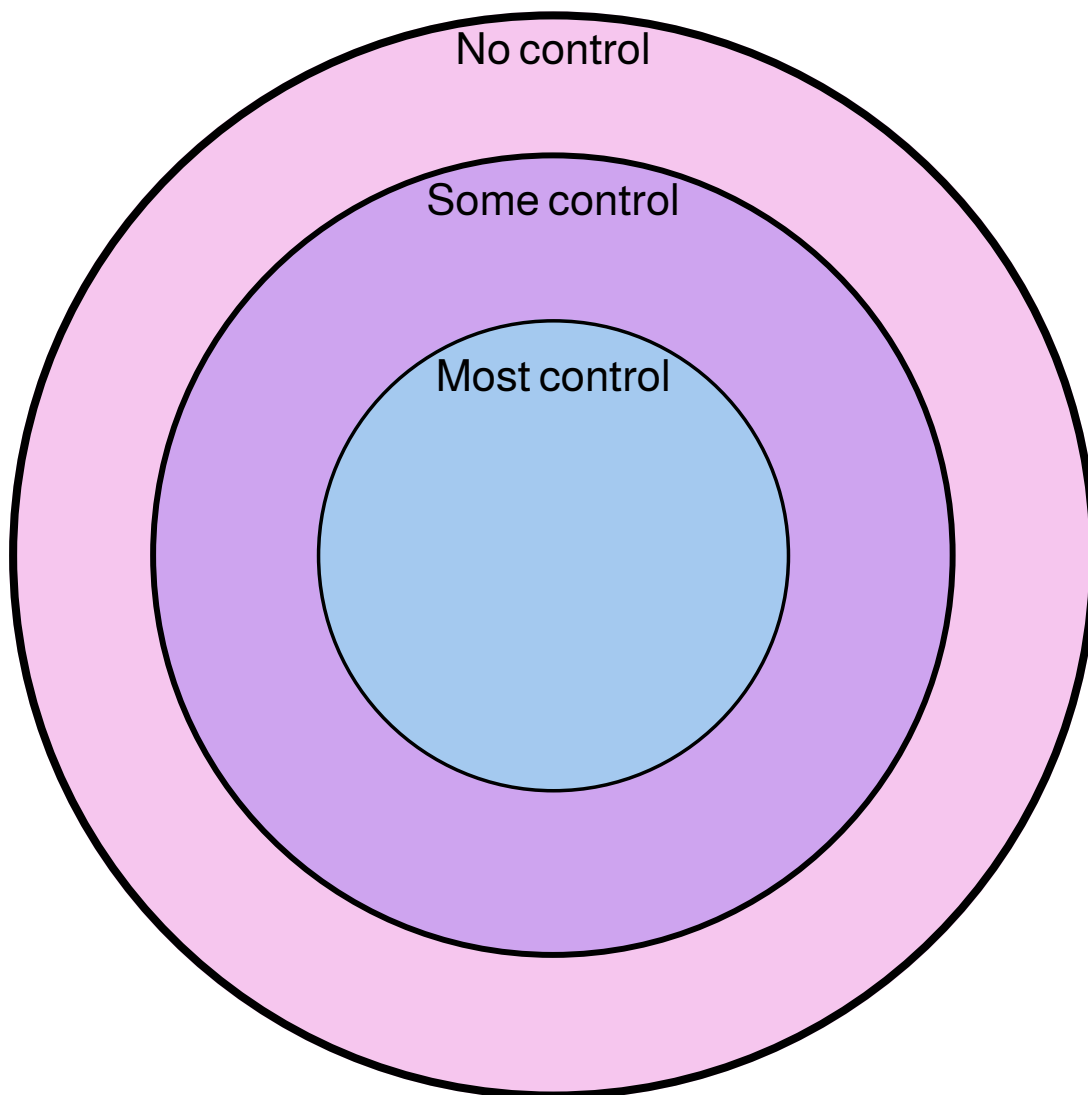# Circle of Control

During difficult times, it can help to take big stressors and break them down into what you can control and what you can't.

Think about what's stressing you out. In the outer ring, write the things that you have zero (or very little) control over.
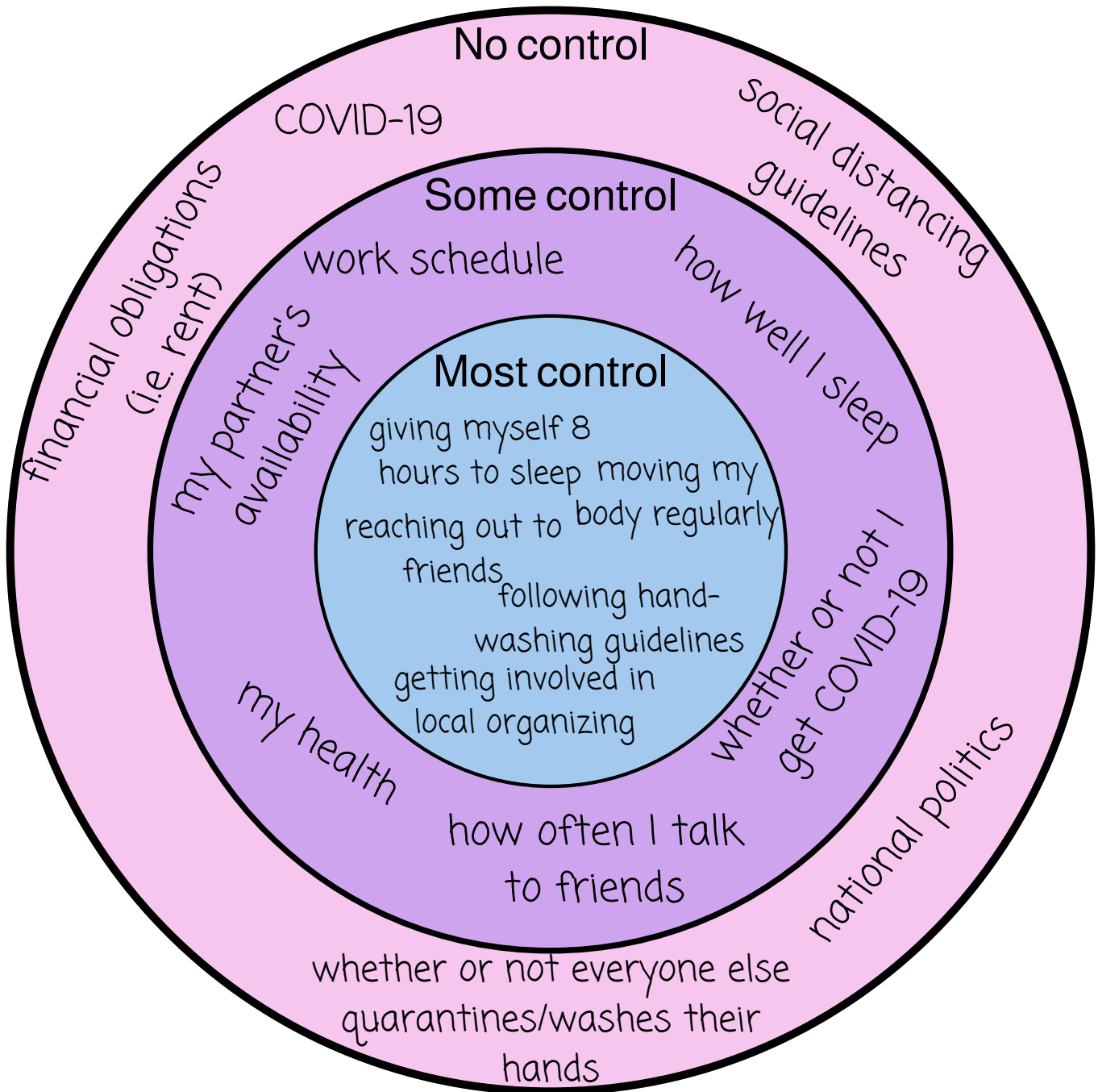
In the middle ring, write the things that you can influence, but not entirely control.

In the inner ring, write the things that you can mostly or entirely control.

If you're unsure how to start, see the example on the next page!

No control

Some control

Most control

Example:

No control

COVID-19

social distancing guidelines

financial obligations (i.e. rent)

Some control

work schedule

my partner's availability

how well I sleep

Most control

giving myself 8 hours to sleep

moving my body regularly

reaching out to friends

following hand-washing guidelines

getting involved in local organizing

whether or not I get COVID-19

my health

how often I talk to friends

national politics

whether or not everyone else quarantines/washes their hands

Now what?

You can use these prompts to think more about your Circle of Control and how to use it to manage stress and anxiety.

1. What was your experience with filling out the circles? What came up for you?

2. Do any of your circles have noticeably more or fewer items in them than the others? Which were easiest to think of answers for?

3. Which circles do you tend to think about the most when you're feeling worried?

4. Look at your "No control" and "Some control" items. Can any of them be broken down into smaller pieces that might go further in? (For instance, you can't control social distancing guidelines, but you can probably control how you choose to implement them.

5. Look at your "Some control" and "Most control" items. Should any of them be broken down into smaller pieces that might go further out? It's important not to expect yourself to control things that aren't actually totally under your control.

6. How would it feel to take some concrete steps with your "Most control" items? Try breaking them down into smaller steps to help motivate yourself.

There's another blank set of circles on the next page if you'd like to try the exercise again!

No control

Some control

Most control