



Hula Hoop Boundary Analogy

Remember the hula hoop? Imagine that you have one around you right now. It magically hovers around your waist area all the time. Now imagine that everyone else has one around them, too.

So often, we spend an incredible amount of time and energy on things that we can't control. And then we get mad at ourselves for failing to do what was never possible to do in the first place because it was not within our control.

OK, you might say, but what has that got to do with a hula hoop? Think of the hula hoop as your very own sorting tool for differentiating between what you can and cannot control. In other words, if it is *in your hula hoop*, you can probably control it. If it is out of your hula hoop, you cannot control it and all efforts to do so are wasted.

What is in your hula hoop?

- Your body
- Your thoughts
- Your actions
- Your opinions
- Your values
- Your dreams
- Your wishes

What is OUT of your hula hoop?

- EVERYTHING ELSE!
- Other people (your child and others)
- Other people's thoughts
- Other people's actions
- The weather
- Etc., etc., etc.

Are you starting to get the picture here? What is YOURS is in your hula hoop and those are really the only things you can control. Everything that is not yours belongs outside the hula hoop.

Now, this may sound pretty simple. But you would be amazed when you really start doing some sorting, how often you find yourself in someone else's hula hoop. Imagine that for a minute. Picture yourself merrily hula-ing away with your own hoop. Then picture yourself hula-ing two hoops.

"Ahh!!", you may say, "I can hula two hoops" and you may be right. But can you hula **two** hoops WITH ANOTHER PERSON IN ONE OF THEM? Hmm? Can you?

Material adapted from: SMART Recovery Family & Friends Handbook, 2012 p. 81