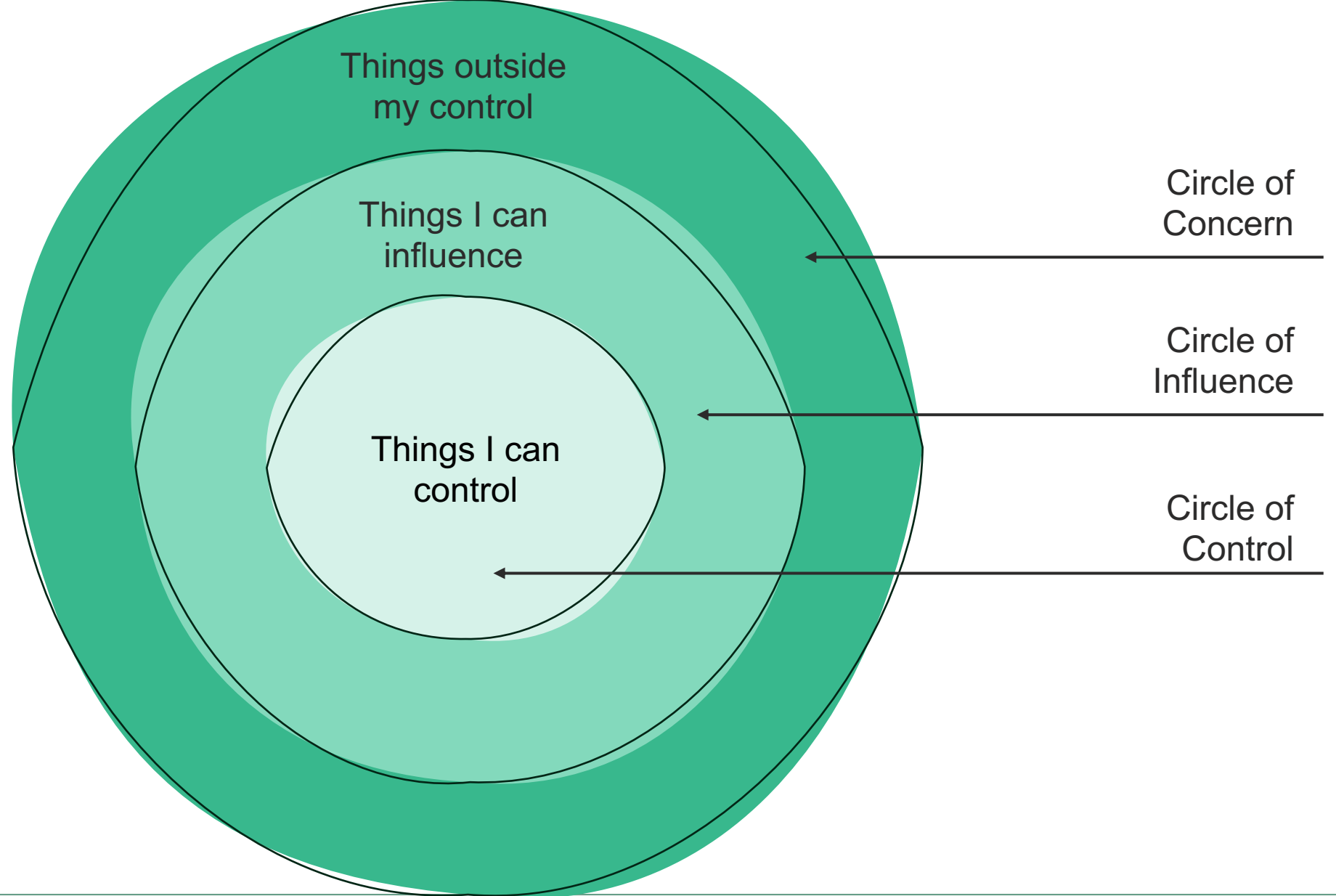
‘The cultural iceberg shows us what’s shaping us. The examined life empowers us to decide what to do with that awareness.’



**Question to ask
yourself**

What can I do?

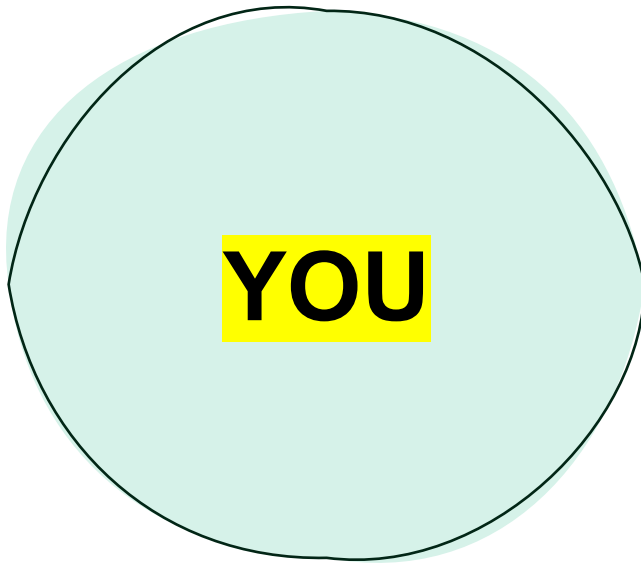
What is within my
control, influence?



Circle of control, influence and concern is drawn from the work of **Stephen Covey** author of 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

Circle of control

These are the things we can directly manage — our actions, attitudes, choices, responses, and how we treat others. This is where our energy is most effective and sustainable.



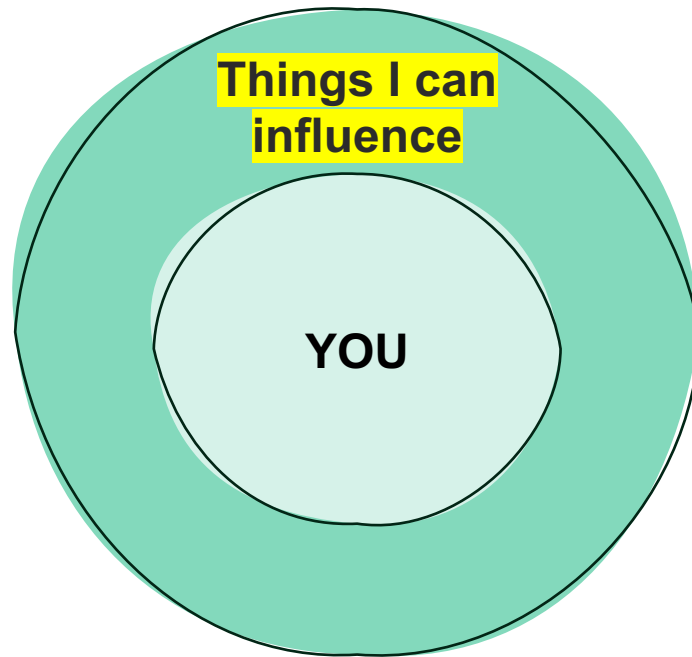
What you can directly manage or change

- How you respond in a challenging team conversation
- Your boundaries around work hours or availability
- Your tone, mindset, and communication style
- How clearly you set expectations for team members
- What you prioritise on your to-do list
- Whether you take time for rest or recovery

“This is mine to manage.”

Circle of influence

These are areas we don't control but can affect — like team dynamics, relationships, or workplace culture. Influence grows when we build trust, model good behaviour, and engage constructively.



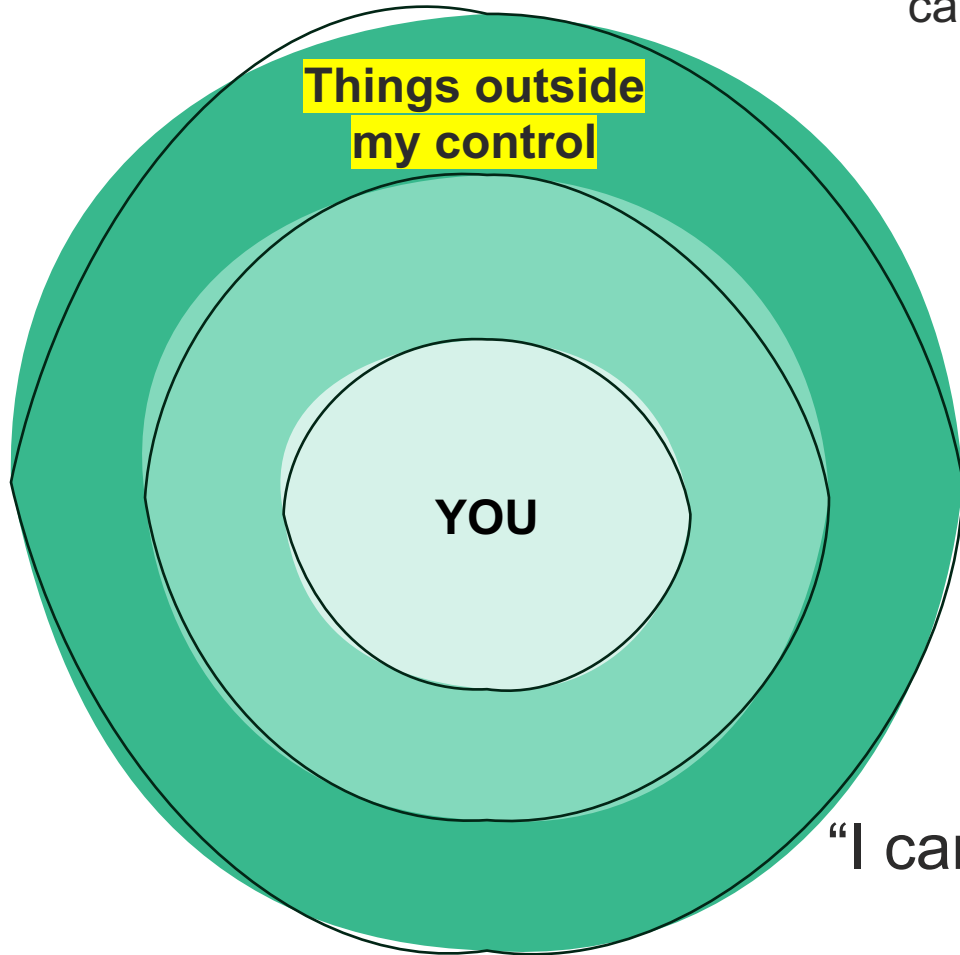
What you can affect — but not directly control

- Team morale or culture
- Staff accountability
- How a staff member handles conflict
- A colleague's workload stress
- The board's engagement

“I can shape/influence this, but I can't own it for others.”

Circle of concern

These are things we care about but have little or no power to change — like global events, government policies, or others' opinions. While valid to care about, focusing too much here can lead to frustration and burnout.



What matters to you — but is beyond your control

- A team member's personal issues
- Organisational funding decisions from donors or government
- Media narratives about your sector
- Broader social injustice or political climate
- Whether a team member “likes” you

“I care, but I can’t carry this alone or control the outcome.”

NFP Leadership

Some of the challenges



**Resource
constraints**

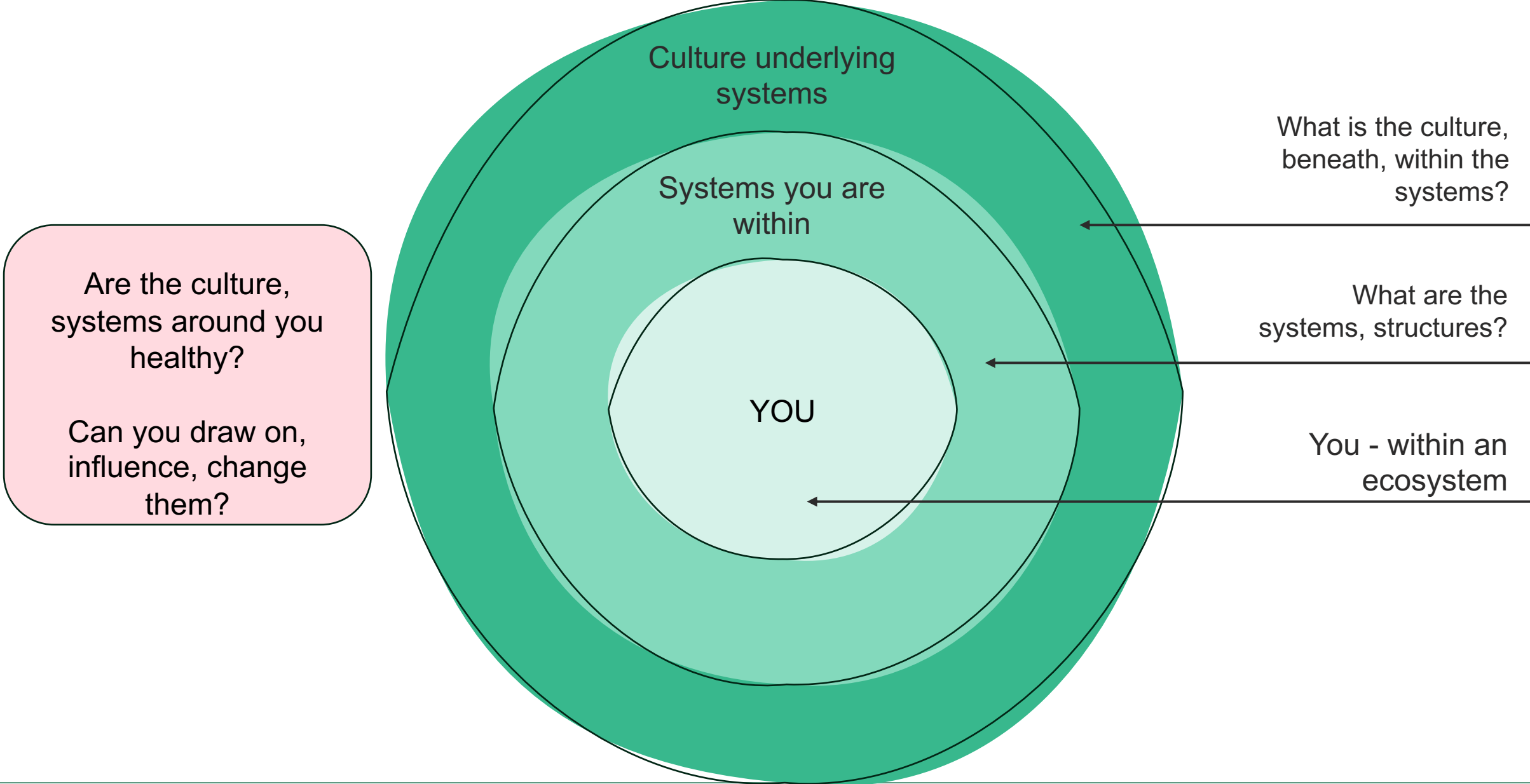
**Mission
driven
pressure**

**Governance &
Accountability**

**People and
culture**

**Sector
pressures**

NFP leaders often live in the Circle of Concern because they care. But **sustainable leadership** happens when we learn to lead from our Circle of Control and stretch our Influence, without being consumed by the rest.



ICDA created the governance wellbeing wheel to help boards understand the relationship between the actions and precedents set at board level and the effects these have in the broader organisation.



Wellbeing wheel

Reflecting on the ecosystem

To Recognise the Culture and Systems Around:

- What spoken and unspoken values seem to shape how things get done here?
- What behaviours are rewarded or praised in this organisation? What's ignored?
- What systems, policies, structures are here that I can draw on?
- Is there space in this culture for rest, reflection, or vulnerability—or is busyness a badge of honour?
- What expectations am I holding that may actually be cultural scripts, not personal truths?
- How much of the stress I'm carrying is mine—and how much belongs to the system?

To Re-Centre in the Circle of Control:

- What is *actually mine* to carry, decide, or change right now?
- Where am I overreaching into the circle of concern and exhausting myself?
- What can I *let go of*—not out of indifference, but to preserve my clarity and effectiveness?
- What small, meaningful actions can I take today that align with my values and role?
- What boundaries can I set that protect my energy and model healthier leadership?

Sustainability leadership strategies

**Anchor in
circle of
control**

**Model
healthy
boundaries**

**Reflective
practice**

**Lead with
clarity, not
chaos**

**Share the
load**

**Make the
invisible
visible**

**Systems
that
sustain**

Ongoing Reflection Prompts

- ☐ Am I leading from my centre or reacting to pressure?
- ☐ What can I release today that isn't mine to carry?
- ☐ What small action would move me toward sustainability, not survival?

"True freedom is not the freedom from responsibility, but the freedom to take responsibility for what truly matters."

The learning zone

Put in chat

Where are you
spending most of the
time in the learning
zone?

What about your
board/org etc?

Ideal zone for
personal / professional
development



Burnout symptoms

Physical Symptoms:	Emotional Signs:	Cognitive Indicators:	Behavioral Changes:	Interpersonal Issues:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Chronic fatigue & low energy.<input type="checkbox"/> Frequent headaches or physical complaints.<input type="checkbox"/> Weakened immune system, leading to more illnesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Persistent feelings of cynicism, detachment, or numbness.<input type="checkbox"/> Increased irritability, mood swings, or heightened emotional reactions.<input type="checkbox"/> A sense of hopelessness or helplessness.<input type="checkbox"/> Decreased self-esteem and self-efficacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty concentrating and making decisions.<input type="checkbox"/> Memory problems and forgetfulness.<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced creativity and problem-solving abilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawal from social activities and relationships.<input type="checkbox"/> Increased absenteeism or reduced productivity at work or school.<input type="checkbox"/> Neglecting self-care and personal responsibilities.<input type="checkbox"/> Changes in sleep patterns (insomnia or oversleeping).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Strained relationships with colleagues, friends, or family.<input type="checkbox"/> Decreased empathy and compassion.<input type="checkbox"/> Isolation and avoidance of social interactions.

How might you first notice that you are stressed?

Physical Symptoms:	Emotional Signs:	Cognitive Indicators:	Behavioral Changes:	Interpersonal Issues:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Muscle tension, headaches, clenched teeth<input type="checkbox"/> Low energy<input type="checkbox"/> Stomachaches or diarrhea<input type="checkbox"/> Rapid heartbeat or increased sweating.<input type="checkbox"/> Skin breakouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Feelings of irritability, anger, or frustration.<input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety, nervousness, or restlessness.<input type="checkbox"/> Sadness or a low mood.<input type="checkbox"/> Overwhelm and difficulty relaxing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Racing thoughts<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty concentrating<input type="checkbox"/> Forgetfulness<input type="checkbox"/> Self-doubt<input type="checkbox"/> Narrow-focused<input type="checkbox"/> Can't prioritise<input type="checkbox"/> Feel powerless/victim<input type="checkbox"/> Indecisive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Changes in eating patterns (overeating or loss of appetite).<input type="checkbox"/> Sleep disturbances (insomnia or excessive sleeping).<input type="checkbox"/> Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other substances.<input type="checkbox"/> Procrastination or avoidance of responsibilities.<input type="checkbox"/> Stop exercising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Agitated<input type="checkbox"/> Short-tempered<input type="checkbox"/> Social withdrawal

What can you do about it?

Physical

- exercise
- healthy diet
- adequate sleep
- breathing exercises

Interpersonal

- reach out to connect with friends and colleagues

Emotional

- seek professional help
- listen to music

Behavioural

- set boundaries for doing work, screen time etc
- pursue a hobby/activity which brings joy

Cognitive

- mindfulness meditation
- Positive self-talk
- time-management steps
- limit access to technology

WHAT DID WE COVER

Know thyself

Circle of control, influence & concern

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Burnout – moving from survival to sustainability

Circle of concern, influence and control tool

● Circle of Concern

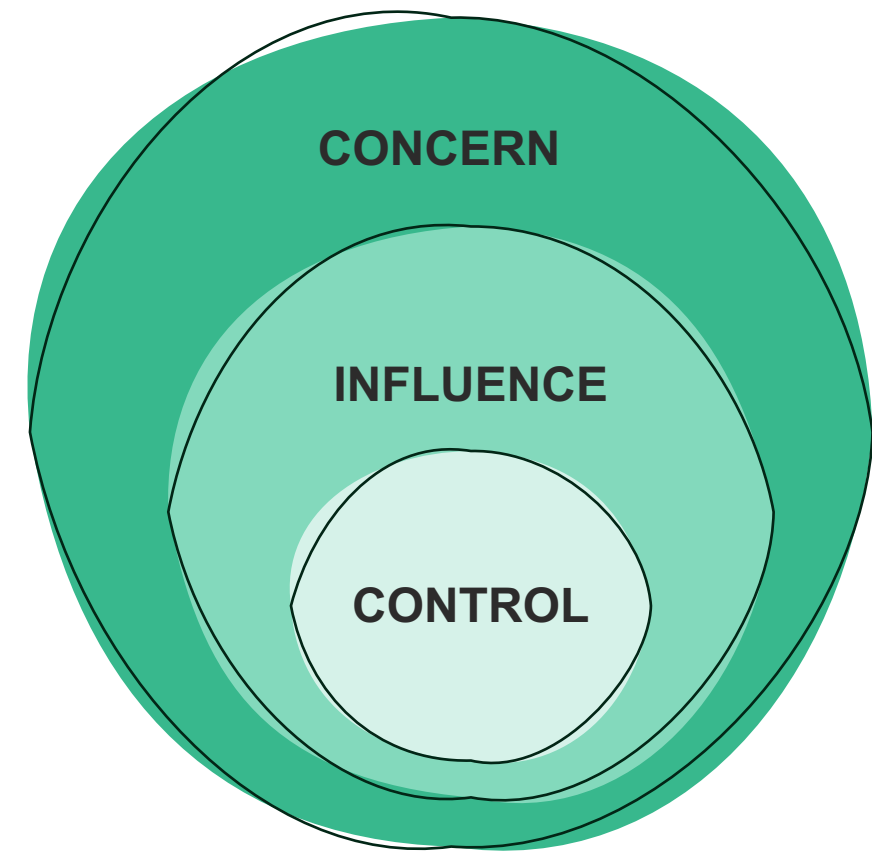
Everything you care about — including external events, team wellbeing, funding, policies, stakeholder expectations, social issues, and global challenges.

● Circle of Influence

Areas where you can *influence outcomes* but don't have direct control — such as team culture, community relationships, or board engagement.

● Circle of Control

What you *directly control* — your actions, decisions, mindset, time, boundaries, and communication.



Reflection Exercise

Brain Dump

List everything currently on your mind — personal, professional, or systemic.

- ✓ What's in your **control**?
- ✓ What can you **influence**?
- ✓ What's outside both — but still impacts you?

•Where are you spending most of your energy?

⚠ Too much in Concern = overwhelm

✓ More in Control/Influence = empowerment

•What can you move from Concern to Influence?

(E.g., instead of worrying about burnout in your team → influence culture by modelling healthy boundaries.)

•What needs acceptance or letting go?

(What might you care about deeply, but cannot change right now?)

Sustainable Leadership Checklist:

Shifting from Burnout to Balance

Reconnect with Self (Circle of Control)

Regain clarity, boundaries, and self-awareness.

- ☐ I've taken time to pause and reflect on how I'm feeling.
- ☐ I can identify what's in my control vs. what's just in my concern.
- ☐ I've set (or reset) one clear boundary this week.
- ☐ I've created space in my week for rest, reflection, or joy.
- ☐ I've revisited or reconnected with my core values and leadership purpose.

Share the Load (Team Engagement)

Let go of overfunctioning and invite shared ownership.

- ☐ I've delegated something I was holding onto unnecessarily.
- ☐ I've had an open conversation with my team about workload or stress.
- ☐ I'm actively modelling wellbeing (e.g. taking breaks, logging off on time).
- ☐ I've encouraged team members to step into leadership or decision-making.
- ☐ I've created space for honest feedback or team check-ins.

Influence the System (Culture & Governance)

Shift patterns that contribute to overload.

- ☐ I've named one systemic or cultural pattern that's fuelling stress (e.g. "do more with less").
- ☐ I've had a conversation with leadership or the board about role clarity or support.
- ☐ I've questioned or re-framed unrealistic expectations or narratives in meetings.
- ☐ I'm advocating for systems of support (e.g. supervision, reflection time, wellbeing practices).
- ☐ I've connected with a peer, coach, or mentor for outside perspective.

Further training and resources:

The graphic features a teal background with a dark teal footer. On the right, a circular arrangement of white paper airplanes surrounds a single red paper airplane pointing left. The text is presented in white boxes and a footer section.

NFP Leadership Certificate

Hone your leadership skills, access great tools and connect with other leaders

The NFP Leadership Certificate is an online program that will equip leaders with the skills, knowledge, tools and connections required to take the next big step in their leadership journey.

- [Emotional intelligence: reflections for board directors](#)
- [10 Top characteristics of good leaders](#)
- [Circles of influence](#)
- [NFP Leadership certificate](#)

4 Day work week

4 day week report



We love feedback



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2025FOCD>