
January 13th
CIRCLE OF CONTROL

“We control our reasoned choice and all acts that depend on that moral will. What’s not under our control are the body and any of its parts, our possessions, parents, siblings, children, or country—anything with which we might associate.”

—EPICTETUS, *DISCOURSES*, 1.22.10

This is important enough that it bears repeating: a wise person knows what’s inside their circle of control and what is outside of it.

The good news is that it’s pretty easy to remember what is inside our control. According to the Stoics, the circle of control contains just one thing: YOUR MIND. That’s right, even your physical body isn’t completely within the circle. After all, you could be struck with a physical illness or impairment at any moment. You could be traveling in a foreign country and be thrown in jail.

But this is all good news because it drastically reduces the amount of things that you need to think about. There is clarity in simplicity. While everyone else is running around with a list of responsibilities a mile long—things they’re not actually responsible for—you’ve got just that one-item list. You’ve got just one thing to manage: your choices, your will, your mind.

So mind it.