

Circle of Influence

“You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with.” Jim Rohn

Before you can strengthen your marriage, you need to assess its current state. In this exercise, you identify those who exert the most influence over you and your marriage. Set aside time to honestly assess your influencers.

CURRENT STATUS

1. **Find a quiet space where you won't be interrupted.** Turn off your phone and computer. Do this old school—pencil and paper. Get comfortable in this space. Have some water handy, tissues, and whatever else you need to be productive.
2. **Pray.** Ask God to quiet your mind and protect you from distractions. Invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you as you complete this exercise. Your goal is to reveal your current influencers, assess their impact on your thoughts, actions, and choices, and decide what needs to be changed.
3. **Draw the following diagram on a sheet of plain paper.**

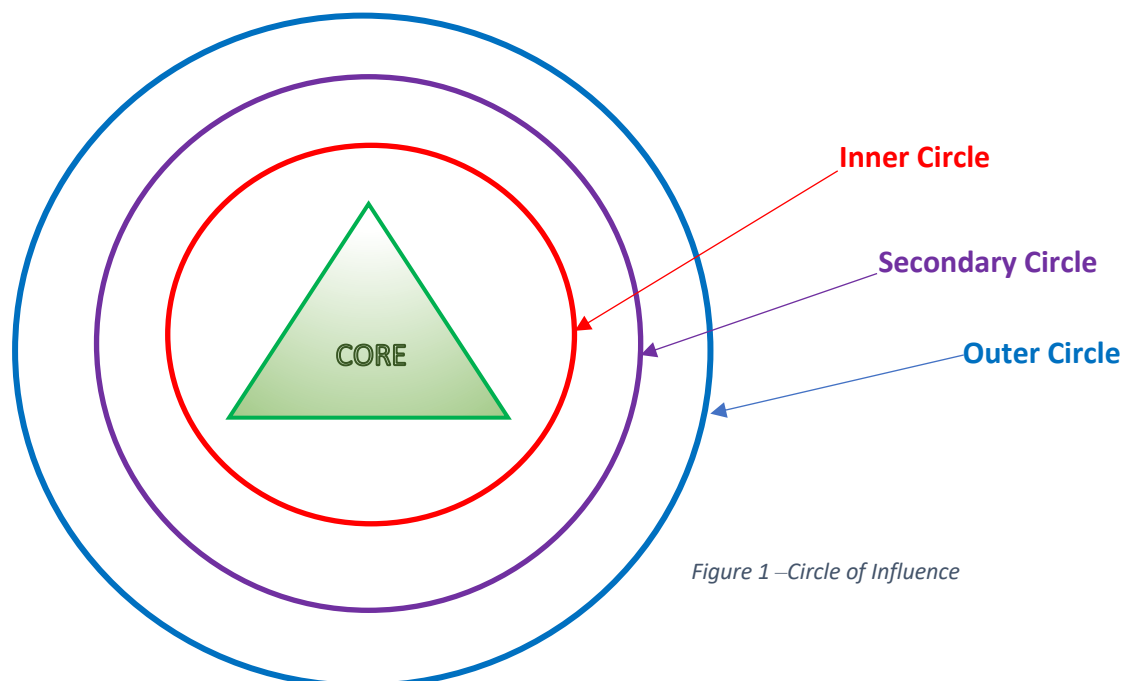


Figure 1—Circle of Influence

4. **Identify** who resides on the points of the triangle in your marriage. Write those names on the triangle points. The triangle is the core of your marriage. Who is part of the core?
5. **Inner circle: Insert the names of the people who are closest to you.** Who exerts the most influence over you, your relationship with God, your relationship with your spouse? Who do you think exerts the most influence over your spouse, your spouse's relationship with God, your spouse's relationship with you?
6. **Secondary circle: The next level of influence.** Evaluate these people using the same questions in Step 5.
7. **Outer circle: The final level of influence.** Who are those people you and your husband interact with regularly, i.e. co-workers, professional people, activities?

EVALUATION

Look back over your current circle of influence. Most likely, someone is in the wrong spot. It's also possible that someone doesn't belong on the circle at all. Don't beat yourself up. We cannot change what we don't identify.

1. Does your CORE consist of God, your husband, and you? If not, why not?

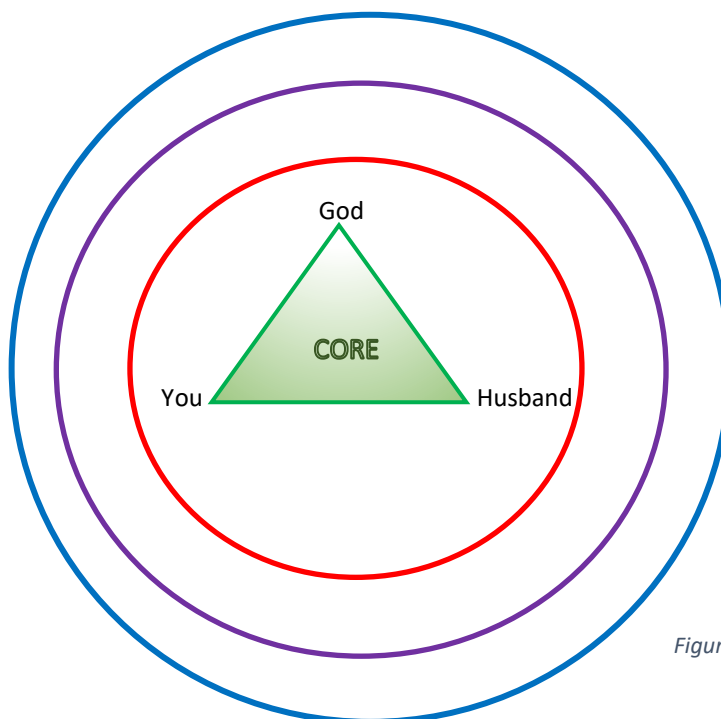


Figure 2 – Revised Circle of Influence

2. Who is in your inner circle that **doesn't belong** there? Be specific and list their names.
Where **do** they belong?

3. Who is in the secondary circle that **belongs somewhere else**? Move their name to the appropriate circle on the second figure.

4. Whose name do you need to **remove from your circles** of influence? Why? What does that look like?

FINAL STEP – YOUR IDEAL CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE

To become healthy, you probably need to make changes to your circle of influence. Evaluate each name on your circle and move that person where they ideally belong. Please understand this evaluation exercise is ongoing.

Some people will come into your life for a season to help you grow in a certain area. But, they don't remain. It's okay to remove those people when appropriate. Some people insert themselves where they don't belong.

Today, choose to move them to the appropriate location on the circle. This is your choice not theirs.

To live abundantly, we must surround ourselves with those who move us forward, believe in us, and passionately love God. We need truth-tellers, encouragers, and fellow warriors for God. Identify those people in your life. Place their names on the appropriate location. Say "hello" to your dream team!

Take your time with this step. Pray over the appropriate circle for each person. When you are ready, place your dream team names on their circle of influence. Remember who alone is in your CORE circle.

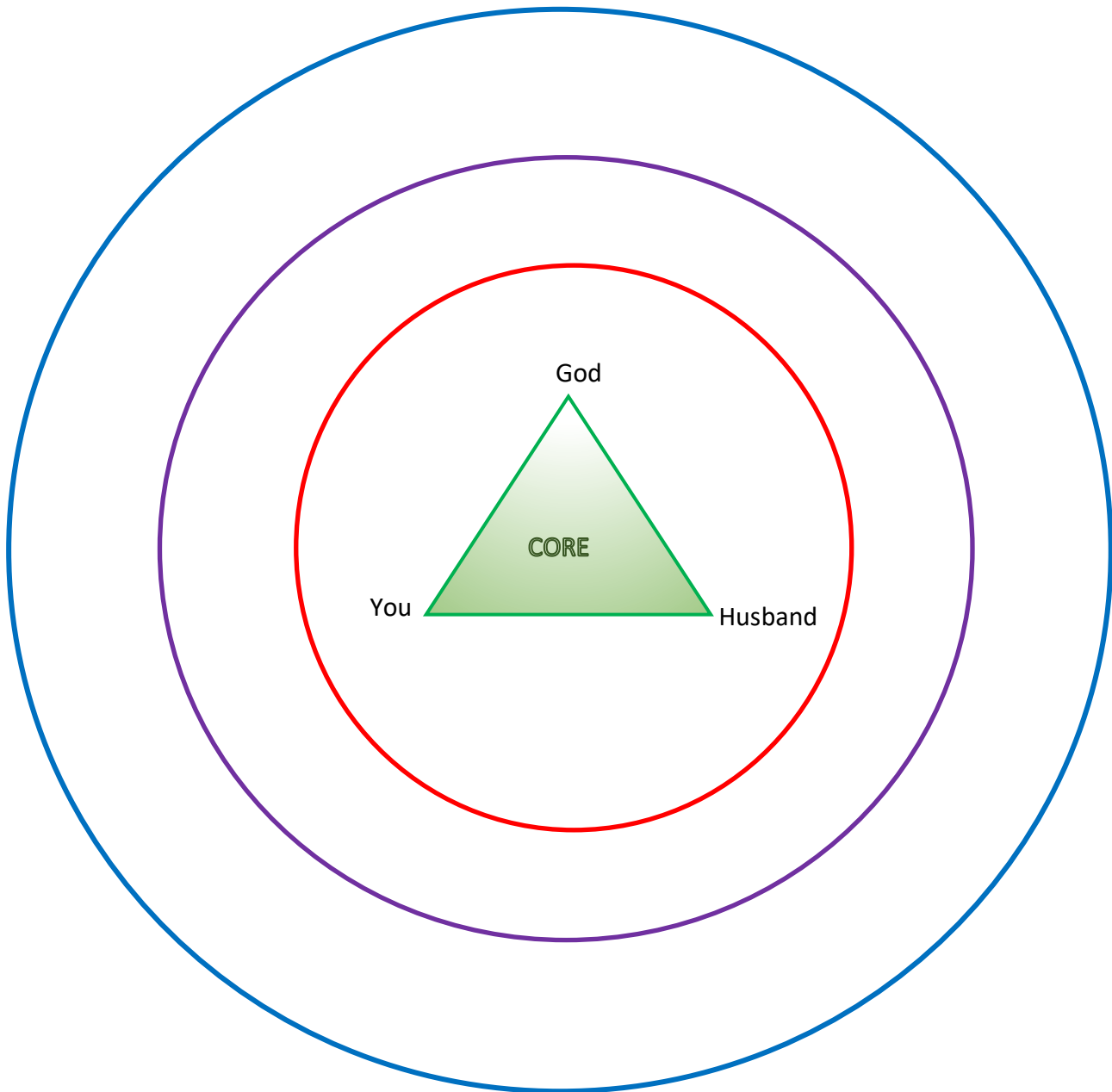


Figure 3 – Dream Circle of Influence

CONGRATULATIONS!

You may not realize it, but you've made *huge* steps forward in your recovery. Take about five minutes and write your feelings about your influencers and those you need to remove. Then, end your time with prayer. Ask God to give you the courage to act on what you've discovered today.

I'm so proud of you!