



RECALIBRATING LIFE

Mapping Your Support Ecosystem

When you are facing a life-altering diagnosis, you manage much more than just your physical health. Overnight, you become a care coordinator, a medical advocate, and a project manager for your own life. This visual mapping exercise is designed to help you step back and look at your entire ecosystem to clearly see where your energy is being drained and where you are genuinely receiving support.

Step 1: Center Yourself

You are the core of this ecosystem. On the next page, write your name inside the center circle.

Step 2: Identify Your Orbit

Think about all the external systems, groups, and people you interact with regularly right now. Draw smaller circles around your center circle for each one.

- **Medical & Care:** Specialists, primary care, therapists, pharmacy, insurance, palliative care.
- **Logistics & Support:** Work/HR, disability services, home health aides, support groups.
- **Personal Network:** Partner/spouse, extended family, friends, other patients, community groups.
- **Daily Life:** Household management, finances, career, transportation to appointments.
- **Self & Soul:** Your own hobbies, quiet time, spiritual community (draw these even if they feel empty).

Step 3: Draw the Connections

Draw a line connecting your center circle to each of the outer circles. The type of line represents the *quality* of that relationship right now:

- **Thick, Solid Line (—):** A strong, positive, and reliable source of support.
- **Dotted/Dashed Line (- - -):** A weak, inconsistent, or distant connection.
- **Jagged Line (▨▨▨):** A stressful, draining, or friction-filled relationship.

Step 4: Follow the Flow of Energy

Add an arrow to the end of each line to show which way the energy, support, or resources flow.

- **Arrow pointing AWAY from you (→):** You are expending energy or managing the logistics.
- **Arrow pointing TOWARD you (←):** You are receiving meaningful help or practical relief.
- **Arrows pointing BOTH ways (↔):** There is a mutual, healthy give-and-take.

Step 5: Reflection and Recalibration

Take a breath and look at your completed map on the next page. Use these questions to guide your next steps:

1. **Count the outward arrows.** If almost all your arrows point away from your center circle, your exhaustion makes perfect sense. Your body is working overtime; you cannot sustain an ecosystem where energy only flows out.
2. **Look at the jagged lines.** What is causing the most friction? Can you delegate communicating with them? Can a friend or partner make the insurance calls this week?
3. **Analyze the dotted lines.** Is there a weak connection that could become a solid line? How can you offer a willing friend a specific, tangible task?
4. **Identify the gaps.** What circle is missing? What is one small step you can take this week to draw a new, supportive circle on your page?

Your Ecosystem Map

Draw your center circle here.
Then, map your orbit.

Map Legend

Connection Quality

- Strong & Reliable
- - - Weak or Inconsistent
- ▨▨▨ Stressful or Draining

Energy Flow

- Energy flows OUT (You give)
- ← Energy flows IN (You receive)
- ↔ Mutual give-and-take