

FINDING BALANCE

JULY 2016

IN YOUR LIFE

Work, play, children, husband, wife, partner, parents, exercise, house, groceries, car, birthdays, sports, garden, holidays. **Finding balance.** Does that word even come into our list of never ending things to do in our fast-paced environment of 2016?

With the advent of high tech gadgets, apps and 24/7 connection; it seems we assume we are more enabled to cope with a more comprehensive list of things to do, while often we are just burdening ourselves with more than we can actually handle - making us feel guilty at the end of the day for not being able to tick off the boxes and completing tasks. I know I am definitely guilty of this myself.

A wise man, David Allen, creator of the Getting Things Done productivity system said, "You can do anything but not everything". There really are only so many hours in the day.

I am sure everybody can remember a time, maybe even now, when you can feel an imbalance in your life. The proportion between all the critical elements in your life is not equal. What does imbalance look and feel like? Most people would be able to tell you a symptom or feeling of imbalance. It could be as subtle as just feeling uncomfortable, more tired than usual, having a headache, tummy ache, or it could be more pronounced such as experiencing increased anxiety, feeling depressed or being very distressed. While some of these symptoms could be medically related, restoring balance in your life can help reduce some of the other symptoms.

For some individuals with various health conditions, finding and maintaining balance can have a direct impact on day-to-day life and quality of life. It can really mean the difference between a great day and a day spent in bed being unwell.

After my brain surgery in 2012, I had to take 'finding balance in my life' to a whole new level. I had built my own 'tool kit' since my diagnosis with my brain tumor in 2010 to help me navigate life with a brain tumor. However, after my surgery, it was about using these tools to help me find balance in my life - I called it my balance wheel

STEPS I TOOK TO CREATE MY BALANCE WHEEL

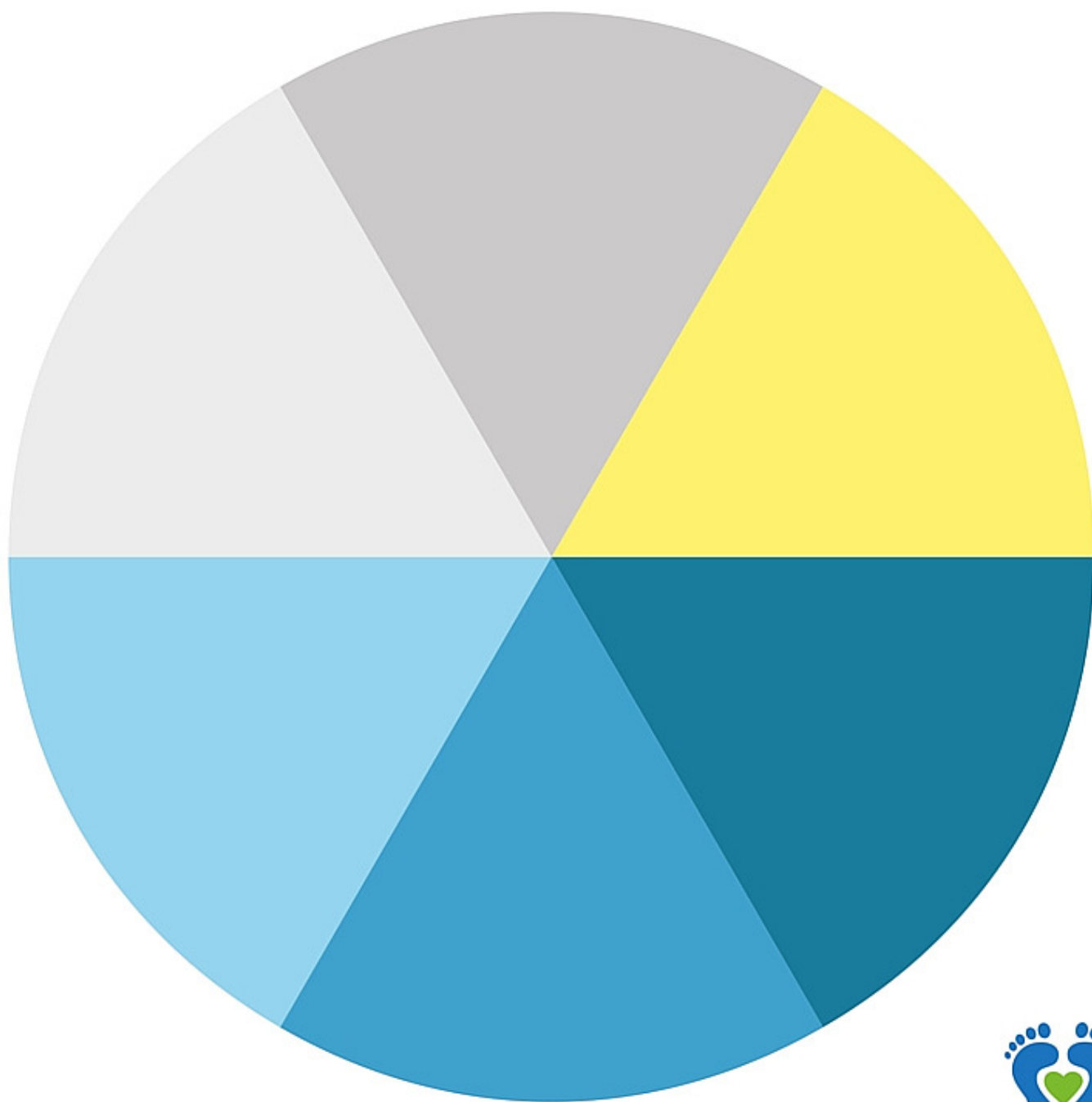
1. Identified the key elements in my life that I knew impacted my health (and therefore life) in a **positive manner** e.g. exercise and meditation
2. Identified any elements in my life that I knew were impacting my health in a **negative manner** e.g. certain stressors or dietary factors
3. Figured out the best way to **incorporate the positive elements** into my life, step by step and make space for them.
4. Became aware of the **negative elements**. Worked out how to decrease them in my life and work with them instead of against them.
5. Selected the top positive 'balance elements' in my life and put them into my balance wheel. Note: This doesn't mean I have to do them everyday, it is a reminder of what elements contribute positively towards maintaining a healthy balance in my day-to-day life.
6. **Printed out** my balance wheel and put it somewhere I could see it on a regular basis
7. Didn't try and incorporate everything all at once otherwise I was setting myself up for failure.
8. **Reassessed** my steps forward and balance wheel on a regular basis to check on how I was integrating balance into my life. Life gets busy so quickly and I needed to make sure I was allowing space for balance

So, next time you are feeling out of balance, and feel you need to think more about finding balance in your life - take 5 minutes, a pen and paper and go through the steps to create your own balance wheel. Here is your own balance wheel below to help you out!

Wishing you well in your quest to finding more balance in your life.

With gratitude

Claire



My Balance Wheel

