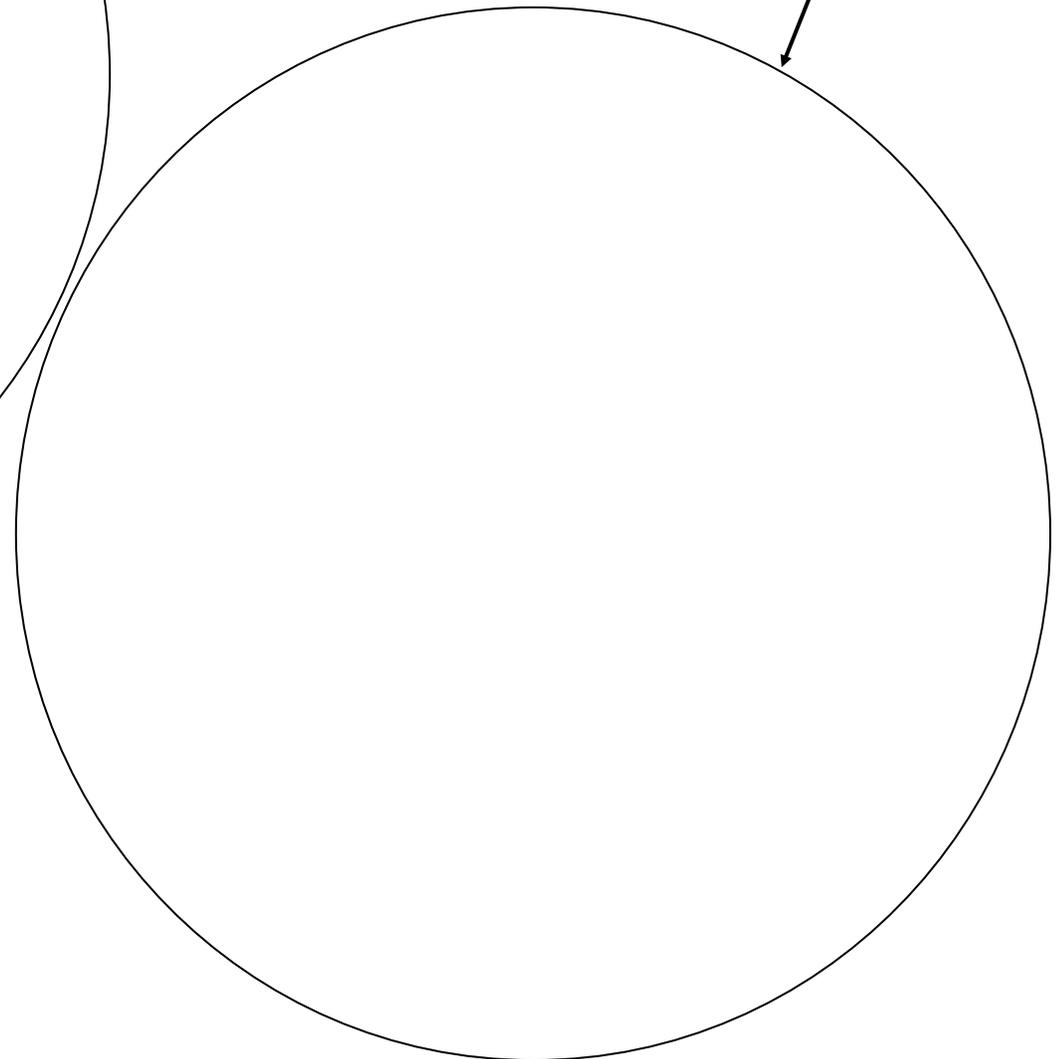


← Your Current Life Balance



Your Ideal Life Balance

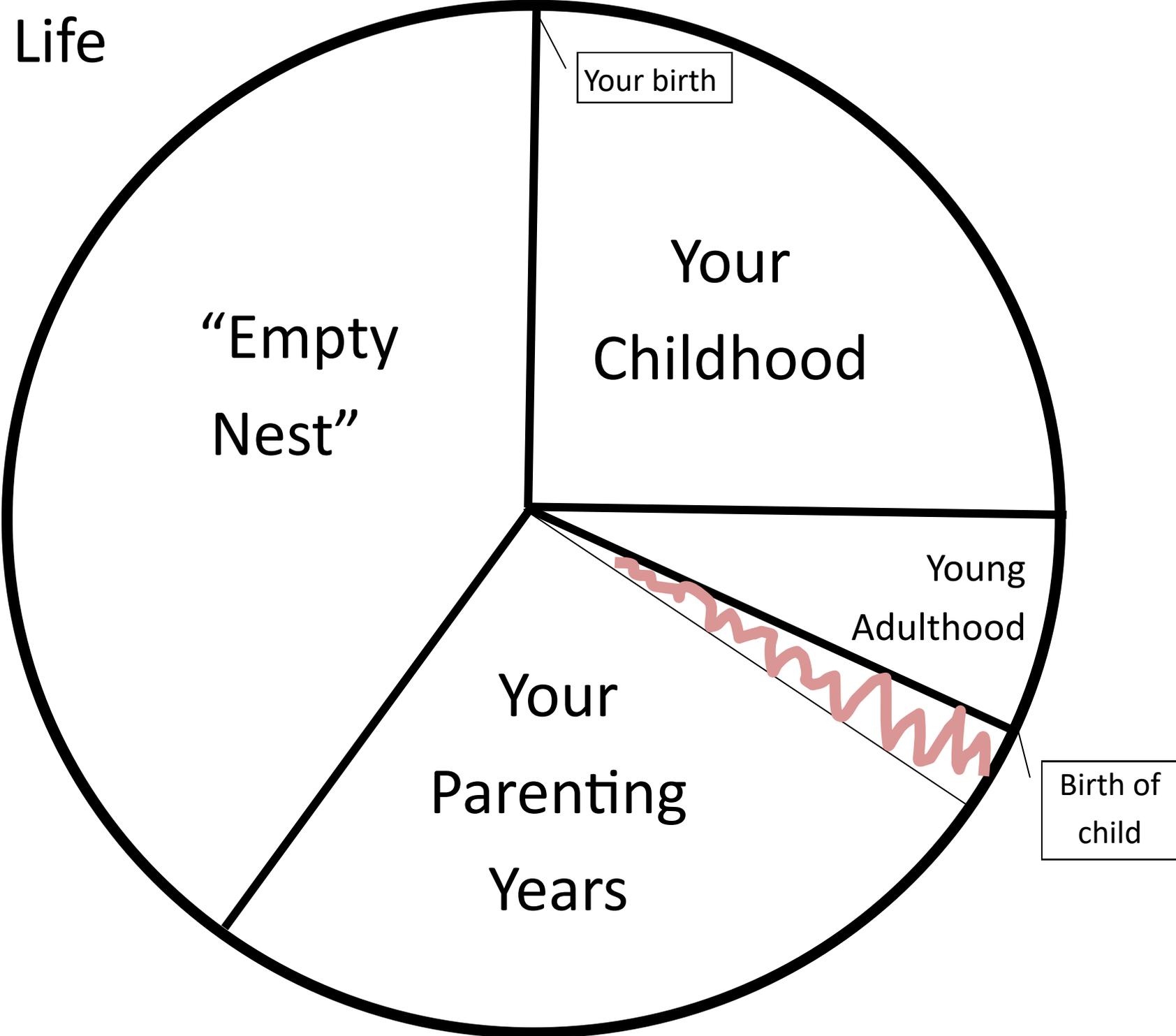
First, look at the pie that's labelled Current Life Balance. Divide it up into pie pieces that show how you're currently dividing your time. You can do this any way you want, but one idea is to divide it into 4 pieces:

- Taking Care of Others: Parenting, Supporting your partner / friends / family
- Taking Care of Business: Work, Paying Bills, Running Errands, Volunteering
- Health & Hygiene: Sleeping, Eating, Bathing, Cooking, Cleaning, Groceries, Laundry
- Things you do JUST FOR YOU. Just because they're fun, relaxing or make you happy.

Now move on to the second pie, labelled Ideal Life Balance.

What do you wish your life was like? What could you do to move it in that direction?

Pie of Life



Instructions for Activity—takes 10—15 minutes

Intro: Most of us have lots of things that demand our time and energy. We may be playing multiple roles right now: worker, volunteer, parent, spouse, housekeeper, cook, driver... We have multiple tasks related to all those roles, plus maintenance jobs like grocery shopping, bill-paying, laundry, plus silly things like y'know... eating, sleeping, and taking the occasional shower. It can be hard to juggle all that!

Look at the first circle.... Imagine this circle is a pie, and divide it up into pieces based on how you spend your time. [demo an example on the white board as you talk...]

Some of the pie pieces might be work or volunteer commitments, some might be child care or elder care, some are household care (grocery shopping, cleaning, etc.). Hopefully some are self-care and perhaps spiritual growth. Divide up your pie however you want to in order to represent where you currently put your time and energy. I'll give you about 5 minutes for that.

After you're done with that: "I want you to draw a second circle – this is to represent your ideal balance. How do you WISH you divided your time? Spend time drawing that out."

Once you've completed both pies, reflect on them. Is your current life balance similar to your ideal? Hurray! Good for you.

Or is it completely different? What could you do to move your current closer to your ideal?

[Discuss]

Wrap Up with: The reality is that it is challenging to have an ideal life balance when you're caring for a young child.

Sometimes it helps to remember we're having one of those "it's just a phase" times of life where things are just hard. And if you're in that phase, that's OK.

This Pie of Life was created by someone in her 70s who worked with parents of young children—she used it to illustrate that in the big picture of your whole life, this time with young children is just a little pie slice. So, it's OK if things are out of balance now—it will get better!!

But it's still worth looking at whether there is any room for improvement at this time. Maybe your ideal just feels way too far out of reach, but maybe there are some small micro-steps you can do that move you just a nudge in that direction. Do you deserve a little bigger piece of the pie for self care?