

PATHWAYS
A WORKBOOK FOR EXPLORING GOD'S CALL

Preparing to use this booklet

The templates within this booklet are intended to stimulate reflection and conversation. It is a fun and energising way of working. Using visual imagery such as the templates found in this booklet allows you to involve several styles of learning. By doing something more than just talking or writing, every aspect of the person is engaged.

People will use these templates in different ways. Some people will draw, others will write, some will add colour or use post-its. Some will be concerned for neatness, others will use it as a scribble pad. These templates are a prompt to conversation and learning. Some people may call on existing experience (especially those templates relating to the past), others may be enriched by calling on complementary activities (such as personality or team style questionnaires), some people will require input from a specific ministry warden in explaining the steps towards a particular ministry.

A few notes are included before each page, to suggest how individual templates could be used. The same visual metaphors are repeated: life as a journey, pools of spiritual refreshment or resource, the rising sun as a direction of travel, the self as a container, the self as a garden. Many of these images are found in the parables of Jesus and the teaching of the Apostle Paul.

This material has been developed through conversations and reflections between Mandy Ford, Nicky McGinty and Stuart Burns. The material draws on the work of Christina Merkley (www.shift-it-coach.com), and the graphic facilitation skills of David Sibbert and the Grove Consultancy (www.grove.com). Where a specific source has been used, these are acknowledged in the notes preceding each page.

We have tried to avoid using business-speak, or overtly secular 'coaching' language in the templates. However, we know that these could be improved, and would value any suggestions for changes or additions.

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At the Crossroads.

This is a starting point, so reflect not only on the positive sense of calling and future possibilities, but also on the things that unsettle you or concern you.

You might find it easier to start in the past, whether long ago or recently.

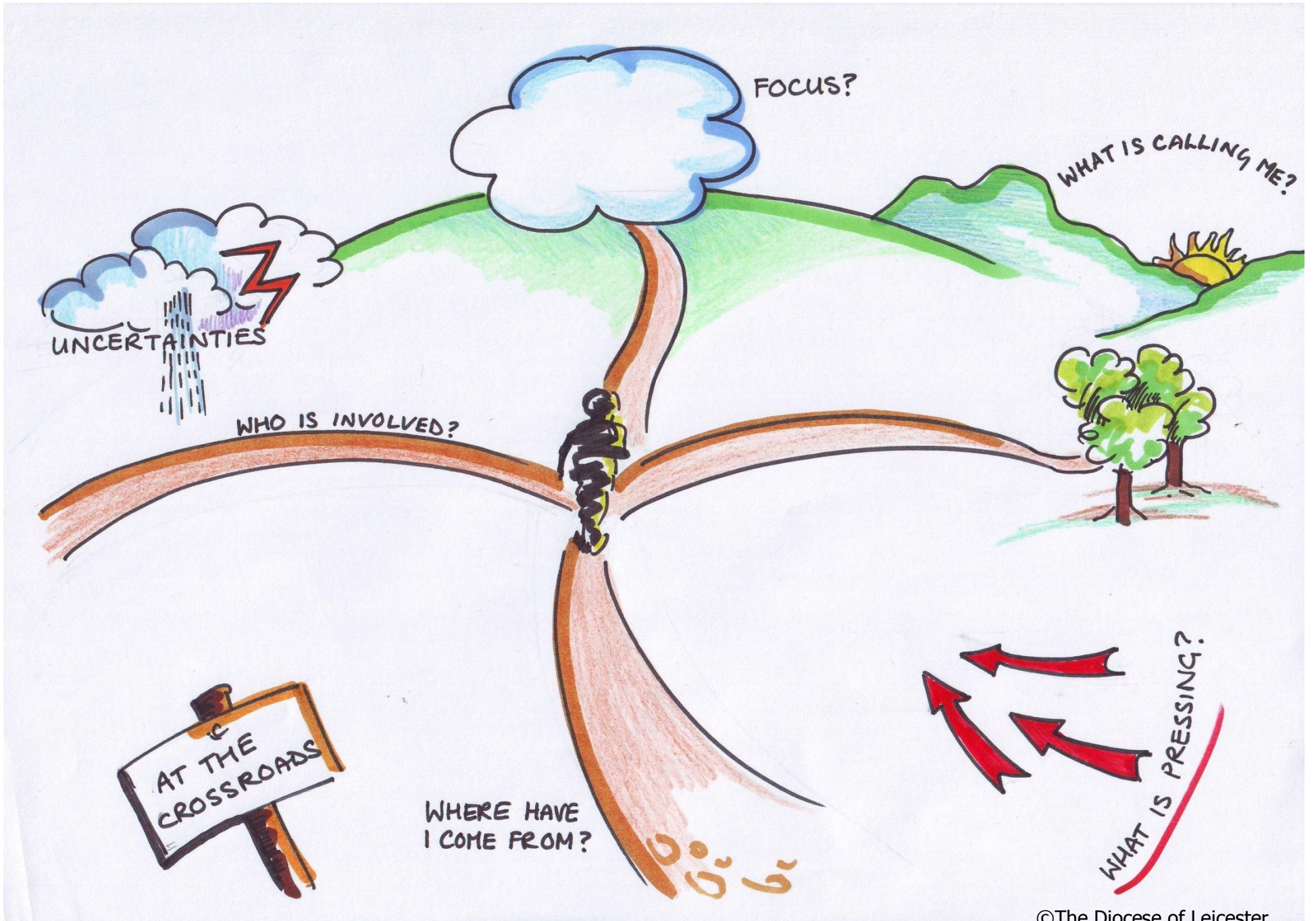
Who has got you to this point?

What are you being drawn towards? Is there a feeling, or a specific role?

Go round the loop a few times and see what emerges.

Consider what is pressing – what motivates you – and why this is a question for you now?

You could look at biblical decisions: the disciples by the sea, Ruth and Naomi, Zaccheus or Jacob...



The Journey of Life

This is a way of recording the past. You are invited to draw a line which travels up and down through the joys and sorrows of life. You may need to use a second sheet – if you do need to, join the sheet onto the page.

Start at the beginning, pick a point (childhood, adulthood) and work through, plotting the major events.

Recognise the dreams and visions you had along the way, and the key people in your story.

Take your time on this sheet.

Be honest with yourself.

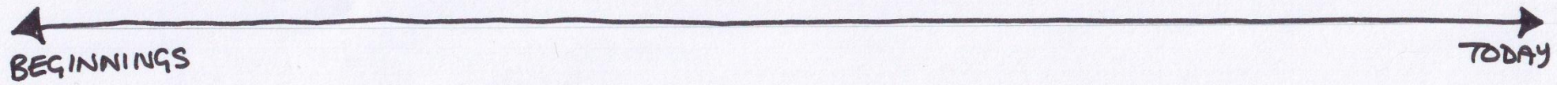
You may find it useful to talk through any issues that arise with a friend or your Church leader.

You might read the description of Paul's journeys in the Acts of the Apostles as you think about your own journey.

Another version of this exercise can be found in *Landmarks* by Margaret Silf (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1998)



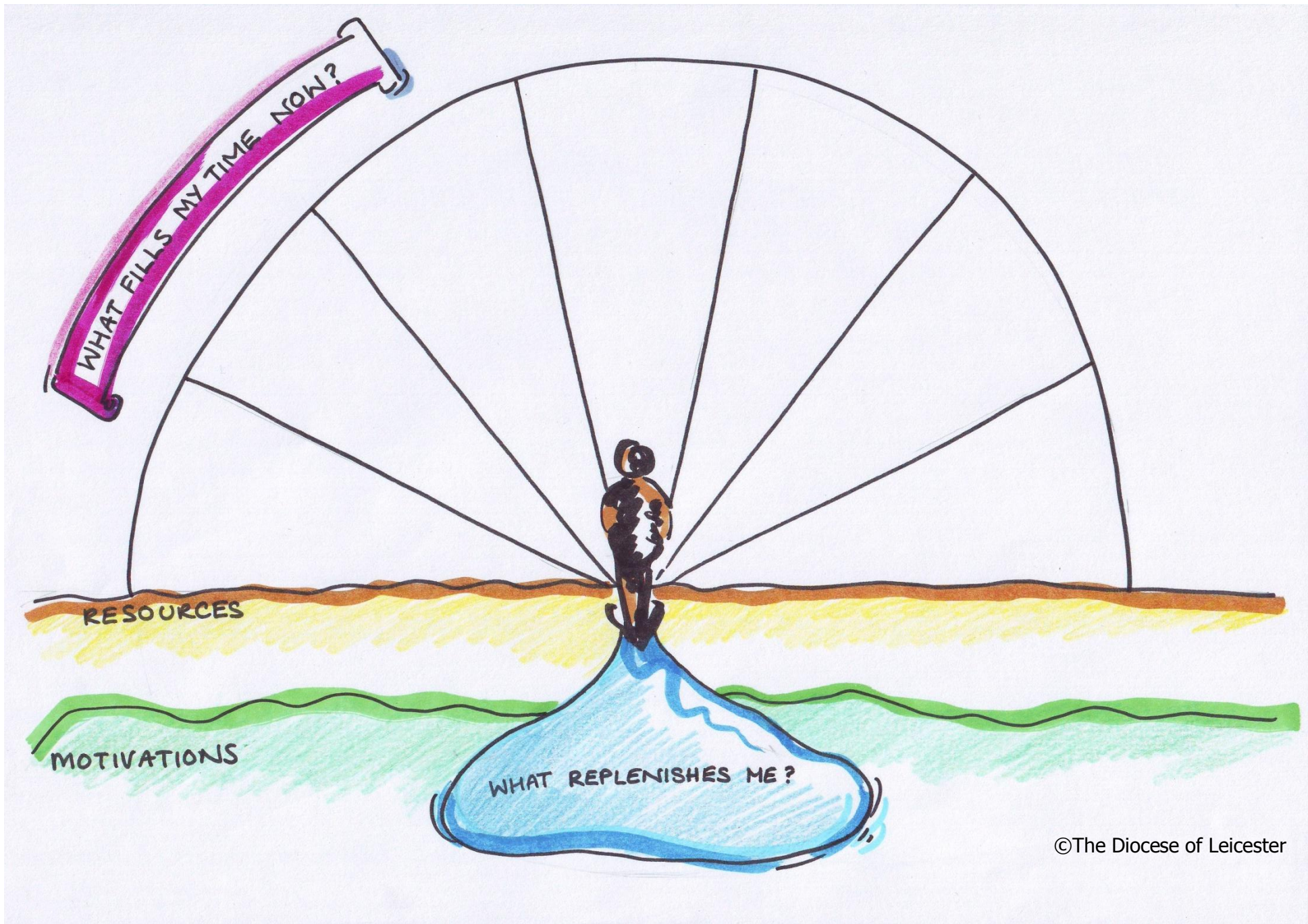
JOYS



SORROWS



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My Life

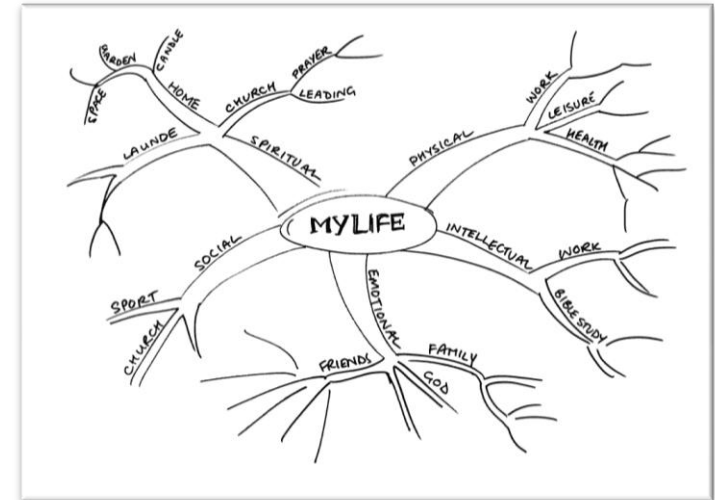
This template is a way of recording roles and activities, which can help to see how some aspects of life are significant for the individual, but also to highlight any unhealthy imbalance.

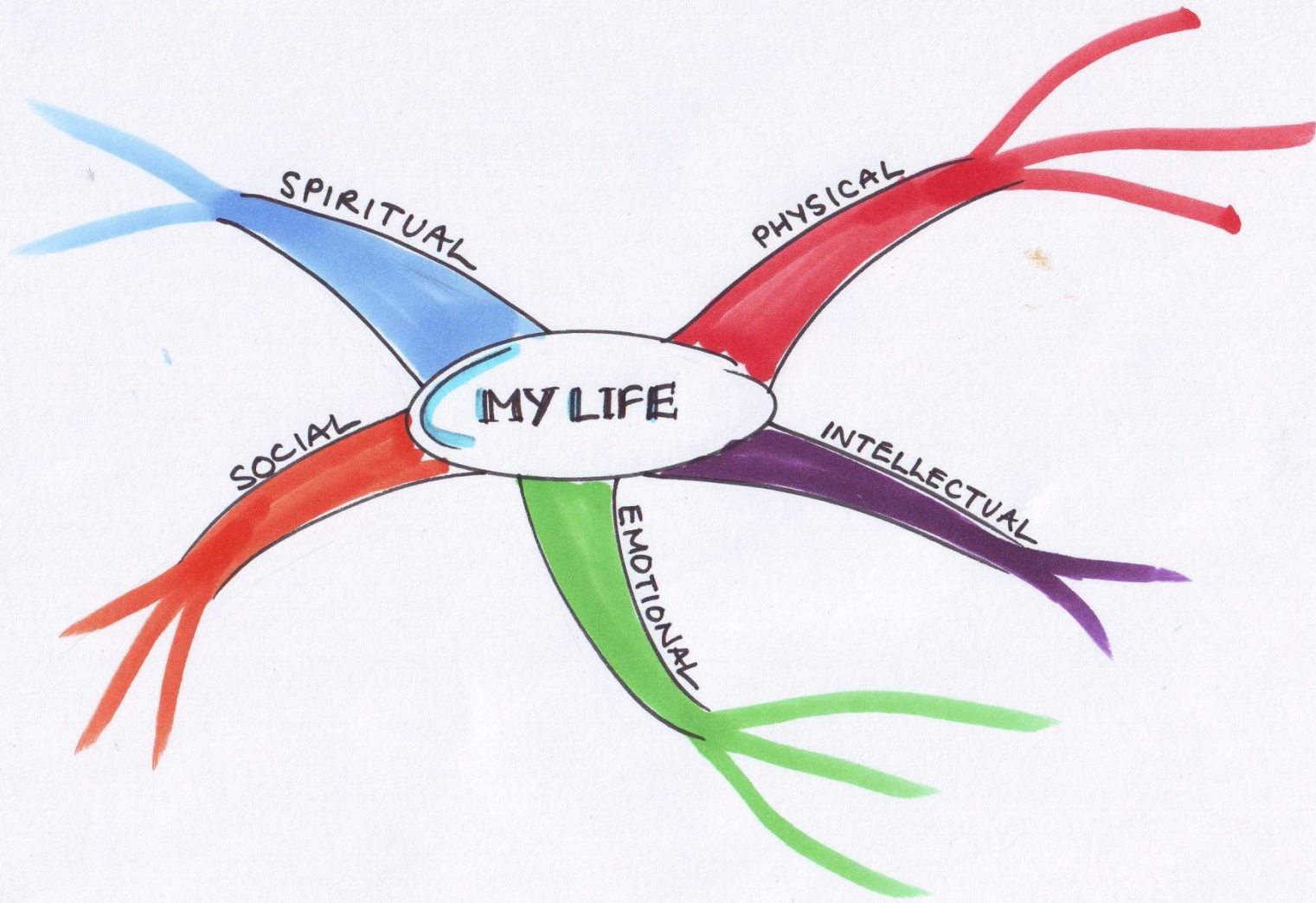
From each branch of the template (Physical, Social, Intelligence, Spiritual, Emotional) add further branches to record the roles and activities in your life as you currently live it. You could colour each branch a different colour.

This template combines the spider diagram techniques promoted by Tony Buzan (www.thinkbuzan.com), with ideas from Stephen Covey *First Things First* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1994). It is a good technique for getting all the information into one place with links and branches so you can see how things connect.

If you have never seen this before you can see some completed examples at <http://www.thinkbuzan.com/uk/support/mindmapgallery>

You might want to add a sheet to think about what you would like your life to be.





What is bearing fruit?

This is a straightforward SWOT analysis – and enables conversation and reflection about:

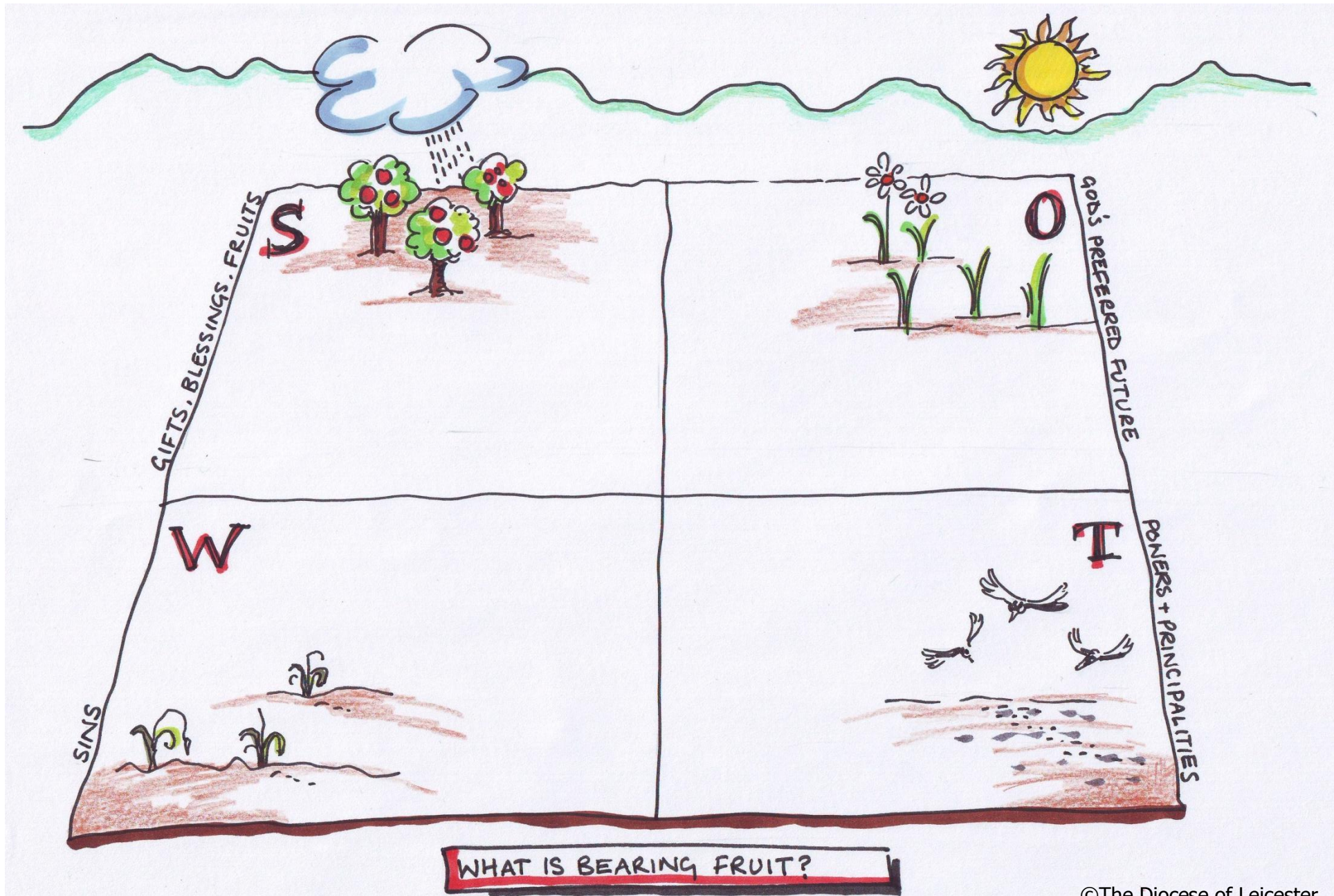
- S Strengths (talents, gifts, blessings)
- W Weaknesses (skills that are lacking, or qualities that are weak)
- O Opportunities (interests, local needs, changes in life circumstances)
- T Threats (emotional, relational, actual)

S and W focus on my present and internal experiences

O and T focus on my external and future context.

The image of the parable of the sower is reflected in this template, which reminds us that although we plant and tend the garden, God sends the sun and the rain which make the plants grow.

For biblical reflection you could read the parables or Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians



Options

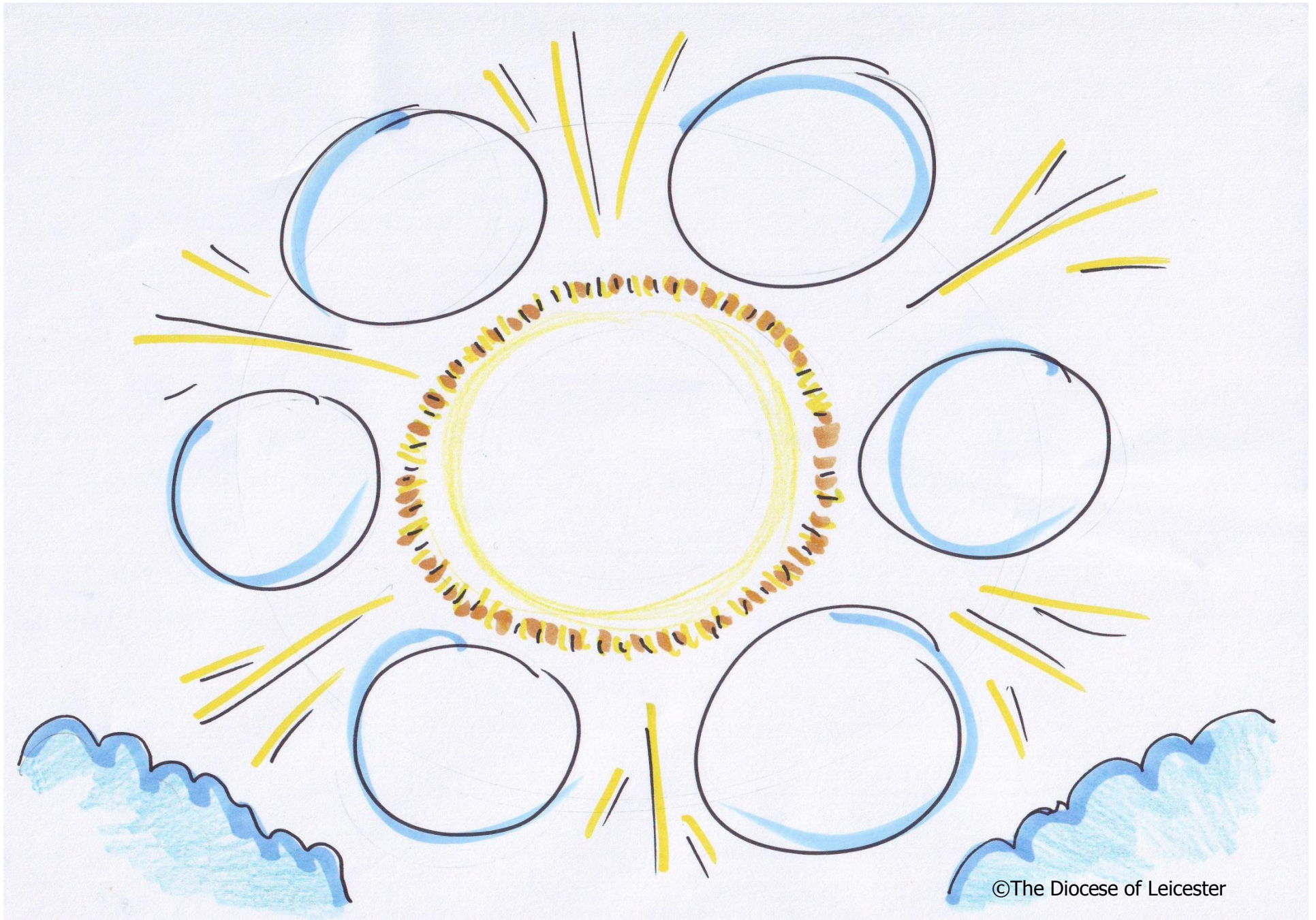
This template helps you to name the possibilities open to you.

Here is a list you might think about:

full time parent or carer, lay reader, international or local volunteer, pastoral assistant, ordained minister, member of religious or volunteer community (such as L'Arche, or a new monastic group), youth or children's worker, chaplain in a hospital, hospice, prison or university, church warden....

Take some time to think about your options and to see what attracts you. Consider what you need to do next and how you will discern the way forward.

Read Paul's letter to the Ephesians, or the lists of gifts and vocations he provides in I Corinthians 12.



Action Steps

This template helps you to think about what you need to do to progress your list of options.

It is a journey plan which allows conversation about hurdles and milestones.

The journey of vocation is never straight, but always winding and in this template the target or goal is intentionally obscured.

Look ahead and identify the steps you must take to engage with your calling or vocation. What hurdles must be overcome between any steps or stages. You may find it helpful to use sticky notes while you work out the sequence of events, and this might take time, moving things around before they are clear.

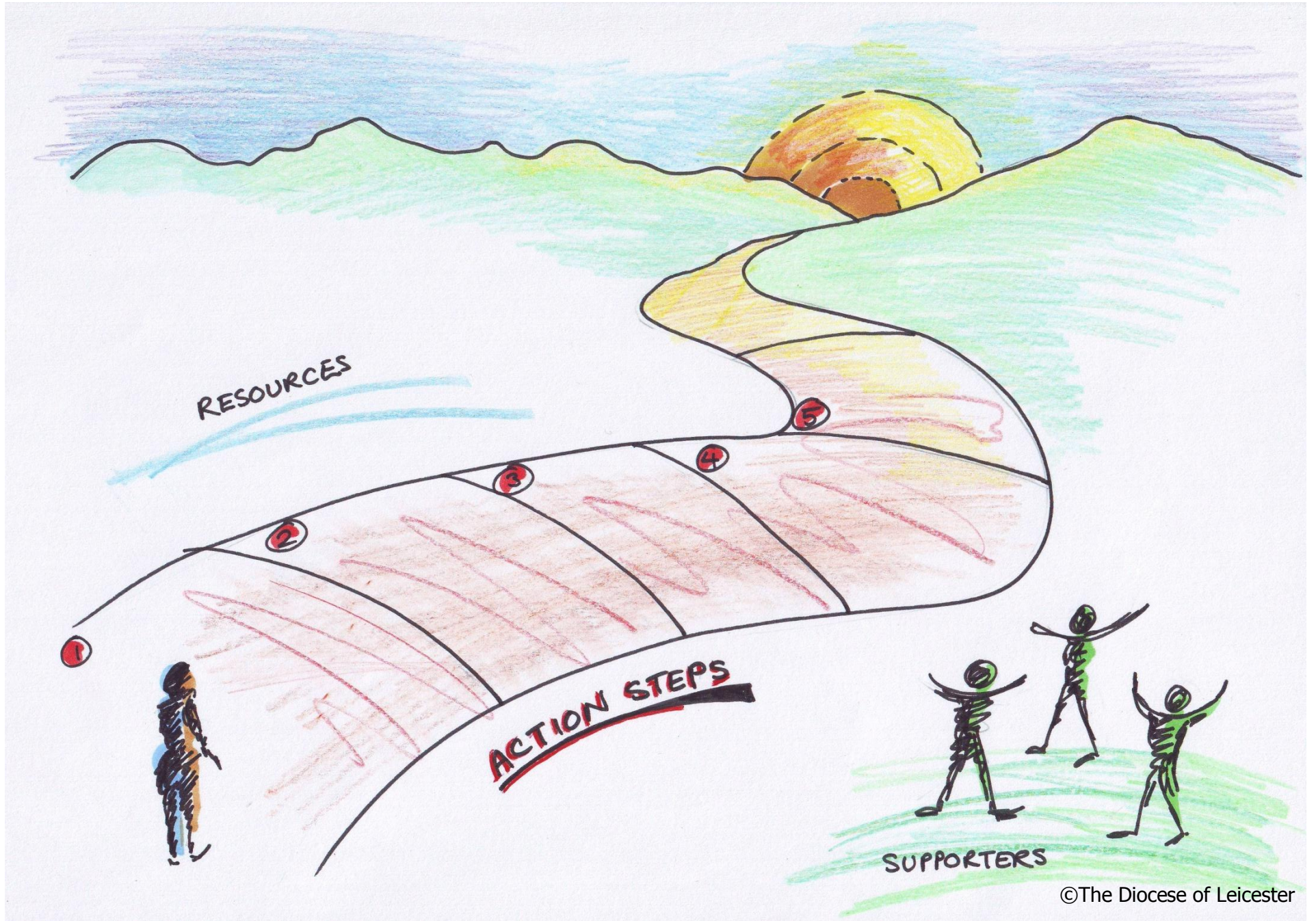
Work though in sequence,

- a. big steps – 1,2,3,4,5
- b. resources,
- c. who might be your support,
- d. identifying rocks and hurdles you might encounter.

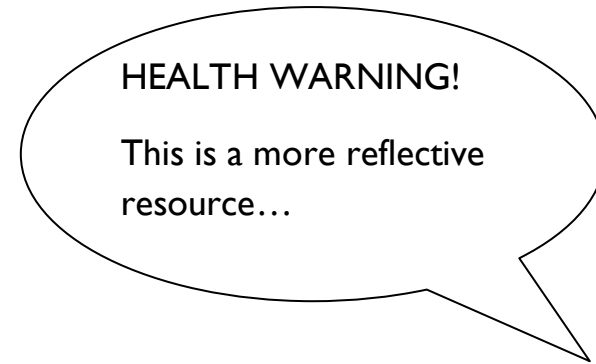
You may find it helpful to talk with a course tutor, a Church leader, or ministry warden at this stage, if appropriate.

Try to identify who will support you in this journey and what resources you will need.

This template is based on various models found in the material from Grove Consultants, for example the “Graphic Gameplan” or “Five Big Steps” - for more information see www.grove.com/site/index.html



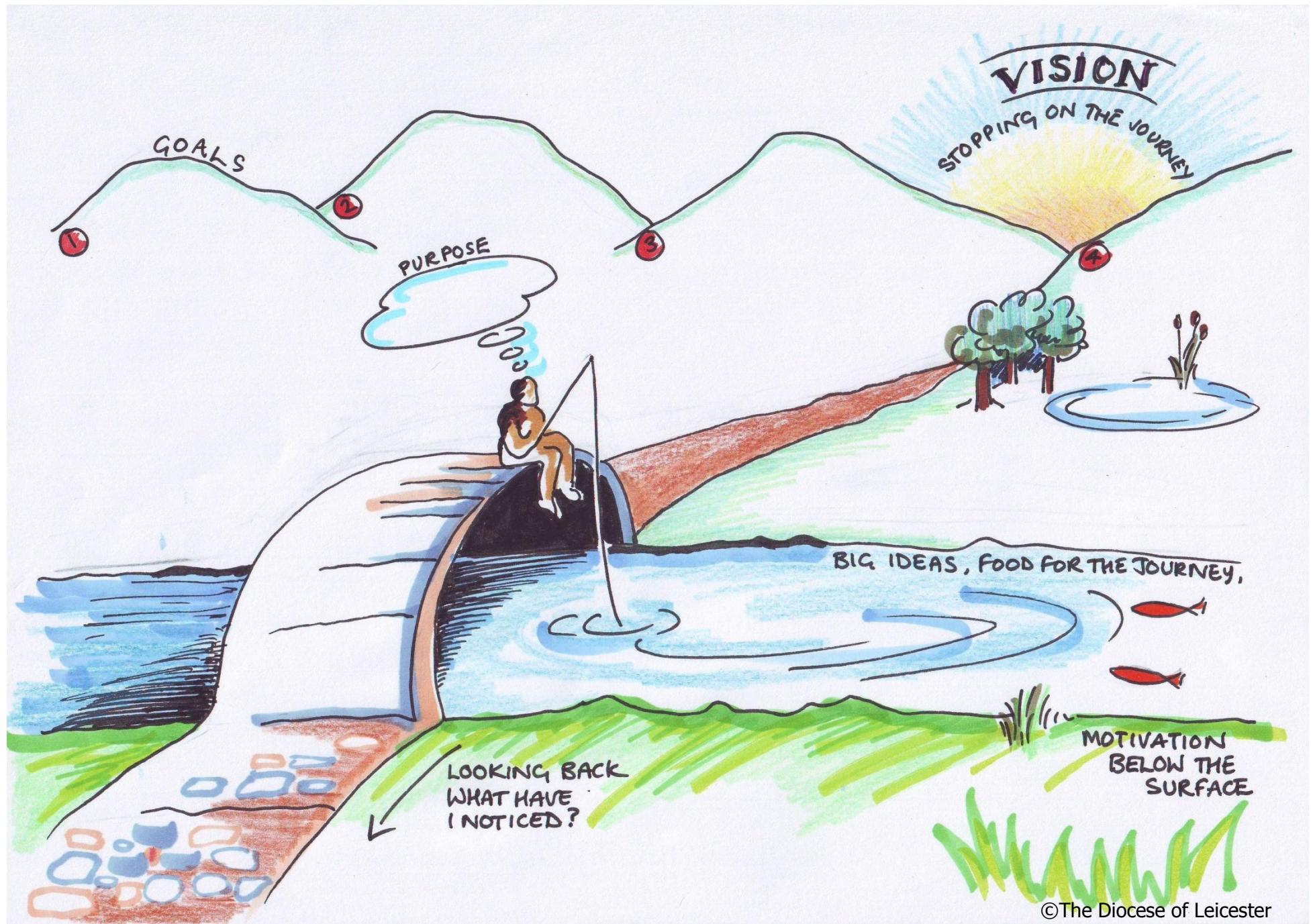
Vision: Stopping on the journey



This template is a rich framework which brings together many earlier themes.

It might be a good template to use on a retreat day, after you have had time and space to think and pray. It provides an opportunity for conversation and reflection, in which the conversation can help to identify specific resources for the journey. Think carefully about who you will share this template with.

After completion, it might be a good template to review after some time on the vocation journey.



Looking at Ministries

Specific ministry training templates for each licensed ministry within the Diocese of Leicester are available as separate sheets and can be downloaded from the School of Ministry pages of the website.

The 'ministry' templates use a series of containers to enable an audit of gifts, skills or understanding to take place.

Ministries covered currently include:

Ordained ministry (for both stipendiary and non-stipendiary ministers)

Reader ministry

Pastoral assistants

Evangelists

Pioneer ministry

Youth ministry

This is not the last page!

This is not the end of the journey, so make a note in your diary to revisit this material in the future.

Then plan a celebration of what you have achieved, write a letter to yourself, offer thanksgiving to God, take time to pray.

You may also need to acknowledge the things you have put down along the way, or let go of as you have undertaken this journey – it is a good time to say “goodbye”.

And if you recognise things you are still clinging on to, consider how you might let them go.

*I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death,
blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live!*

Deuteronomy Ch.30 v.19

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