

The spheres of life

Source : Boîte à outils de la gestion du temps, Dunod, 2014, author : Pascale Belorgey.

Nathalie Van Laethem's testimony about her use of the spheres of life:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3FGV7U7N5K8&feature=youtu.be>

Understanding the concept of the spheres of life allows you to be more efficient, because very often, the different roles you assume tend to overlap, and you end up having to face many situations at the same time. This concept is very useful for people who feel like they are always rushing and forgetting the essential.

In order to maintain an emotional balance at work, you need to set clear boundaries between the different roles you assume: professional, family, social, etc. Everyone has different spheres of life which give meaning to their existence. It is very important to fully understand the characteristics of each sphere, in order to find a way to make them compatible. If you take time to work on this, you will be fully yourself, happy, and stress-free.

1. Drawing your current situation

You don't need to be a good at drawing to work on this. On a blank piece of paper, all you need to do, is to make a circle (or any other shape you prefer), for every sphere of your life. The size of your drawing doesn't matter. What really matters, is the size of the spheres compared to one another, and their placement in space. Some spheres can overlap, or on the contrary, be very far apart.

You need to choose the number of spheres you want to draw. You can add your own spheres, or divide a sphere into 2, like Nathalie does in the video.

- The professional sphere represents our work, our job, our career.
- The social sphere represents our friends, our network (including close colleagues with whom we share a relationship beyond work), organizations or clubs we belong to, recreational activities, etc.
- The family sphere represents our close family: partner, children, parents, siblings, and maybe cousins who are always by our side.
- The personal sphere represents activities which fulfill us, help us define ourselves, passions, health, sport, body care, relaxation, etc.

When we have drawn all the spheres on our paper, we can answer the question: how do we feel about this organization? Is our drawing satisfying? If we are not entirely satisfied by our current situation, then we take another piece of paper, and move on to the next step.

2. Drawing your desired situation

To achieve this second drawing, you must trust your intuition. If you had zero obligation, not even to make a living, how would you represent your ideal spheres? What are the aspects of your life you would like to dedicate more time to? What spheres would you like to distance yourself from? Are there some spheres you wish were closer to each other? or further apart?

Take time to look at your drawing and to check what it says on an emotional level. What do you feel? Relief? Liberation? Joy? Excitement? If the emotion you are feeling is a positive one, then you are on the right track, the track of your own life's balance.

Once this second drawing is validated by your emotions, compare it to the first one. It's time to use your rational mind and put words on this work. You can write, inside or next to each sphere that has changed, all the activities you need to do to achieve this change. For example : exercise more, start drawing, spend more time with your children, work less/more, spend less time on this or that type of task. The path is clear, all you have to do is to start walking it.

3. The plan for action

When you made the second drawing, you let go of all of your obligations, but that doesn't mean that you have to actually let go of them in real life and threaten your current life's balance. Change can be slow, at least at first.

