

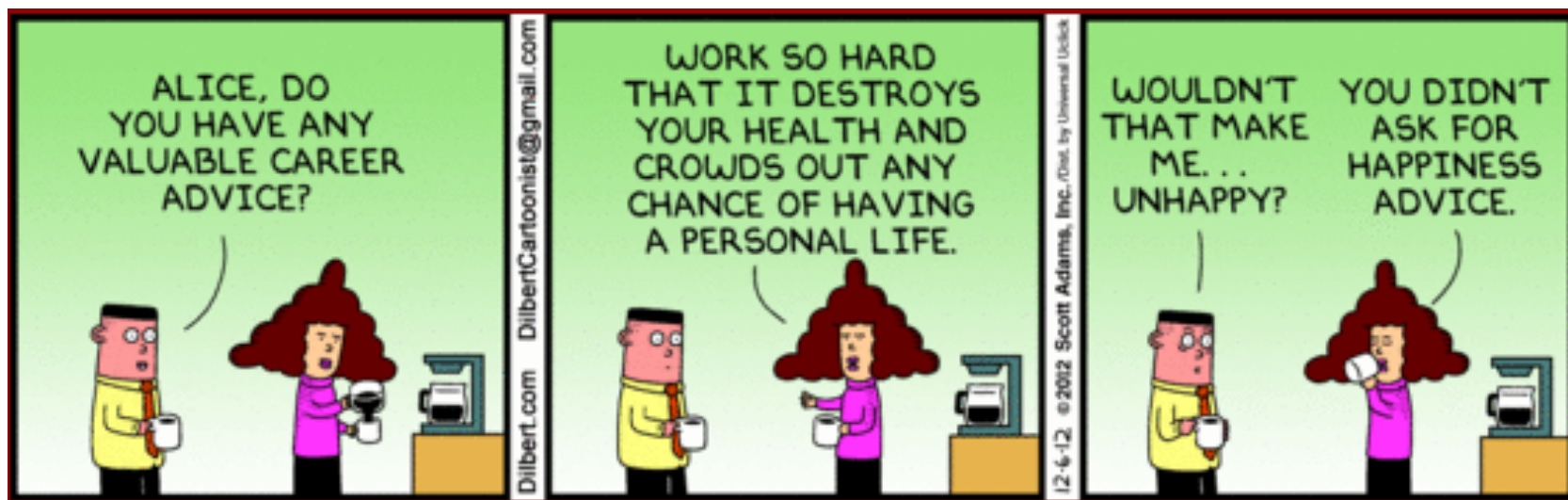
Improving Work-Life Satisfaction

Mikel “Micky” Holcomb

Physics Department, WVU

Mother of 2 kids (Age 5 and 7)

Funded by NSF, DOE, ACS



(Based on materials from a partnership
between AWIS & the Elsevier Foundation)

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ADVANCE



Improving Work-Life Satisfaction

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ADVANCE



“Ground Rules” & Housekeeping

- Respect each other
- Silence and put away cellphones
- Maintain confidentiality

“Absorb what is useful, reject what is useless, add what is specifically your own”

Bruce Lee

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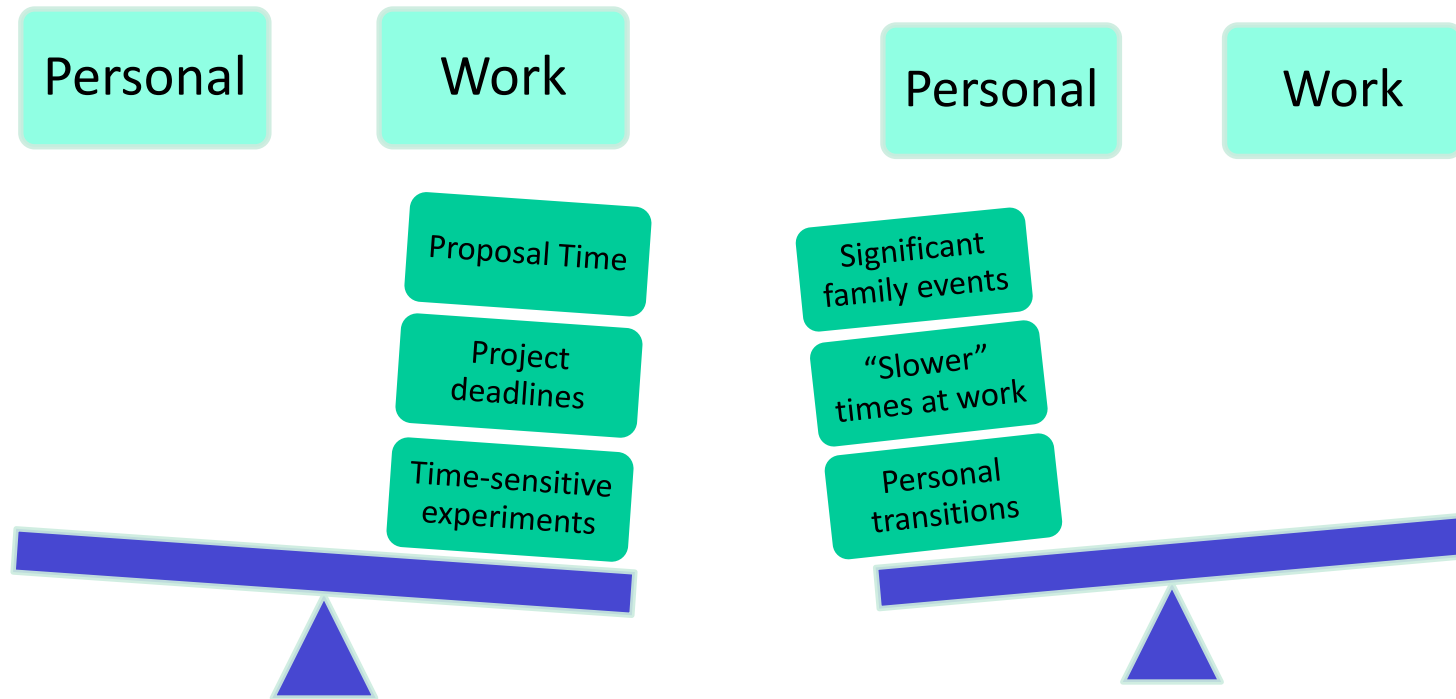
**“What makes
work-life
satisfaction so
challenging?”**

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Work-Life balance goals will fluctuate throughout your life, throughout the year and sometimes throughout the day!



When both hit simultaneously, need coping strategies!

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Defining Satisfaction

It is different for every person.

- Varies over time
- Not just about women
- Not just about children/parents
- Finding time for life outside of work (rafting)
- Tension between demands (teaching vs research)
- Making choices that match your values and priorities (ex. You value teaching, but not rewarded for it OR opposite)

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Work-Life Satisfaction

begins with awareness:

Your situation and the systems
in which you live and work

Resources available to you

Your strengths and weaknesses

Your values/priorities

Your current level of work-life
satisfaction and
your work-life challenges

What is
satisfaction to
you?

Not always easy to
identify the answer

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EXERCISE:

80th Birthday Tribute

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Participant Debrief

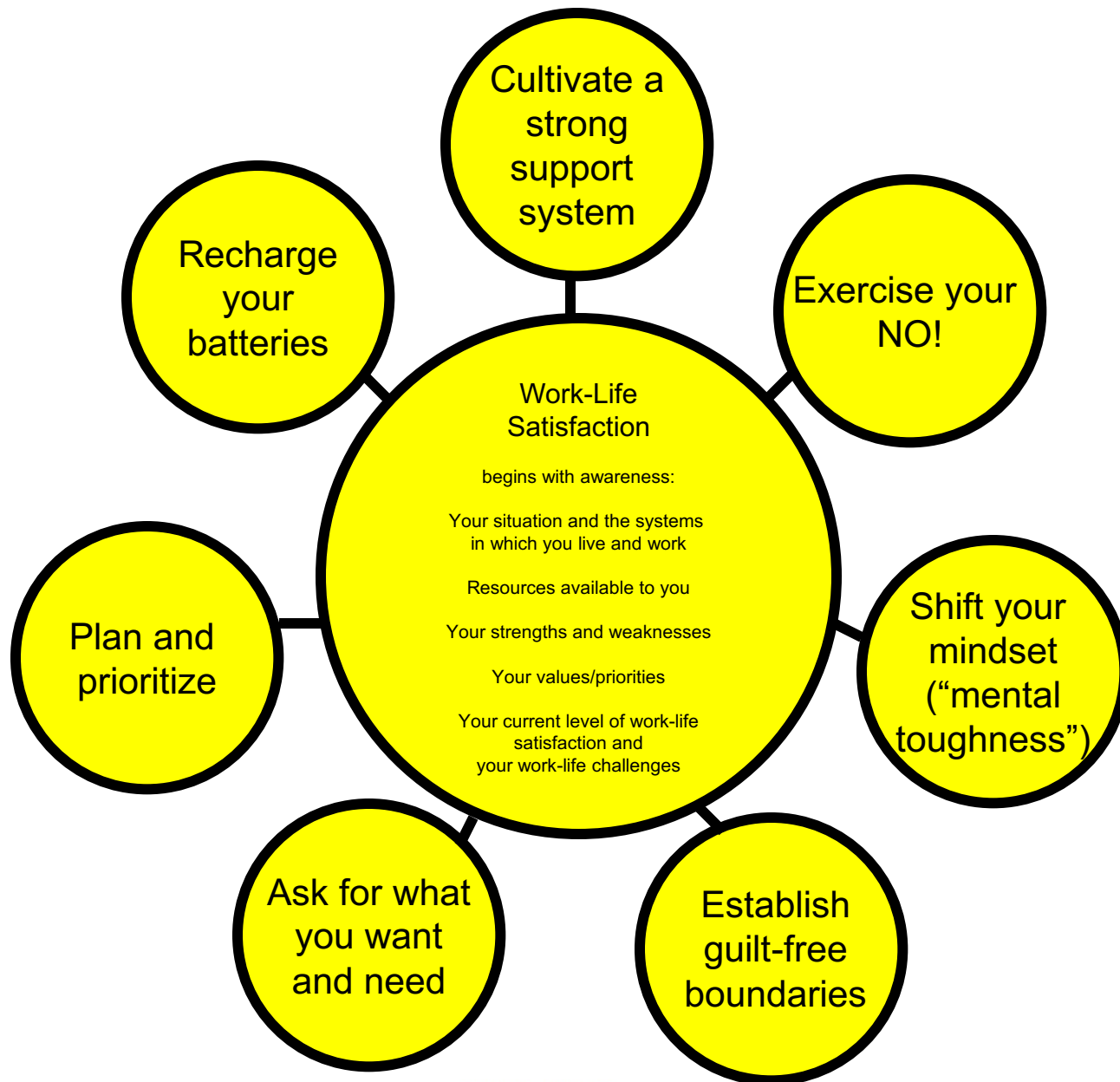
What are the values and priorities that are most meaningful to you, as evidenced by your toast?



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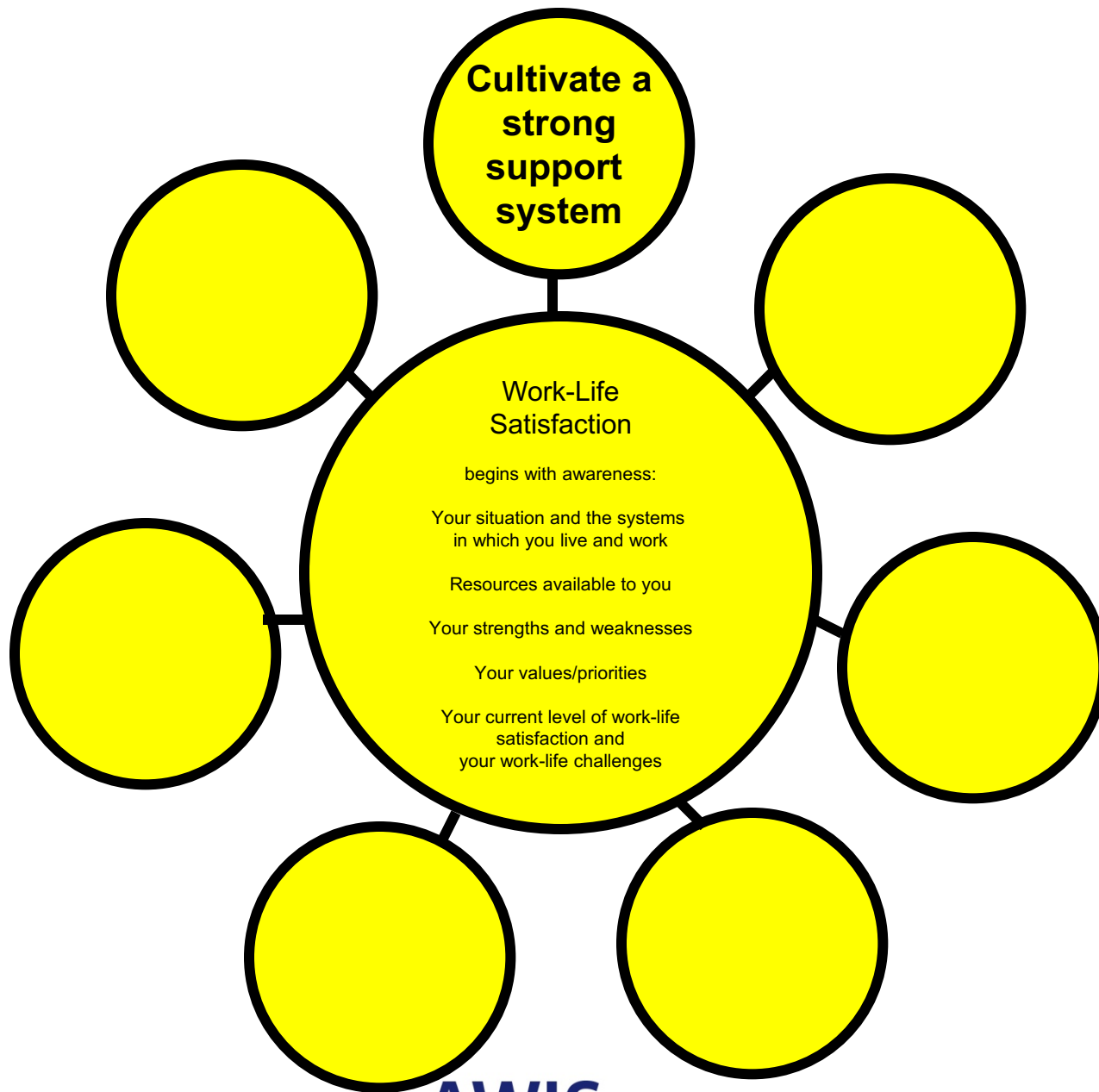
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Who do you ask for advice?

Topics might include:

Classes

Research

Career Planning

Service

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Most People Don't Ask for Help from Enough People!

- **Friends and Family**
- **Online Resources**
- **Housecleaning or Neighborhood Teenagers**
- **Self Analysis**
- **Networking**
- **Mentoring**
- **Peers**



Who are two people you could add to your support system?

What are important qualities in a mentor?



What are important qualities in a mentor?



What are important qualities in a mentee?

The Role of a Mentee

- Seek advice, not a supervisor who directs actions.
- **Synthesize lessons** learned from many mentors – become your own person.
- **Come prepared** (what do you want, strengths, weaknesses)

Example: Public Speaking

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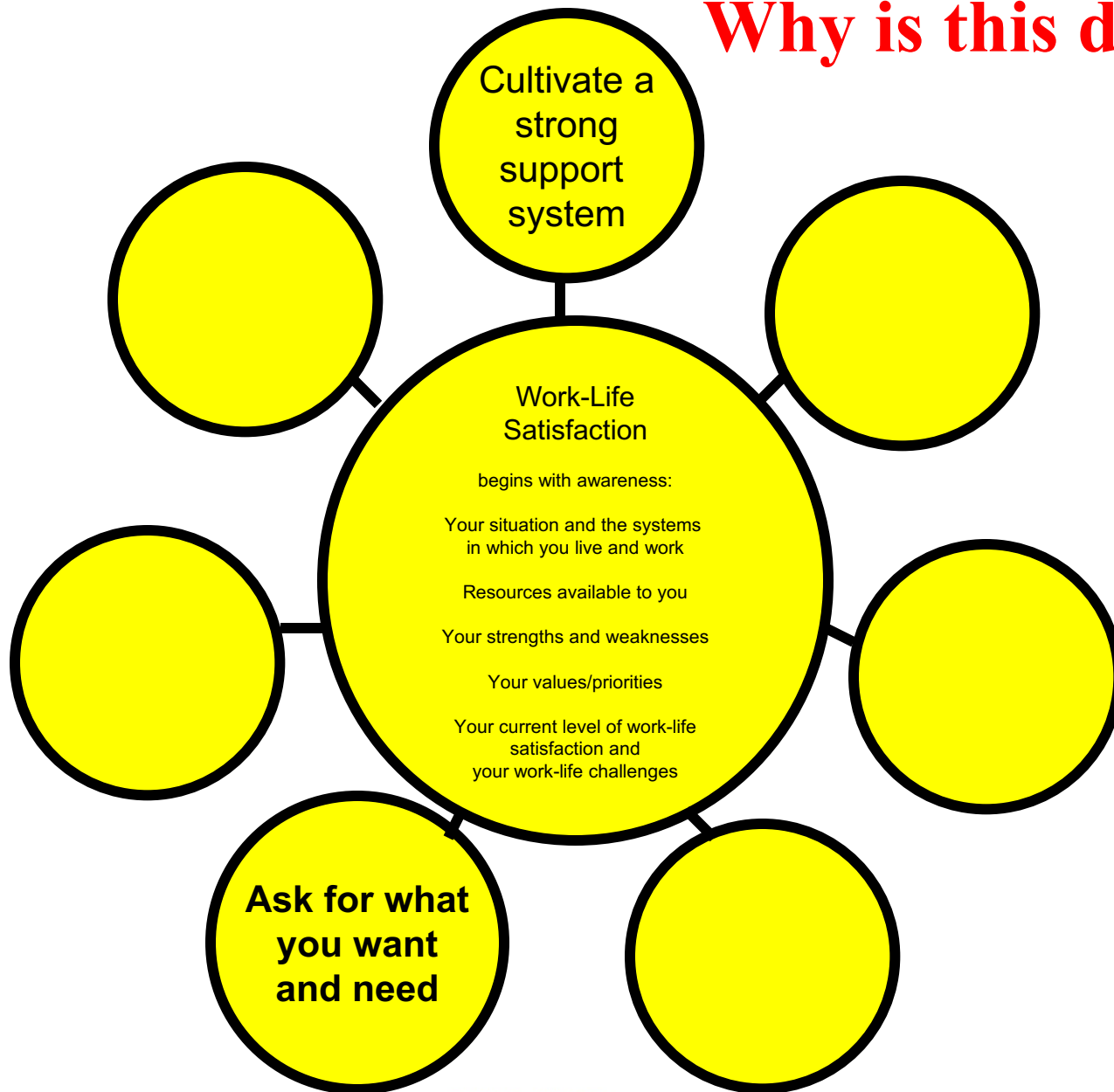
How do you ask someone to mentor you?

What's the worst they
can say?



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Why is this difficult?



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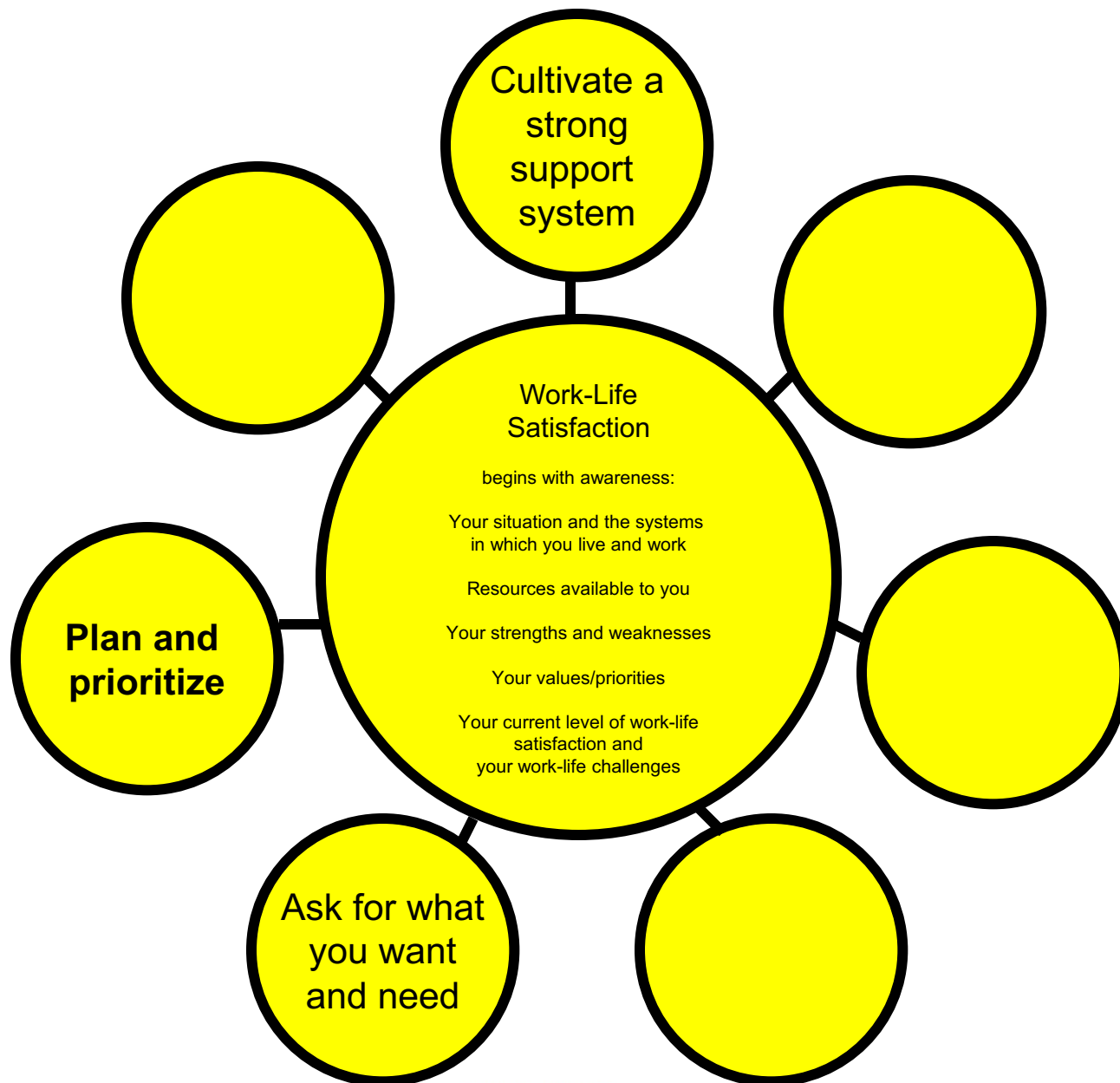
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What You Need: Discussion/Activity

- Has anyone asked for something they need recently? Wish you had?
- Framing is important: If you provide me with this resource, I can
 - These are the great things I will do with that resource
 - How does it benefit the organization: relate mission, strategic plan of university, college, department
 - Deliverables?

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Priorities/Values



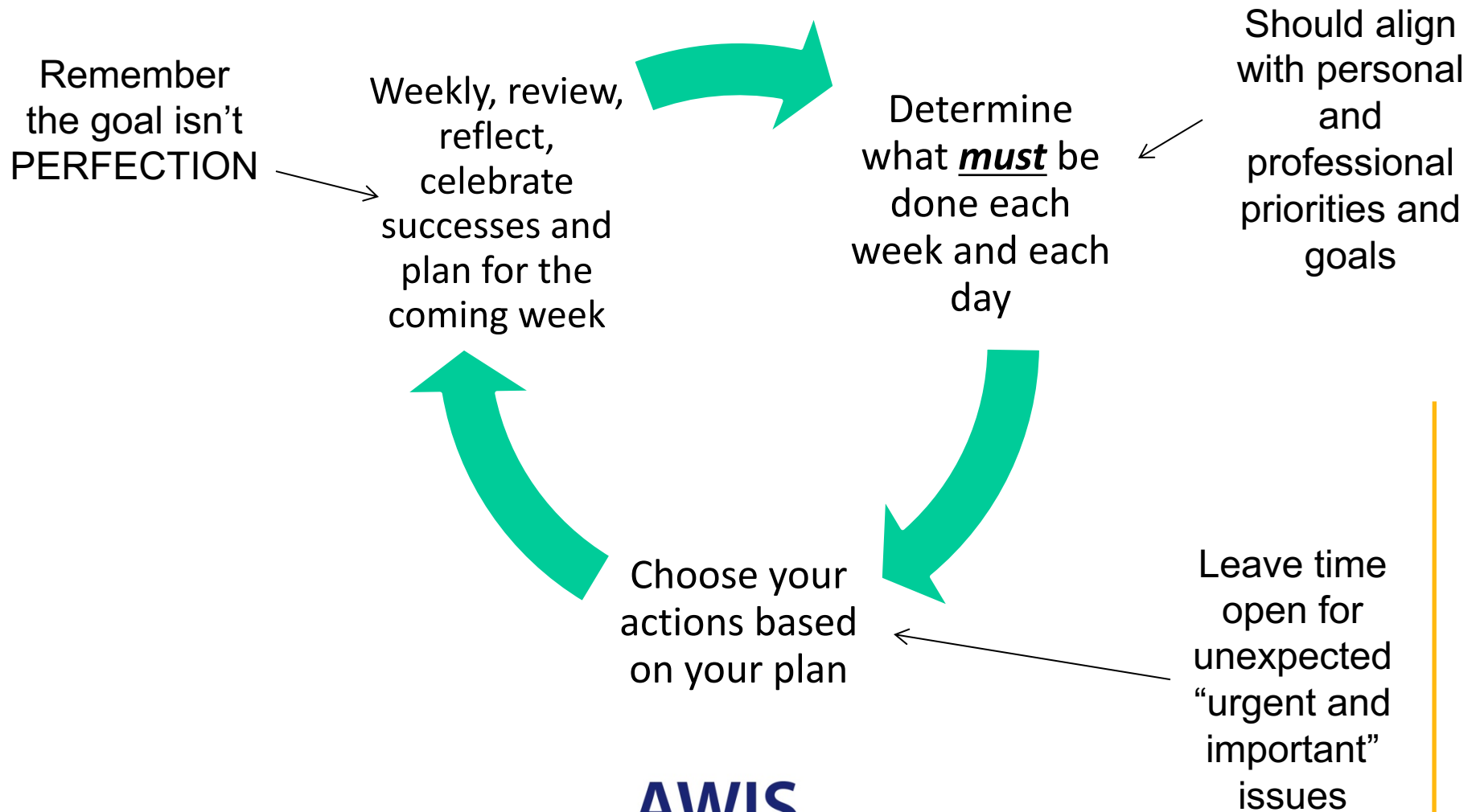
Holding our deeply held values and priorities in our consciousness provides a “compass” for making important decisions.

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Your Weekly Planning Meeting



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Make a Schedule

Does it align with how you are ranked?

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wed	Thursday	Friday
<10:30	Proposals	Papers	Papers	Papers	Proposals
10:30-1:00	Class & Prep	Proposals	Class & Prep	Proposals	Class & Prep
1 - 2	Lunch and Email				
2 - 4	Discussions with Research Students and Collaborators				
4 - 5	Meeting	Misc.	Office Hours	Colloquium	Misc.
5 +	Email & Miscellaneous				

The more specific your tasks can be, the better!

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5 Questions to Ask When You Are Considering Saying Yes:

1. Must this be
DONE?

(Who says?)

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5 Questions to Ask When You Are Considering Saying Yes:

2. Must this be done BY ME?

(If not me, then who?)

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Only if it applies to all three

My Interests

My Skills

X

X

Delegate

YES!

Delegate

Delegate

X

X

My Reward

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5 Questions to Ask When You Are Considering Saying Yes:

3. Must this be
done *RIGHT*
NOW?

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5 Questions to Ask When You Are Considering Saying Yes:

4. Must this be
done THIS WAY?

(Why?)

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5 Questions to Ask When You Are Considering Saying Yes:

5. If I say yes to this, what am I saying no to?

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Say **NO** by saying **YES**:

“Here’s what I can do...”

from Judy Feld, AWIS coach

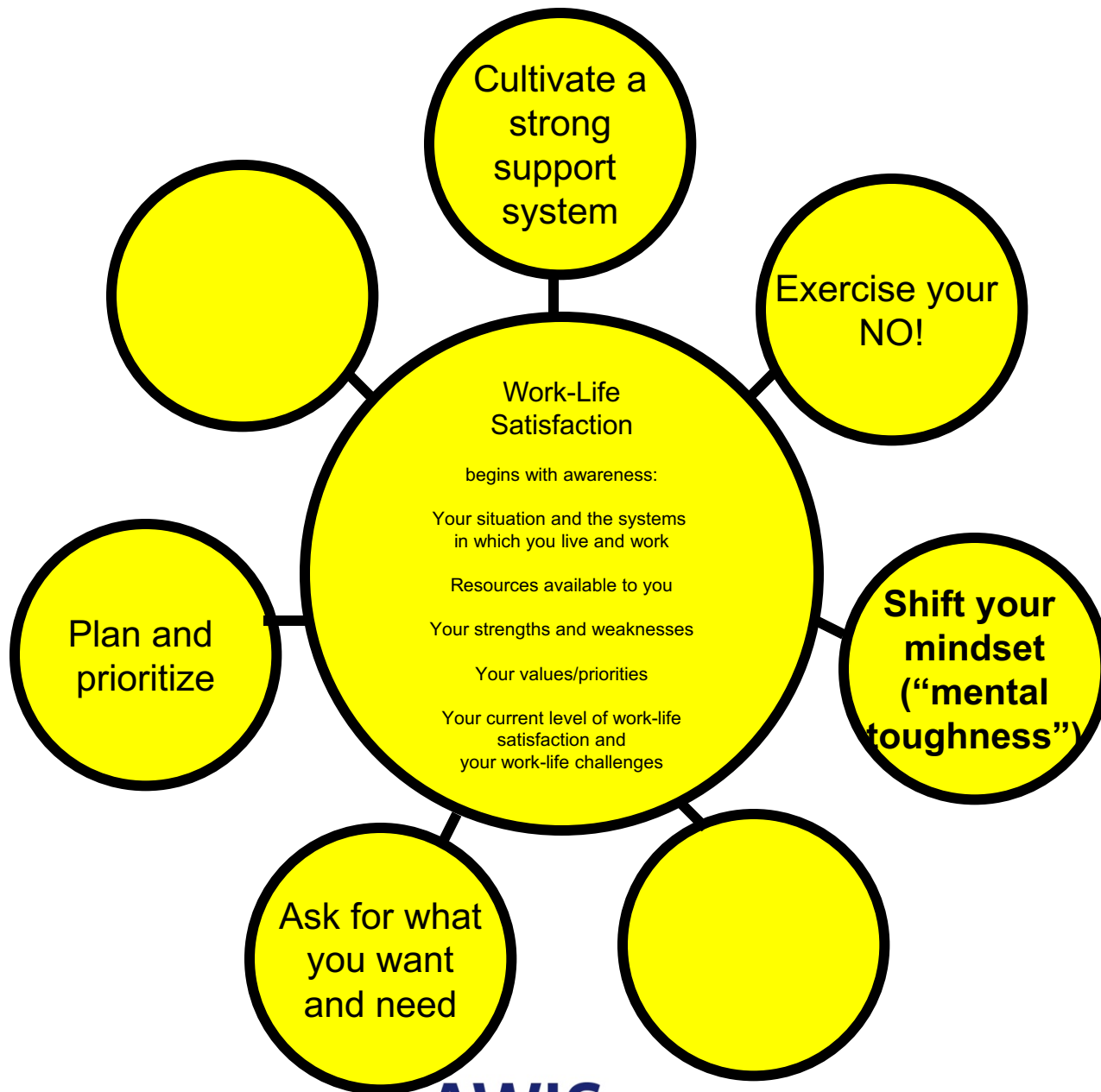
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Exercise your “No” Discussion/Activity

- Think of something you have been asked to do recently (*ex: chair a committee, organize a meeting*) and ask yourself these 5 Questions (use handout)



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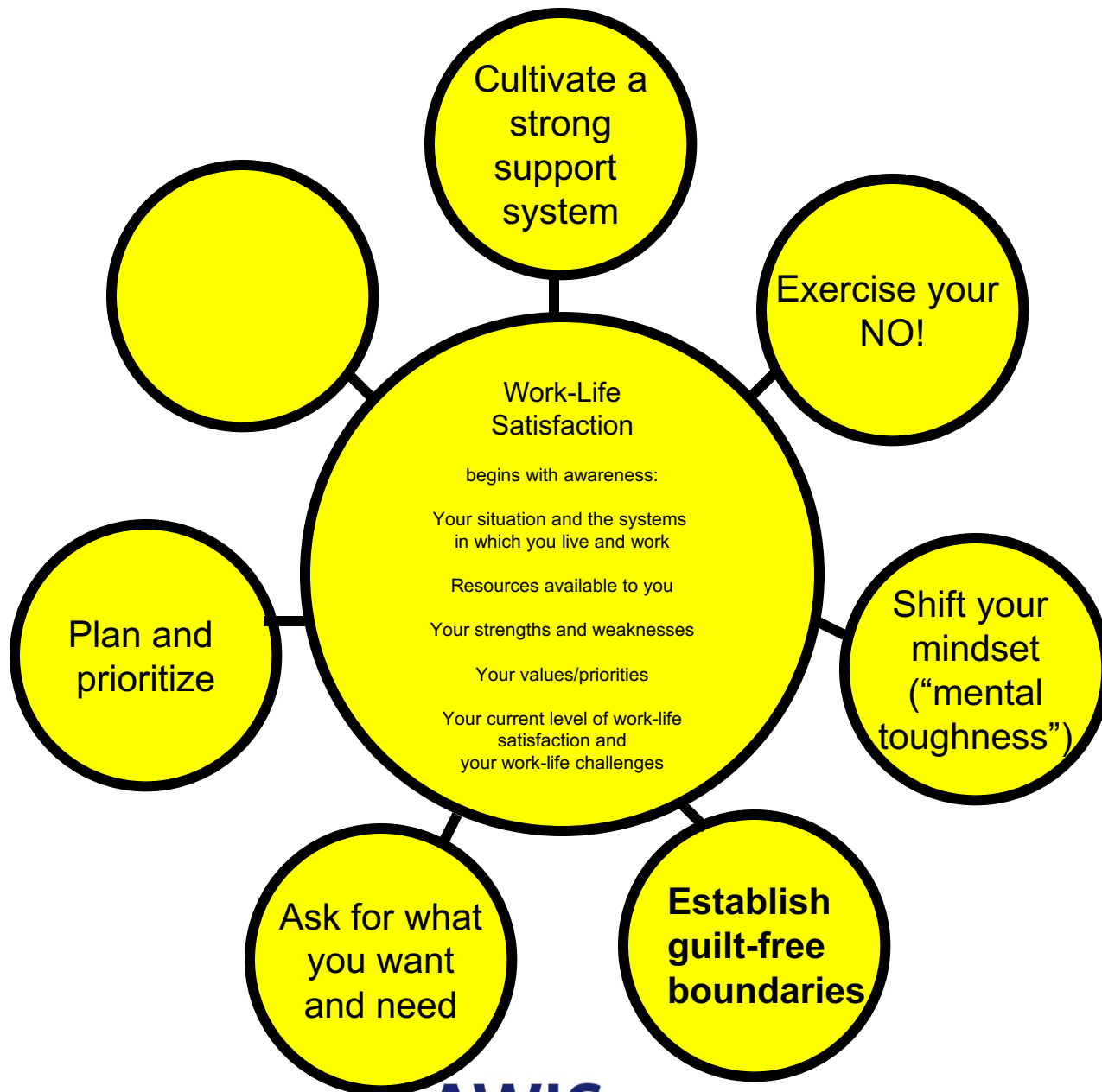
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Mindset Shift: Discussion/Activity

- What is something that you find stressful or complicated? (e.g., public speaking, writing)
- Discuss ways to shift your mindset. (e.g., practice, find more opportunities to do it)
- Form a group of like-minded peers with which to practice

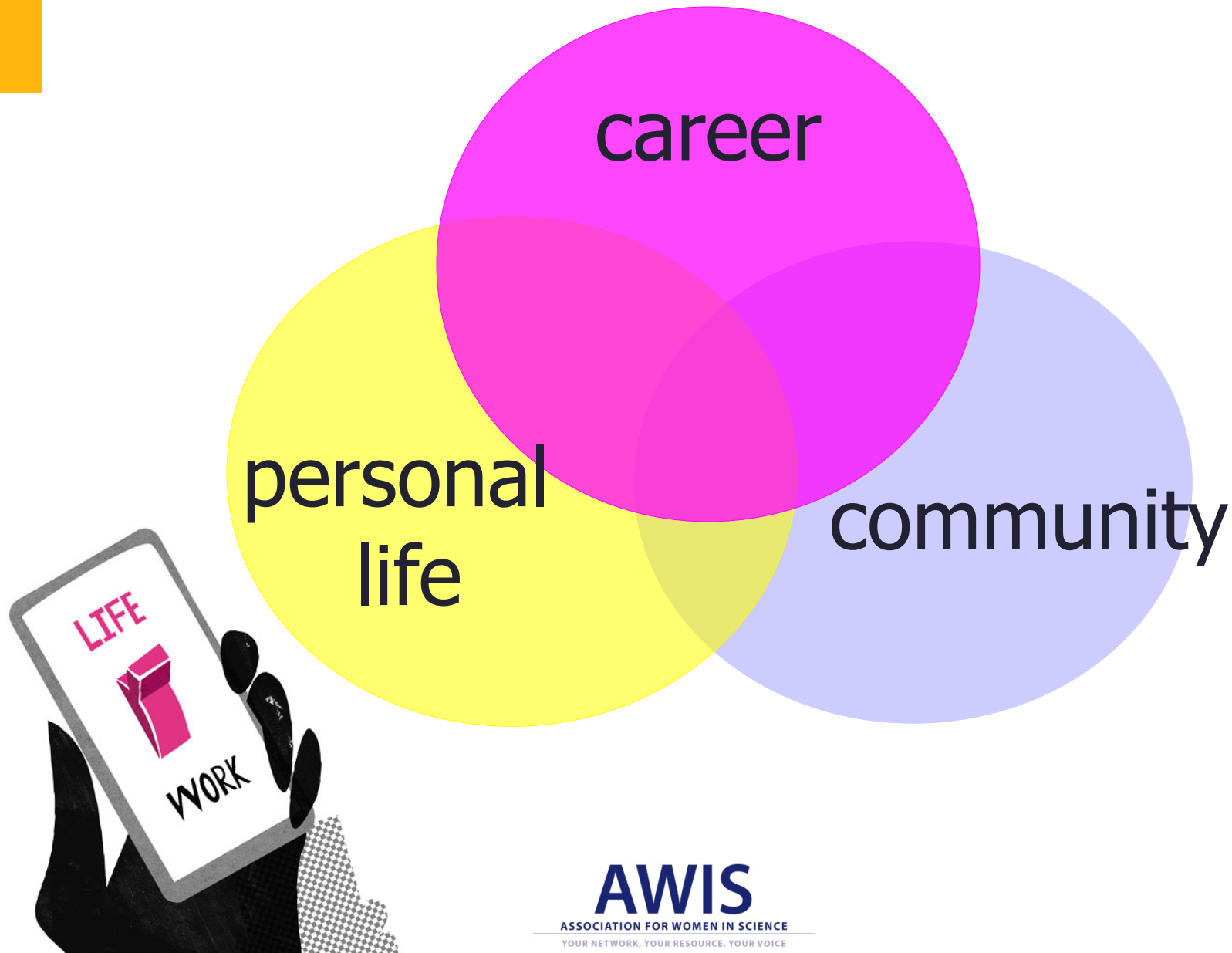


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Life Balance and Career in Context



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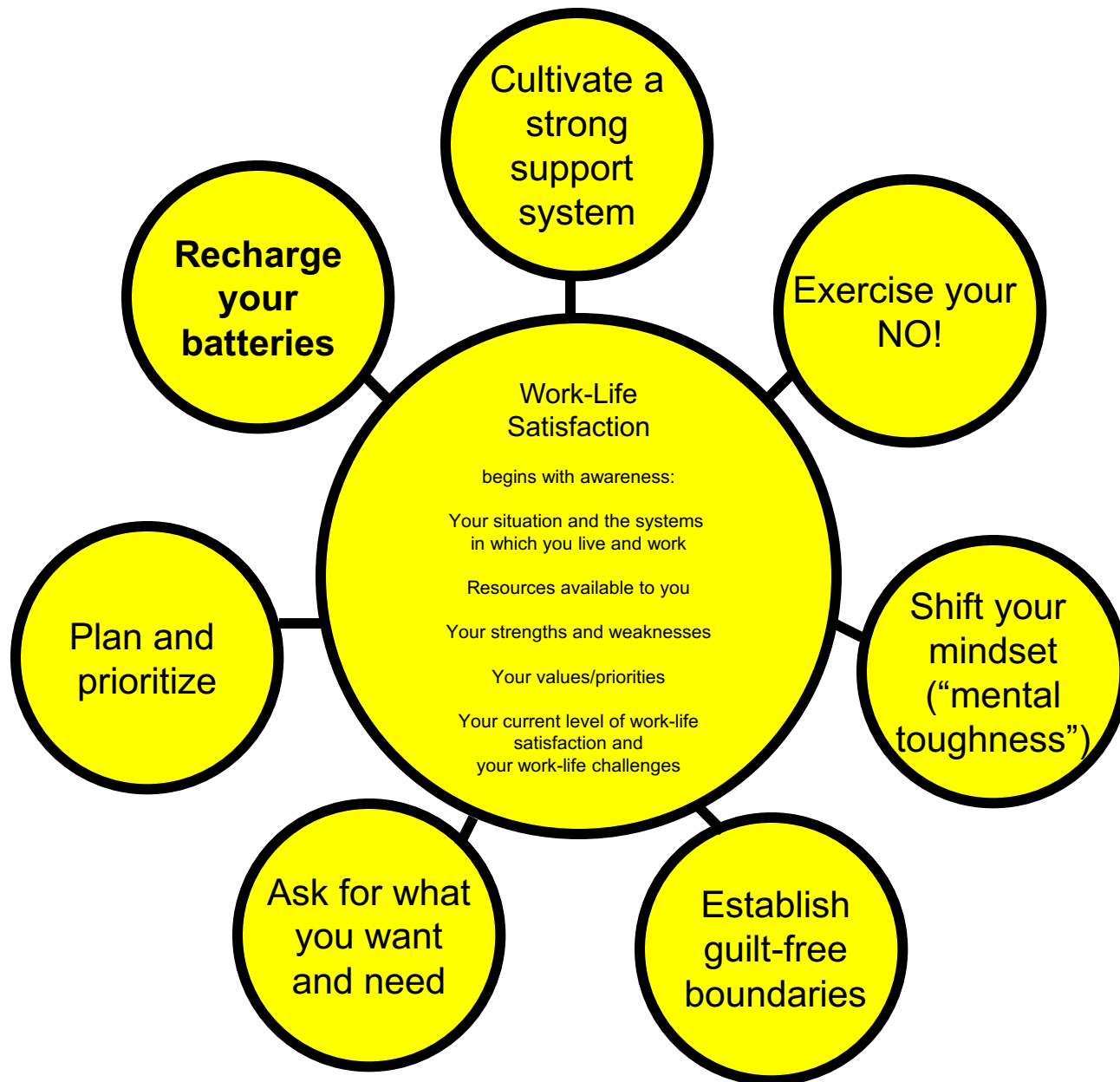
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Guilt-free Boundaries: Discussion

- Phone example
- Email example:
 - How often do you check your email?
 - How often do you need to check your email?
 - Boundary: If critical can call

Guilt-free Boundaries: Discussion

- Vacations
- Work travel
- Double dipping vs. separation



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How do
you
recharge
your
batteries?



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Pick a few strategies to try and experiment to find out what helps you the most!



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Use your
experimental skills to
build a happier life!

Comments??

The world
became a
more
beautiful
place



SLRD-TV

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