

Social Support Map

A social support map is one way to visualize the network of support that each of us has. In figure 1 below, you will see a blank social support map to fill out. This exercise will allow you to visually assess your personal support system. Take a moment to complete this exercise using the page provided or make your own on a blank sheet of paper. It can take any shape you like. Be creative and have fun with it.

In the center bubble, write your own name. In the surrounding bubbles, write the names of people you are connected to. The closer the relationship with them, the closer their bubble will be to the center bubble. Below their name, write the role they have in your life. For example, if I fill out my social support map and had a brother named Bobby, I would write brother. Other roles include sister, mother, father, friend, spouse, mentor, sponsor, pastor, counselor, etc. Please try to include the most supportive people in your life.

Figure 2 is an example of what a completed social support map might look like. Notice that some of the bubbles have been left blank. We can see empty spaces as an opportunity to add more healthy relationships into our lives. Think of the people in your map as your tribe. You need them, and they need you. Every support map has its strengths and weaknesses, but they have a variety of uses. They remind us of who we have in our lives and show deficits in our support system. They also provide an opportunity to reflect upon the quality of the personal relationships we have with those around us. Please look over your support map carefully once you've completed it.

Social Support Map

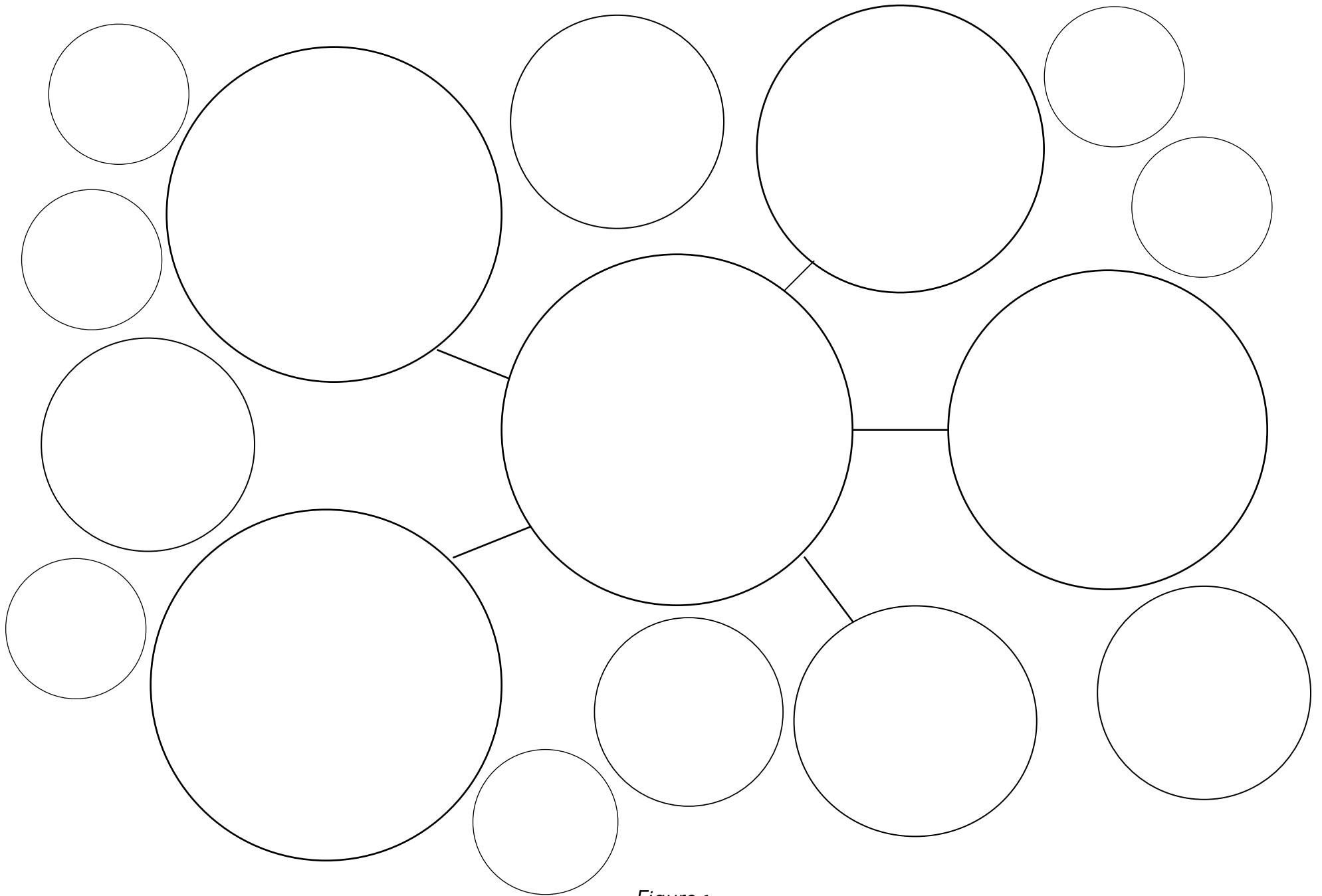


Figure 1

Adapted from: *The social network map: Assessing social support in clinical practice.* Tracy, E. M., & Whittaker, J. K. (1990).

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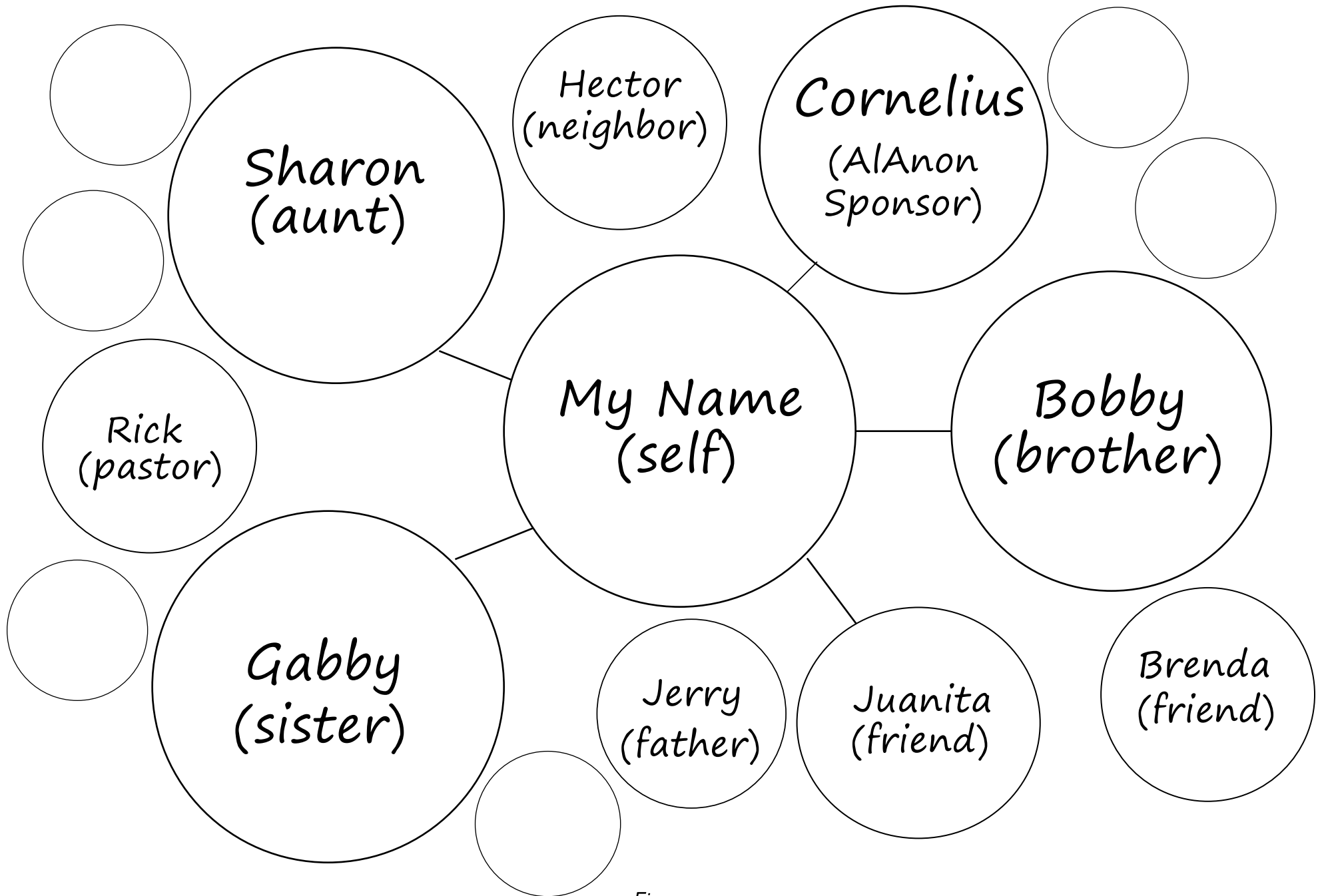


Figure 2.