

**Navigating the
New Normal:**

**Promoting
Positive Mental
Health &
Resilience
During
Challenging
Times**



Joyce Marter

Handouts



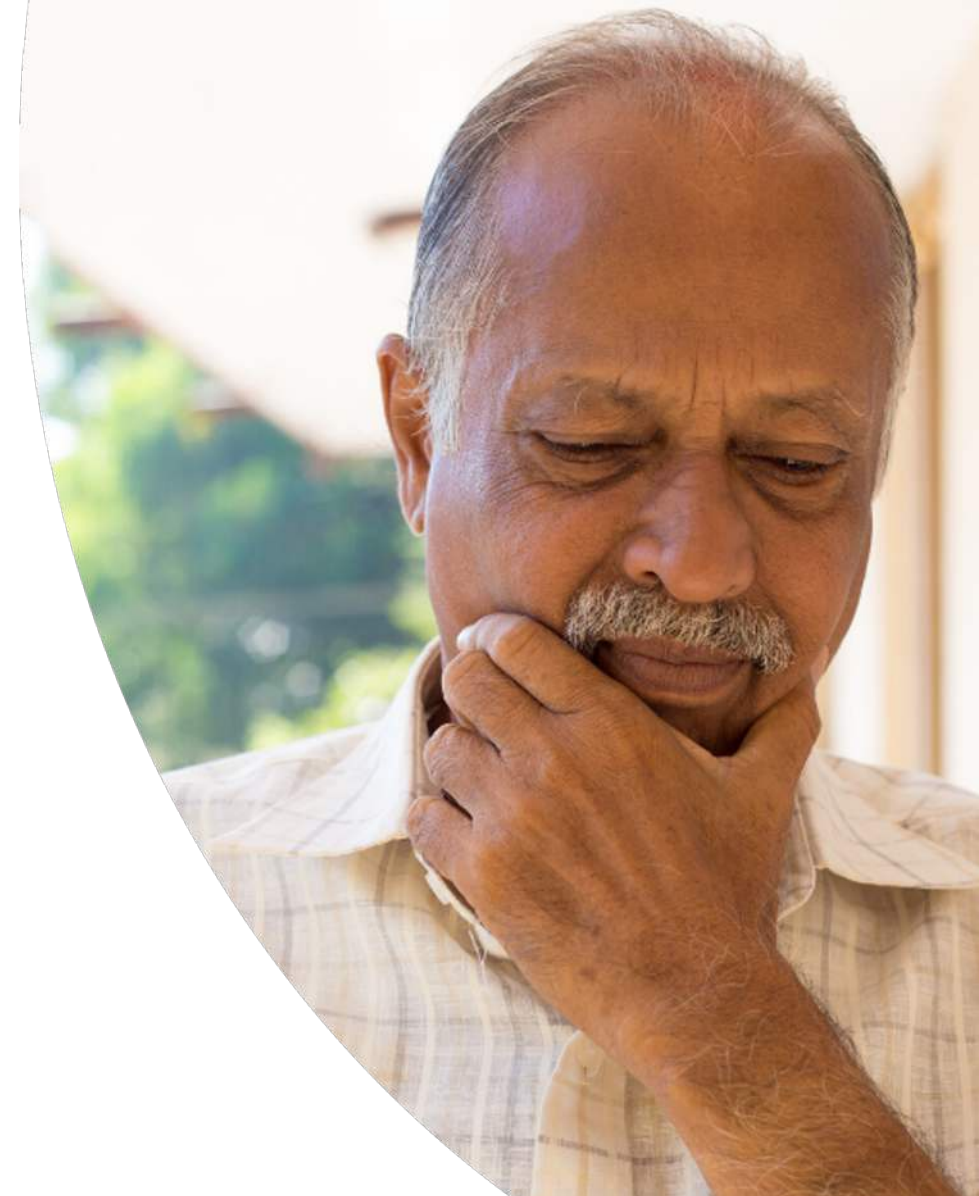
My Background

- National EAP Account Manager
- Founder/CEO of Urban Balance
- Leadership/Refresh Mental Health
- Consultant for Behavioral Health Organizations
- Leadership in the profession
- International corporate trainer



Stressors of the Pandemic

- Concerns for health & safety of self & loved ones
- Adjustments to working remotely and differently for essential workers
- Sheltering in place with loved ones
- Loneliness and isolation
- Dependent care—new demands such as homeschooling



Stressors of COVID-19

- Less social support
- Financial fears & stress—unemployment
- Racial injustice issues coming to the forefront
- Political divide and unrest
- Challenges managing uncertainty and change
- Reentry



Reintegration Challenges

- Change, transition & uncertainty are stressful
- Health anxiety
- Social anxiety
- Dependent care coverage
- Financial stress (helping loved ones)
- Workload
- Workplace safety protocols



Mental Health Implications

- Feelings of grief and loss
- Increase in stress, anxiety and depression
- Increase in substance abuse
- Relationship conflict, abuse, violence
- PTSD/Trauma
- Increase in suicide



Signs & Symptoms of Stress

- Physical
- Emotional
- Cognitive
- Relational





Internal Sources of Stress

- Unrealistic expectations
- Negative attitudes and feelings
- Self-sabotaging behaviors
- Poor self-care habits

What is Stress? What is Burnout?

- Stress is the body's physical and psychological response to anything perceived as overwhelming
- Burnout is a state of emotional and physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress



Symptoms of Burnout

Feelings of:

- Powerlessness
- Hopelessness
- Detachment
- Isolation
- Irritability
- Frustration
- Failure

Decrease in:

- Despair
- Cynicism
- Apathy
- Emotional exhaustion

Increase in:

- Errors
- Absenteeism
- Hypochondria
- Sleep disruption

Mental Health Continuum

In Crisis

Very anxious
Very low mod
Absenteeism
Exhausted
Very poor sleep
Weight loss

Struggling

Anxious
Depressed
Tired
Poor
performance
Poor sleep
Poor appetite

Surviving

Worried
Nervous
Irritable
Sad
Trouble Sleeping
Distracted
Withdrawn

Thriving

Positive
Clam
Performing
Sleeping Well
Eating normally
Normal social
activity

Excelling

Cheerful
Joyful
Energetic
High
performance
Flow
Fully realizing
potential

Acceptance

**If you don't like
something,
change it.
If you can't
change it, change
your attitude.**

MAYA ANGELOU



Control what you can, let go of the rest

What you can control:

- Your own thoughts
- Your own emotions
- Your own behaviors
- Your own choices

What you can't control:

- Other people's thoughts
- Other people's emotions
- Other people's behaviors
- Other people's choices
- Outcome
- COVID-19
- What else?

Mental Health Tips

- Prioritize your mental health & wellbeing
- Create structure to your day
- Take a break from the news
- Take time for mindfulness practices



Overview of Mindfulness

- Maintain a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment
- Pay attention to our thoughts and feelings without judging them
- Sense in the present moment
- Can be practiced anywhere, anytime



Source: <http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/mindfulness/definition>



Mindfulness in the Workplace

- GOOGLE
- NIKE
- ACCENTURE
- SONY
- LOREAL
- BRITISH AIRWAYS
- NOKIA
- MICROSOFT
- AMERICAN EXPRESS
- JOHNSON & JOHNSON

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Benefits of Mindfulness

- Enhances relationships
- Improves job performance
- Reduces chronic pain
- Increases focus and attention, and improves decision-making skills
- Improves creativity, memory, and cognitive flexibility
- Improves mood, empathy, and overall quality of life
- Boosts immune system

Source: Glomb, T. M, Duffy, M. K, Bono, J. E., & Yang, T. (2012). Mindfulness at work. *Research in Personnel and Human Resource Management*, 30, 115-157.

Int J Yoga. 2015 Jul-Dec; 8(2): 128-133. Effectiveness of mindfulness meditation on pain and quality of life of patients with chronic low back pain

Benefits of Mindfulness

Cont.

- Decreases anxiety, stress, depression, tiredness, and irritability
- Increases emotional intelligence
- Encourages healthier eating habits
- Improves heart and circulatory health
- Aids in recovery from substance use
- Improves sleep
- Increases financial well-being

Source: <http://www.mindwork.co/what-is-workplace-mindfulness/the-research-on-mindfulness>, <https://www.helpguide.org/harvard/benefits-of-mindfulness.htm>, http://www.mindfulnet.org/Building-the-Case-for-mindfulness-in-the-workplace_v1.1_Oct16_Full_doc.pdf

Strategies for Increasing Mindfulness

- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Unplugging from technology
- Listening & using your senses
- Mindful eating & spending
- Yoga
- Breathing
- Body scan
- Positive mantra
- Connection to nature
- Meditation
- Morning routine



The disease of being busy & multi-tasking

- Hampers Creativity
- Decreases Quality
- Drains Energy
- Shrinks Brain
- Reduces Wellbeing
- Reduces Efficiency
- Kills Prioritization

Taken from Stanford University “Cognitive Control in Media Multi-Taskers” Study



Mindful Workplace Exercises

- Start your day with a mindful moment and plan for mindful breaks
- Slow down to increase your productivity
- Switch off distractions
- Be a single-tasker
- Pay attention to your coworkers

Source: <https://hbr.org/2016/03/how-to-practice-mindfulness-throughout-your-work-day>, <http://www.mindful.org/10-ways-mindful-work/>

Positivity

**A man is but the
product of his
thoughts...what
he thinks,
he becomes.**

MOHANDAS GANDHI



Keep Your Thinking Positive

- Turn down volume of your inner critic
- Detach from fear
- Avoid catastrophic thinking
- Practice the power of affirmations and mantra



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Practice Gratitude

**He is a wise man
who does not
grieve for the
things which he
has not, but
rejoices for those
which he has.**

EPICETETUS



Detachment

**Feelings are
waves of energy
which we can
choose to surf,
rather than
allowing them to
overcome us.**

ARLENE ENGLANDER



Detach From:

- Your own negative emotions like fear, anxiety, anger and sadness
- The negative emotions of others
- Expectations
- Outcome (embrace uncertainty)



Detachment Strategies

- Visualization of protective barrier
- Lifeguard analogy
- Unhook from conflict
- Drop your end of the rope
- Do the next right thing
- Zoom out for greater perspective



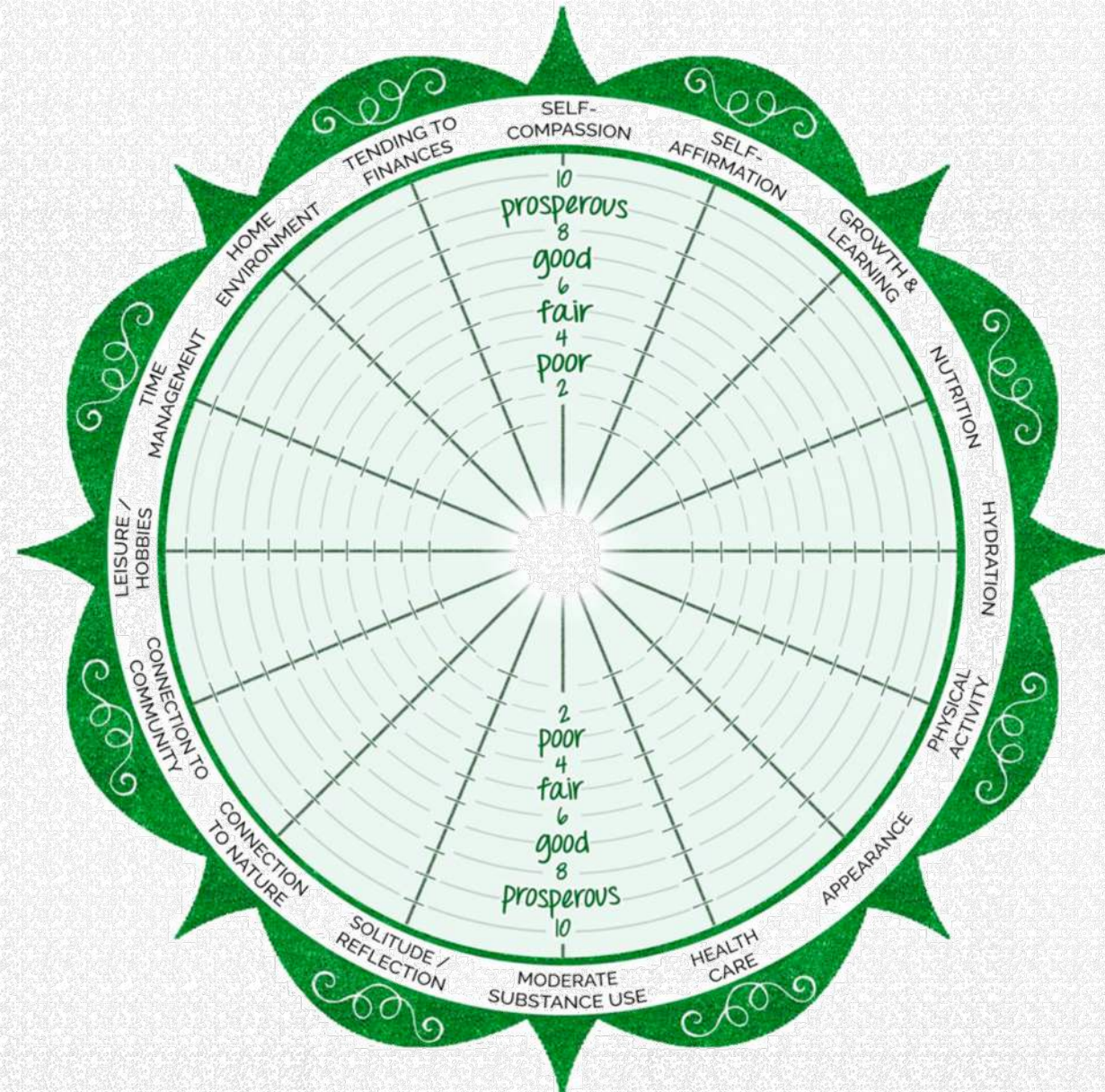
Prioritize Your Own Well-Being

- Practice self-care
- Set healthy limits and boundaries with assertive communication

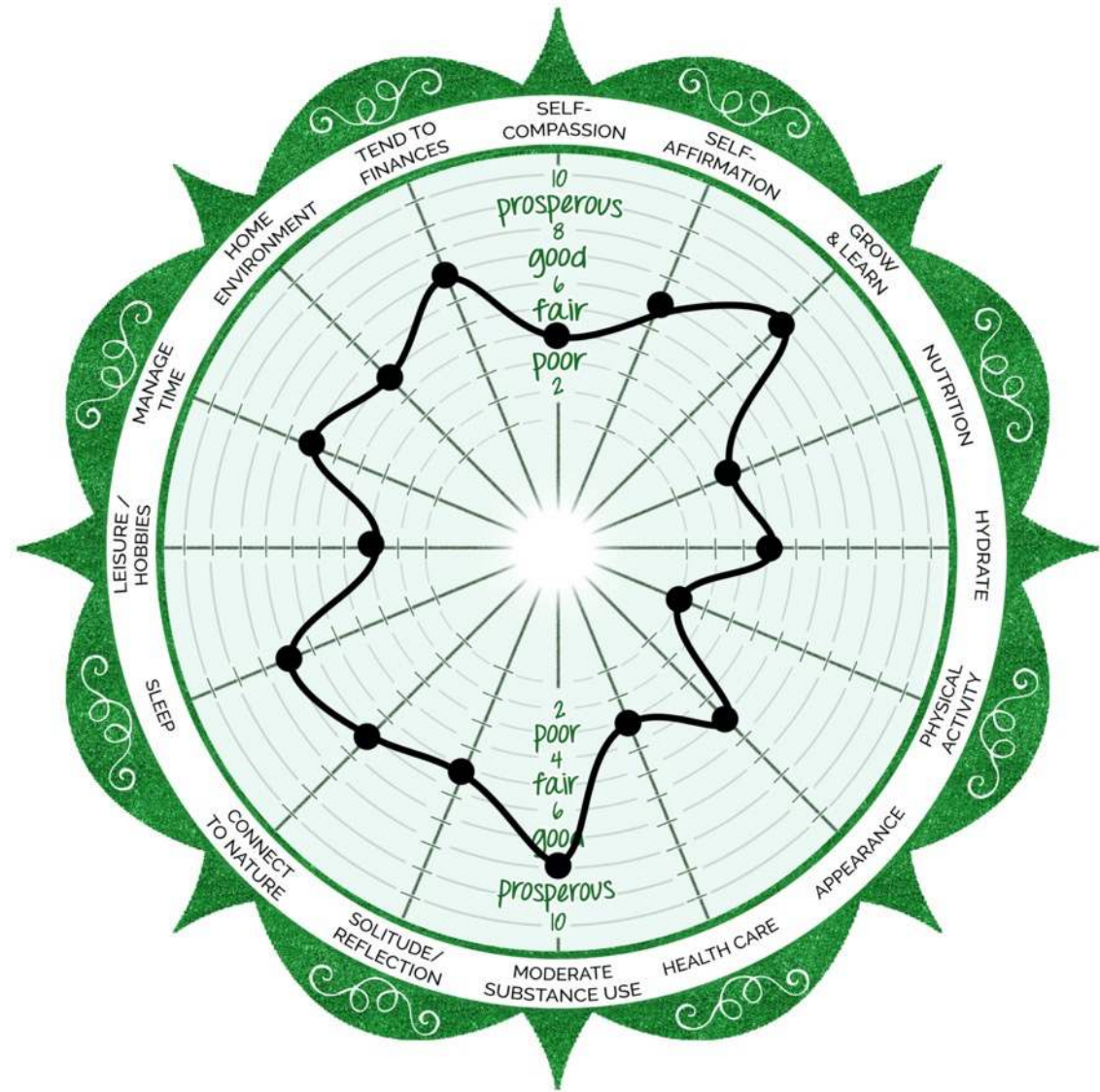


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Self-Care Wheel



Sample Completed Self-Care Wheel



Support

**Alone we can
do so little,
together we can
do so much.**

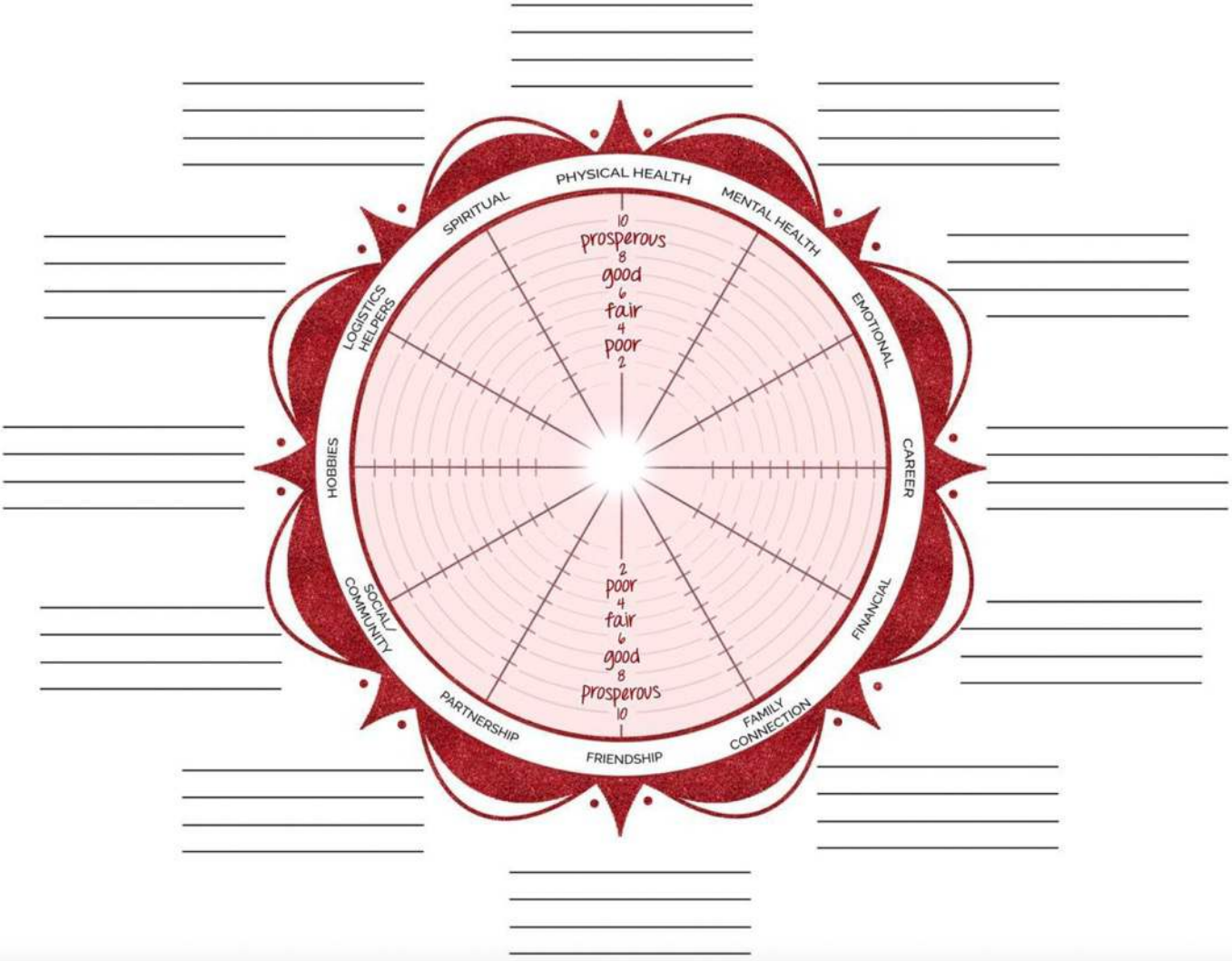
HELEN KELLER



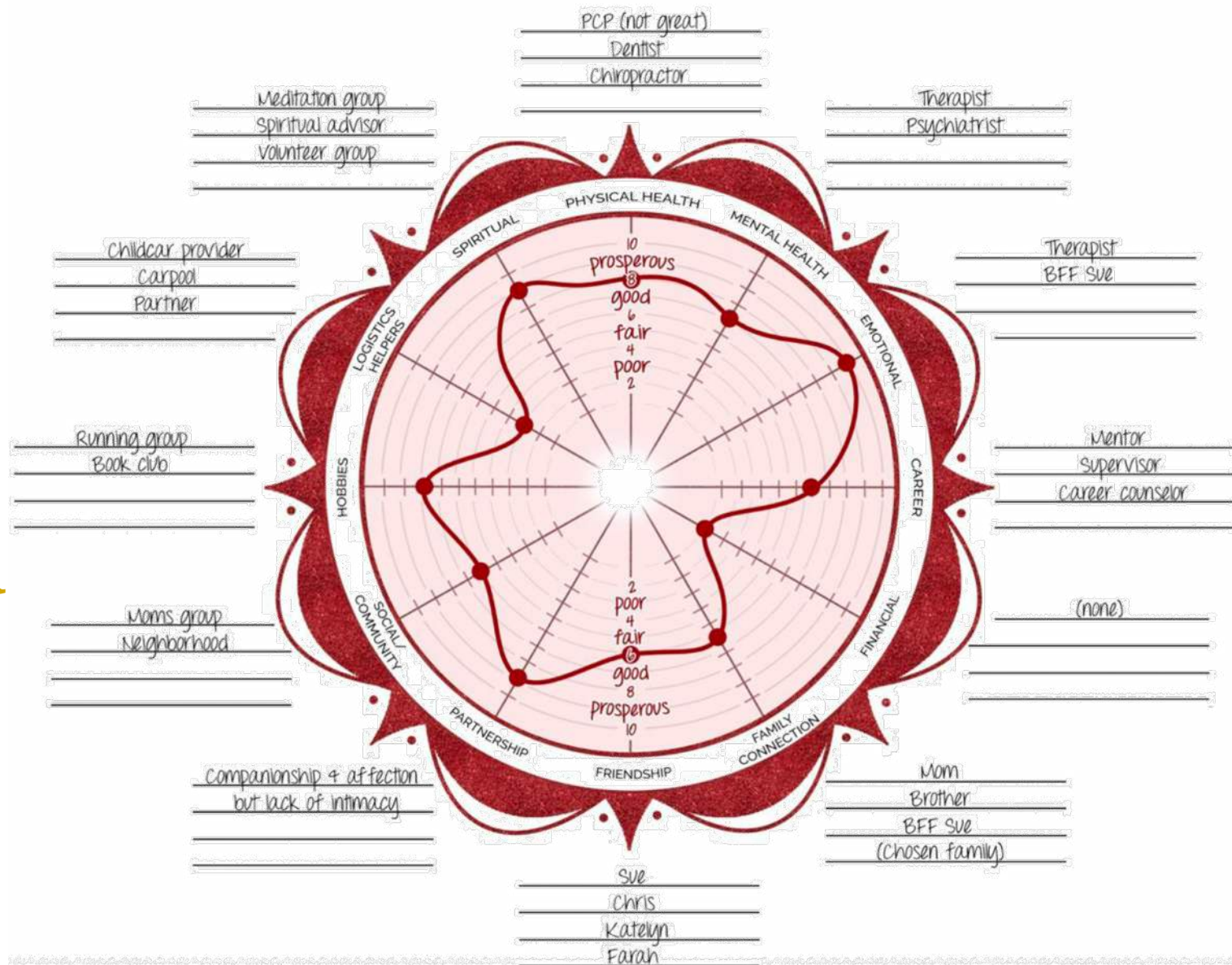
Barriers to Accessing Support

- Fear (difficulty trusting)
- Pride
- Shame or stigma
- Guilt
- Fear of imposition
- Low self-esteem, not feeling deserving
- Learned helplessness
- Hopelessness
- Loss of power and control (ego)
- Loss of credit (ego)
- Early life messages
- Expense
- Introversion or shyness

Support Network Wheel



Sample Support Network Wheel



Access Support

- Avoid isolating with your feelings
- Connect with loved ones
- Ask for what you need
- Participate in online communities
- Utilize teletherapy



Resilience

**Life will give you
whatever experience
is most helpful
for the evolution of
your consciousness.**

ECKHART TOLLE



Mindfulness as Resilience Training





Key Components to Building Resilience

- Prioritize your mental health & wellbeing
- Seek and give support
- Strive for work/life balance
- Engage fully in life; don't isolate yourself
- Develop a sense of purpose/meaning in life

We are in this together!



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Resilient People

- Understand that challenges are a part of life
- Promote health and wellbeing
- Enjoy connection & collaboration
- Are open, flexible and adaptive
- Are emotionally intelligent
- View challenges as opportunities
- Learn from mistakes
- Avoid worrying
- Have a sense of humor even when stressed



Utilize Your Benefits:

- Vacation
- Flex Spending/Health Savings Accounts
- Sick benefits & FMLA for time as needed
- Insurance Benefits (Mental Health Parity Law)

EAP Services (US):

- 3 free sessions per issue, per year
- Immediate family members also eligible
- Counseling for stress, mental health, substance abuse, relationship issues, etc.
- Resources to alleviate stressors
- Childcare & Eldercare
- Legal & Financial
- Educational resources





Meditation Resources

- [Calm: 30 Days Free](#)
- [Headspace: Free Trial](#)
- [Jack Kornfield: Compassion in the Time of Coronavirus](#)
- [Eckhart Tolle](#)
- [Jon Kabat-Zinn](#)
- [Tara Brach](#)

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