

# Audiobook PDF

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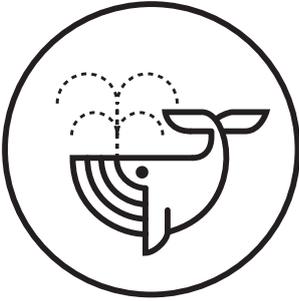
# EFFECTIVE PRACTICING FOR WRITTEN BY BENNY GREB MUSICIANS

*THE ULTIMATE GUIDE FOR HOW TO BECOME  
BETTER AT YOUR INSTRUMENT*



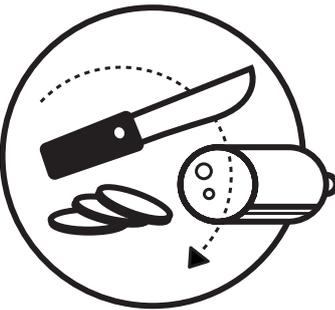
020\_BIG-THINGS-SMALL

## THE WHALE METHOD



Now, there are three different ways to take advantage of the whale method. The first one is to cut the material vertically.

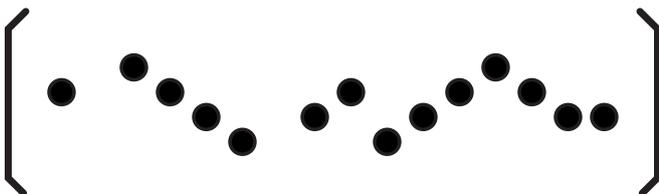
### 1. THE SALAMI SLICE METHOD



(Vegetarians can call this "the tofu slice method" - the important thing is to slice something through from top to bottom.)

#### How does it work?

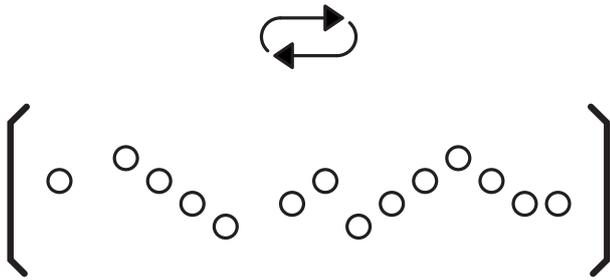
For starters, if you want to work on a difficult groove or passage like this,



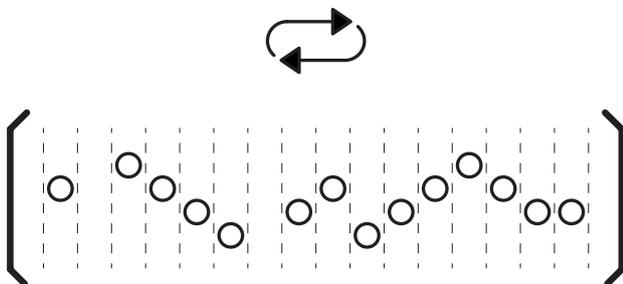
don't try to play the entire bar with poor quality, or so slow that the phrase is unrecognizable. Instead, become aware of the length of the phrase you are working on and set this as a loop in your head.



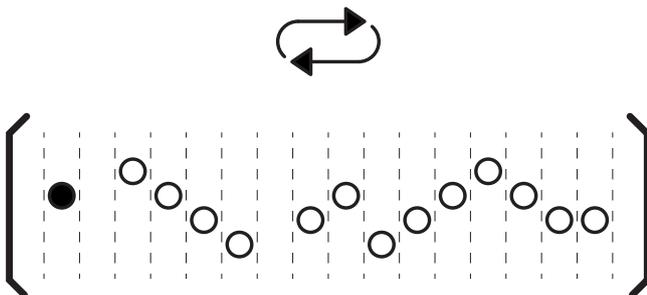
## 020\_BIG-THINGS-SMALL



If it's, say, a one-bar phrase, then your loop or form is now always repeating after one bar. Now slice it vertically like a salami,



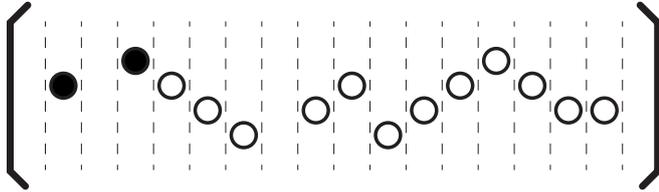
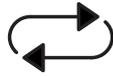
start a metronome in a tempo that still makes sense, and **ONLY** take on the first slice, or in other words, play the first note.



You may think: "But I can play the first four!" I know, it's tempting. But play only the first note. Let the time pass until the 1 comes around and again play the first note. Relax while you wait for the loop to come around, and then place the note as accurately as possible in time and with the sound quality you want. As soon as you are happy with that first note, sing the next one in your head, and add it to the first.



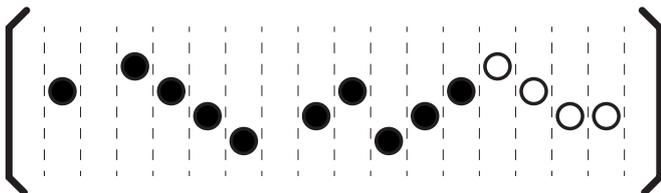
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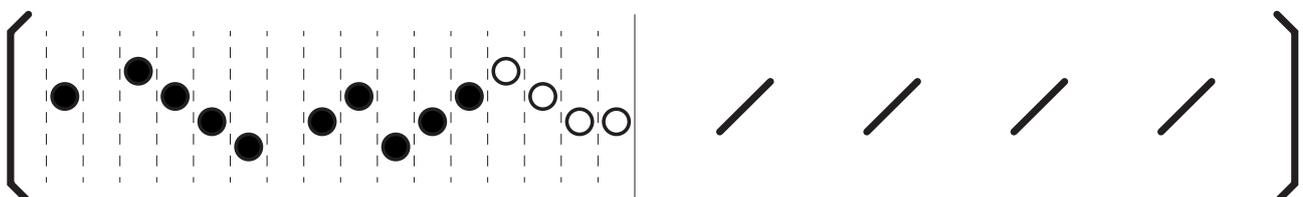
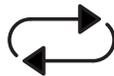
Now, these two make up your phrase in the loop. Treat it like it's the whole phrase, play it until it really feels good and secure. Only then can you focus on adding the next note, while trying to keep the quality and relaxation going on the first two as well. Remember, while all this is happening, the mental loop never stops-keep the form.

**CREATE SPACE**

Quick tip: As you complete more and more of the phrase, you'll notice the relaxation interval before the loop starts again naturally becomes smaller and smaller.

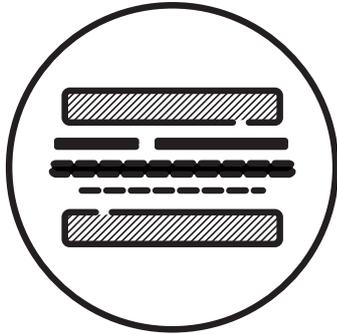


The simple solution (and I have to remind myself of this as well) is to insert a bar of rest into the loop, or perhaps a couple of quarter notes, which will give you more time to relax, refocus, and breathe, and also lowers the difficulty level.



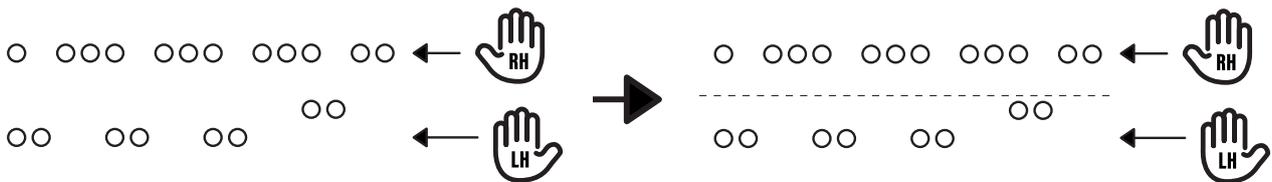


## 2. THE SANDWICH METHOD



In this variation of the whale method, we'll slice the phrase horizontally, like a sandwich that has layers from top to bottom. And some music is actually built up like this as well. This is the way to go when you have any repeating patterns per limb, especially when we talk about coordinating different voices; for example, when playing the drums, or when a pianist needs to maintain a continuous pattern with the left hand while playing the melody with the right hand.

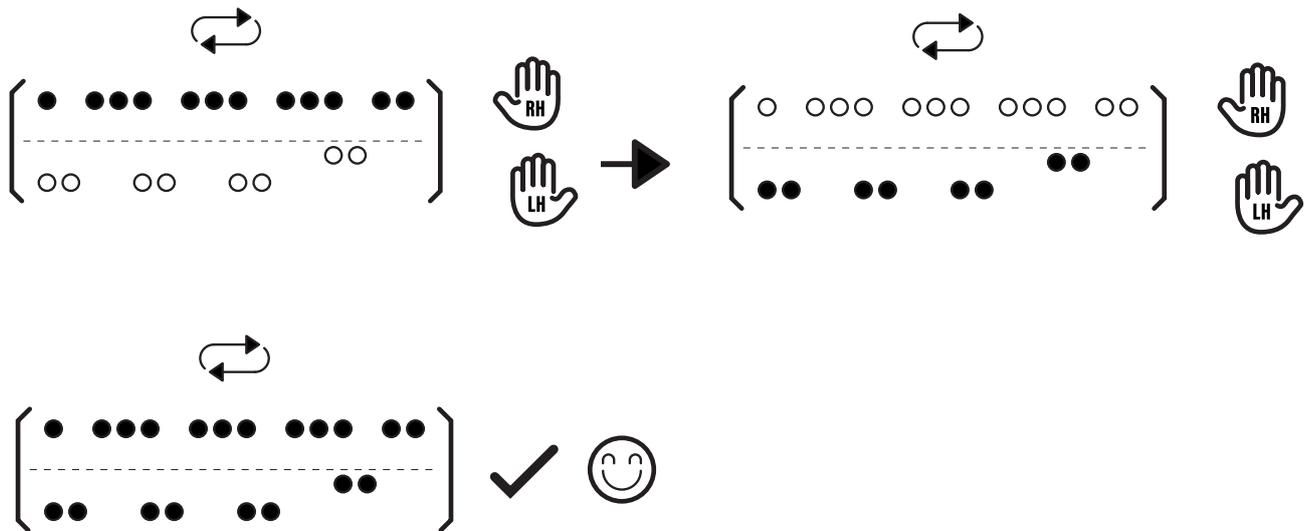
Try this with anything that is ostinato based. For drummers this is 80 percent of their repertoire, including Latin grooves, rock/pop and funk grooves, as well as basic jazz independence.



Start by isolating and playing only one limb or instrument, such as the right hand on the hi-hat. Then play only the snare drum part, then only the bass drum part, and so on. Look at each part as a separate pattern, focus only on that until it feels comfortable, then isolate another, and repeat; and only then try to play the parts together at the same time.



## 020\_BIG-THINGS-SMALL



This process gives your body and brain the time to automate each pattern, so that more bandwidth will be available for the task of eventually playing them all together at the same time.

If separating each layer is still not a small enough slice, both variations on the whale method can be combined. This is my "go to" technique for learning more challenging material in terms of coordination.

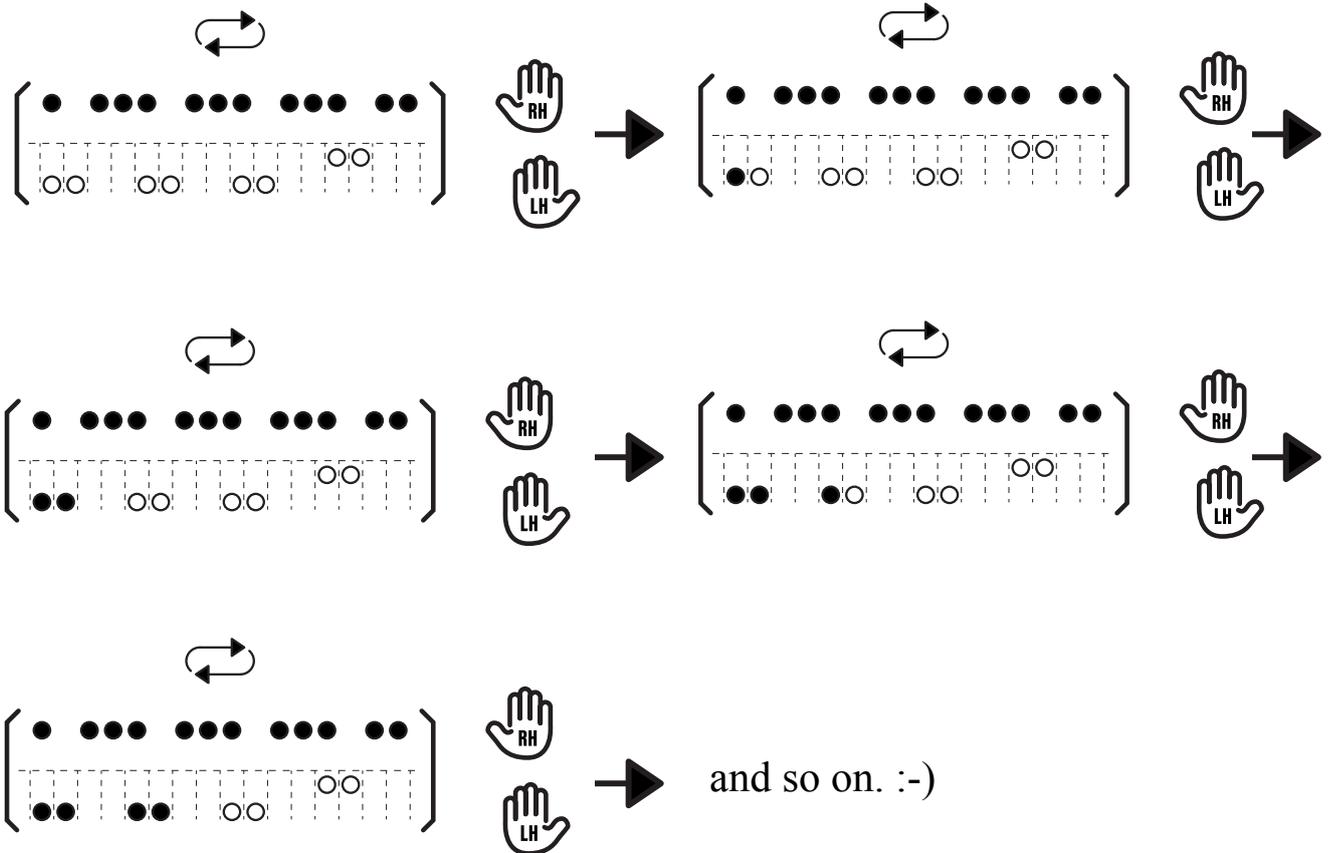
### 3. THE SALAMI SANDWICH METHOD

(And then I promise to stop with the food metaphors.)

With the salami sandwich method, once you've separated the individual ostinatos or different limbs, keep one of them going as you gradually build up the next. So for a drum groove, that means: First, sandwich the limbs apart, for example the ride cymbal pattern. Keep playing that. Then try to focus on what you'll need to add in the bass drum, but only play the first note. When it feels good, add the next, all while the loop time and form stay consistent and the ride cymbal keeps playing.



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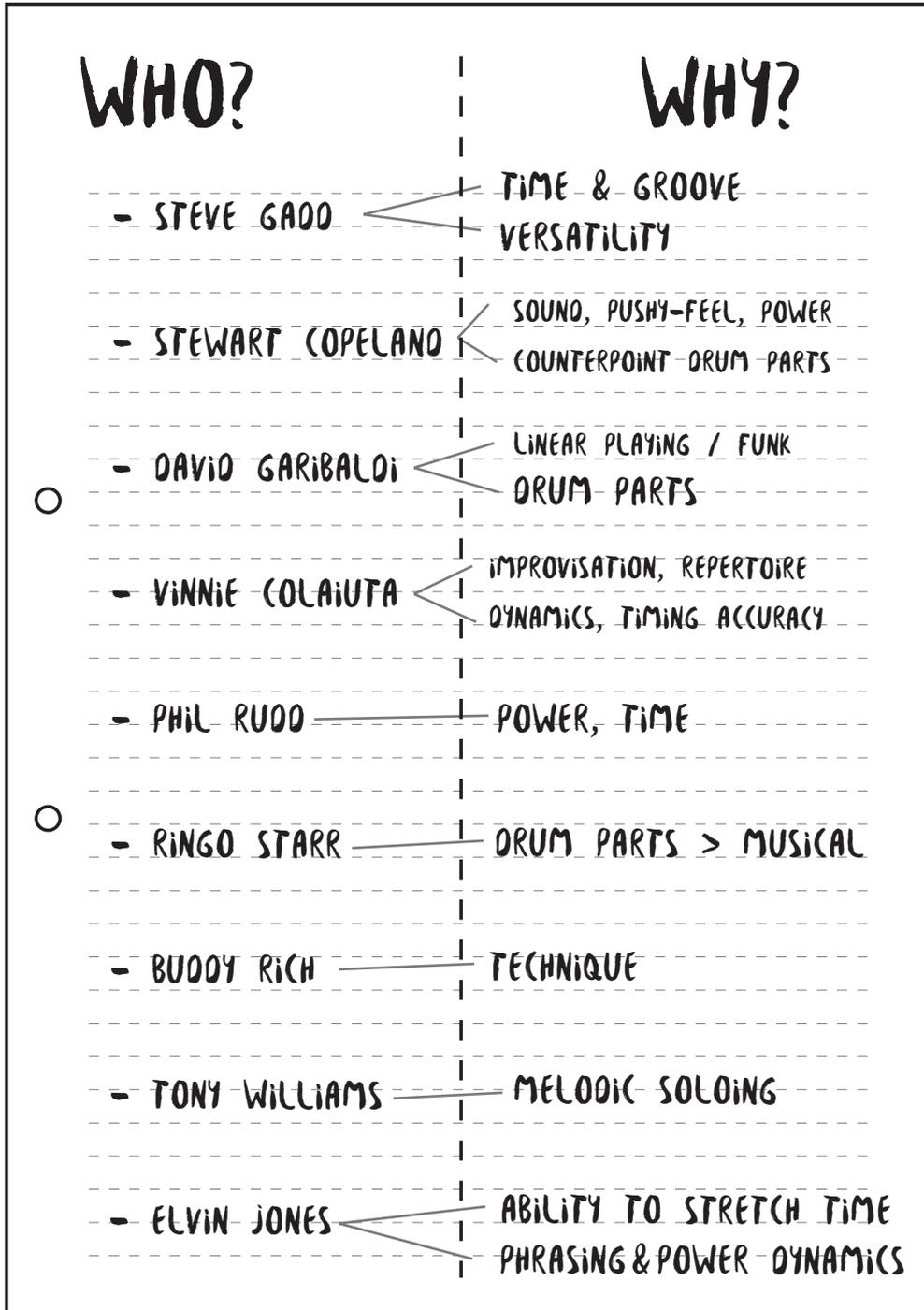
So there you have it. Remember the two basic variations on the whale method-the salami slice and the sandwich-and the combination of both into the salami sandwich method. This helps to fast-forward the process when you're struggling with exercises or phrases of any kind. It just works! And not because I'm a genius or I told you so, but because it respects the programming language of the human brain.

This is how we add new information to our hard drive in the most effective way. Make sure your practicing techniques are aligned with how your mind and body function, otherwise these facts will work against you.





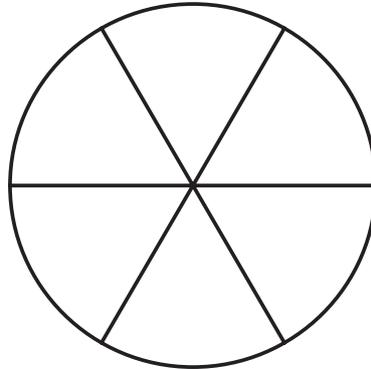
025\_A-DESTINATION-WHY





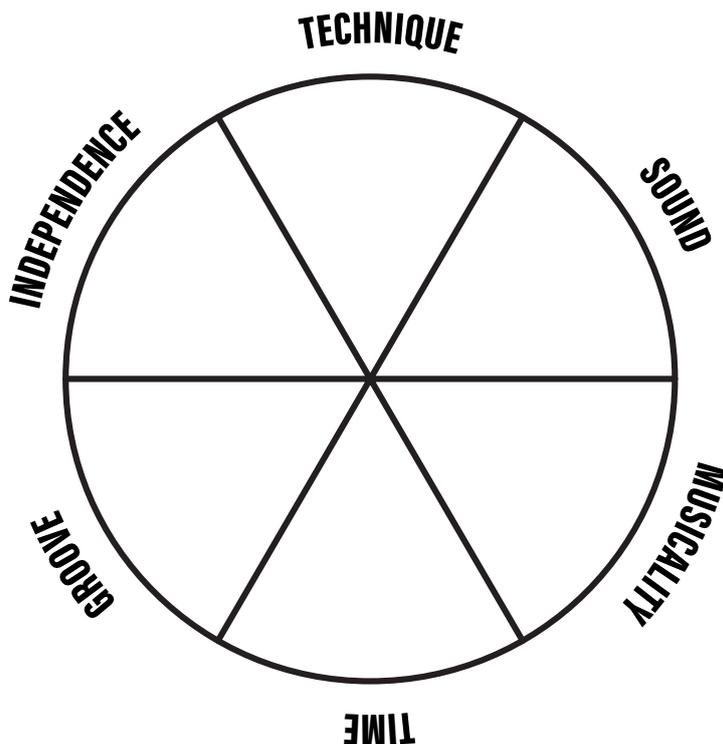
026\_B-CURRENT-LOCATION

## SETTING UP THE PIE



Check out this thing. This is usually referred to as a pie chart. If you're more of a savory person, you can also think of it as a pizza that's already been sliced.

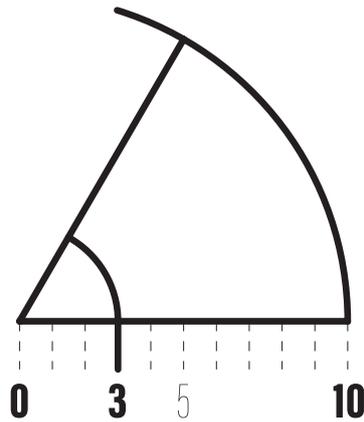
What I want you to do with yours, is to slice it up into however many equally sized pieces as there are qualities in your Why list. For example, I listed six qualities, so my pizza would have six slices. Then label each slice with one of your Why qualities, like this:



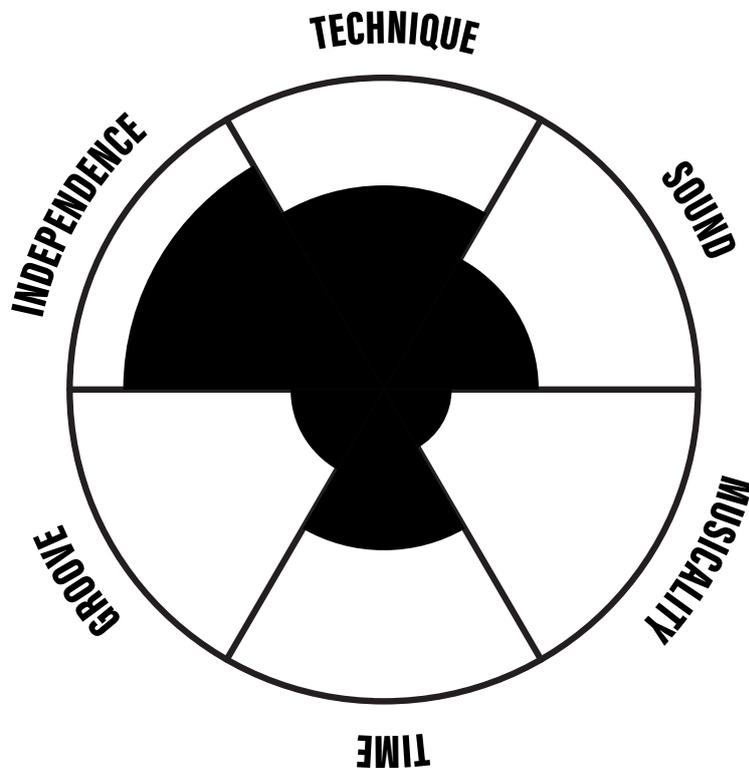


## 026\_B-CURRENT-LOCATION

When you've settled on your numbers, imagine there's a scale of 0 to 10 on the X-axis of each pie piece (with 5 being in the middle, of course), and draw an arc inside the piece to create a smaller wedge, as in this example for a rating of 3:



Great! And lastly, fill in your pie from the center point to the arcs you drew, so that the smaller wedges are colored in. Like this:

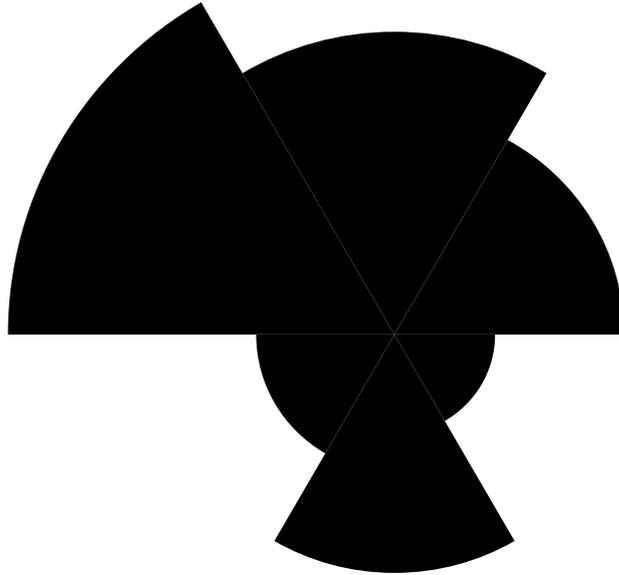




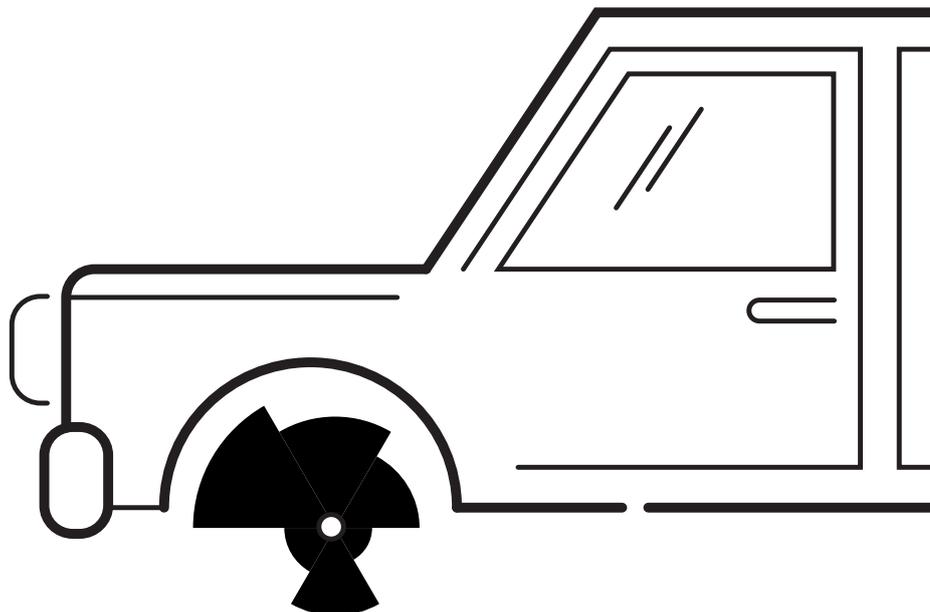
026\_B-CURRENT-LOCATION

## 1. YOUR ABILITY BALANCE

Now we'll take a moment to look at the shape of this thing.



Just for fun, picture your pie as the wheel on a car.





## C: THE NEXT STEP

### PRIORITIES

We don't want to feel overloaded by taking on too many things at once, so let's limit it to three items for a certain period of time in order to maximize our progress and avoid spreading ourselves too thin, as discussed in the chapter on focus.

So we'll concentrate on just three areas for the next 3 months. Which ones? Simple! Just take the three smallest pieces of your pie and number them 1 to 3, in no particular order. Like this:

