

Exercise S10-2 Middle Circle Activity Recognition Exercise (MCARE)

Our middle circle behaviors are warnings to an unhealthiness within us. It can emerge in either healthy or unhealthy ways. It is healthy when it surfaces through working the Steps, talking things out, or in therapy. It is unhealthy when it surfaces as sexual sin or other inner circle activities. In recovery, we remain mindful of middle circle activities and use any engagement in these unhealthy behaviors as a warning sign of a possible slip or relapse into inner circle behaviors. Living in the middle circle is not a sign of growth or health.

In this exercise, we can use the blank table template provided below. Before discussing how to complete the table, let's take a quick look at an example of a completed table.

Middle Circle Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	TOTAL
Visuals - Live															
Visual - Movies, TV															
Visual - Videos, Pictures								x							
Fatigue															
Lack of sleep (<7)			x												
Excess time at work															
Overbooked calendar															
Fantasies						x			x			x	x		4
Anger				x						x					
Frustration		x	x	x	x								x	x	6
Defensiveness										x					
Entitlement							x								
Stress/Anxiety - work					x						x				2
Stress/Anxiety - finances	x								x						2
Lies, Secrets															
TOTAL	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	

This example shows a relatively modest number of character flaws that surfaced each day. It also shows that a few character defects surfaced more frequently than the rest. The MCARE daily score could be categorized as semi-stable.

Some reminders:

- To begin, we list our middle circle activities, as documented in the Defining Our Sobriety exercise (P3), in the first column. Typically, at least 12 activities are listed. After listing them, we enter the total of the number of times for each of the 14 days we entered our middle circle by engaging in each of the listed activities. (You can refer to Exercise S10-1 for your daily listing of wrongs and associated character defects.) After making these entries, we calculate the sum of occurrences in each row and in each column.

2

Exercise S10-2 Middle Circle Activity Recognition Exercise (MCARE)

MCARE Daily Score Scale:

Score	0	1-2	3-5	6-8	9-10	11-12	13+
Health	Healthy	Semi-stable	Unstable	Risky	High Risk	Unhealthy	Extremely Unhealthy

Using the information generated

- The entries in the Total column are useful in identifying how frequently over a 2 week period any given character defect surfaced. We would likely benefit from giving special attention to the defect(s) that occur most frequently. We can revisit Steps 4-7 regarding that particular defect(s). We may also wish to revisit Step 9 for those most harmed by that defect.
- The entries in the Total row are useful for identifying how frequently in any given day one or more of our character defects surfaced. Using the MCARE Daily Score Scale, we can assess our relative health over this 2 week period.

Final Thoughts & Recommendations

It is important to Step 10 and our overall recovery to take a close look at middle circle behaviors. With our questionable behaviors identified, we can work to correct that activity. For example, if our daily score was above 3, we can look back at our journal to try to identify the cause. We then use the Rule of 3 and discuss these issues with our therapist, sponsor, and friend in recovery with the intent of adjusting our recovery program to bring our daily score down to or near 0. It is recommended that we continue this process until we have at least a month of daily scores of 2 or less.