

REPLENISH THE WELL: AN EXPERIENCE IN SELF-CARE

DIRECTIONS FOR “PIE OF LIFE” EXERCISE

The purpose of this exercise is to help you take a look at how you are currently allocating the time of your life. A meaningful life is one in balance, with adequate time allocated to the activities that express your values and priorities. Unfortunately, many people do not live their life in balance, or in a way that supports and expresses what they say that value.

This exercise will help you assess whether or not you are currently living a whole and balanced life. Follow the steps below:

1. On a blank piece of paper, draw a large circle to represent your life.
2. Place a smaller circle in the center to represent you, and label it with your name.
3. Thinking of your life as a pie, divide the slices and label them to show the various activities that you are engaged in on a regular basis. Some of the “pie slices” many people include are: work, learning, family and other relationships, contributions to others, fun and leisure, physical and emotional self-care, and spiritual well-being.
4. Reflect on your current life by considering the following questions, and share your responses with a partner:
 - Am I living a balanced life?
 - Are my priorities and values reflected in this allocation of time?
 - If I had one month left to live, is this the way I would allocate my time?
 - Am I involved in too many activities?
 - How much of my time is spent caring for others? For myself?
 - Are there areas of my life that need my attention?
 - Is there a dream or desire that keeps getting put on the back burner that I’d like to focus on now?
 - What needs less attention? More attention?
 - What changes do I want to make?
 - What is one commitment I can now make to change the balance toward what I want for my life?

Exercise developed by Catherine D. Nugent, for Replenish the Well: An Experience in Self-Care, workshop presented at Peer Services: A Life in the Community for Everyone, Fifth Annual Conference of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment’s Recovery Community Services Program, Washington, DC, July 13, 2004. Adapted from Richardson, C. (1999). Take time for your life. New York: Broadway Books.