

## Example of Power Point Slide

**POWERSOURCE** People & Organizations Can Transform Stress and Manage Change.

# Control and importance Grid

	Can Control	Can't Control
Important	Immediate Action	Acceptance
Not Important	Low Priority	Non-attachment

The diagram is a 2x2 grid. The vertical axis is labeled 'Important' at the top and 'Not Important' at the bottom. The horizontal axis is labeled 'Can Control' on the left and 'Can't Control' on the right. The four quadrants are: Top-Left (Yellow): 'Immediate Action'; Top-Right (Green): 'Acceptance'; Bottom-Left (Pink): 'Low Priority'; Bottom-Right (Light Blue): 'Non-attachment'.

# The Control and Importance Grid

## Purpose of Exercise:

- Presents a quick method of determining how important a situation is and whether it is controllable.
- Provides a way to identify what is not worth worrying about.
- Offers a method to prioritize energy expenditure on real-life situations.

## Time:

15 minutes

## Introduction:

*We often find ourselves worrying about things we cannot change or control. Or worse, we waste valuable time and energy on tasks that we have control over, but are not important (the trivial many). Let's take a look at the Control and Importance Grid (Display Overhead). The activities of our lives can be placed in the four fields of action generated by the interaction of control and importance. Basically, there are things that are uncontrollable and things we can control. Some are important and others are not. Think of some of the events in your life right now and write them on the grid in the appropriate boxes.*

## Processing the Exercise:

After participants have completed the task, click through the slide and discuss the responses for the Control and Importance Grid. The best use of their energy for each of the four fields of action is some variation of the following:

You **can control it** and it **is important**: Act Immediately. Focus time and energy on this field.

You **can control it**, but it's **not important**: Low priority: don't waste time and energy.

You **can't control** the situation, but it **is important**: Accept it; be realistic.

You **can't control** the stressor, and it's **not important**: Forget about it. Don't spend a dollar's worth of worry on a ten-cent problem.

## Tips:

You might point out that trainers often turn the world into a set of simple binary choices to illustrate principles. In the real world, we all face a graduated scale for each dimension. Things range from not important to slightly important, to somewhat important, to important, to very important. The amount of control ranges from no control, to a little influence, to some control, to a lot of control, to absolute control. The actions people can take are likewise distributed over a continuum ranging from action, to direct influence, to indirect influence, to acceptance. The wisest choice of actions to take in each field depends upon how one judges the situation.

## Key Points to Draw Upon:

This exercise helps people develop perspective on their stressors and gives them a guideline for evaluating how wisely they are expending their energy. The key is to get people to prioritize energy use and to become aware of patterns of expending energy that will never be productive. By eliminating these dysfunctional energy expenditures, people will be able to focus their energy more appropriately.