

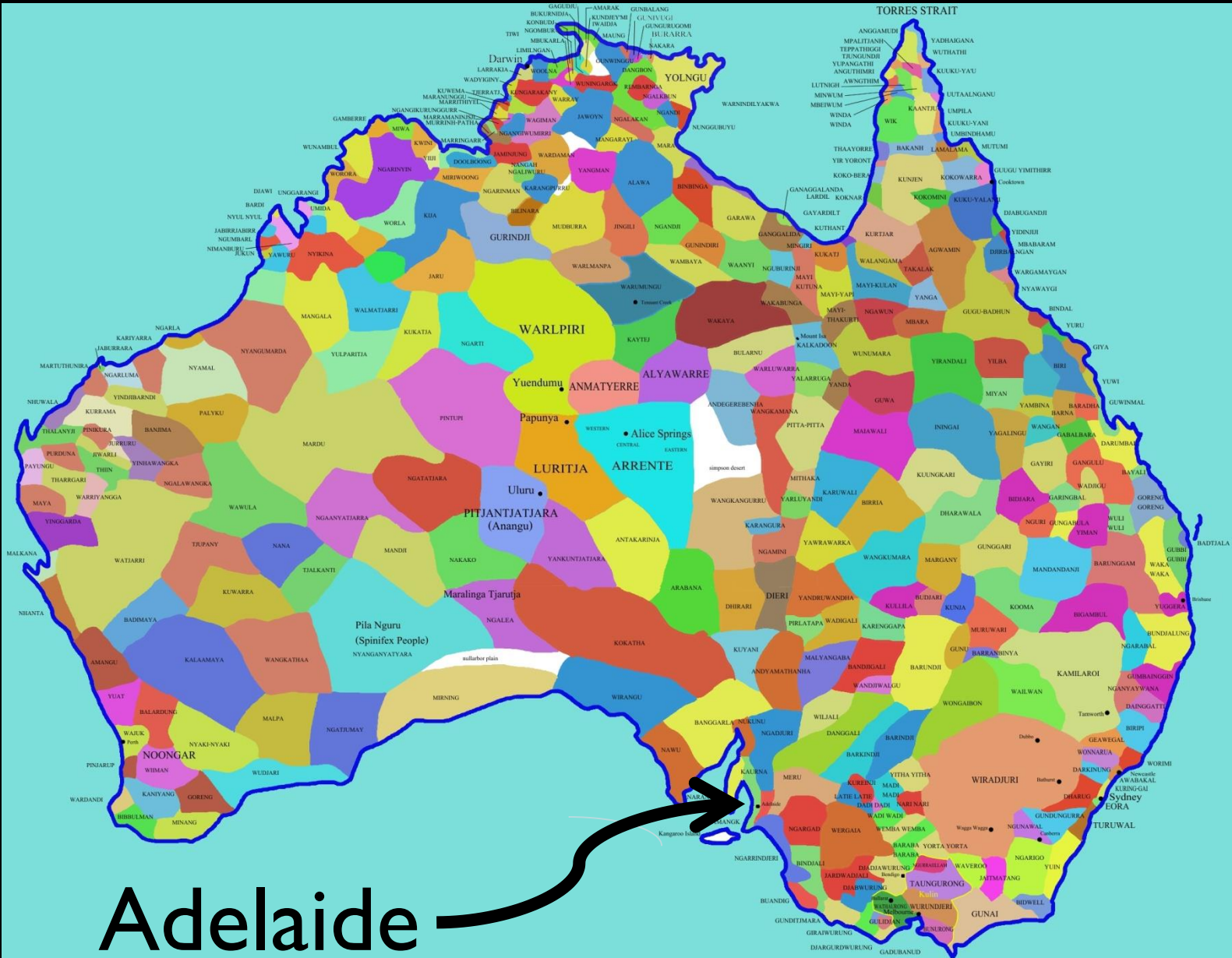
Staying Well

(while social distancing)

Hugh Kearns

Hugh Kearns





Adelaide

Karna people

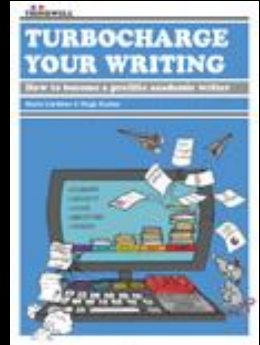
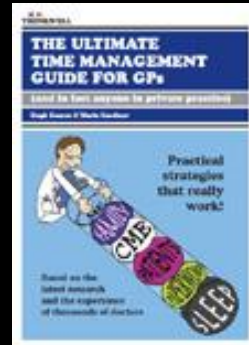


- Flinders University
- Lecture • Research
- Self-management



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52 WAYS TO STAY WELL

During your PhD, Post-doc
or Research Career

Hugh Kearns



Ben Bulbin, County Sligo, Ireland

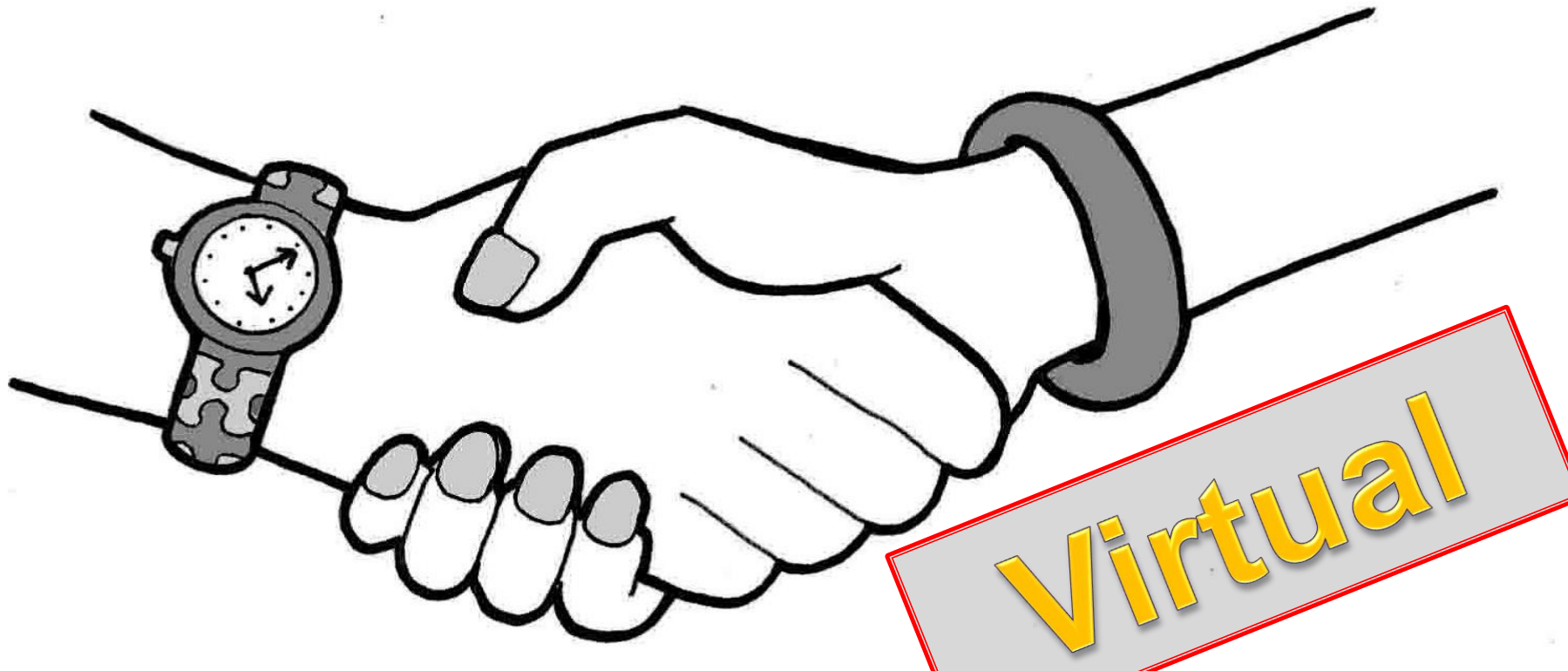


And who are you?

Introduce yourself

- Name
- Where are you?

CHAT



Isolation



Isolation

Photo from Unsplash by Carlos "Grun"



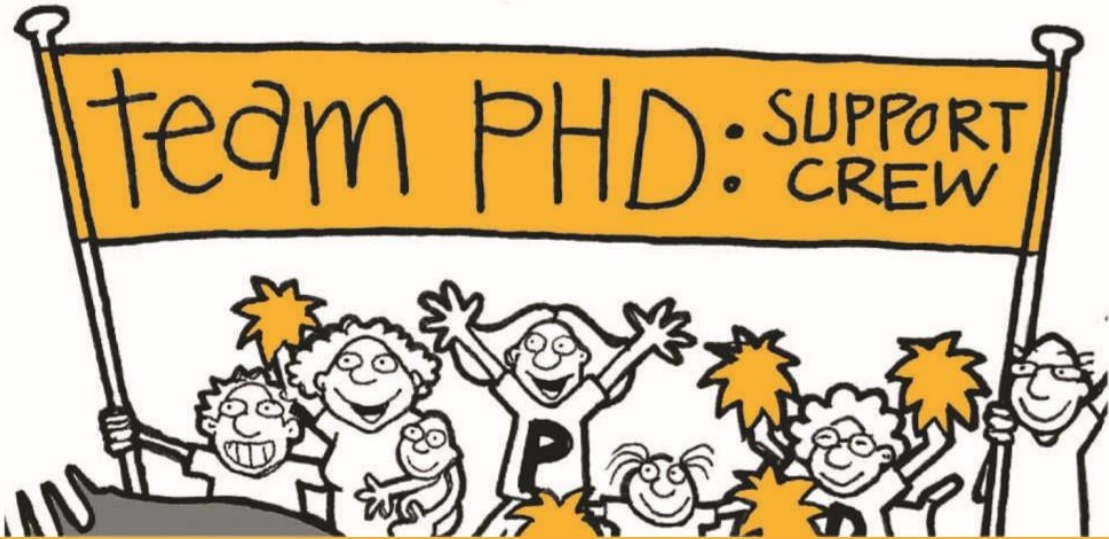
Virtual

SUPPORT CREW

Research can be very isolating, both physically and socially. It's good to have a support crew.

Members of your support crew could be:

Your partner	A writing group	Organisations/ groups within your institution
Family	A social group you connect with	
Friends		
Colleagues in your research area	A counsellor or psychologist	



Your partner
 Family
 Friends
 Colleagues in your research area

A writing group
 A social group you connect with
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 Organisations/groups within your institution



Virtual

Routines and structure

Routines

- ▲ Flexibility is nice
- ▲ Structure is good

4. ROUTINES

The flexibility of research means it can be easy to drop your normal routines. You can stay up late reading articles, then get up late the next day, feel tired, miss meals and avoid going out.

While some flexibility is nice, most people function better with structure in their lives:

- Getting up at a certain time
- Having breakfast
- Having a shower
- Going out to meet people
- Eating regularly
- Sleeping regularly

In psychology these are called ADLs or activities of daily living. They are not very exciting or dramatic but they are important in providing structure and giving meaning to your day. And they tend to be associated with feeling better.

So if you find yourself drifting a bit, it might be time to get the ADLs going. Even if you don't want to. At this moment you might not feel like getting up and putting clothes on, but once you're up you'll feel better. You might not feel like coming onto campus, but once you're there, it'll be fine.

- ▲ Getting up time
- ▲ Showering
- ▲ Getting dressed
- ▲ Regular meals
- ▲ Regular breaks
- ▲ Finishing time
- ▲ Regular sleep

ADLs

Activities of Daily Living

Routines

Routines are especially important when things aren't going so well. Let's say you're not making much progress in your research, you're losing motivation and feeling down. So you decide to have a lie-in in the morning and binge watch a TV series. Then you start to feel guilty because you haven't done any work. You start to worry about your research and then worry about everything else too. You lose more motivation and feel worse. This is when having a routine could help. The occasional

lie-in is a treat. Occasional binge watching is not a problem. But when they become the norm and you're finding it hard to do anything else, it might be time for some routines.

That's the importance of routines. You don't do something when you feel like it – you do it because it's a routine and then you feel better.

Normal?

Not Normal

It's not normal

These are difficult days

It's not normal

So don't expect your normal output

It's not normal

Work full-time

Home school the kids

Entertain the kids

Keep the house going

Respond quickly to emails

Keep up your high standards

Support your friends/family

Worry that you're finding it hard

Stay sane

You can't do it all.

Be kind to yourself.

This is a tough time.

Can't

do it

ALL

Being
Realistic

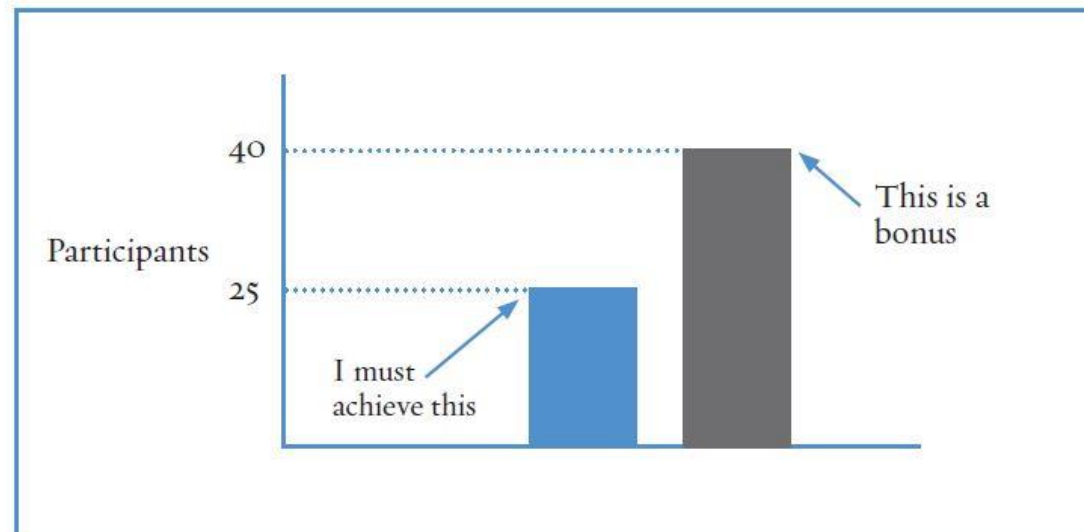
Two-goal approach

The two goals approach

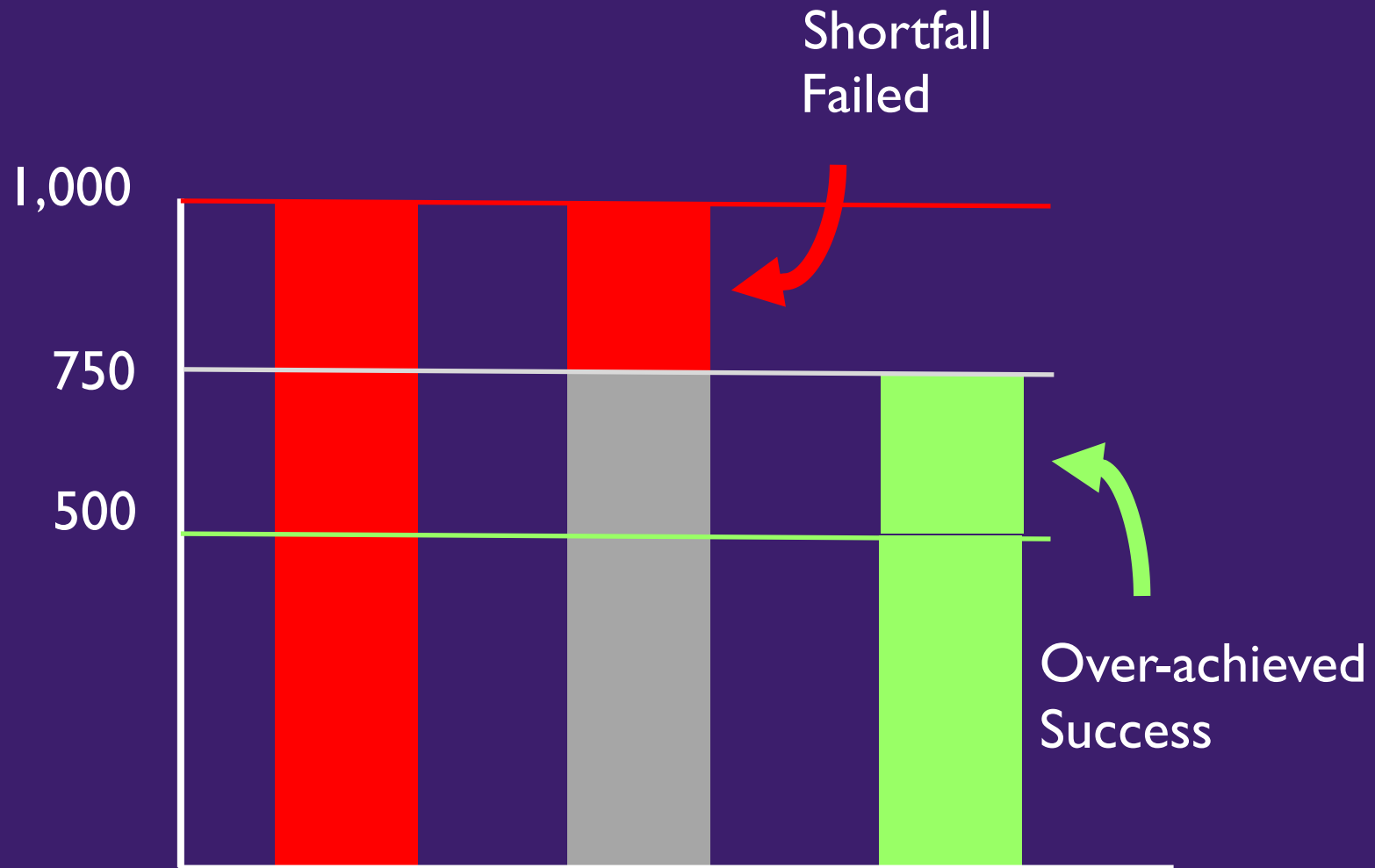
Some people don't feel comfortable setting realistic goals. They feel they are not pushing themselves hard enough. Or that they might slack off because the goals aren't demanding enough. One approach is to create two goals. One is the realistic one, and the other is the stretch goal or the best case goal.

For example the realistic goal could be to interview 25 participants and analyse the data. The stretch goal could be to interview 40 participants and analyse the data.

This means that if you get to 25, you can feel OK. More than that is a bonus.



Two-goal approach



Distraction



Switching



$$\begin{array}{rcl} \text{Real time} & & 2 \\ & & = \\ \text{Fantasy time} & & 10 \end{array}$$

Close
the
door









- ▲ What is your strategy for dealing with the distractions?

CHAT

Switching off



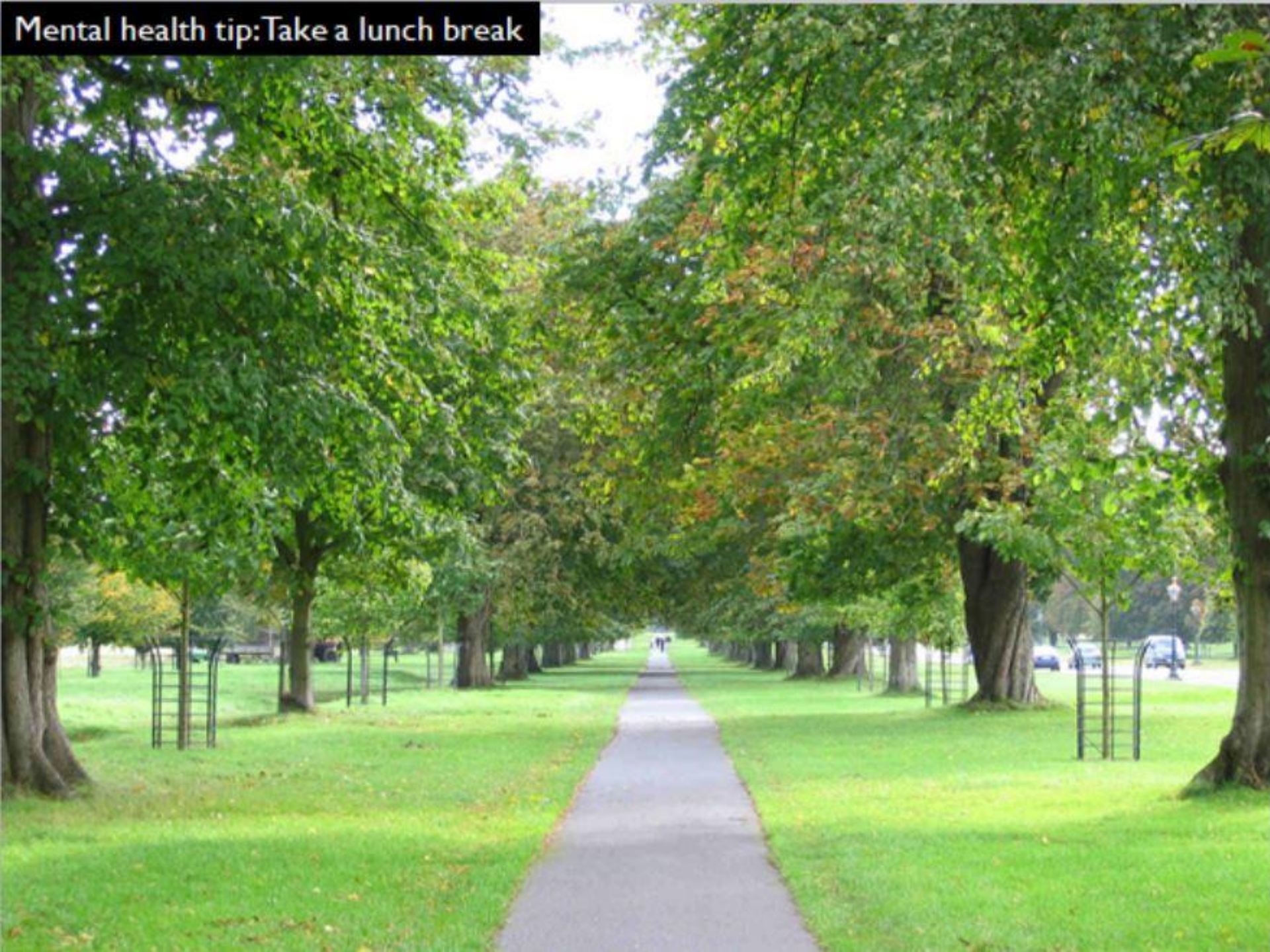
ON



OFF



Mental health tip: Take a lunch break



Run

Knit

Paint

Creative writing

Friends

Nap

Movies

Pottery

Pets

Yoga

Voluntary work

Read

Meditate

Walking

Stress
and
worry

Early Warning Signs

Furniture rage
Physical signs
Short temper
Get irritated

Ask someone
who knows
you!



Early Warning Signs

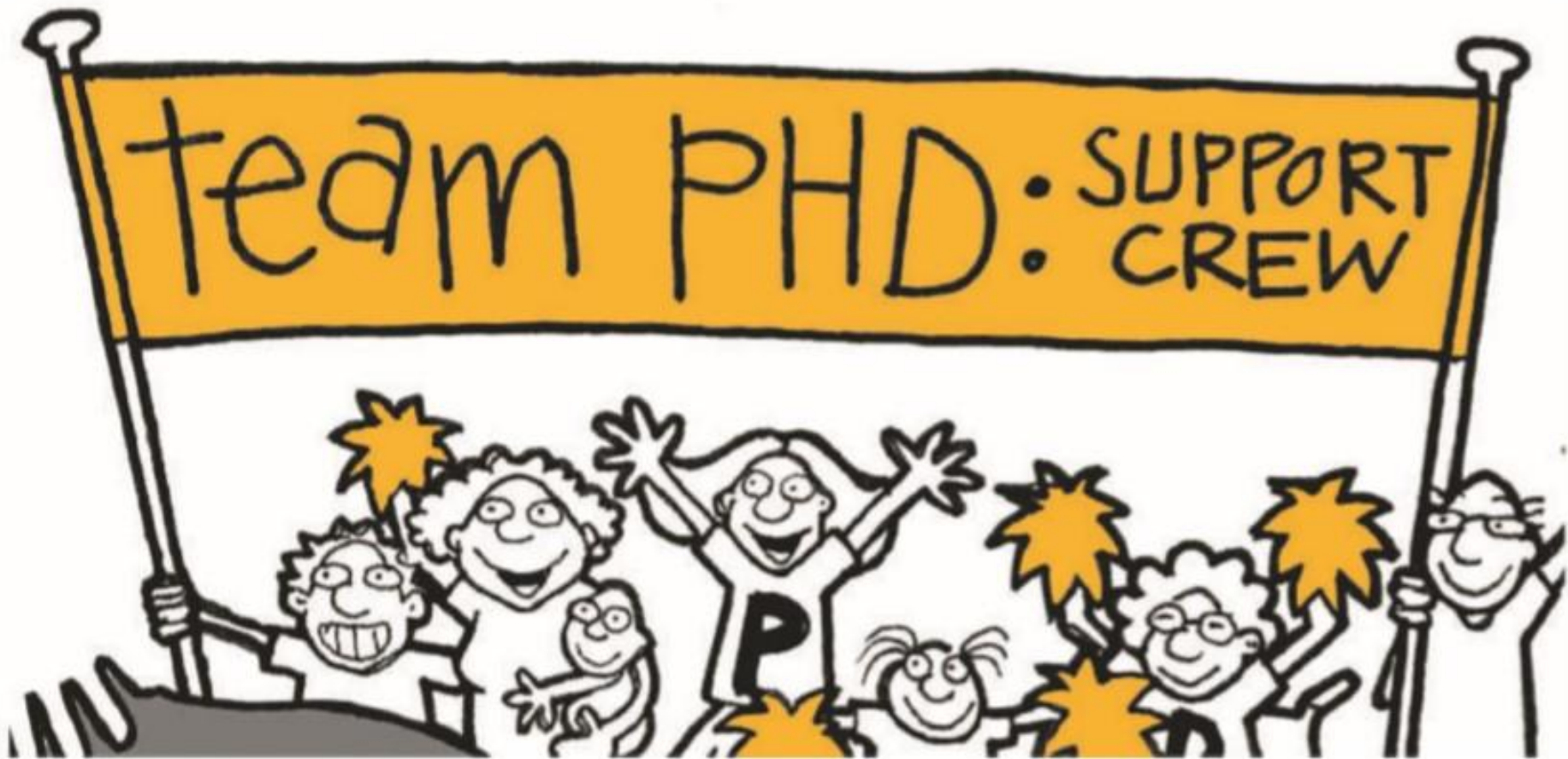
▲ What are your Early Warning Signs?

CHAT

Time Out



Talk about it



Write it down

The thing that is
bothering me is ...



Distraction



Music

Podcasts

Movies

Reading

Techniques

- Meditation
- Mindfulness
- Yoga
- Tai Chi



▲ How do you switch off?

CHAT

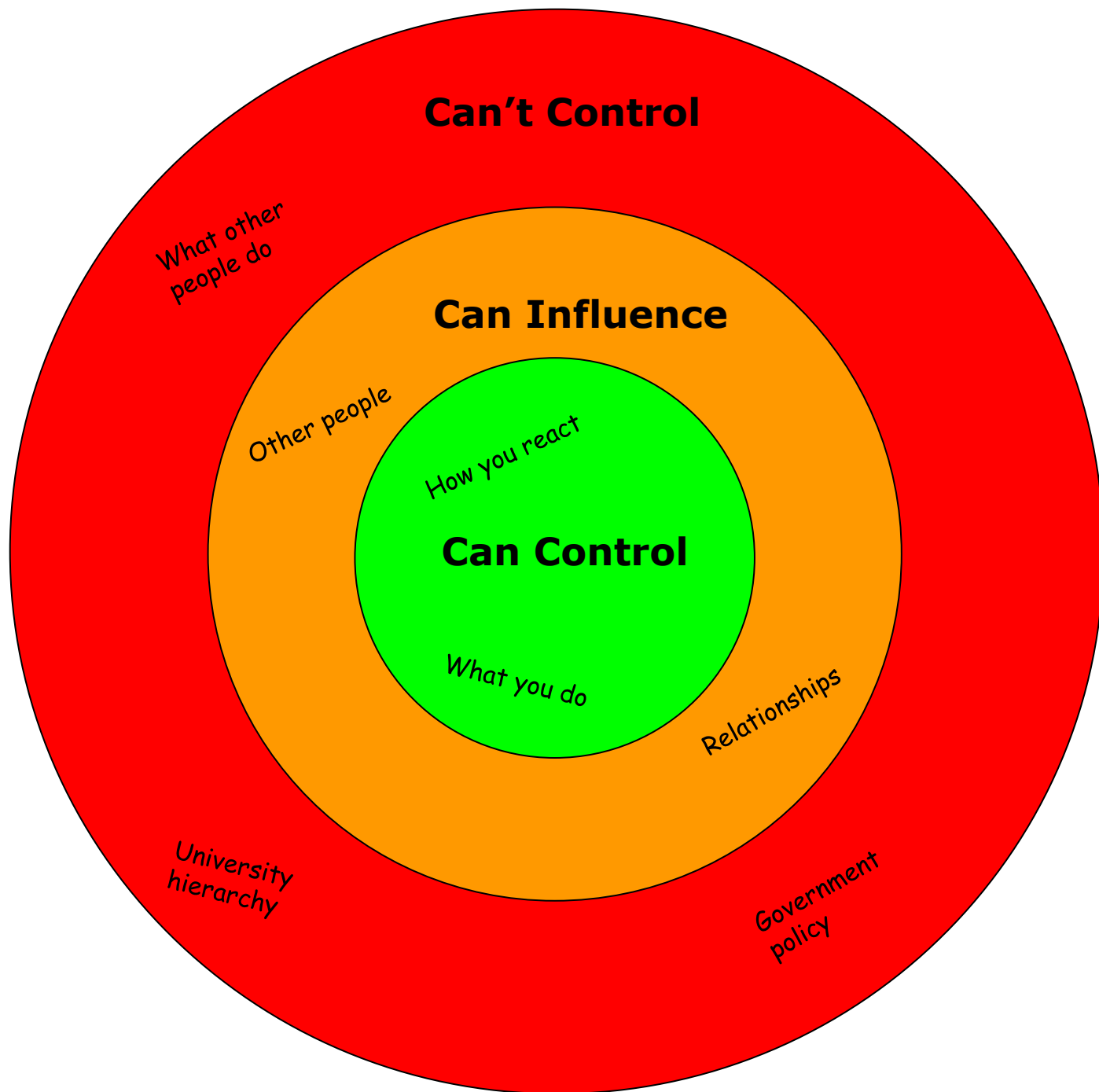
Reach out

Reach out

There is support – but you have to reach out

- Friends
- Counselling
- Psychology

Circles of influence



What are your Controllables?

- What can you do (or not do!) that could help you stay well.

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