

THE LO-FI PRODUCTIVITY METHOD FOR A HAPPIER LIFE

# THE PRODUCTIVE GORILLA





I'm Virginia Cinquemani, aka the Green Gorilla, a qualified transformational coach, author of *SustainABLE: How to Find Success as a Sustainability Professional in a Rapidly Changing World*, and sustainability trainer.

Join me to access the lo-fi productivity system that I have refined over the years and that allowed me to build a business, work as a university lecturer, write a book, and gain various professional qualifications while parenting two kids on my own, and still having time for crafting, drawing, yoga and generally enjoying a decent quality of life. Oh, and I don't usually work after 3 pm - the time my kids come out of school.

People often comment that I'm a wonder woman, when in fact, I'm just organised.

In the following pages, you'll find the templates for four weeks' worth of the Productive Gorilla Method.

But before you start, I suggest you watch the videos in this [YouTube playlist](#), which will take you through the concept behind the Productive Gorilla and the templates, one by one.

Feel free to get in touch if you have any questions.

**And if you like the method, consider joining the [Patreon membership](#), in which I share new templates every Friday, plus additional tips and coaching support to become a productivity ninja!**

# WEEK ONE

How can you embody more of the zebras' *stress-coping strategies*?

# This week I will:

week commencing

✓	Actions	When?	Priority		
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L





# My tasks this week

"Humans may think prey animals like zebras face a lot of long-term stress from the constant threat of predation, but research shows it's generally the short-term stress when a predator attacks that affects them most visibly. When comparing non-humans to ourselves, one rather obvious and perhaps underappreciated difference is the fact that they live in the great outdoors." ([asknature.com](#))

How can you embody more of the zebras' stress-coping strategies *this week*?

activity blocks	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday	sunday
early morning							
mid-morning							
lunch							
early afternoon							
mid-afternoon							
evening							



"Humans may think prey animals like zebras face a lot of long-term stress from the constant threat of predation, but research shows it's generally the short-term stress when a predator attacks that affects them most visibly. When comparing non-humans to ourselves, one rather obvious and perhaps underappreciated difference is the fact that they live in the great outdoors." ([asknature.com](http://asknature.com))

How can you embody more of the zebras' stress-coping strategies this week?

MY THOUGHTS



What have you learned last week?  
What do you need to do to put this learning into practice in your life?

## LAST WEEK'S LEARNING



A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing.

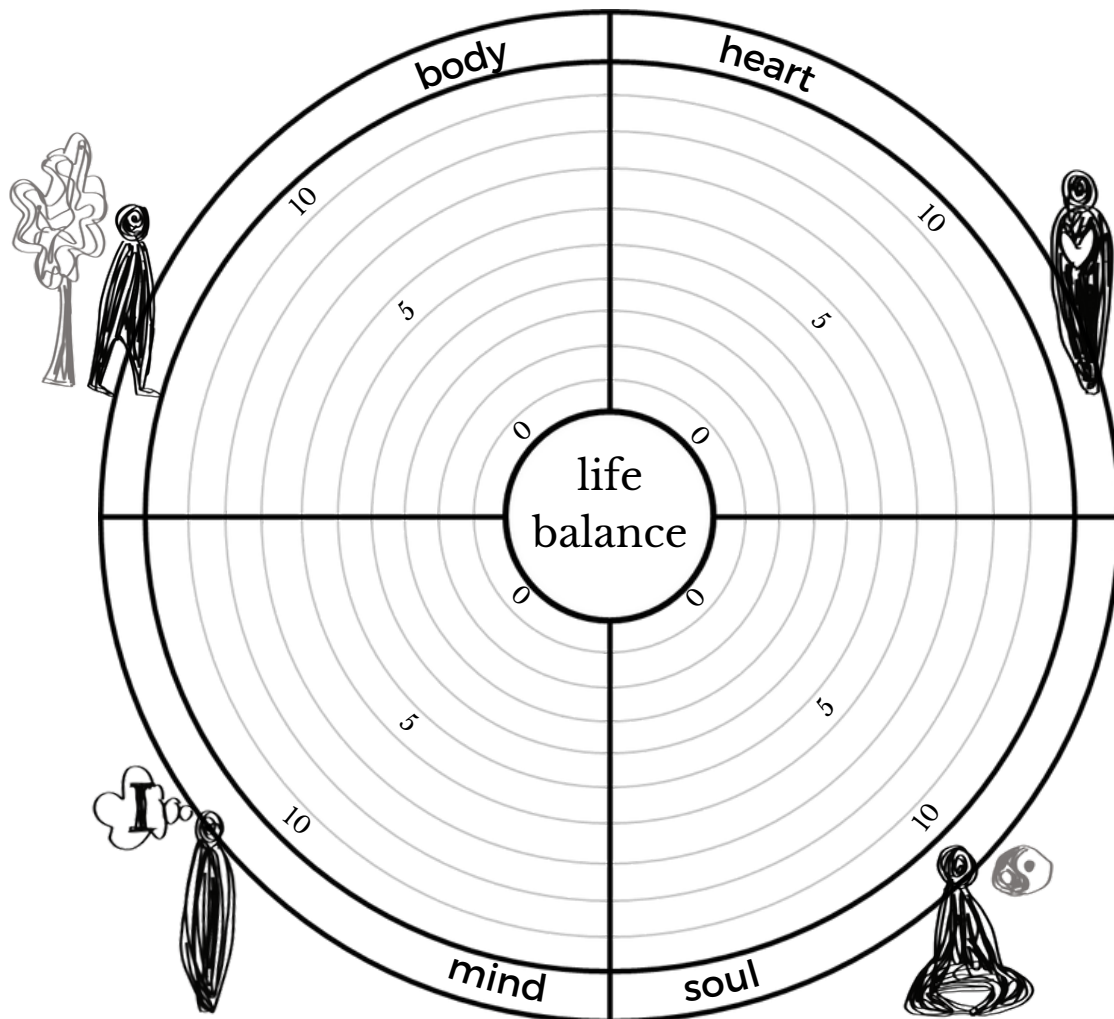
## SUGGESTED CREATIVE ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK

*You are invited to either journal or draw during or after the activities to capture and deepen your thoughts*

- **Challenge yourself to spend more time outdoors this week.** Swap the car for public transport or your bike; take a brisk walk during your lunch break; sit on a park bench and absorb the birdsongs - whatever the weather. Now, how do you feel?
- **What activity slows down time for you?** Running, walking, swimming, painting, meditating, yoga, sewing are all good "meditative" practice that can help cope with life's stressors... make time to rediscover (or discover!) one of them this week and record how you feel at the end of the first session.
- **Cook something new.** Or eat something you have never eaten before.
- Meaningful connections have a major positive impact on stress-coping. **Is there a friend you have been wanting to reconnect with** that you haven't got round to? Can you send them a text or - better still - a handwritten postcard this week?

# Self-Care Wheel

Mark yourself from 0 to 10 against each of the spheres of self-care.  
Then reflect upon how you can bring up your score this week. You'll find some suggestions at the bottom of the page which you can circle or highlight.



## Self-Care Ideas

### Body:

safe housing | regular medical care | healthy eating | exercising | sexual intimacy | sleeping | holidays | time off | massages | acupuncture | bubble-baths | walking | turning off your phone

### Mind:

self-reflection | therapy | coaching | journaling | sensory engagement | aromatherapy | listening to music | drawing | painting | gardening | sunbathing | reading self-help books | joining a support group | focusing on your strengths | focusing on the positives | practicing gratitude | asking for help | making a vision board | figuring out what you want in life | learning a new skill | learning who you are | taking time for lunch and breaks | taking mental health days

### Heart:

affirmations | self-love | self-compassion | crying | laughing | expressing love and affection | buying yourself a present | cuddling a pet | practicing forgiveness | nurturing a hobby | relaxing with family or friends |

### Soul:

self-reflection and self forgiveness | being outdoors | finding your spiritual community | meditating | singing | dancing | playing | practicing yoga or breathwork | swimming in open waters | volunteering



**WEEK TWO**

How can you embody more of the lemon leaves' resilience?

# This week I will:

week commencing



✓	Actions	When?	Priority		
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L

# My tasks this week

"In leaves of the lemon tree, a main vein runs through the center, transporting water to the photosynthetic cells, and sugars away from them. All the veins are additionally connected to each other through a pattern of nested loops, which allows for flow to be quickly re-routed to any other vein in the event of injury, or when a change in flow is required, while remaining resilient to damage." ([asknature.com](#))

How can you embody more of *lemon leaves’* resilience strategy *this week*?

activity blocks	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday	sunday
early morning							
mid-morning							
lunch							
early afternoon							
mid-afternoon							
evening							



"In leaves of the lemon tree, a main vein runs through the center, transporting water to the photosynthetic cells, and sugars away from them. All the veins are additionally connected to each other through a pattern of nested loops, which allows for flow to be quickly re-routed to any other vein in the event of injury, or when a change in flow is required, while remaining resilient to damage." ([asknature.com](http://asknature.com))


**How can you embody more of the lemon leaves' resilience strategy this week? Ask yourself: what choice do I have in this situation?**

M Y T H O U G H T S



What have you learned last week?  
What do you need to do to put this learning into practice in your life?

## LAST WEEK'S LEARNING



A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing.

## SUGGESTED CREATIVE ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK

*You are invited to either journal or draw during or after the activities to capture and deepen your thoughts*

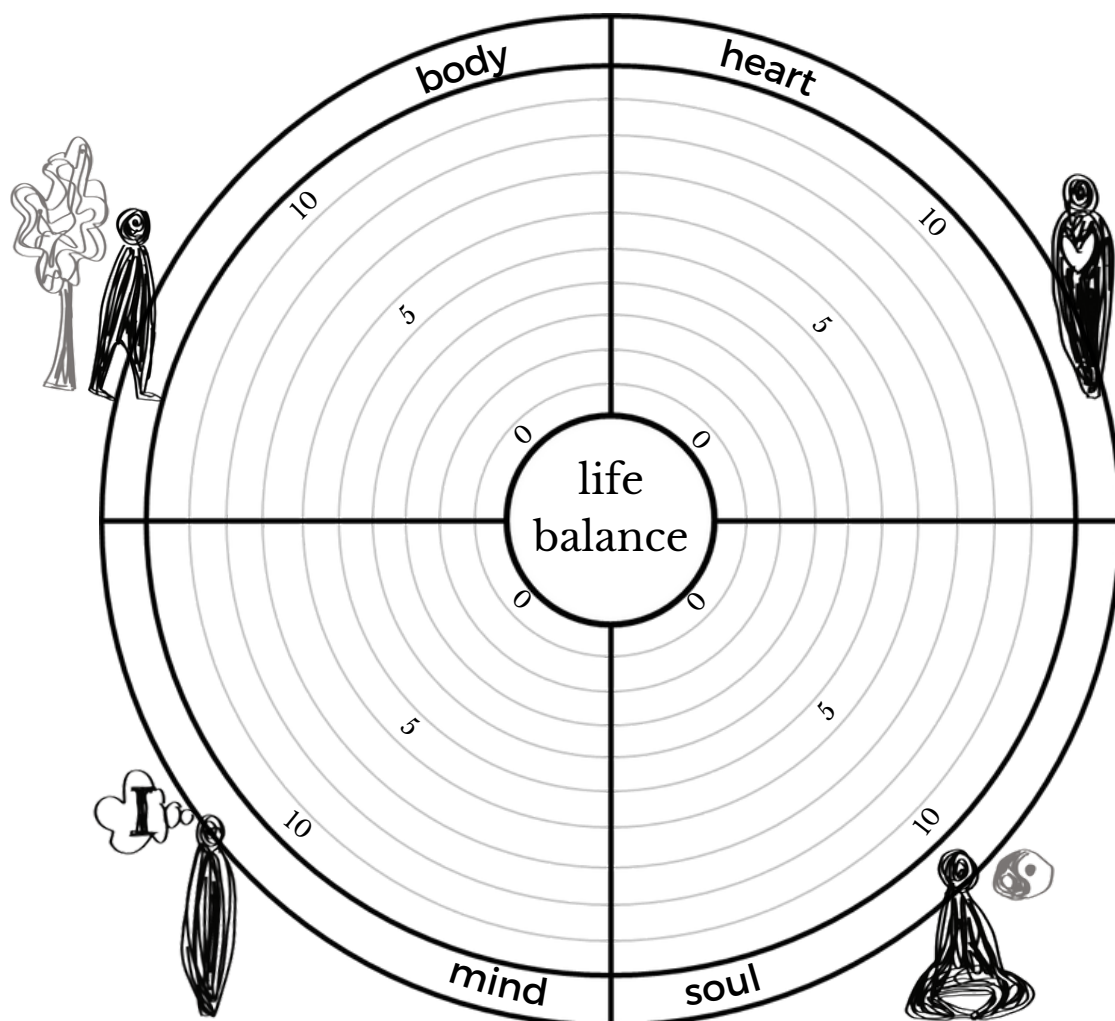
- **Write yourself better:** Consider an example in your life where you continue to repeat a story that produces worry or anxiety. Try writing out a new version with a more positive interpretation. Recognize how you feel in the process.
- **Find your Ikigai (a Japanese concept that means "reason for being"):** What are you good at? What do you love? What does the world need? Can you be paid for it? You can find your Ikigai using these [free worksheets](#).
- **Give walking meditation a go:** Meditation has been proven to be a great tool to manage emotions and build resilience. Walking meditation combines this with the restorative properties of nature. [Try this guided meditation \(11 min\)](#).
- **Collage making!** Grab a few old magazines, paper, scissors and a glue stick and create a self-portrait collage. Don't overthink it. What does your choice of images, colours, design tell you about you?



# Self-Care Wheel

Mark yourself from 0 to 10 against each of the spheres of self-care.

Then reflect upon how you can bring up your score this week. You'll find some suggestions at the bottom of the page which you can circle or highlight.



## Self-Care Ideas

### Body:

safe housing | regular medical care | healthy eating | exercising | sexual intimacy | sleeping | holidays | time off | massages | acupuncture | bubble-baths | walking | turning off your phone

### Mind:

self-reflection | therapy | coaching | journaling | sensory engagement | aromatherapy | listening to music | drawing | painting | gardening | sunbathing | reading self-help books | joining a support group | focusing on your strengths | focusing on the positives | practicing gratitude | asking for help | making a vision board | figuring out what you want in life | learning a new skill | learning who you are | taking time for lunch and breaks | taking mental health days

### Heart:

affirmations | self-love | self-compassion | crying | laughing | expressing love and affection | buying yourself a present | cuddling a pet | practicing forgiveness | nurturing a hobby | relaxing with family or friends |

### Soul:

self-reflection and self forgiveness | being outdoors | finding your spiritual community | meditating | singing | dancing | playing | practicing yoga or breathwork | swimming in open waters | volunteering

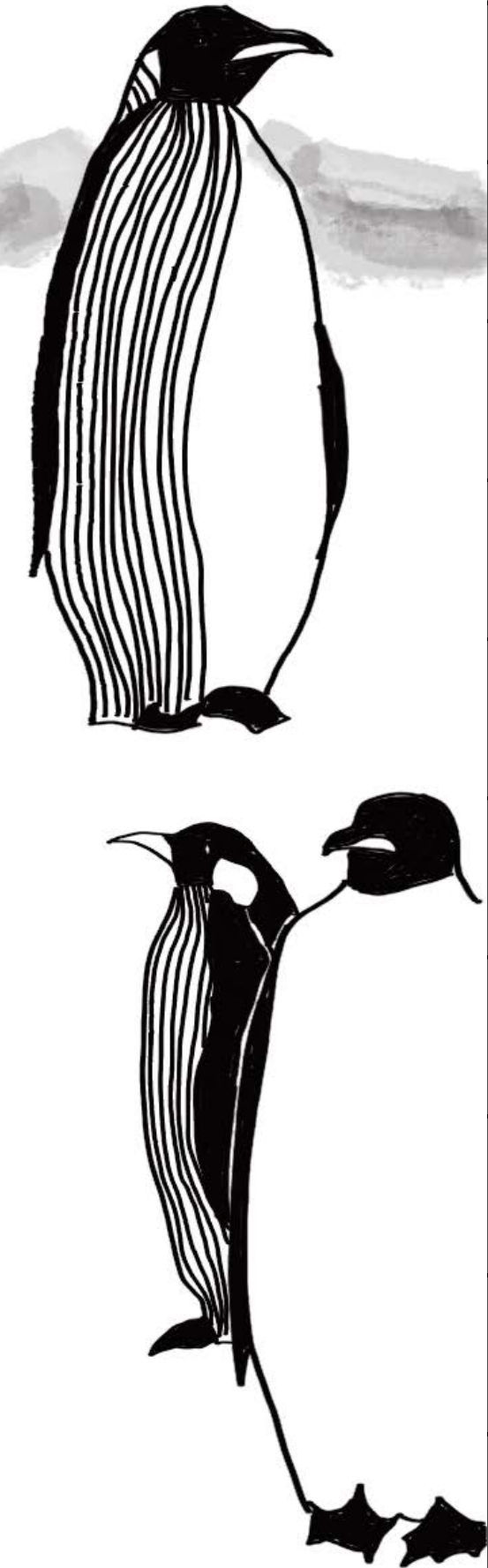
# **WEEK THREE**

Who can you connect with to reach your goals this week?  
How can you maximise the power of connection?

# This week I will:

week commencing

✓	Actions	When?	Priority		
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L

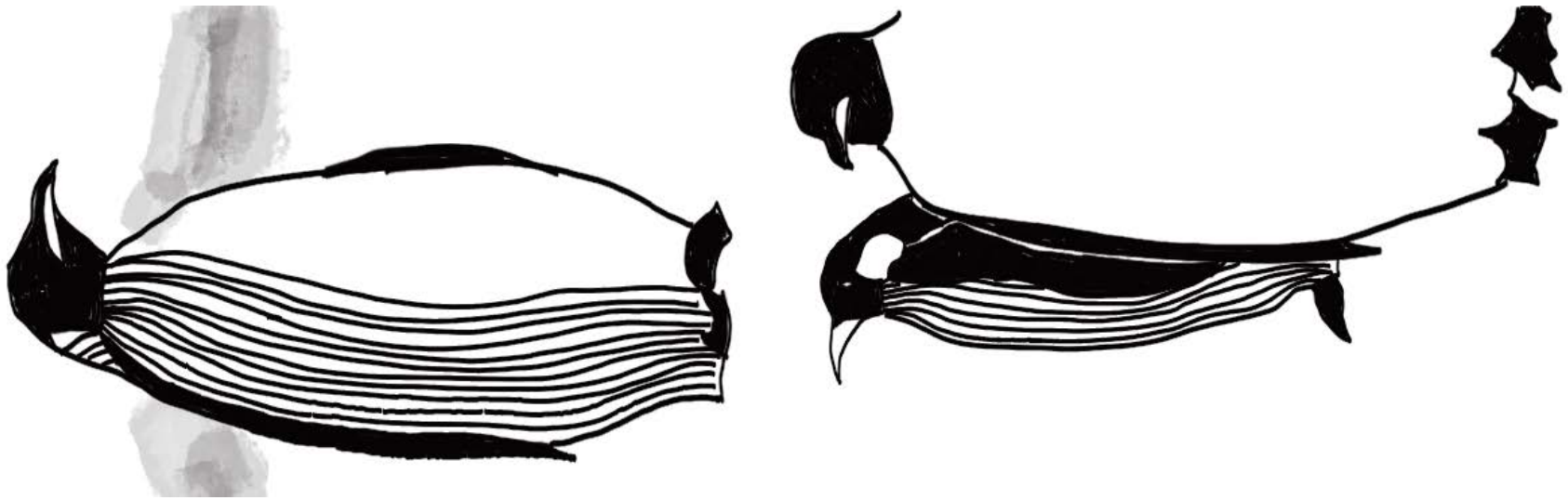


# My tasks this week

"Groups of emperor penguins use social huddling to protect themselves from the cold. Emperor penguins breed during the cold Antarctic winter, where temperatures can reach -30C and below. To conserve energy and protect themselves from the cold, they adopt a behavioral strategy of huddling close together in large groups. Huddling is considered key to their ability to live in such a cold place." (asknature.com)

Who can you connect with to reach your goals this week? How can you maximise the power of connection?

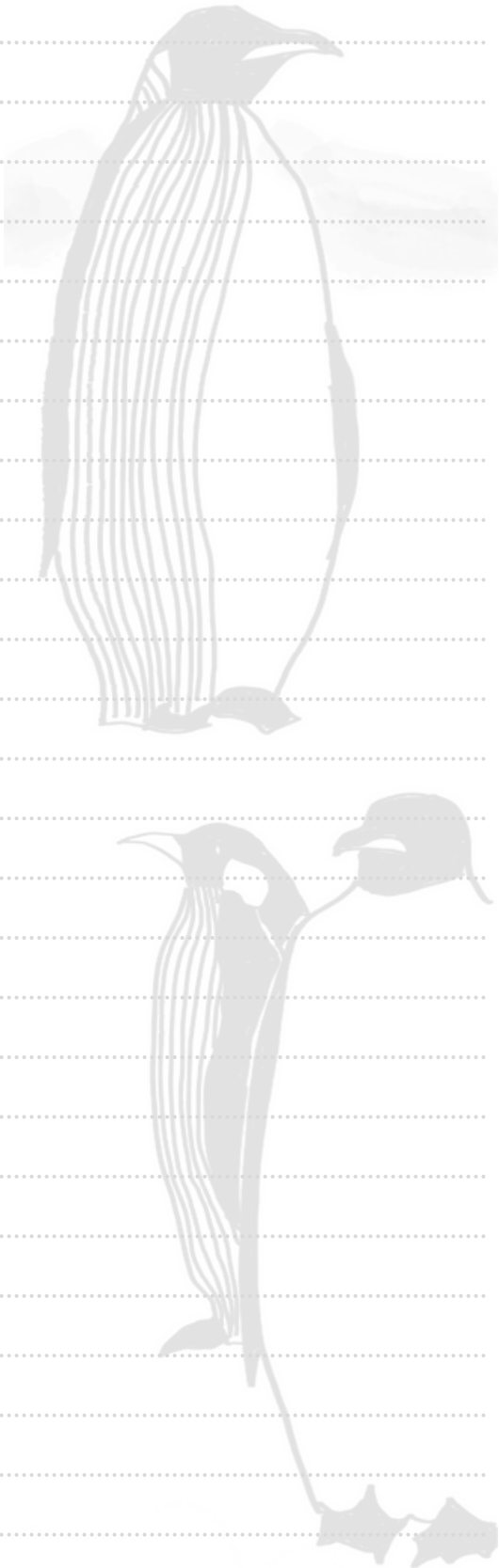
activity blocks	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday	sunday
early morning							
mid-morning							
lunch							
early afternoon							
mid-afternoon							
evening							



"Groups of emperor penguins use social huddling to protect themselves from the cold. Emperor penguins breed during the cold Antarctic winter, where temperatures can reach -30C and below. To conserve energy and protect themselves from the cold, they adopt a behavioral strategy of huddling close together in large groups. Huddling is considered key to their ability to live in such a cold place." ([asknature.com](http://asknature.com))

**Who can you connect with to reach your goals this week?**  
**How can you maximise the power of connection?**

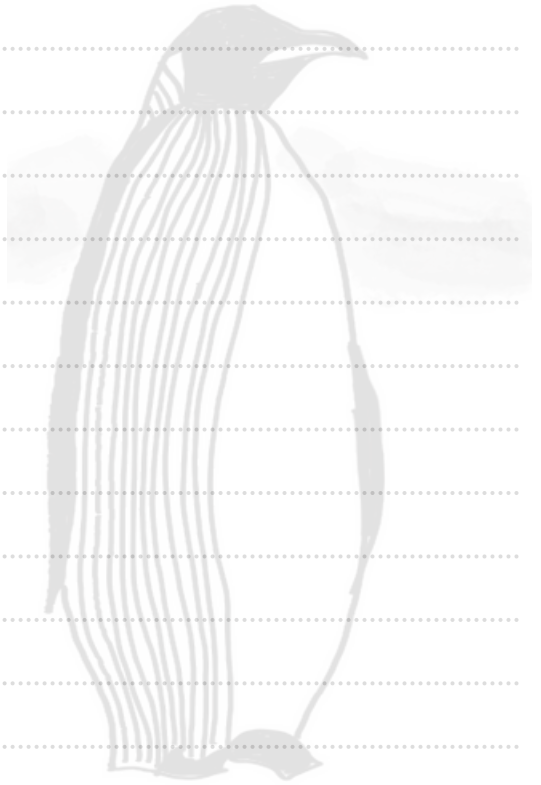
MY THOUGHTS





What have you learned last week?  
What do you need to do to put this learning into practice in your life?

## LAST WEEK'S LEARNING



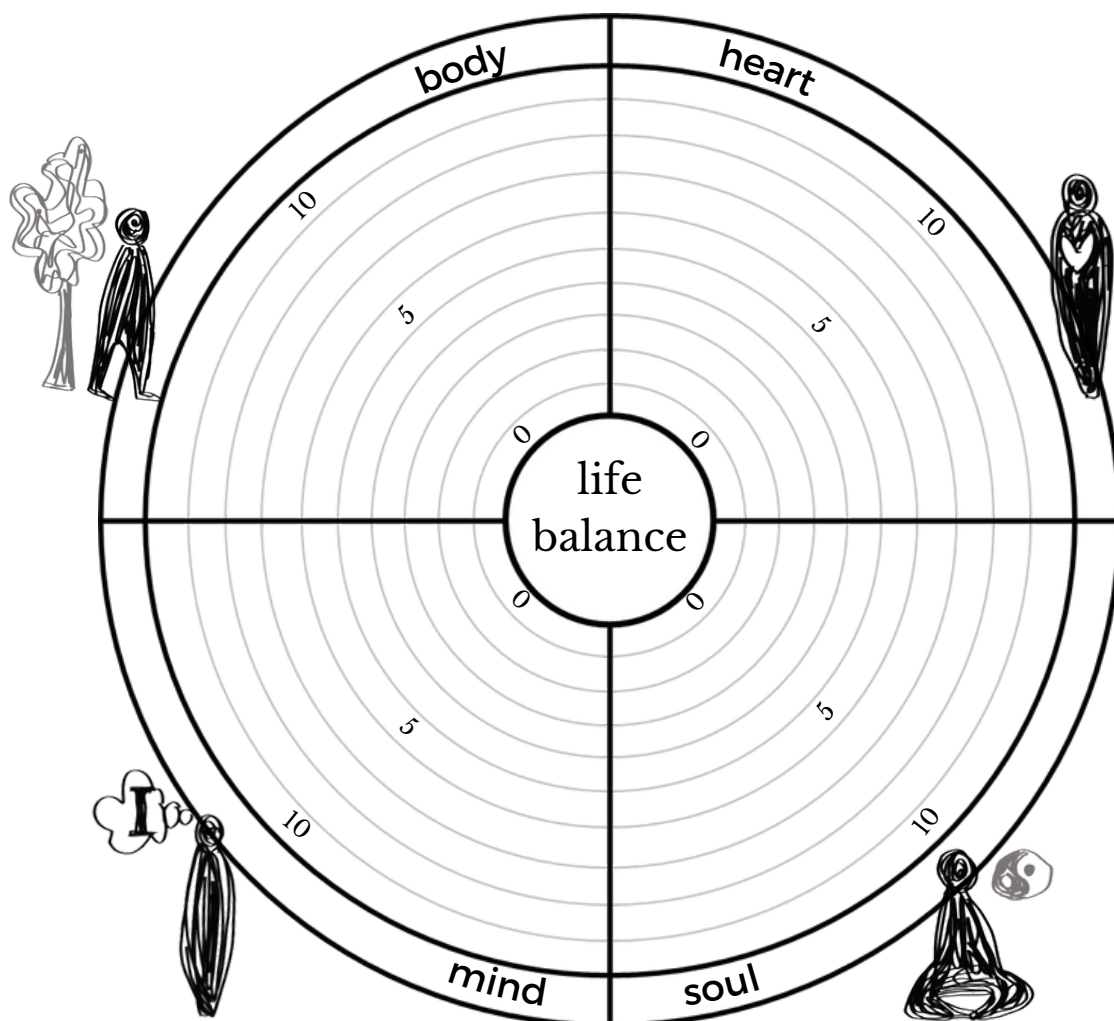
## SUGGESTED CREATIVE ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK

*You are invited to either journal or draw during or after the activities to capture and deepen your thoughts*

- **Who can you invite for coffee and a walk this week?** Social interactions, both in terms of quality and quantity, can have a short- and long-term influence on mental wellbeing and physical health.
- **What social activity can you start this week?** Some examples: a new class in your local community centre, volunteering, joining a group sharing your interest.
- **Random acts of kindness:** can you engage with a random act of kindness a day this week?
- **Create a mindmap of meaningful connections** that energise, motivate and inspire you. If you are unsure about how to mindmap, [check this video out](#). What can you notice at the end of this exercise? Anything that surprises you? What's next?

# Self-Care Wheel

Mark yourself from 0 to 10 against each of the spheres of self-care.  
Then reflect upon how you can bring up your score this week. You'll find some suggestions at the bottom of the page which you can circle or highlight.



## Self-Care Ideas

### Body:

safe housing | regular medical care | healthy eating | exercising | sexual intimacy | sleeping | holidays | time off |  
massages | acupuncture | bubble-baths | walking | turning off your phone

### Mind:

self-reflection | therapy | coaching | journaling | sensory engagement | aromatherapy | listening to music | drawing |  
painting | gardening | sunbathing | reading self-help books | joining a support group | focusing on your strengths |  
focusing on the positives | practicing gratitude | asking for help | making a vision board | figuring out what you want  
in life | learning a new skill | learning who you are | taking time for lunch and breaks | taking mental health days

### Heart:

affirmations | self-love | self-compassion | crying | laughing | expressing love and affection | buying yourself a present  
| cuddling a pet | practicing forgiveness | nurturing a hobby | relaxing with family or friends |

### Soul:

self-reflection and self forgiveness | being outdoors | finding your spiritual community | meditating | singing |  
dancing | playing | practicing yoga or breathwork | swimming in open waters | volunteering

# **WEEK FOUR**

How can you embody more of the Jack Pine's qualities this week, and *share valuable resources* with others for mutual benefit?

# This week I will:

week commencing

✓	Key Actions	When?	Priority		
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
			H	M	L
Quick Actions					
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____		<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____		<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____		<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	

# My tasks this week

"The roots of the jack pine trees can share resources through the connected roots that help individuals to thrive, often among multiple individual trees connected by the unseen web beneath the soil" (asknature.org)

How can you embody more of the jack pine's qualities this week, and share *valuable resources* with others for mutual benefit?

activity blocks	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday	sunday
early morning							
mid-morning							
lunch							
early afternoon							
mid-afternoon							
evening							





"The roots of the jack pine trees can share resources through the connected roots that help individuals to thrive, often among multiple individual trees connected by the unseen web beneath the soil" ([asknature.org](http://asknature.org))

How can you embody more of the jack pine's qualities this week, and share valuable resources with others for mutual benefit?

MY THOUGHTS



What have you learned last week?  
What do you need to do to put this learning into practice in your life?

## LAST WEEK'S LEARNING



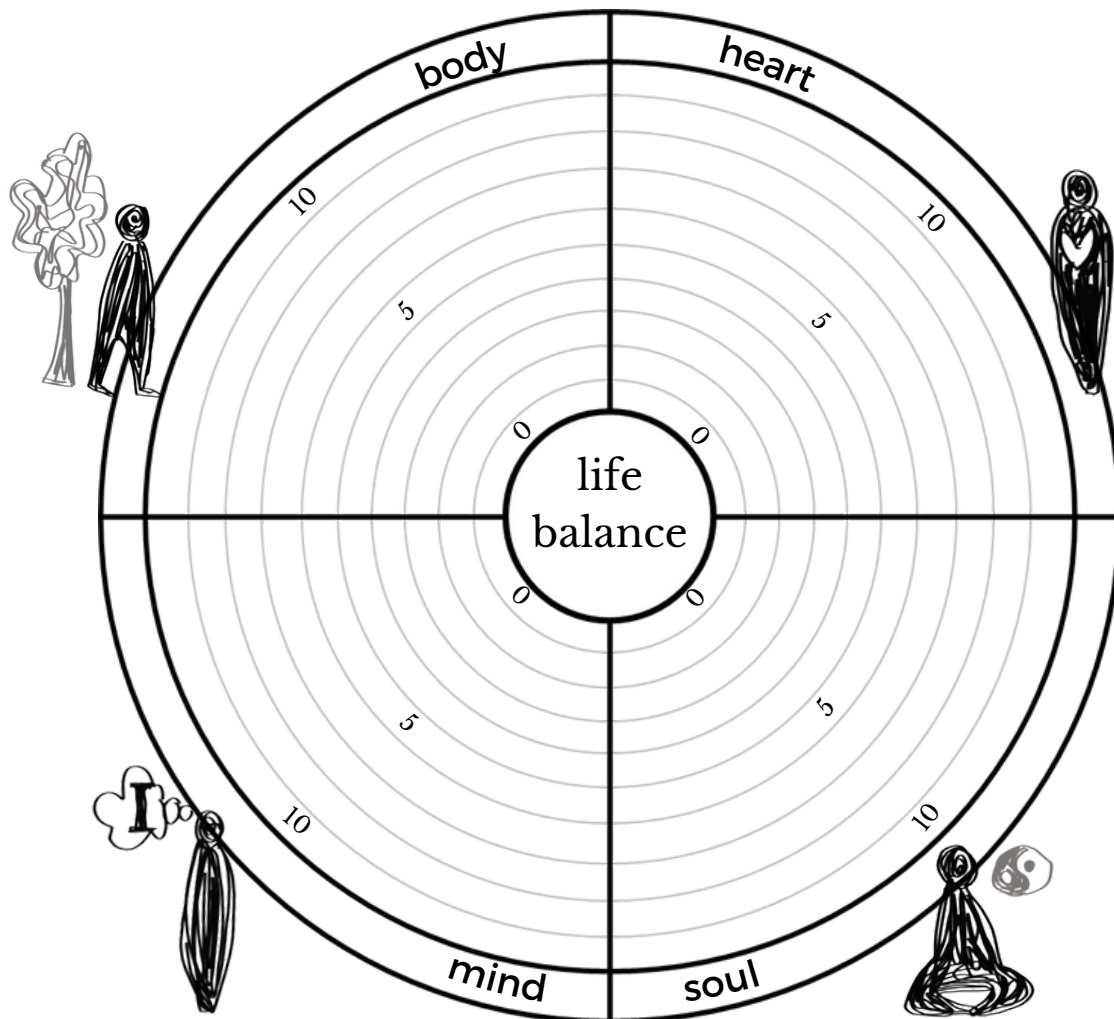
## SUGGESTED CREATIVE ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK

*You are invited to either journal or draw during or after the activities to capture and deepen your thoughts*

- **What valuable resources can you share with others?** Your time is a precious resource... can you spare an hour to go and read at your local nursing home, or help build a community allotment?
- **Planting trees supports our planet.** Think about joining a local tree planting charity or plant your own!
- **Cooking from scratch for friends and family.** Is there a recipe you always wanted to attempt but never did? Try to cook something new this week and share it with someone you care about.

# Self-Care Wheel

Mark yourself from 0 to 10 against each of the spheres of self-care.  
Then reflect upon how you can bring up your score this week. You'll find some suggestions at the bottom of the page which you can circle or highlight.



## Self-Care Ideas

### Body:

safe housing | regular medical care | healthy eating | exercising | sexual intimacy | sleeping | holidays | time off |  
massages | acupuncture | bubble-baths | walking | turning off your phone

### Mind:

self-reflection | therapy | coaching | journaling | sensory engagement | aromatherapy | listening to music | drawing |  
painting | gardening | sunbathing | reading self-help books | joining a support group | focusing on your strengths |  
focusing on the positives | practicing gratitude | asking for help | making a vision board | figuring out what you want  
in life | learning a new skill | learning who you are | taking time for lunch and breaks | taking mental health days

### Heart:

affirmations | self-love | self-compassion | crying | laughing | expressing love and affection | buying yourself a present  
| cuddling a pet | practicing forgiveness | nurturing a hobby | relaxing with family or friends |

### Soul:

self-reflection and self forgiveness | being outdoors | finding your spiritual community | meditating | singing |  
dancing | playing | practicing yoga or breathwork | swimming in open waters | volunteering