**Name**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Homeroom**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Focusing On What We Can Control***

**Directions:** Read the following excerpts from Sean Covey’s *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens[[1]](#footnote-1)*, and answer the questions that follow.

****To be truly responsible for something, you must exert[[2]](#footnote-2) control or influence over it. Otherwise, you’re just spending time and energy feeling bad about something that you could never do anything about. That’s not being responsible, that’s just focusing on what you can’t do instead of what you can. But as Covey writes:

“…there is one thing we can control: how we respond to what happens to us. And that is what counts! This is why we need to stop worrying about things we can’t control and start worrying about things we can.

What will happen if we spend our time and energy worrying about things we can’t control, like a rude comment, a past mistake, or the weather? You guessed it! We’ll feel even more out of control, as if we were victims. For instance, if your sister bugs you and you’re always complaining about her weaknesses (something you have no control over), that won’t do anything to fix the problem. It’ll only cause you to blame your problems on her and lose power yourself.”

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| **Stop and Jot:** Name two things that Covey says are within your control.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

***Focusing On What We Can Control* (Continued)**

To illustrate his point further, Covey shares a story of a girl named Renatha, and what happened when she chose to focus on what was outside of her control:

“A week before her upcoming volleyball game, Renatha learned that the mother of a player on the opposing team had made fun of Renatha’s volleyball skills. Instead of ignoring the comments, Renatha became angry and spent the rest of the week stewing. When the game arrived, her only goal was to prove to this mother that she was a good player. To make a long story short, Renatha played poorly, spent much of her time on the bench, and her team lost the game. She was so focused on something she couldn’t control (what was said about her) that she lost control of the only thing she could, herself.

Responsible people, on the other hand, focus elsewhere … on the things they can control. By doing so they experience inner peace and gain more control of their lives. They learn to smile about and live with the many things they can’t do anything about. They may not like them, but they know it’s no use worrying.”

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| **Stop and Jot:** What did Renatha choose to focus on in this story? What impact did that have on herself and her teammates? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

**Reflection Questions for *Focusing On What We Can Control* (Continued)**

**Directions:** In your neatest handwriting and in complete sentences, answer the following questions.

1. Why is it important to focus on what is within your control, as opposed to what isn’t?

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1. What is something you tend to focus on that is not within your control? What are some of the consequences of this?

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1. What is within your control that could focus on instead? How might this benefit you?

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**Reflection Questions for *Focusing On What We Can Control* (Continued)**

1. Identify two specific ways that you will model responsibility this week. How might you benefit from this?

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1. Excerpt from *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* by Sean Covey [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. **exert**: to have an effect on something [↑](#footnote-ref-2)