

The Weave

A simple way to look at your life and see whether the world around you is helping you cope with pain — or making it harder.

When you're living with long-term pain — or any hard season of life — the thing that helps most is a quiet sense that **you're going to be okay, whatever happens**. That feeling comes from two beliefs: that the people and things around you **will support you**, and that **you have what it takes** to get through.

The Weave is a picture you draw of your own life. It helps you see where your strength is coming from, and where something might be draining you — so you can make small changes that leave you better supported.

What gives us resilience

We cope better when the world around us gives us certain things. You don't need to memorise this list — it's simply what we look for when we draw your Weave. You're more able to adapt to pain when your life gives you:

- 1 **Validation.** A sense that your experience is real and taken seriously.
- 2 **Supportive relationships.** People — family, friends, peers, mentors, community — who are there for you.
- 3 **A sense of identity.** Being part of something that gives you pride, purpose and satisfaction.
- 4 **Some control.** A feeling that you have power over your own life and choices.
- 5 **Fair treatment.** Being treated as an equal, with real chances to take part and contribute.
- 6 **Access to what you need.** The basics — food, clothing, a safe and calm place to be, money, medical care, and chances to learn or work.
- 7 **Meaning.** A sense that your life matters and has purpose.
- 8 **Routine and structure.** Predictable rhythms — daily habits, regular gatherings, and practices that matter to you (like ways of worship).

The more of these you're getting, the better your chances of coping well with pain — and the Weave helps you find where they're strong and where they're missing.

START HERE — FIND YOUR ANCHOR

Before you begin, choose an anchor. An anchor is someone who consistently makes you feel safe and supported, and whose opinion you trust. Ask them to sit with you as you do the Weave and to support you as you make changes.

Don't have a person like that right now? Use something that comforts and steadies you instead — a pet, a place, the memory of someone from your past, a song, a film, a hero of yours (real or imagined), or your faith. **Come back to your anchor often as you work through this.**

How the Weave works

There are three simple movements to it:

1. **List** the people, places and things that have a real influence on your life.
2. **Notice** whether each one mostly supports you or mostly drains you.
3. **Adjust** — look for ways to lean into what supports you and ease what drains you, so you have more strength overall.

Drawing your Weave

You'll need the template on the next page (or a blank sheet of paper), and a blue and a red pen or pencil. Take your time — there's no rush and no right answer.

1 Put yourself in the centre

Write your name in the middle of the page. Everything else grows out from here.

2 Add the things that matter in your life

Around your name, write down:

- a. People you have important relationships with
- b. Groups that are part of who you are (work, cultural, lifestyle, faith)
- c. People, places or groups that give you what you need — e.g. work gives you income; a class gives you exercise and calm
- d. Places you spend a lot of time — home, work, school, the gym
- e. Things you do regularly — sports, hobbies, habits (including ones like smoking or snacking)
- f. Personal qualities you identify with — being kind, strong-willed, creative
- g. Your pain itself, *if* it also gives you something — meaning, inspiration, or a way of connecting with others

Some things will fit in more than one place — that's completely fine.

3 Mark what supports you and what drains you

Look at each thing you wrote, and draw a line connecting it to you in the centre:

- a. A **blue line** if it *gives* you strength or support
- b. A **red line** if it *drains* you or gets in the way

Make the line show *how much*: a thin dashed line for a little, a thick line for a lot. See the legend on the template page.

Something can be both supportive and draining — draw both a blue and a red line if so.

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See how things connect

Now look at everything together. Do any of them affect each other?

- a. Do some make it **easier** to reach others? (*e.g. going to the gym regularly makes it easier to see your friends*)
- b. Do some get in the way of others? (*e.g. caring for an elderly parent gives you purpose, but leaves less room for a career that gives you identity*)
- c. Do some cancel each other out, or strengthen each other?

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Look for small changes

Finally, think about how you might shift things so you feel more supported overall:

- a. If something drains you more than it helps, can you change *how you interact with it*? (*e.g. meeting a toxic friend less often, or reading the news instead of watching it if you find graphic footage disturbing*)
Is there another source for that same support?
- b. What's getting in the way of stepping back from a draining thing, or closer to a supportive one?
- c. Do you have a good **variety** of the resilience factors from page 1, or are some missing?
- d. Is there support in your life you're not using right now? Is there someone who could help you reach it?

A GENTLE REMINDER

You're not judging anything here — you're just honestly noticing how it affects *you*. If a relationship drains you more than it supports you, that doesn't make the other person bad. It's simply what's true for you right now.







And your Weave will keep changing through your life. Something that drains you today may strengthen you later, and the other way around. Come back to it whenever things shift.

When you're done

Bring your Weave to your next visit at Novah, or talk it through with your anchor. Seeing it on paper is often the first step to feeling more in control — and you don't have to make sense of it alone.

Draw it here

HOW TO DRAW YOUR LINES

-  Supports you a lot
-  Supports you moderately
-  Supports you a little
-  Drains you a lot
-  Drains you moderately
-  Drains you a little

