

On a monthly basis, I will be addressing you with a concern that I feel has merit. At the bottom of this page is my contact information. If you feel aggrieved or amused, or want to express agreement or disagreement, let me know your thoughts.

## **In Control**

Some days ago, I heard a deputy expressing his concern that ever since he joined the sheriff's department, he no longer had any control over his life. He was told what days he would work, what time of day he would work, and where he would work; and that he had to read and follow so many policies and rules, he no longer had any control in his life.

We all want the feeling of being in control of our lives, but when we take a close look at our individual lives, we would have to admit to ourselves that the expectations of our employers, our families, our co-workers, our associations, and many others exert both formal and informal control over how we act, react, and look at things.

While regretting this lot, I looked into my life for those things that only I control. I searched for those things that no one can control in my life or yours. I was able to find three. Maybe you can find more.

I'd like to find that deputy sheriff and share with him what I discovered.

I found that only I control my attitude. If I want to remain positive in the face of all adversity or opposition, I can. If I want to have a positive influence, I can and only I control the direction of my attitude.

I found that only I control the quality of my work. If others are burnt out, discouraged, or/and not performing up to their capabilities, I don't have to join them. I can always produce a high quality work product. It only takes me.

And lastly, I found that only I can control the quantity of the work I perform. If others are slacking or goofing off, I can be different. I have total control over just how much I will contribute, whether my work product will be exceptional or sloppy, and whether I'll be a positive or negative influence on my team.

The big revelation I had was that I control these "Big Three" every day, and that I get to make a new decision every day. Maybe we never lose control-we just lose sight of what we do control.

The future is ours. Will we decide to shape it, or will it shape us?

[Email comment to the Executive Director](#)

-December 2006-