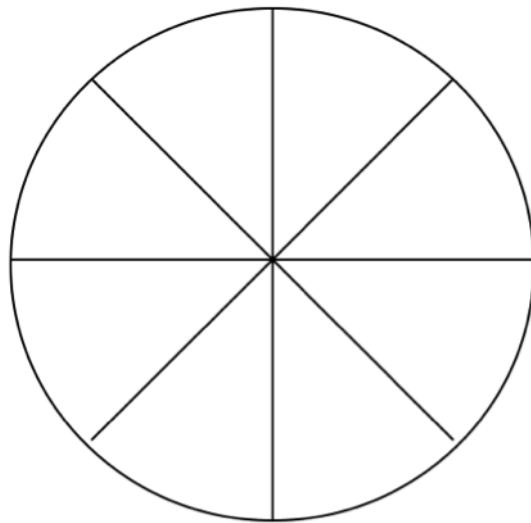


Wheel of Life

There is a useful and versatile coaching tool called the wheel of life, which we'd like to share with you. It allows you to gain a snapshot of where you are in all areas of your life.

The real key to its usefulness is that it gives you an overview of all the aspects of your life, not just the ones that may be currently troubling you.

The first thing to do is to draw a circle like the one below on a piece of paper.



Allocate each segment of your circle to an area of your life that is important to you. There is an example list below you can choose from, or you can choose your own areas. Just make sure that each segment represents a part of your life you really care about (see below for an example wheel).

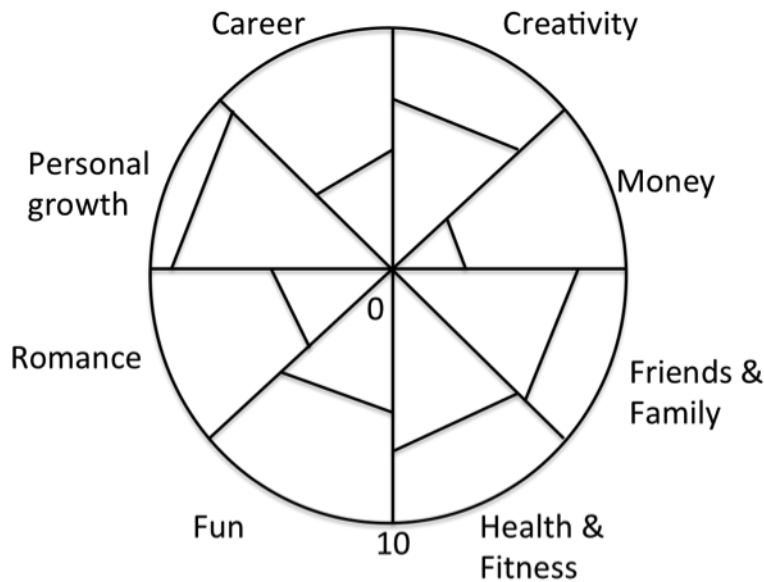
Career/work	Travel and Adventure
Personal Development/growth	Partner/ significant other
Home-work balance	Children or other Family relationships
Physical environment - home or work	Fun / Recreation / Hobbies
Health and well being	Contribution to Society
Spirituality	Money
Friends	Music
Creativity	Performing

Now here are a few ways you can use this tool:

Finding problem areas

Take each segment in turn and give it a score out of 10 of how satisfied you are in that area of your life right now. Make the 0 at the centre of the circle be completely miserable, and 10 at the outer edge be ecstatic. Draw a line within the segment to mark your score for that segment. So your circle may look something like the one below.

The ideal result is that you have a wheel within the wheel that is vaguely road-worthy, unlike the example above. The objective is not to get 10's all round,



rather to find a balance across all the areas. If the wheel above was yours, it seems to be that while you are learning a lot (personal growth) and you are happy with your friends and family, you perhaps need to focus on some other areas of your life such as earning more money, finding a little more romance, and having a bit more fun.

In the example above, it could be that this person is consciously sacrificing those other areas of their life in order to gain some vital experience, and that they know this is a short-term situation. If this is part of a plan, that's fine. However, these levels of dissatisfaction across so many important areas of your life (that you've identified as important) are not sustainable in the long term.

Doing this exercise is a great way to take stock of where you are, to see what you might be missing when you may just have your head down getting on with your life without thinking about it.

Keeping things in perspective

If you are feeling frustrated, or can't put your finger on why you are feeling bad, or you feel overwhelmed by something that is going badly for you, take the time to do your wheel, and it will remind you that there is so much more to you and your life than any one area that you are currently finding difficult.



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Goal Setting

When you have done your wheel of life, you can use it to start goal setting. Take each segment at a time, and spend some time identifying what your short, medium and long-term goals are in that area of your life. Once you have done that for each segment, you will have quite a long list of goals. See if there is any commonality and group your goals in categories such as:

- goals I can do right now
- goals I have to plan for
- goals I need help with (identify where this help is available).

If any goals cut across each other, you need to figure out what you need to do about this. If career success means you can't have the happy family life you dream of, you need to think about what you are going to do about this, otherwise, you'll not be able to work towards either with complete conviction.

Once you have all these goals, you can sit down and start to create your master plan to move this forward. Often when you do this, the same goal or goal comes up in each segment. When this happens, you are giving yourself a strong message you need to listen to.

Prioritising

Another great use for the wheel of life is to set your priorities. Once you have completed your wheel, ask yourself where the leverage points are. By which is meant, identifying the small change in one area that would create a number of knock on impacts in other areas. For example, if you have let yourself get really unfit, getting back to the gym could impact many other areas because you would be feeling more energetic and therefore more motivated to go for work. You would be feeling better about yourself so you would be approaching everything with more confidence. For some people, just catching up on their paperwork and filing would give them a similar boost. What would it be for you?

Tracking your progress

Remember that the wheel is just a snapshot, so the next time you do it, it might be completely different. It can be useful to re-do your wheel at regular intervals, e.g., quarterly so that you see the impact of what has been changing in your life over that period of time and review what areas are now most important to you.



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