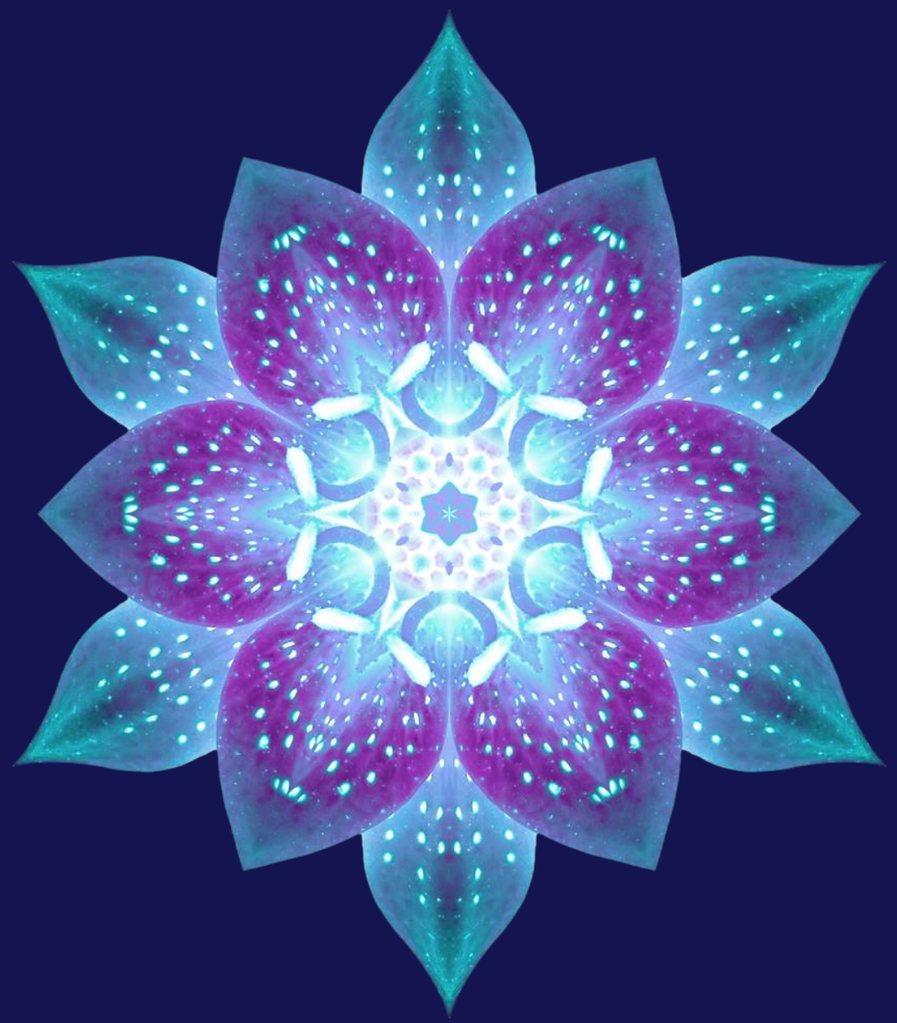
Stay Sane with the Personal Craziness Index



David J. Bookbinder, LMHC

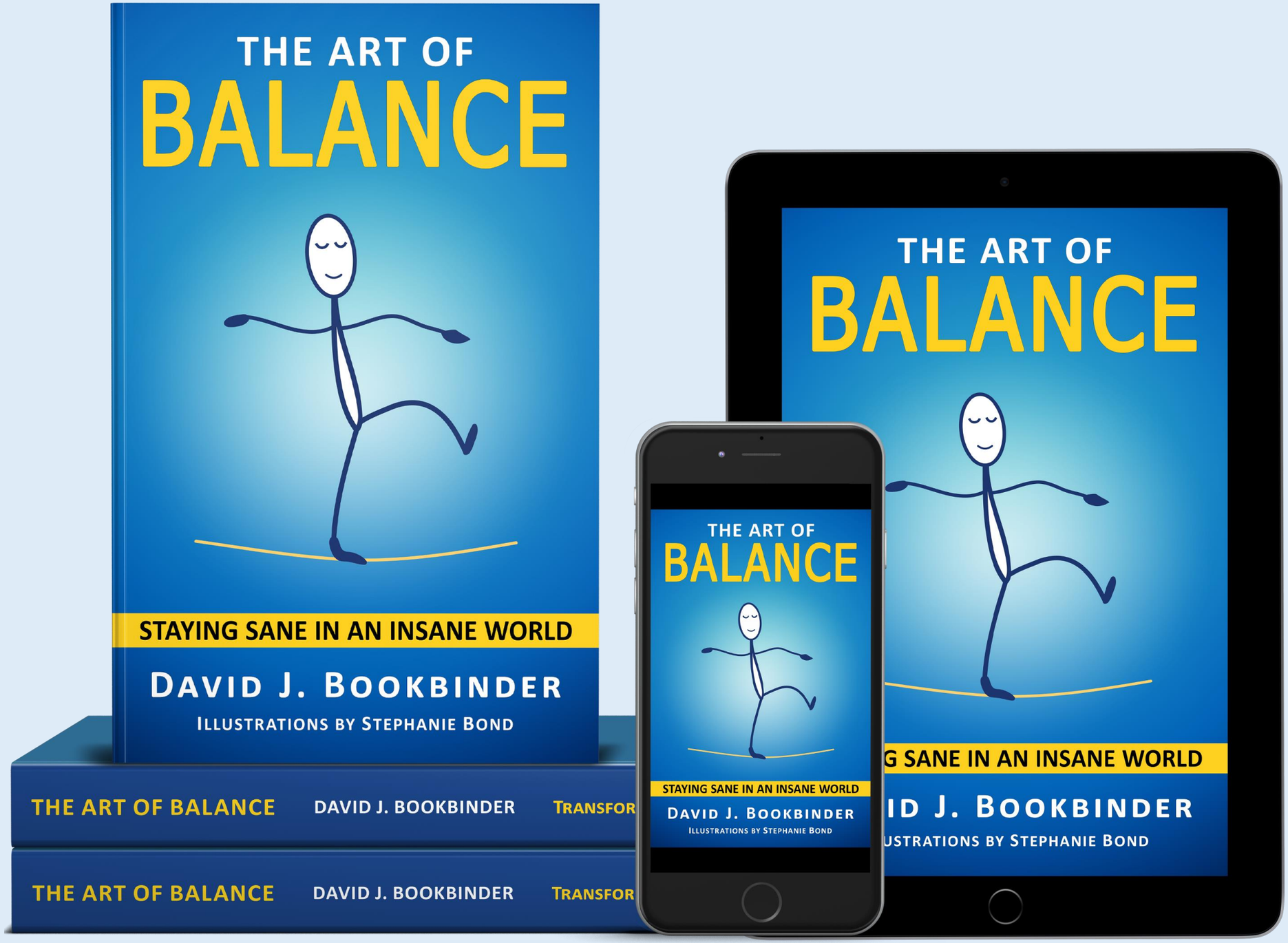
What Can This Guy Teach Yoga Practitioners About *Staying Sane*?



About David J. Bookbinder, LMHC and the *Art of Balance* Workshops

Psychotherapist, life coach, writer, and photographer.

- **Therapy/Coaching:** davidbookbinder.com
- **Books:** transformationspress.org
- **Blog:** phototransformations.com
- **Courses** (soon)**:** udemy.com
- **Mandalas:** flowermandalas.org



Paperback: $9.99 USD

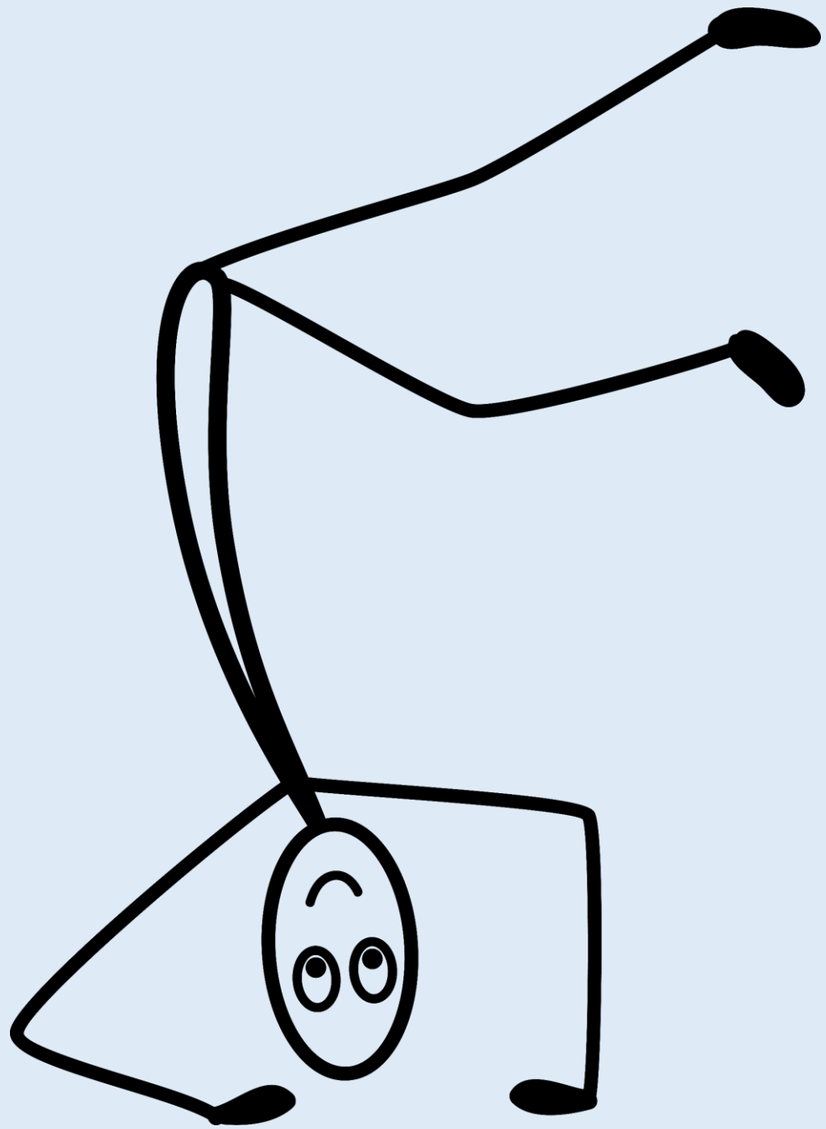
Kindle: $3.99 USD

Therapy/Coaching Tools & Yoga as a Double Helix



Synergy: Two threads are better than one!

Stay Sane with the Personal Craziness Index



Why a Personal Craziness Index (PCI)?

- **To stay sane** in an insane world, we need to do more than just *learn* tools and techniques.
- **We also have to *keep doing*** the things that help us stay sane.
- **Maintaining** new practices, habits, and attitudes takes persistence.
- **If we don't stay on course**, we run the risk of drifting back to older, less balanced ways.

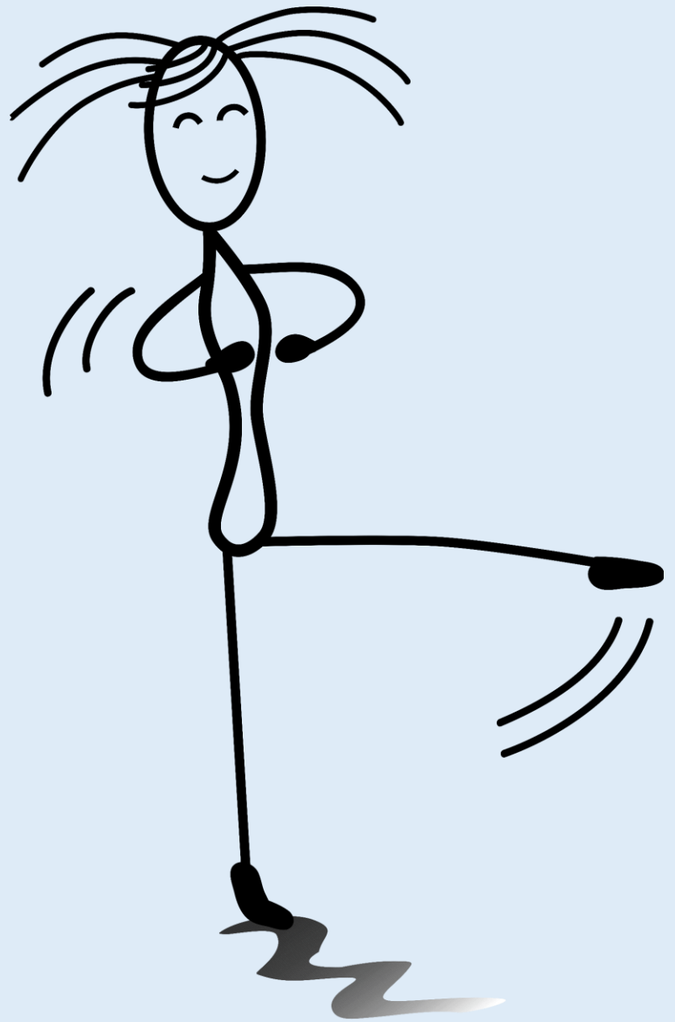
What is the Personal Craziness Index (PCI)?

- **The PCI is a universal tracking tool** that can be used by anyone to monitor and maintain balance.
- **It relies on the fact that** we act differently when we're in balance than when we're not.
- **The PCI helps us identify** the best indicators of when we're balanced or unbalanced…
- **…and also how to track them** so we stay steady on our (emotional / psychological / life) feet.

The PCI can help you go …



From here…



Back to here!

In this *Art of Balance Workshop*, you'll learn to:

1. **Identify** behaviors that are different when your life *is* in balance and when it *isn't*.
2. **Select** the most important indicators of balance and imbalance.
3. **Track** these indicators daily.
4. **Create** your own PCI.
5. **Notice** when the PCI shows you're moving into out-of-balance territory.
6. **Make** course corrections, so you can return to balance.

Why I Use the Personal Craziness Index

- **I noticed** that clients who seemed to have resolved their problems often came back a few years later with similar problems.
- **They'd stopped** doing the things they learned to do in therapy and their old patterns took over.
- **I found the Personal Craziness Index** in a book on addiction recovery.
- **I thought this tool might be adapted** to situations broader than addiction recovery.
- **I tested it on myself** for depression recovery. It worked!
- **I now use it with every client** who's willing to try it.
- **It's made a big difference** in many clients' lives.

How the PCI Works

In each of 10 major life areas, the PCI lists three indicators of how we act when we're in balance.

Then we track the seven most significant ones every day.

In 12-step recovery programs, the phrase "fake it till you make it" expresses the idea of using our willpower to assume new, healthier attitudes and behaviors.

The PCI helps us "fake it till we make it" when the amount of willpower that's required to keep personal craziness at bay is still small.

Here's an example of a completed PCI, with the tracked activities in **bold** and marked with an asterisk (*). This is similar to the one I created when I tried this out on myself. Yours will have different indicators.

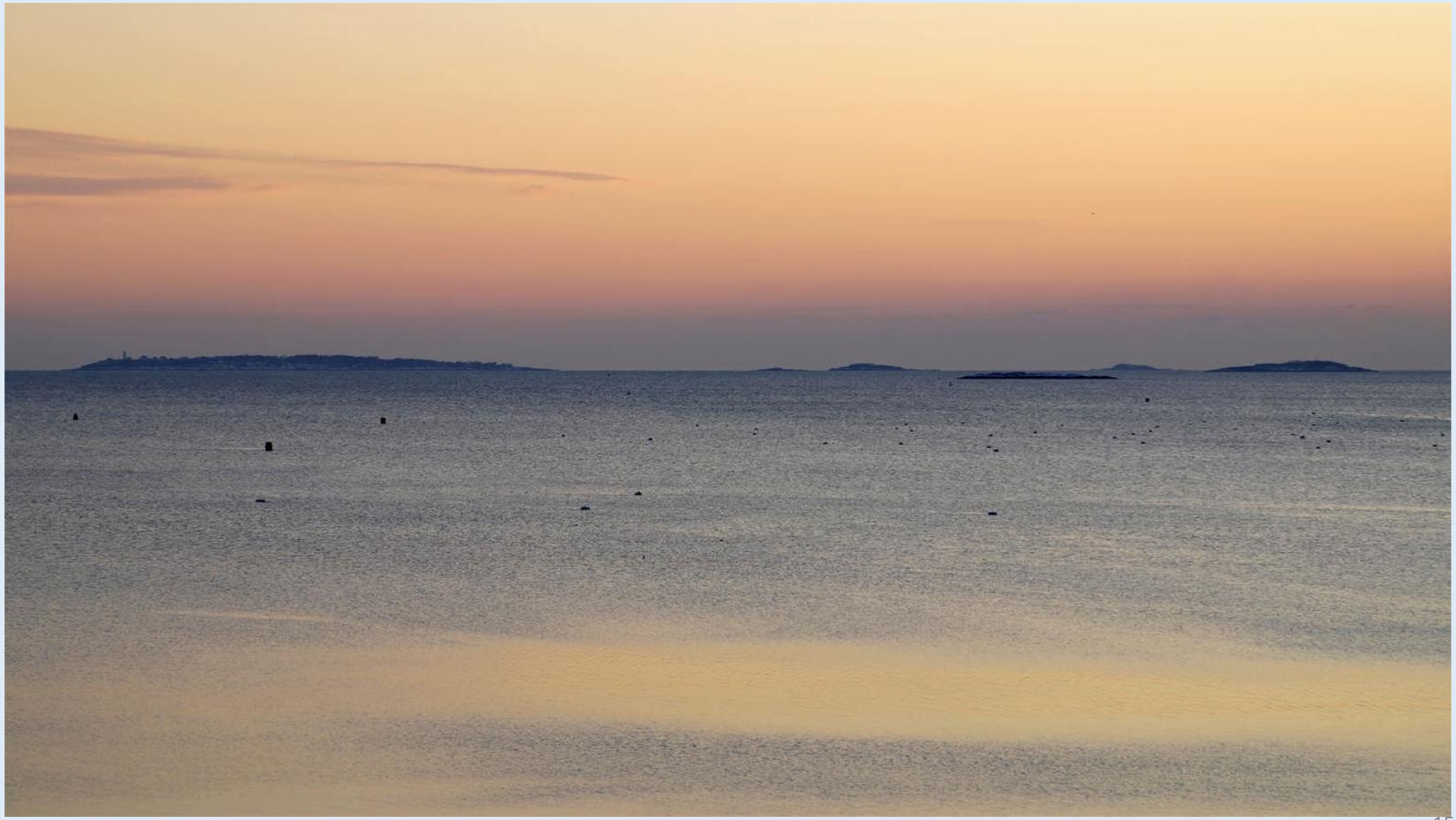
The Personal Craziness Index—Example

HEALTH/HYGIENE	**RECREATION**
1. Go to gym 3x/week	1. Plan/take 2 vacation trips/year
2. Cook own meals *	2. Go to movies with gf or friends
3. Sleep at least seven hours/night	**3. Take daily walk in morning ***
HOUSING	**FAMILY**
1. Make bed in the morning	1. Call/email family regularly
2. Wash dishes after each meal *	2. Send birthday cards
3. Keep clutter to a minimum	3. Visit family at least once/month
TRANSPORTATION	**FRIENDS**
1. Fill tank when it reaches ¼ full	1. Call or email friends regularly
2. Keep up with car maintenance	2. Meet friends at least once/week
3. Keep inside of car clean	3. Send birthday cards
WORK/MONEY	**GROUP ACTIVITIES**
1. Pay bills when I get them *	1. Attend creativity group regularly
2. Maintain bank account buffer	2. Contribute to online groups
3. Limit work to 40hrs/week *	3. Go to weekly poker game
HOBBIES/INTERESTS	**SPIRITUALITY**
1. Work on photos once/week	**1. Meditate daily ***
2. Read every night *	2. Go to Buddhist group regularly
3. Write at least 3x/week	3. Listen to spiritual podcasts

How Does the PCI Keep Us Balanced?

- **Course corrections are built into the tool.**
- **When we spot a downward trend**, we *resume* doing the things that balance us and *stop doing* the things that unbalance us.
- **Then we become balanced again**.
- **The reason this works is similar** to how, when we smile, we feel better even if we're forcing the smile. Our brain says, "You're smiling, so you must feel good."
- **Examples**: Morning walks, washing the dishes, cooking a meal, exercising. But also paying bills on time or keeping the gas tank filled.
- **The brain says**, "You're taking walks and paying bills. You must feel good."

Example: Morning Walk Photographs



A PCI Success Story: Part I, Before

Winter, 2014/15:

- **After a brutal winter**, clients started to come back into therapy, adding one or two returning clients per week to my already full schedule.
- **Soon, I was seeing 7 clients a day**, when normally I see 5 or 6.
- **Then more clients came back**. **I said yes to them all**.
- **I stopped** doing the things that kept me balanced.
- **I slept badly**, ate badly, became exhausted, isolated, and depressed.
- **Within three months**, I met the criteria for burnout.
- **It took a long time to recover my balance.**

A PCI Success Story: Part II, After

Winter, 2016/17:

- **After Donald Trump was elected President**, my Boston-area clients started to come back into therapy, adding one or two returning clients per week to my already full schedule.
- **I soon noticed** that I'd stopped doing some of the things that keep me balanced.
- **I set a limit** of 6 clients/day.
- **I told clients**, as they continued to come back, "Sorry, I can't see you right now" and scheduled them for later, more open times.
- **It was *still stressful*, but I slept fine**, ate well, and did not get exhausted, depressed, or isolated.
- **Burnout prevented! I never lost my balance.**

How to Create a PCI - The PCI Template

HEALTH/HYGIENE	RECREATION
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
HOUSING	FAMILY
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
TRANSPORTATION	FRIENDS
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
WORK/MONEY	GROUP ACTIVITIES
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
HOBBIES/INTERESTS	SPIRITUALITY
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

How to Create a PCI

1. **In the PCI template** in the handout**,** identify a total of 30 indicators, 3 for each of the 10 categories.

   If a category doesn't fit you, think of another one that does and list 3 activities there.

   Focus on the things you do that keep you in positive territory, more than things you don't do or the negative behaviors.

   Examples: Under "Health/Hygiene," you might list "exercise 30 minutes/day" as something you do to stay fit, or "cook healthy meals every day" as a reminder to avoid unhealthy eating vs "I don't exercise" or "I eat junk food."

Detail: Useful / Not Useful PCI Indicators

- The best indicators are ones that **happen every day**, and that are **noticeably different** when you're balanced or unbalanced.
- These are usually things **you already do** when you're balanced, rather than things you'd like to do.
- Also, it's usually better to track something **positive** than something **negative**. You can see when you're starting to forget the positive before you drift into fully negative territory.
- **Example**: If you're tracking "I eat healthy foods every day" and you skip a day, you'll notice. If you're tracking "I don't eat junk food," you may have skipped several healthy meals before you're actually eating a Big Mac or Ramen noodles.

How to Create a PCI (continued)

2. **Choose the 7 best indicators to track**. From any of these 10 categories, choose the 7 indicators that most clearly show you're maintaining your defenses against personal craziness.

   These indicators should ideally be ones you can track every day.

   Sometimes the choices are obvious, such as "I exercise 30 minutes/day" or "I eat 3 healthy meals daily," but sometimes the best indicators aren't so apparent.

   When I did my own PCI, paying bills early, washing dishes after each meal, and filling up my gas tank when it hit ¼ tank were just as important to track as my morning walks and meditations.

The Personal Craziness Index—Example

HEALTH/HYGIENE	**RECREATION**
1. Go to gym 3x/week	1. Plan/take 2 vacation trips/year
2. Cook own meals *	2. Go to movies with gf or friends
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1. Work on photos once/week	**1. Meditate daily ***
2. Read every night *	2. Go to Buddhist group regularly
3. Write at least 3x/week	3. Listen to spiritual podcasts

How to Track a PCI

3. **Track your PCI score every day.**

   Use a piece of paper, a spreadsheet, or an app to track your PCI.

   At the end of each day, give yourself 1 point for each activity you did and a 0 for each activity you didn't do.

   If you skip a day, give yourself all 0s for that day.

   Add them up. If your total score dips below 7, reverse the trend. Resume doing the positive activities you're tracking.

   When your Personal Craziness Index is restored and you're hitting 7 every day, your personal craziness will also diminish, restoring your personal sanity—and your balance.

Important!

As your life conditions change, re-do the PCI to make sure it continues to track the most significant differences between when you're *in* balance and when you're *not*.

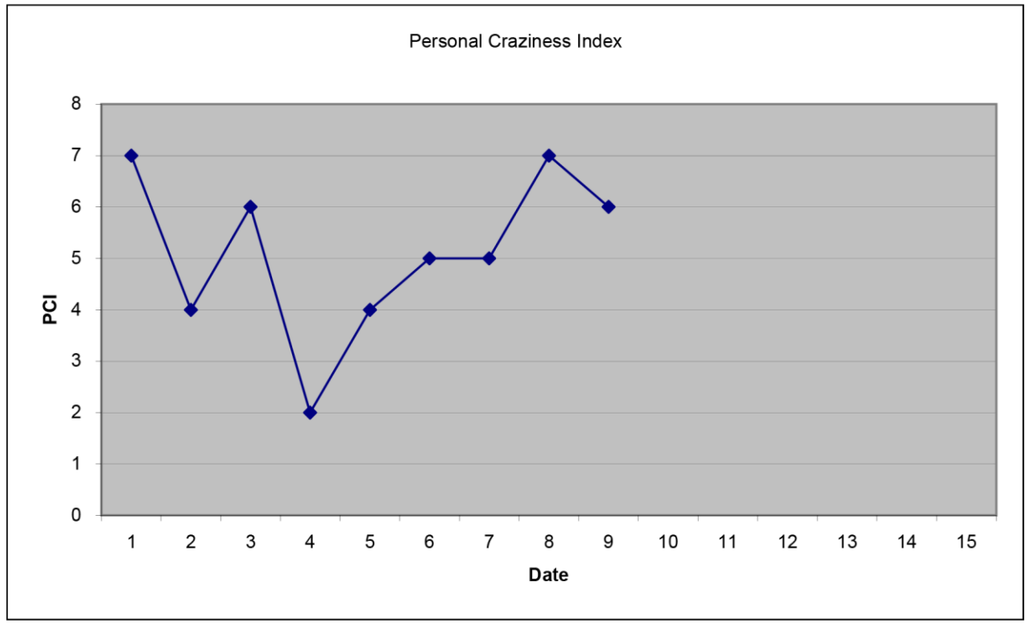
Also Important!

The PCI is not a list of obligations.

It’s not a list of things you “ought to do,” but instead a list of things you already do when you’re doing well and a reminder to keep doing them, so you can keep doing well.

The PCI—Tracking Table and Graph

Cooking	1		1					1	1						
Dishes	1		1				1	1	1						
Bills	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1						
Reading	1	1			1	1	1	1	1						
Work	1	1	1			1	1	1							
Walks	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1						
Meditation	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1						
PCI	7	4	6	2	4	5	5	7	6						
	9/1	9/2	9/3	9/4	9/5	9/6	9/7	9/8	9/9	9/10	9/11	9/12	9/13	9/14	9/15



(You can also use apps.)

Activity: Create Your PCI

- **Identify 3 indicators for each of the 10 categories**. If a category doesn't fit your life, create a new category that works for you and list 3 activities there.
- **Choose 7 indicators to track**. Choose the 7 indicators are most clearly different when you're maintaining your defenses against personal craziness.
- **Beginning today**, track these indicators each evening. It's usually best to choose the same time each day.

The PCI Template

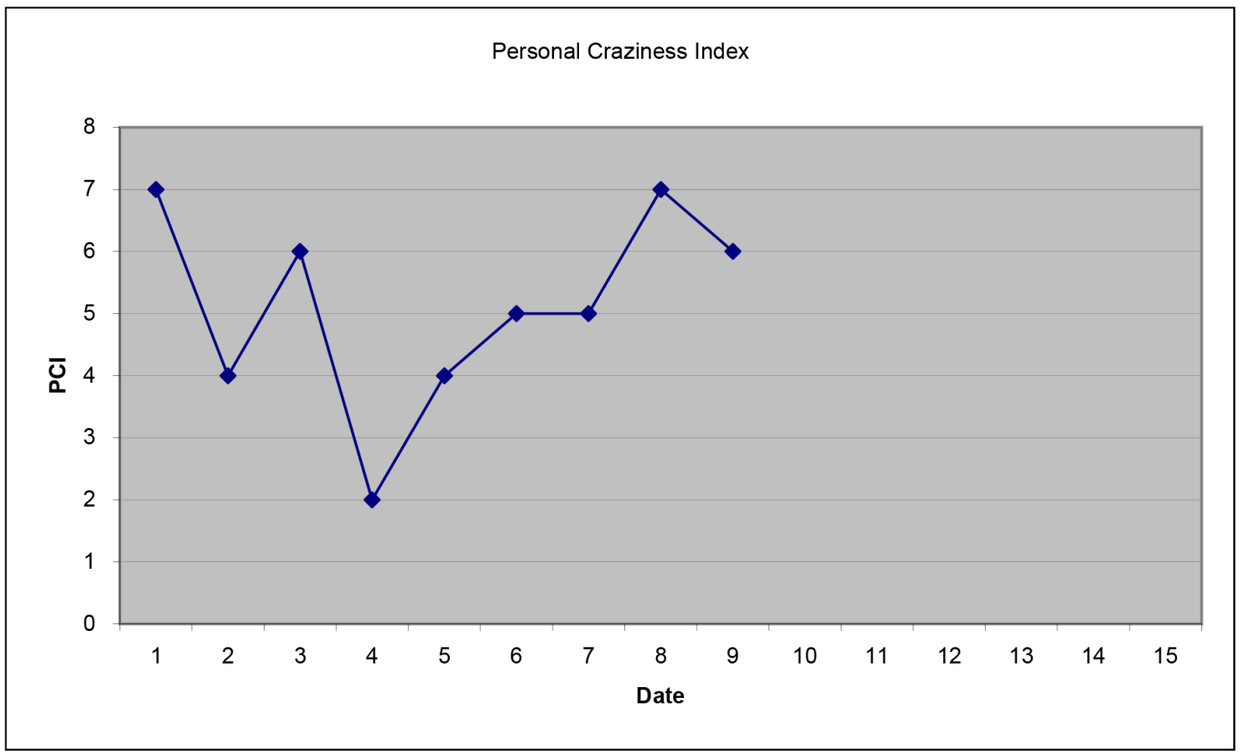
HEALTH/HYGIENE	**RECREATION**
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
HOUSING	**FAMILY**
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
TRANSPORTATION	**FRIENDS**
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
WORK/MONEY	**GROUP ACTIVITIES**
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
HOBBIES/INTERESTS	**SPIRITUALITY**
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Tracking Your PCI with a Spreadsheet

1. **Download** the tracking spreadsheet from: transformationspress.org/nonfiction/resources (using “Save link as” from your browser)
2. **Open** the spreadsheet in Excel or Google Sheets.
3. **Enter your 7 activities**, replacing the sample activities.
4. **Enter dates** of the current month in the bottom row of the table, replacing the sample dates.
5. **Every evening**, for each activity, enter a 1 if you *did* the activity that day and a 0 (or leave it blank) if you *did not*.
6. **Add** up your daily sum (0-7).
7. **If you forget to track**, enter a 0 for each activity for that day.

The PCI—Tracking Table and Graph

Cooking	1		1					1	1						
Dishes	1		1				1	1	1						
Bills	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1						
Reading	1	1			1	1	1	1	1						
Work	1	1	1			1	1	1							
Walks	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1						
Meditation	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1						
PCI	7	4	6	2	4	5	5	7	6						
	9/1	9/2	9/3	9/4	9/5	9/6	9/7	9/8	9/9	9/10	9/11	9/12	9/13	9/14	9/15



Tracking With an App

- **Several of my clients are tracking their PCIs with apps.**
- **Apps** allow you to track individual items in a more detailed way, though I haven't yet seen one that lets you get a PCI score for each day or that graphs your PCI.
- **If you prefer** an app to a spreadsheet, on the next slides are some apps that you can try.

➢**Questions:**

Do you already use a habit-tracking app?
Which one?
What's your experience with them?

Tracking with an App: “Done”

- **Simple, minimalist.**
- Uses horizontal bars to track habit progress.
- Has an Export feature so you can use your data in a spreadsheet.
- Tracks 3 habits for free, unlimited habits for $6.99 (USD).



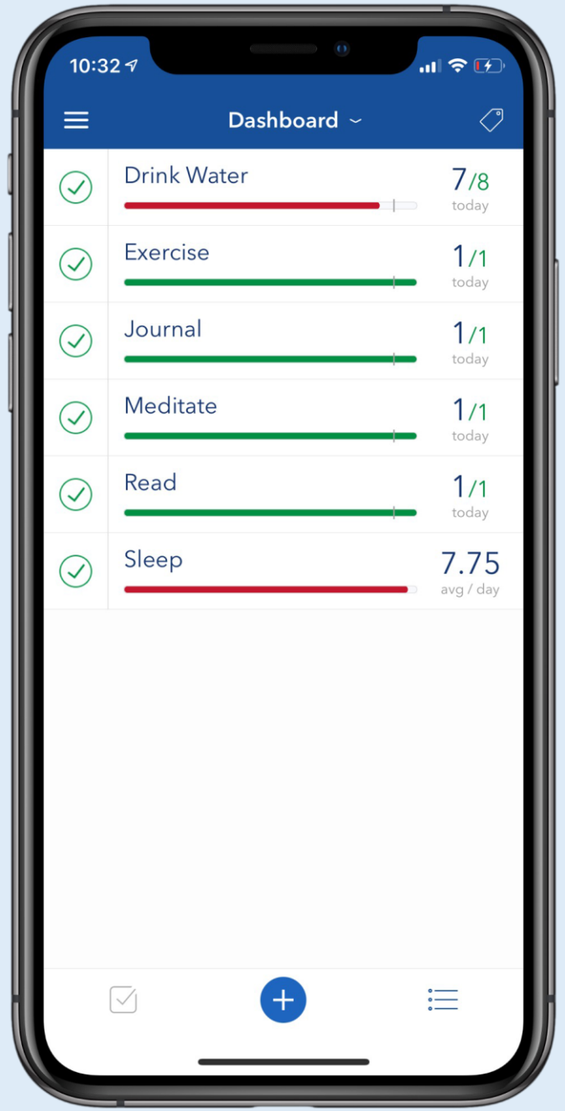
Tracking with an App: “Strides”

Tracks activities four ways:

1. **Habits** (good or bad)
2. **Targets** (see your goals progress)
3. **Average** (how long you do an activity)
4. **Projects** (milestones and % complete sliders)

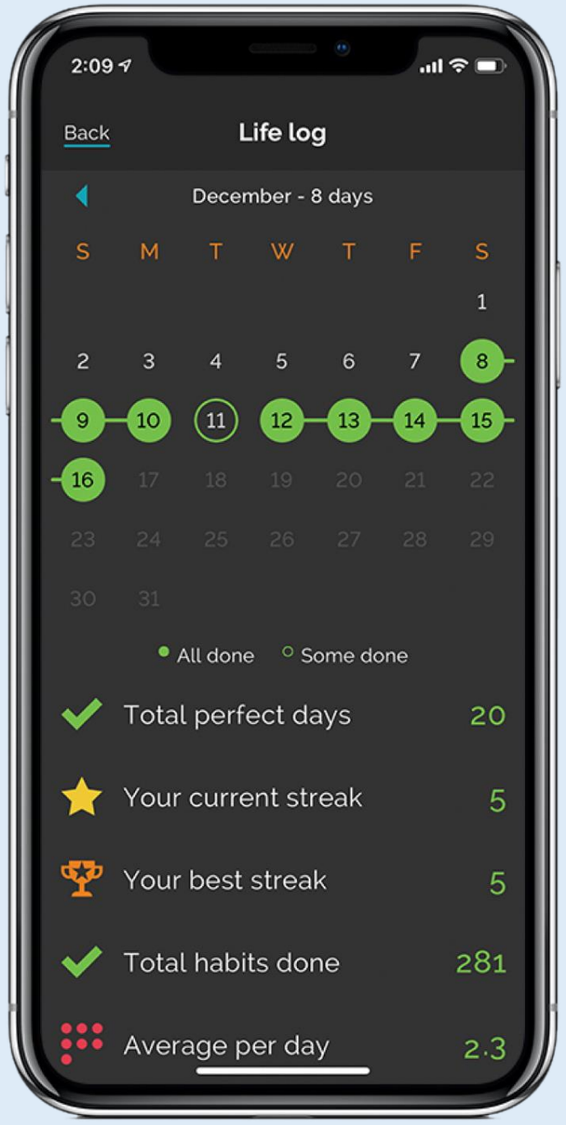
Tracks up to 7 habits for free.

“Plus” version costs $30/year (USD)



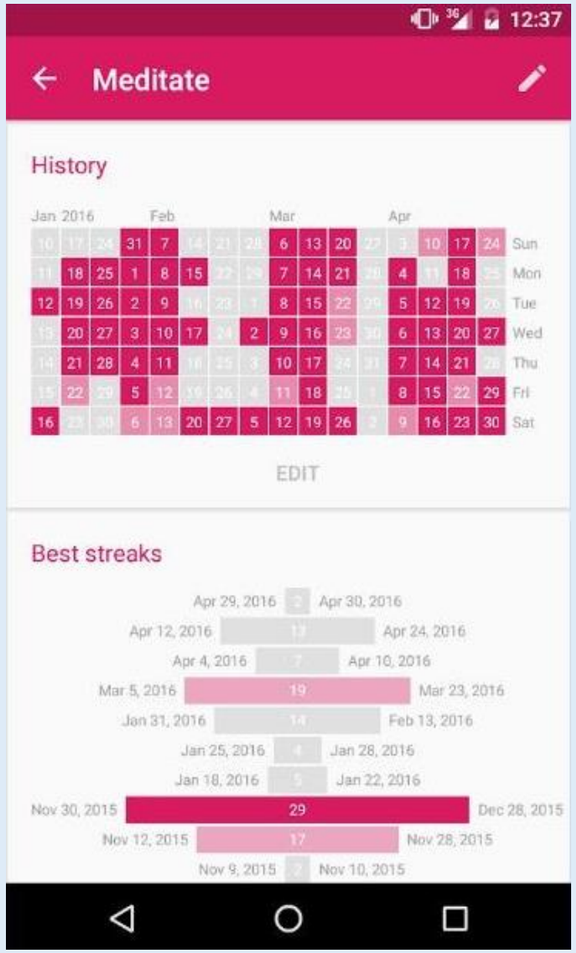
Tracking with an App: “Productive”

- Uses a “Don’t break the chain” strategy based on a motivational technique from comedian Jerry Seinfeld.
- Has a very useful “at a glance” screen.
- Most similar to the PCI
- Costs $29.95/year (USD)



Tracking with an App: Androids

For Android, try Loop or Habit Bull, among many others.



Loop

Q&A and Contacts

Email: **david@davidbookbinder.com**

Therapy/Coaching: **davidbookbinder.com**

Books: **transformationspress.org**
or bookdepository.com (free worldwide shipping)

Blog: **phototransformations.com**

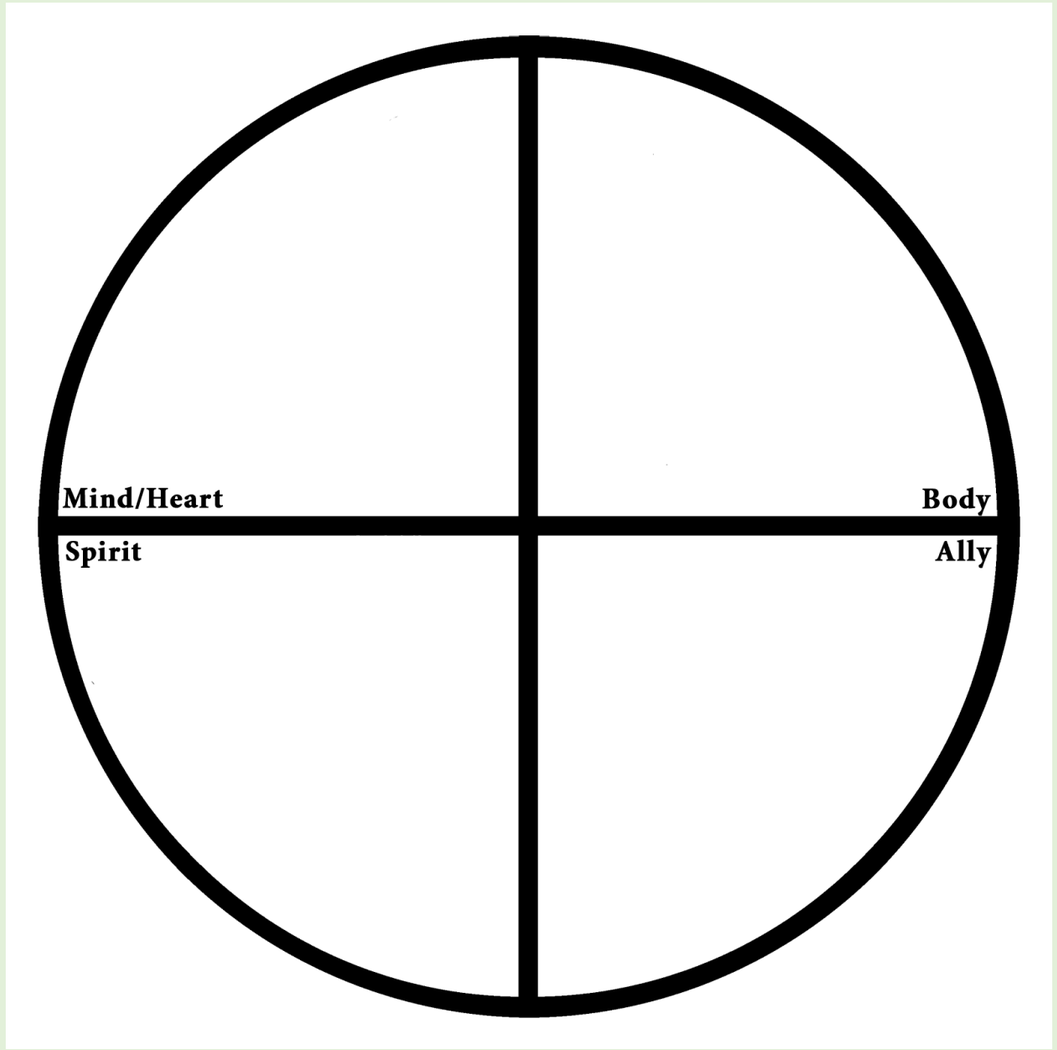
Courses (soon): **udemy.com**

Mandalas: **flowermandalas.org**

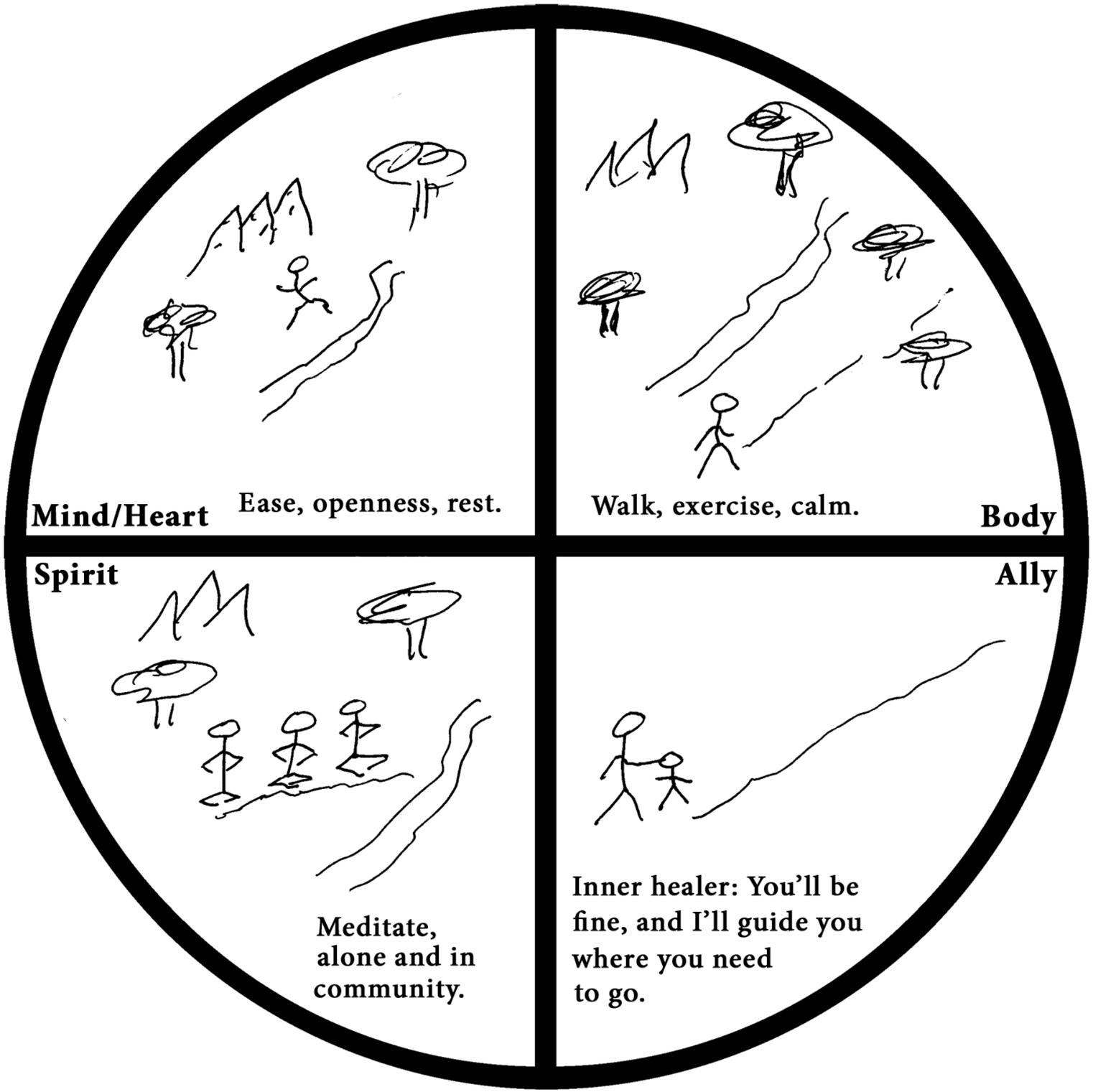
Bonus Tool 1: The Medicine Wheel

- **A circle** divided into four equal sections.
- **Used by** many Native American tribes.
- **Different tribes give different meanings** to each of four sections, such as stages of life, seasons of the year, and elements of nature.
- **We'll use the Medicine Wheel** to find out what our mind/heart needs, what our body needs, what our spirit needs, and who can be a helper or ally.

1. **Begin by drawing** a circle on a sheet of paper, then divide the circle into four sections. Write the words “Mind/Heart,” “Body,” “Spirit,” and “Ally” in the four sections.



The next slide shows a Medicine Wheel I did during a period of work burnout.


Mind/Heart
Ease, openness, rest.
Walk, exercise, calm.
Body
Spirit
Meditate, alone and in community.
Ally
Inner healer: You'll be fine, and I'll guide you where you need to go.

Medicine Wheel Questions

Close your eyes and I'll ask you the following questions:

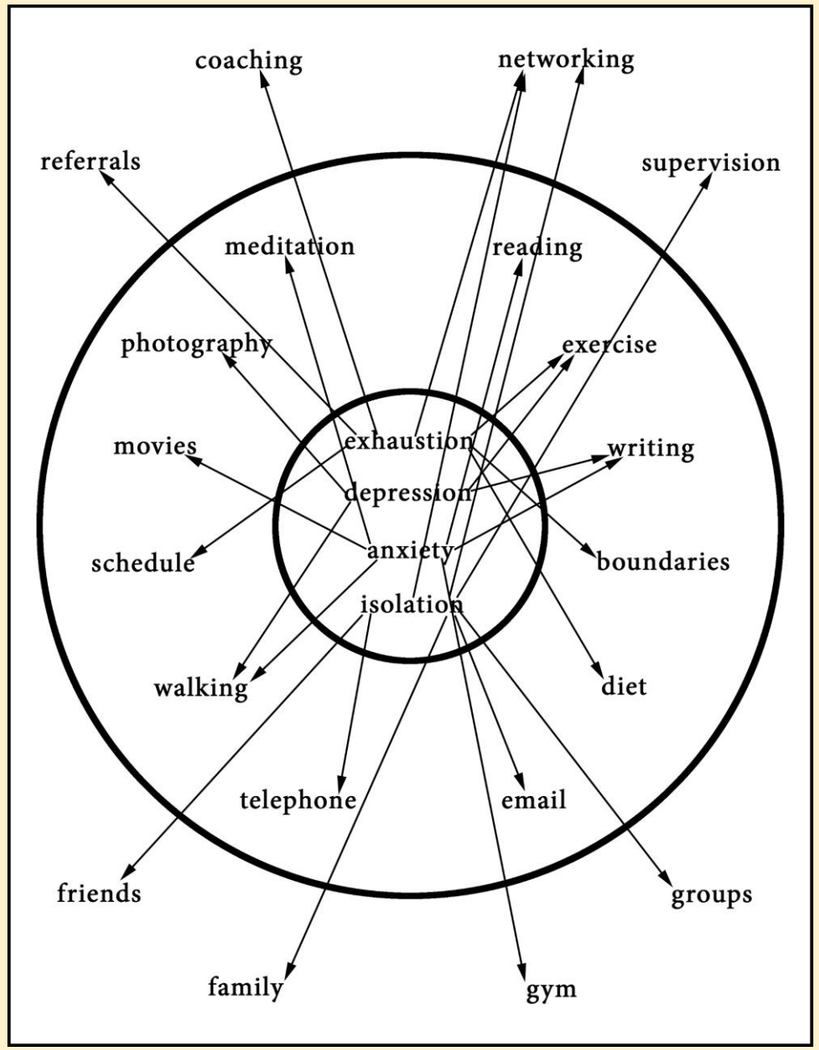
1. **"What does your mind and heart need?"**
2. **"What does your body need?"**
3. **"What does your spirit need?"**
4. **"Who or what is your ally?"**

For each question, wait a little while for images to come to you. Then, open your eyes and draw those images. Next, write any words that came with them.

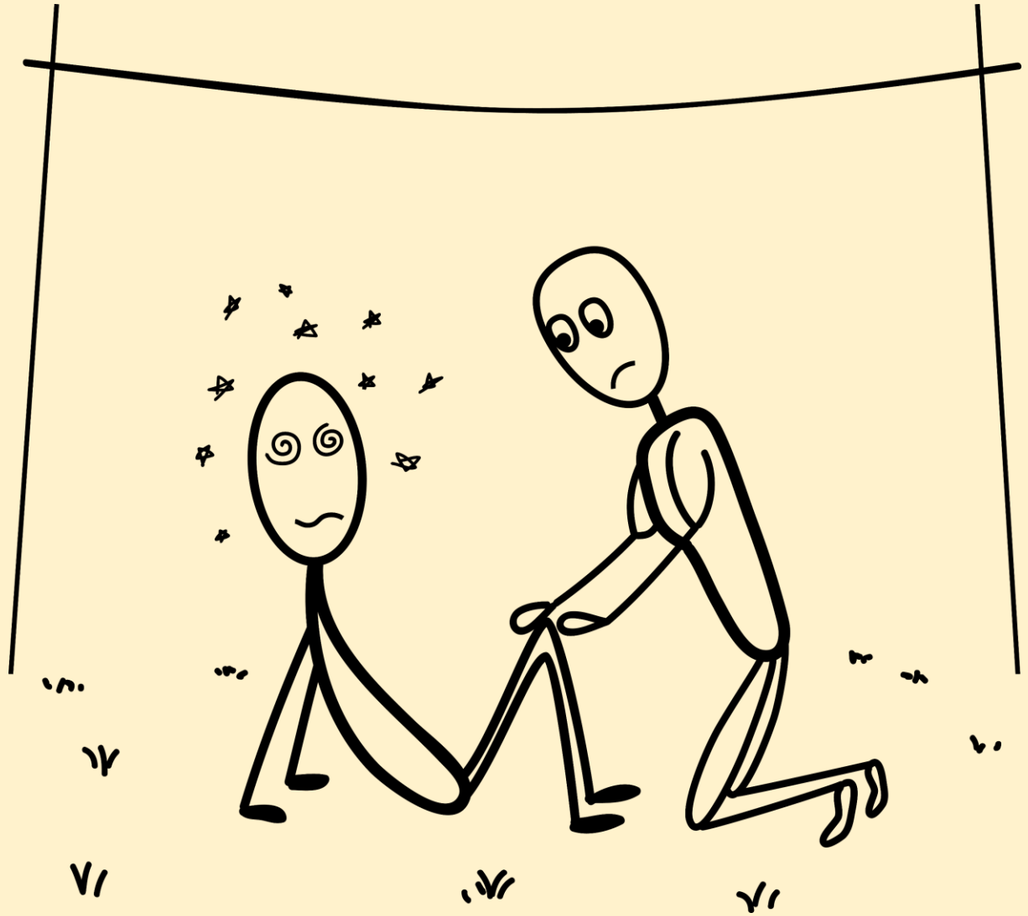
After you complete the exercise, give yourself a minute to let what you have discovered sink into your mind, heart, body, and spirit.

Bonus Tool 2: The Circles of Problems and Resources

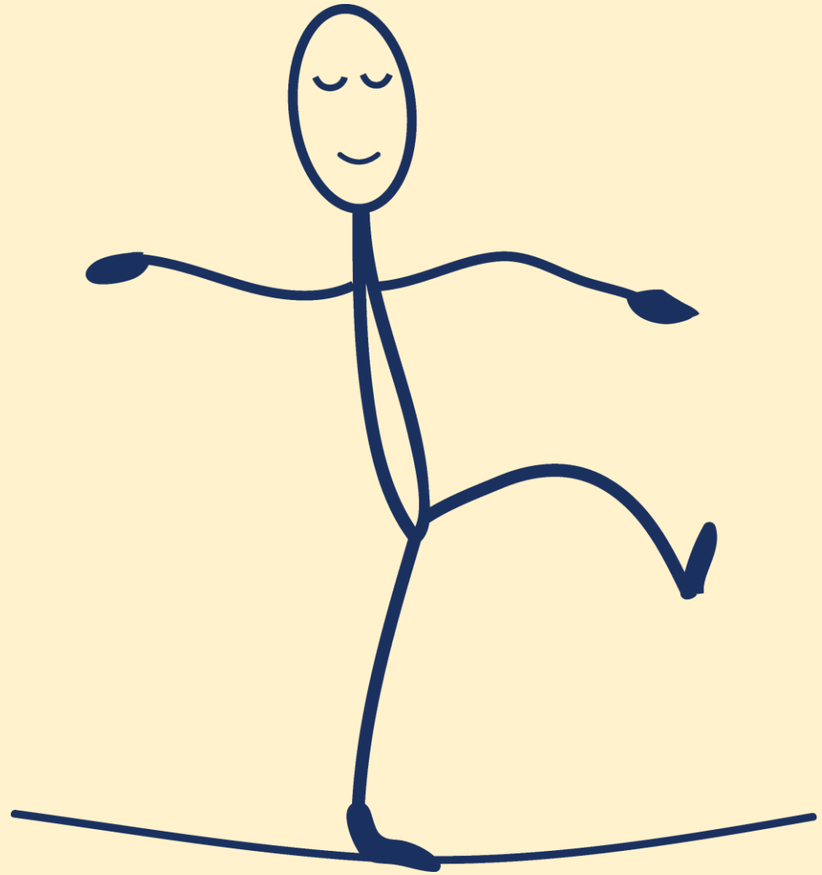
- The **Circles of Problems and Resources (CPR)** is simple but powerful tool for quickly identifying the problems you're experiencing and the resources that can help you resolve them.
- It can help you go from unbalanced to balanced.



The CPR can help you go:



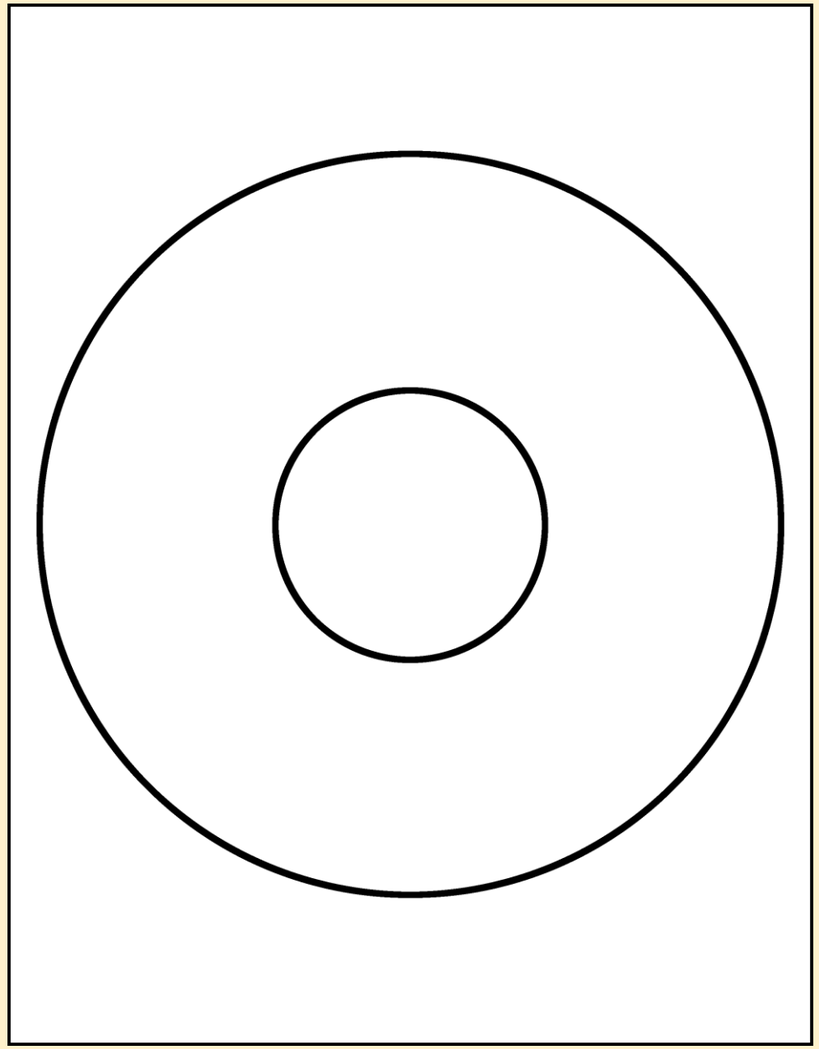
From here…



Back to here!

The CPR—Drawing the CPR Template

1. **Begin by drawing** a doughnut shape that fills most of the middle of a single sheet of paper.

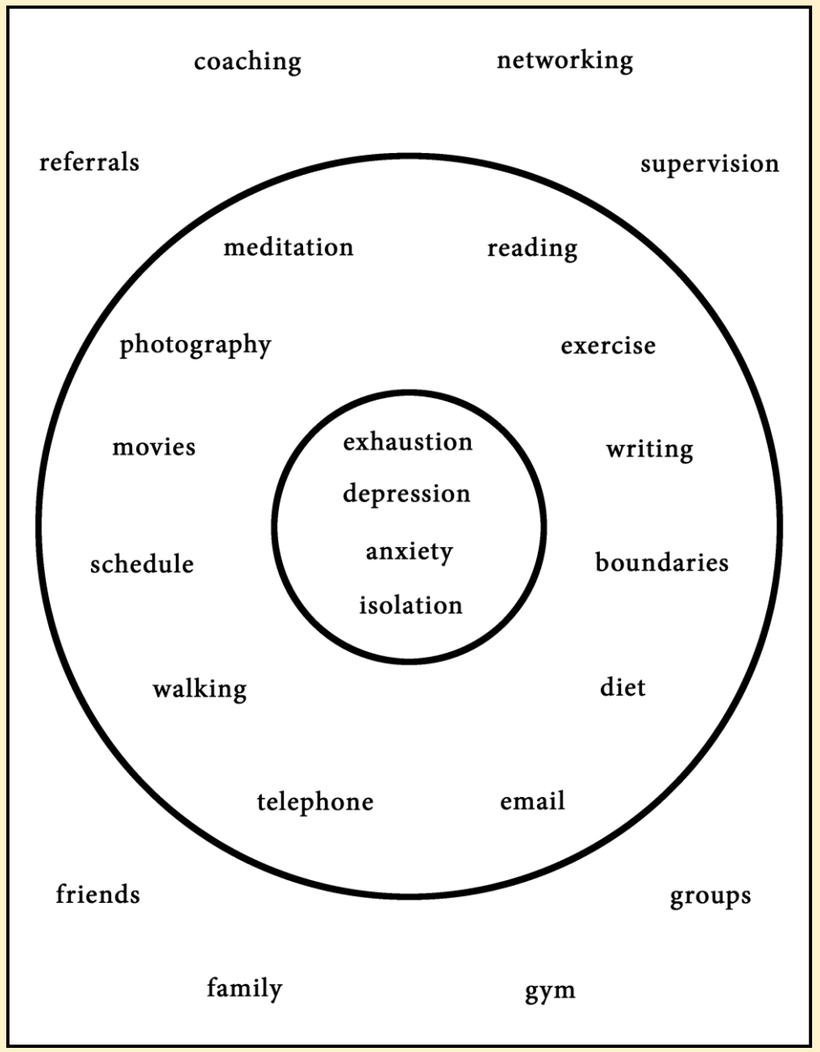


The CPR—Listing Problems and Resources

2. **Inside the innermost circle**, list the problems you are currently experiencing.

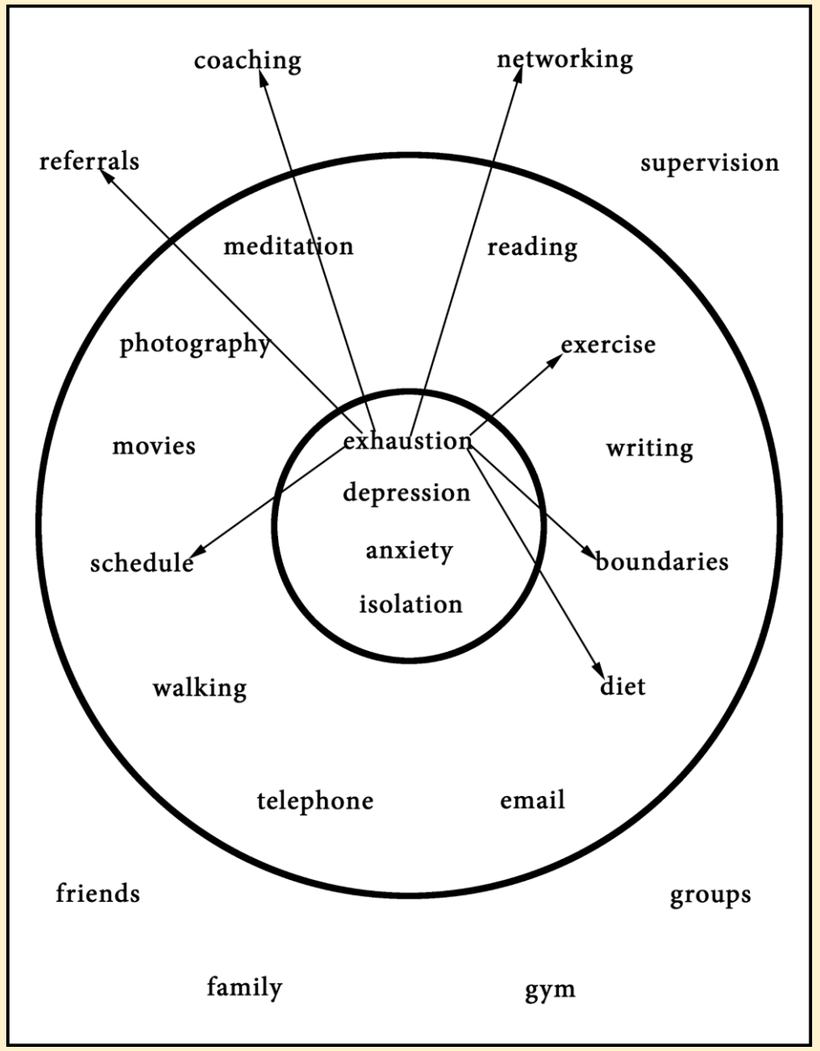
3. **In the outer circle**, list the internal resources that might help with these problems

4. **In the area outside the doughnut**, list external resources that also could be helpful.



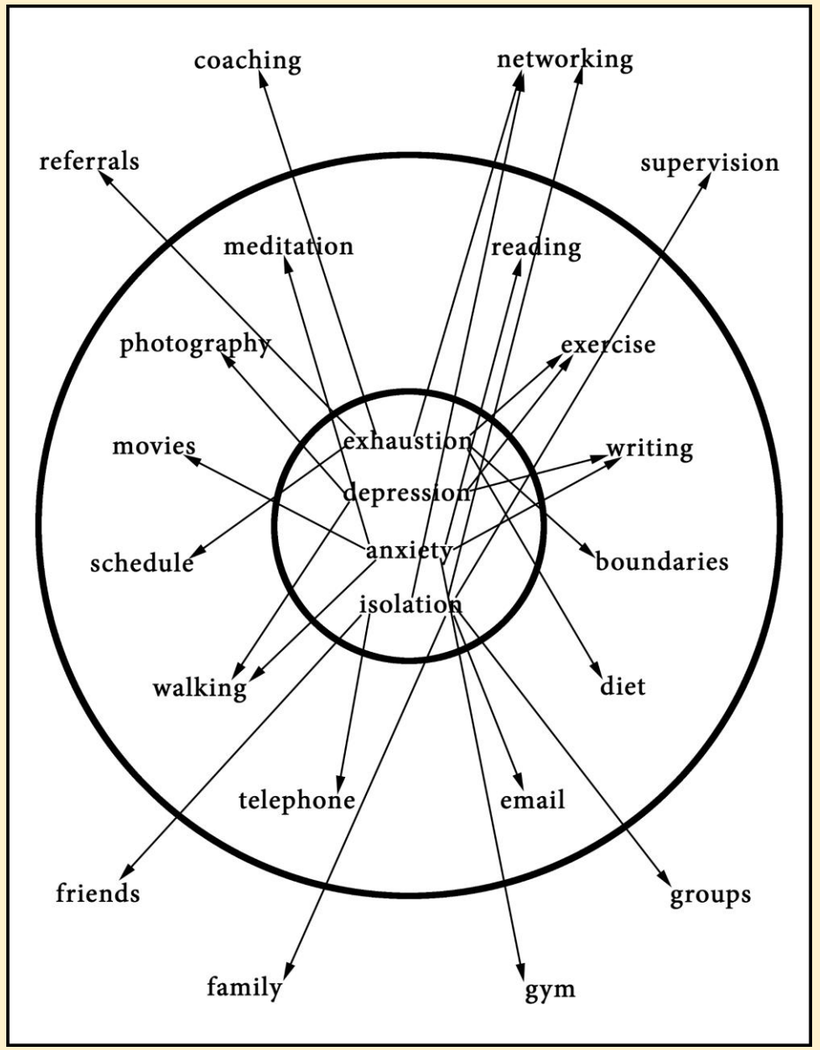
The CPR—Connecting Problems with Resources

5. **Finally, one problem at a time,** draw lines to connect each of the problems with your internal and external resources.



The CPR—Completed Example

- These are the actions, activities, practices, and supports that can lead you out of your unbalanced state and back to balance.
- You can use the CPR as a "prequel" to the PCI.



Q&A and Contacts

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Blog: phototransformations.com

Courses (soon): udemy.com

Mandalas: flowermandalas.org