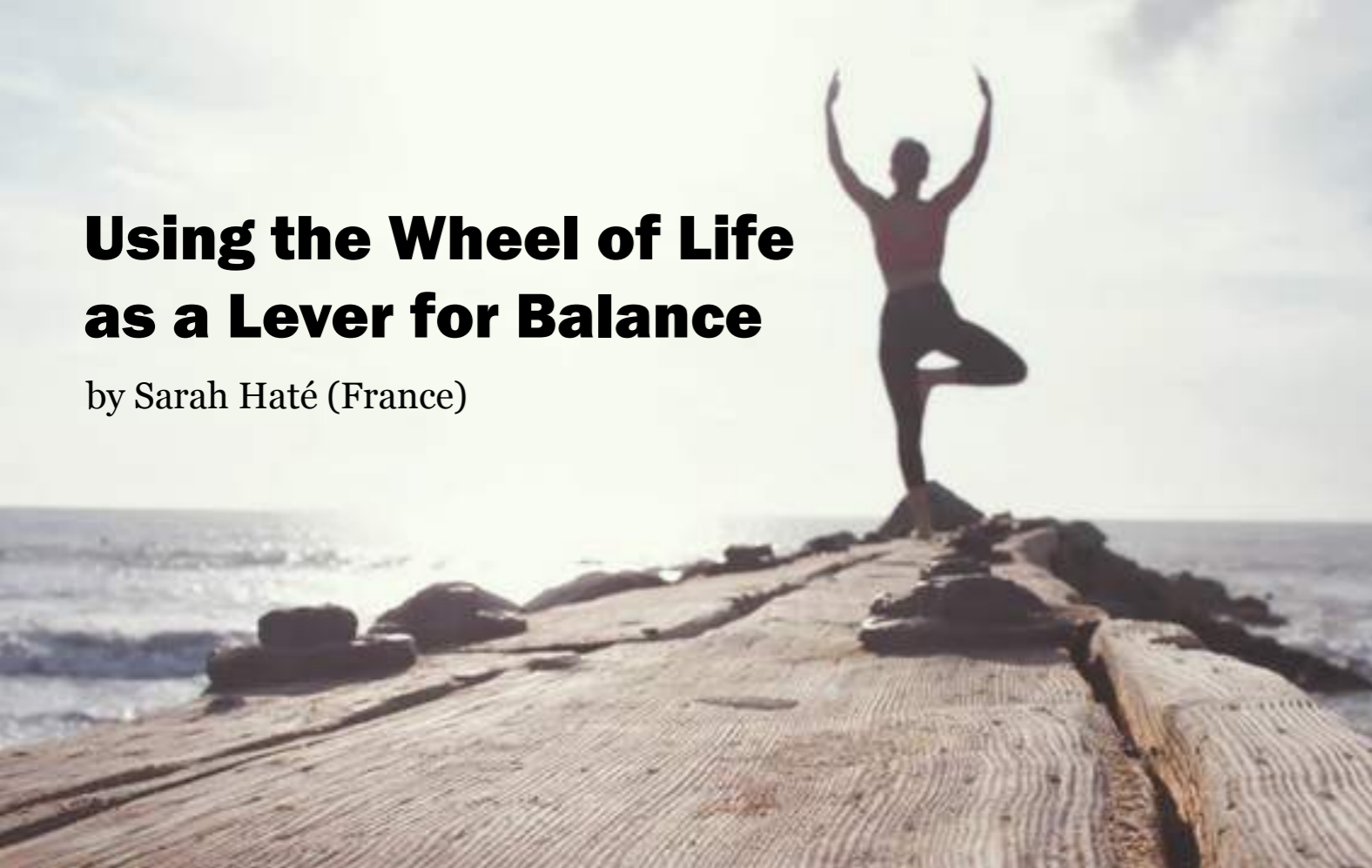


# Using the Wheel of Life as a Lever for Balance

by Sarah Haté (France)



*In my experience as a performance coach, a successful tool is one that can be adapted to a wide range of situations. The clients that I have already had the privilege to coach belong to various socioeconomic backgrounds, have had diverse reasons for wanting to be coached and come to me at different stages in their life, yet all of them have needed to gain more visibility and prioritise at some point during our sessions. One of the tools that I regularly bring into my coaching activity is the Wheel of Life.*

## What is the Wheel of Life?

The name of this tool comes from the fact that life is represented as a wheel, and the important areas in a coachee's life are the spokes of the wheel. Literature mentions between 8 and 10 areas, or spokes. It's a very common coaching tool, and despite the fact that its origin is unknown, it can be likened to the symbol of the wheel of life that originated in the Middle Ages. This wheel represented 4 phases of life: happiness, loss, suffering, and hope.

The Wheel of Life is a physical tool, i.e. it either needs to be printed out and given to the client, or drawn on a piece of paper by the client. One of the reasons why I find it so effective is that it

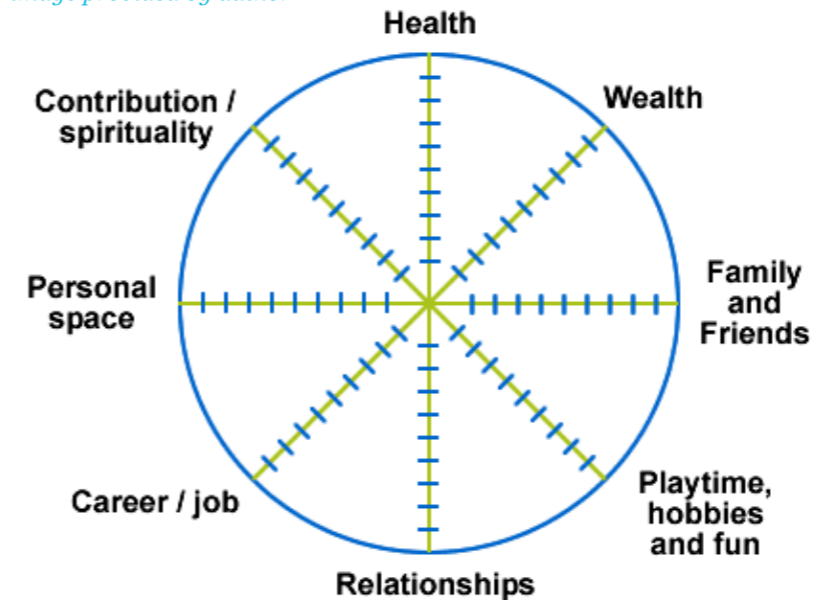
enables the coachee to see what is going on in her life, rather than simply talking about it. Mapping out her important areas very often leads to an "aha" moment, as things become a lot clearer.

## How can you use the Wheel of Life?

The principle is extremely easy. Take an existing template, like the one below, or ask the coachee to create her own. The latter is an empowering exercise in itself, as it enables the coachee to identify the dimensions in life that are important to her in the present moment. Each spoke should be graduated from 0 to 10, 0 being in the centre and representing the lowest score, i.e. this area is not satisfactory, and 10 being on the circle edge and representing the highest score, i.e. this area is extremely satisfactory.

<sup>1</sup>Explanation taken from 'Becoming a Professional Life Coach', Patrick Williams and Diane S. Menendez, published by W.W. Norton & Company in 2015

image provided by author



Once all the scores have been plotted on the spokes of the wheel, ask the coachee to join them up and enquire into her impression of the wheel when simply looking at it. This may enable the coachee to identify areas in her life which require more attention, and therefore leads to goal setting. This could also lead a coachee to see the areas in life where she pays too much attention and gives too much time and energy, to the detriment of other areas which she feels are more important to her personal wellbeing.

The next step is to ask the coachee which area(s) she would like to work on, and to ask what it would take to move from the current score to a score of 10. This is a great way of testing her motivation, uncovering limiting beliefs and identifying action plans. As you have established the scores for all the important areas of her life, it is a great reference with which to work during future sessions, as you can go back to the ones she has decided to work on, and check on the progress being made.

On some occasions, after a few coaching sessions, my clients have actually said that they no longer need to achieve a score of 10 because they have made their necessary life changes with a score of 8, for example. It is important to remember that we ALWAYS work with our coachees and respect their decisions. Obtaining a score of 10 in all areas of the wheel of life is not the aim; the aim is to help them get a bigger picture, take a step back and get out of their mind and into their life.

## When can you use the Wheel of Life?

The Wheel of Life is a tool that can be used in very many different situations. It can help a person who has a lot of things going on in her life, to prioritise goals and gain visibility. It can also be of use to a person with no clear goal, or who wishes to improve her work-life balance. It is an excellent starting point when a coachee arrives at a position of overwhelm.

I have often adapted it to more specific situations, such as a client who was aware of her limiting beliefs, but needed help getting over them to set up a new business, or another one who repeatedly mentioned the fact that she was looking for recognition from others.

The way I used this tool in the first example was to ask her to determine why she wanted to set up a new business (we had already worked on her values, and she used them for the wheel). Each of the 8 reasons was a spoke of her wheel, and enabled us to then work on one of her limiting beliefs, which led her to identify what she needed to do, in order to take her idea to the next level, i.e. do extra training, start networking and establish her prices.



<sup>2</sup>Image taken from <https://www.time-management-techniques.com/tony-robbins-rpm.html>

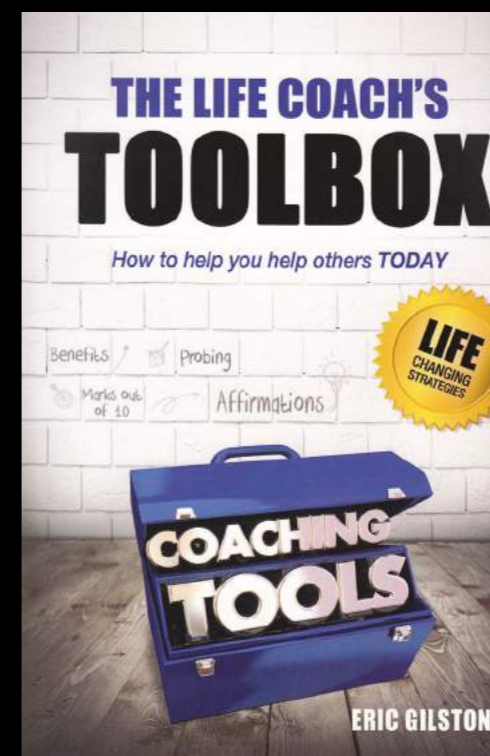


In the second example, I asked my client to use each spoke to identify what recognition meant to her. It was interesting for her to realise that she also needed to recognise herself, to appreciate everything she had already accomplished, and to verbalise what she would like from others in both a professional and personal context.

To conclude, I can say that this approach assumes that the coachee will be happy and fulfilled if she can find the right balance of attention for each of the areas that she has identified as being important in life. It should nevertheless be noted that people change and life circumstances change, and that this tool is therefore designed to evolve over time. Happy coaching!



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#### About the author:

Eric Gilston has been a Life & Business Coach for the past 17 years, having qualified with the Life Coaching Academy. He has worked in numerous schools, colleges, Universities and businesses, coaching students and business people of all ages and at all levels. He has also coached numerous individuals on a one-to-one basis, ranging from 10 year olds through to Judges, Headteachers and CEO's. He is also a qualified Retirement Coach, and a qualified FA Coach & Referee. He has worked for the multi-national companies Unilever & Grand Met in key Marketing roles, and been self employed for 27 years.

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#### ABOUT **SARAH HATÉ**



**Sarah Haté** is a trainer, public speaker and certified professional life coach. She has a passion for giving her clients the space they need to reconnect with themselves and rediscover their authentic self, in order to create a magical, positive life for themselves and their loved ones.

Sarah created So Free Coaching, to offer one-to-one sessions, group sessions and workshops. As she lives in the south of France, her clients are both French and English-speaking. She trained in Development Coaching with NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) with Simply Changing Limited, and recently obtained her Level-1 certificate in EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques).