Conversations on Burnout

Leading in a Time of Burnout

Hazel ANDERSON TURNER

Who am I?

- Hazel Anderson-Turner

- Certified Business Psychologist

- ICF Professional Certified Coach

- Leadership Team Facilitator

- Specialist in resilience and burnout – the application of Acceptance & Commitment Therapy (ACT) to the workplace

- Coaching skills enthusiast

Focus for this session

- Refresh - What is burnout?
- Reflective questions for leaders
- The shadow side of strengths
- Psychological safety
- Recovery & pacing
- Collective boundaries

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What is burnout?

"Burnout is a syndrome conceptualised as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed".

World Health Organisation

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Burnout occurs when the demands of our roles outstrip our resources

Resources

Reward
Support
Recovery
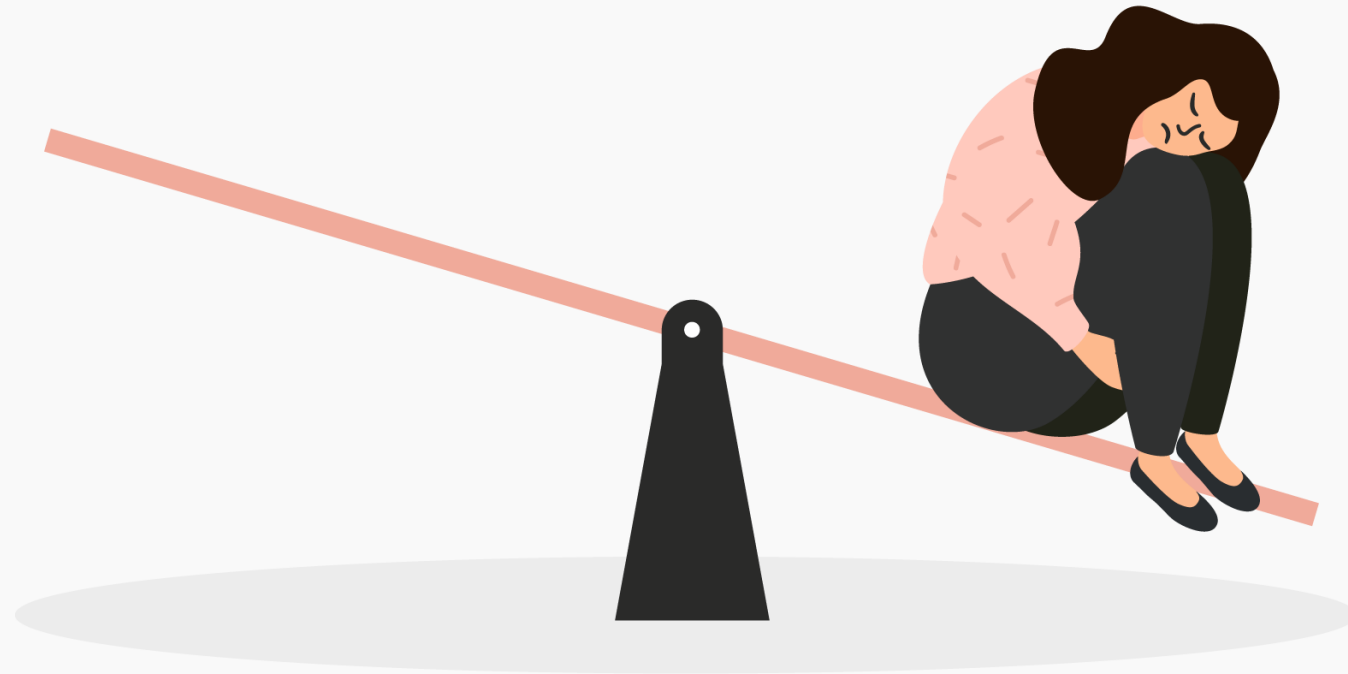
Job Demands

Workload
Values conflicts
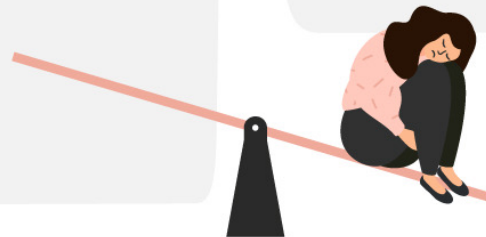Low control

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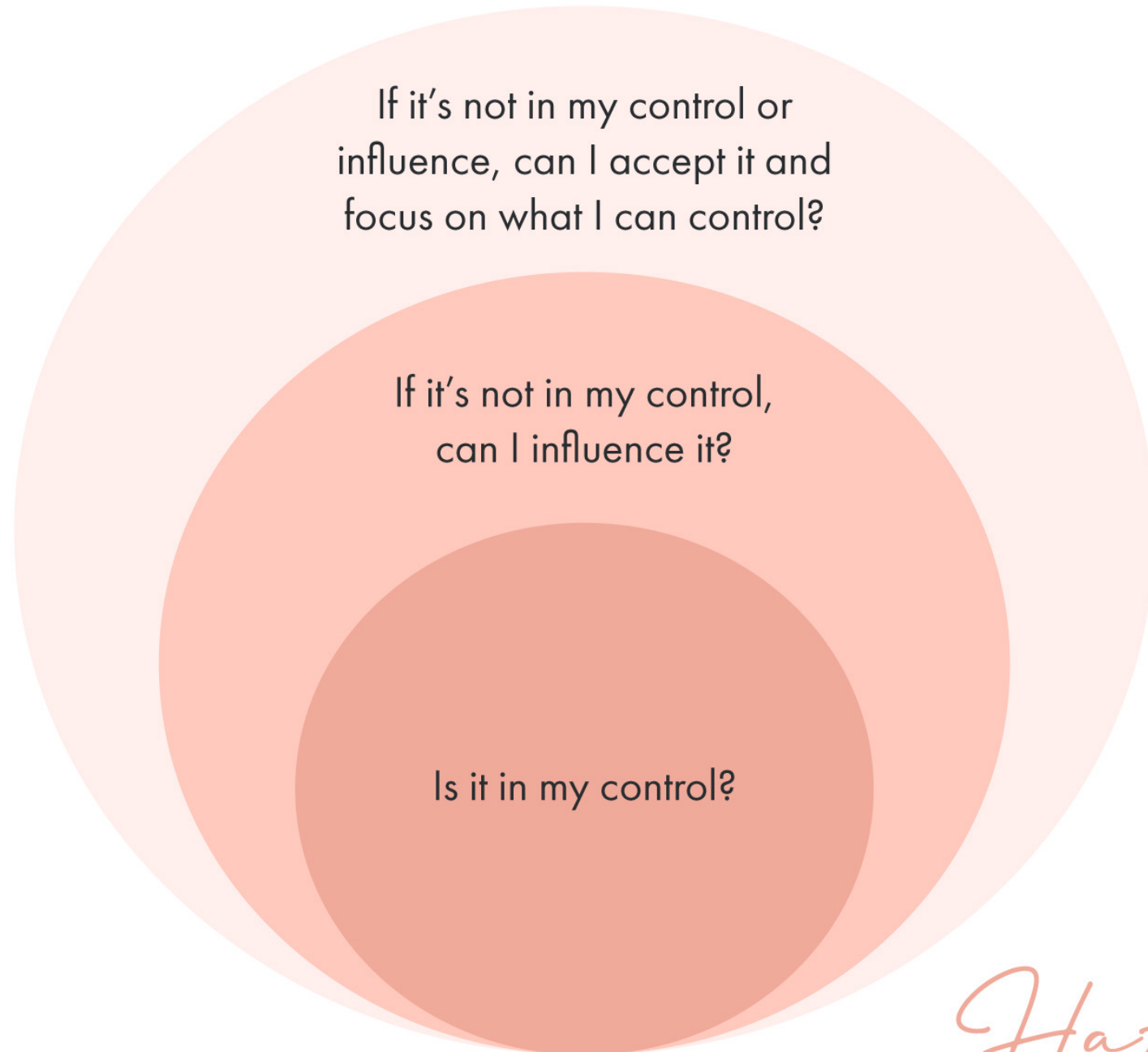# The resource/demand balance (Leadership questions)

Resources

- What is within my control in respect to showing my team that they are appreciated?

- Are there any areas of effort-reward imbalance that I am able to influence in some way?

- What support do my team need most from me right now?

- What small things make a big difference to my team?

- What is most important to my team?

- In what ways can I support my team to recover from the demands of their roles?

- What behaviours do I most need to be role modelling?

Demands

- What are my team finding most challenging right now?

- What is within my control in respect to supporting my team with the demands of their roles?

- In what ways could I support my team to create and hold boundaries?

- How might I be able to increase the amount of control or involvement the team have?

- Am I aware of any values conflicts in the team (particularly in respect to fairness) that might need further discussion and clarity around?

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Covey's circles of influence

If it's not in my control or influence, can I accept it and focus on what I can control?

If it's not in my control, can I influence it?

Is it in my control?

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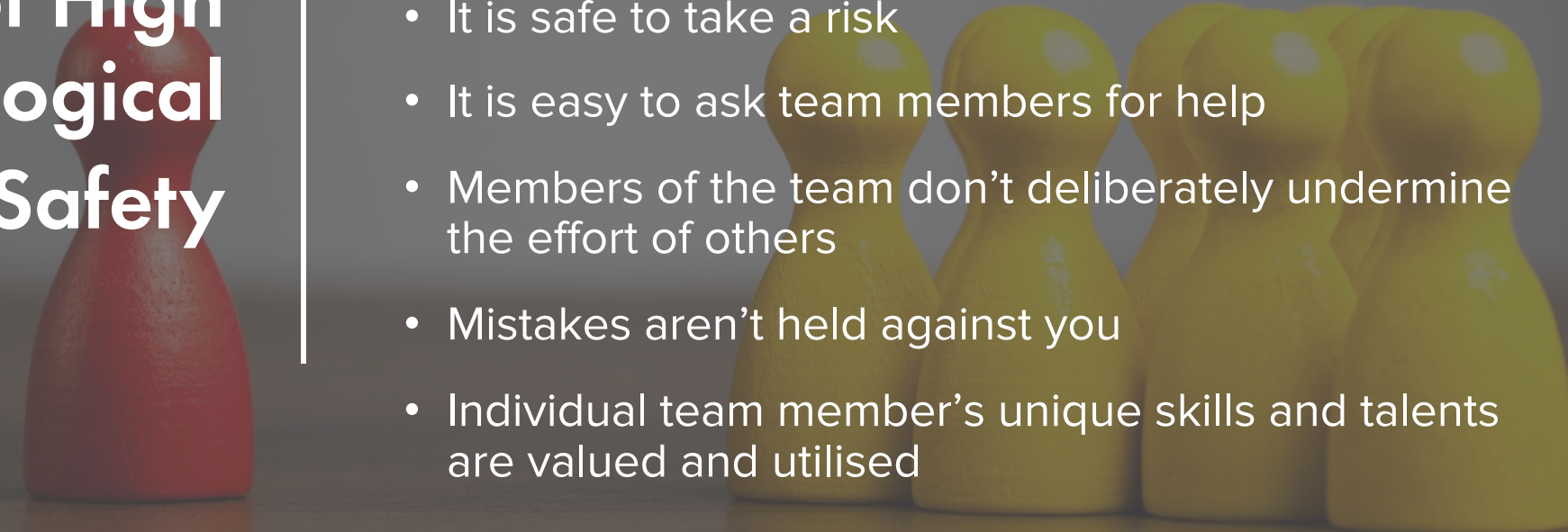
The shadow side of strengths

- What are your greatest strengths?
- What do these look like when they get 'overplayed?'
- What impact does this have on you when this happens?
- What impact do you think it has on others?
- What is within your control in respect to ensuring your strengths don't become 'overplayed'?

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Psychological safety

"A climate in which people are comfortable sharing concerns and mistakes without fear of embarrassment or retribution"

Amy C. Edmondson

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Indicators of High Psychological Safety

- Members of the team are able to bring up problems and tough issues

- People on the team don't reject others for being different

- It is safe to take a risk

- It is easy to ask team members for help

- Members of the team don't deliberately undermine the effort of others

- Mistakes aren't held against you

- Individual team member's unique skills and talents are valued and utilised

Benefits of Psychological Safety

- Google – highest predictor of team performance:
  - Better at harnessing diverse ideas
  - Brought in more revenue
  - Lower turnover

- Further research has shown a link between psychological safety and:
  - An Increase in sharing information and knowledge
  - Speaking up with suggestions for organisational improvements
  - Take initiative to develop new products and services
  - Learning quickly, particularly in uncertain and changing times
  - Reduced rates of burnout

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Leadership behaviours

Google's Project Aristotle	Supportive leadership behaviours	Psychological theory
• Turn taking - Every team member had an opportunity to speak. • Team members demonstrated empathy to each other.	• Inclusiveness • Support and coaching • Trustworthiness • Openness • Behavioural integrity	• Social learning theory – listening, providing support and providing clear and consistent direction enable the leader to model to their team that it is safe to take risks and engage in honest conversation • Social exchange process – when followers are supported by their leaders, they will reciprocate with supportive behaviour themselves.

Recovery & pacing

- In what ways can you influence the pace of your work?

- What expectations do you hold yourself to that limit your ability to pace yourself and recover?

- What does good recovery look like for you?

- What needs to change in order for you to get good recovery time?

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What helps prevent burnout?

Mind

Meditation/ mindfulness

Joy/positivity/ gratitude

Nature

Jounaling

Self-compassion

Tech-free time

Coaching/therapy

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What helps prevent burnout?

Body

Activity

Rest

Nutrition

Sleep hygiene

Hydration

Love/hugs

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What helps prevent burnout?

Context

Community/ connection

Control what you can control

Values-based activities

Change your context

Decrease workplace demands

Resolve relationship and role conflicts

Boundaries

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Collective Boundaries

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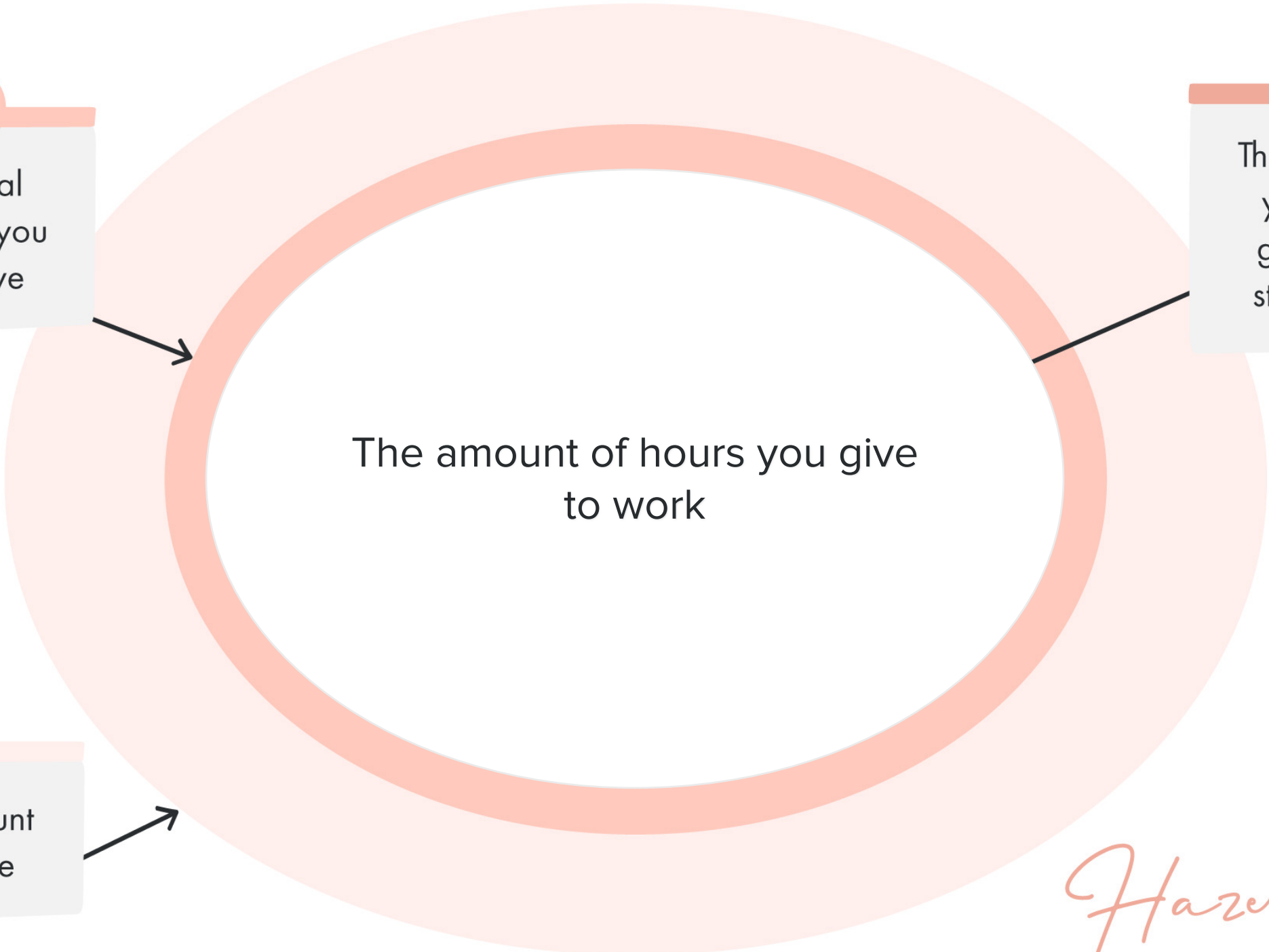
The total
amount you
can give

The amount
you can
give and
still be ok

The amount of hours you give
to work

The amount
you care

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How can you help your team set and hold boundaries?

What is important to us inside and outside of work? →

What feels ok and not ok? →

What's one collective 'rule' that will help us all? →

What's an individual rule we want to experiment with?

↓

If we were able to hold these boundaries, what might the impact be? →

If we keep giving more than we can sustain, what will the impact be? →

How can we support each other to hold boundaries? →

What are we walking away from this conversation with permission to do?

Leadership behaviours supporting boundary setting & holding

- Role model – your own behaviour gives others permission.
- Set clear expectations:
  - Both what you want and don't want.
  - How you want to be communicated with regarding challenges and timescale issues.
- Where possible, make deadlines a shared agreement:
  - "If you take this task on by this deadline, what will it mean that you don't do?".
  - "This is the date I need it by, what support will you need to meet that deadline?".

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Leaders can play a powerful role in both demonstrating how to navigate stressful environments AND by creating safe spaces to keep working on improving those environments to protect teams from burnout.

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