



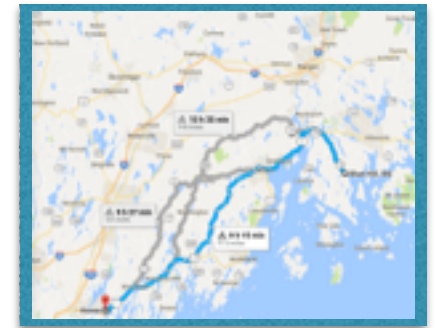
Mapping:

How to break any goal into small, do-able steps

Whether your goal is big or small, it is extremely helpful to have a map of steps to show you how to get there.

I'm a believer in Mapping because I've seen it get people launched and achieving things right away, often goals people have been putting off for years. Mapping is crucial if you are working on a Big Hairy Audacious Goal (B.H.A.G.) with lots of parts and pieces. But it is also helpful for smaller goals too. It is a great tool because it:

- Captures all your thoughts in one place.
- Forces you to think through all the steps you need to take to reach your goal, even the unpleasant/scary ones.
- Shows you a reasonable order in which to do things
- Gives gives you a lot of small, un-threatening first steps to start making your goal a reality RIGHT AWAY.
- Gives you lots of choices for things to do next, so if you hit a snag in one one area you can still make progress toward your goal
- If you choose to post it...it puts your goal right up in front of your eyes, everyday



After all, every great achievement is just a series of small steps, made one after the other.



A few great achievements, brought to you by humanity

If you are a visual thinker, you have probably used some form of mapping already. You architects, engineers, and craftspeople have been using flow charts all along - or maybe worked with the idea of a "critical path."

Or those of you who keep a to-do list know the power of getting things out of your head and down on a page (and that delicious feeling of checking them off!).

When it comes time to make a map of your goal, you can use any format you like. I teach you my particular mapping technique because I find it linear and easy to explain, plus it works with almost any type of goal.



Ahhhhhhh.....

So let's get started!



How to Map Pretty Much Any Goal



Materials: pencil, big piece of paper, small piece of paper, your brain (for now - you may need more brains later)

1. **Write your goal down** on the edge of a piece of paper, and illustrate it simply (stick figures ok!)
2. **Break your goal into sub goals.** For instance, for the goal of “Rent an apartment in Portland,” your sub-goals might be “Figure out my budget,” “Find an apartment,” and “Arrange to have my furniture moved.”

But more complicated goals, say, “Start a non-profit to combat human-trafficking,” can be overwhelming to break down. (Sounds scary, right? Actually, I’ve watched this one get mapped ...and done!) A neat trick for figuring out all your sub-goals quickly is to **grab a piece of scratch paper, figure out all your obstacles, and “flip” them.** (hang on for illustration below).

Once you have your sub-goals, circle them and connect them to your big goal.

3. **Keep going, working to the right, breaking each chunk into smaller chunks.** Just put down your ideas as they come. You can go back and change things later. **If you get stuck** on a circle, just put a “?” inside it, You can go back later and brainstorm it.
4. When you have a chunk that can be done in **15 minutes or less** you have something special: it is not just an ordinary chunk. **It is - cue angel choir - a Go Box.**
5. Keep going until you have a nice stack of Go Boxes to choose from.

*Spend 15 Min. at
library looking up
literary agents*

*I’ve watched Go Boxes get
things done like nothing else.
Prepare to hear a LOT about go
boxes.*



OK, let’s take a real goal, one from my own life. The sole tree on our in-town tiny lot got old and died, and now my office is baking in the sun all afternoon. I really wanted to plant a new tree, but was overwhelmed with choices, expense, timing - it seemed so complicated and my nervousness about making a mistake keeps me procrastinating on it.

So I mapped it, using the 5 steps.

1. Write your goal down on the edge of a piece of paper, and illustrate it simply.



plant a new tree
in my backyard

2. **Break your goal into sub goals.** If you are having trouble, **grab a piece of scratch paper, figure out all your obstacles, and “flip” them.**

Getting a new tree has turned out to be a more complicated goal for me. So I quickly come up with 5 obstacles for my tree project on a scratch pad:



*I don't know
what kind of
tree I want*

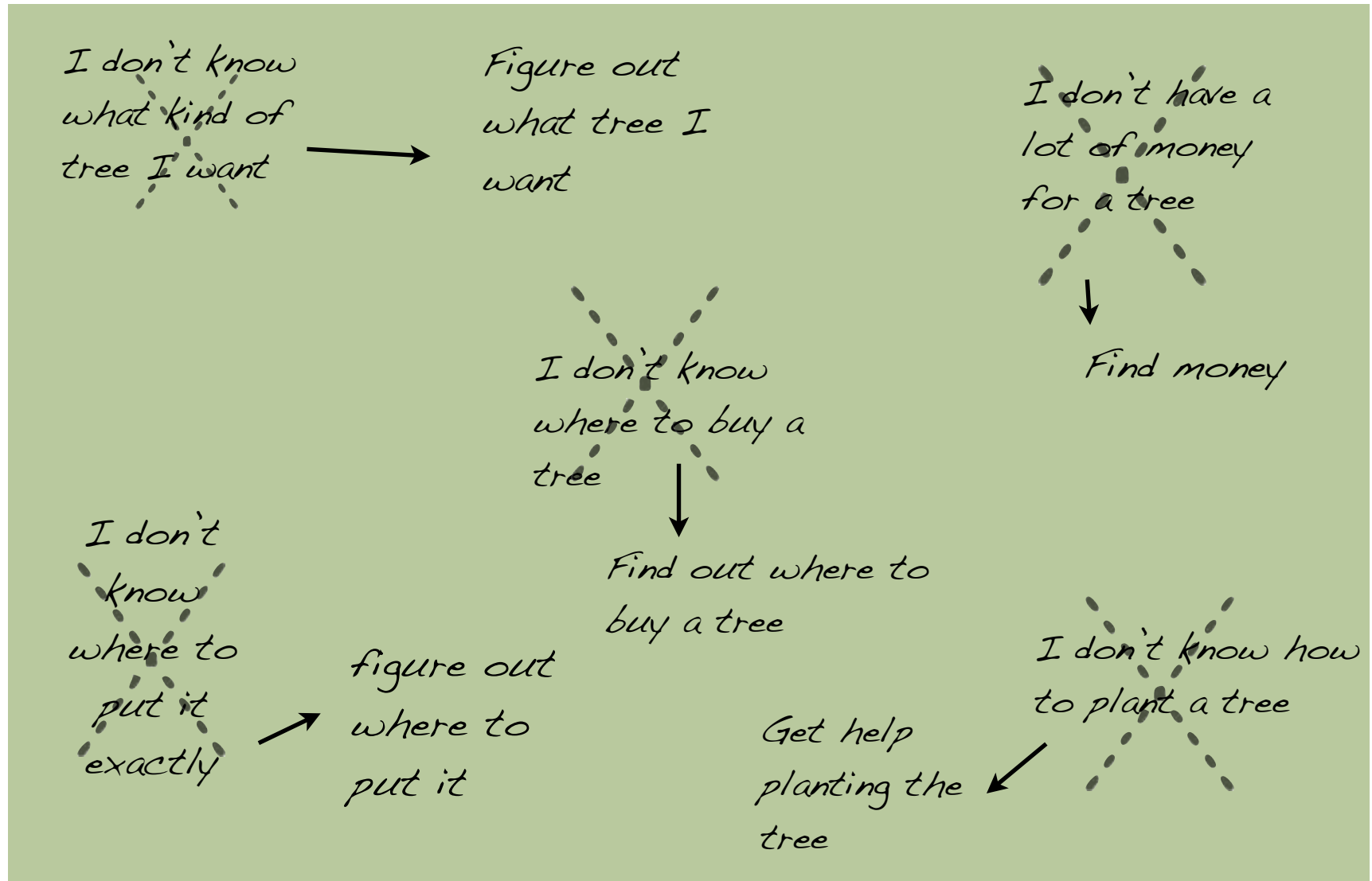
*I don't have a
lot of money
for a tree*

*I don't know where
to buy a tree*

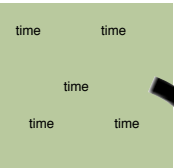
*I don't know
where to put
it exactly*

*I don't know how
to plant - do I
need to get help?*

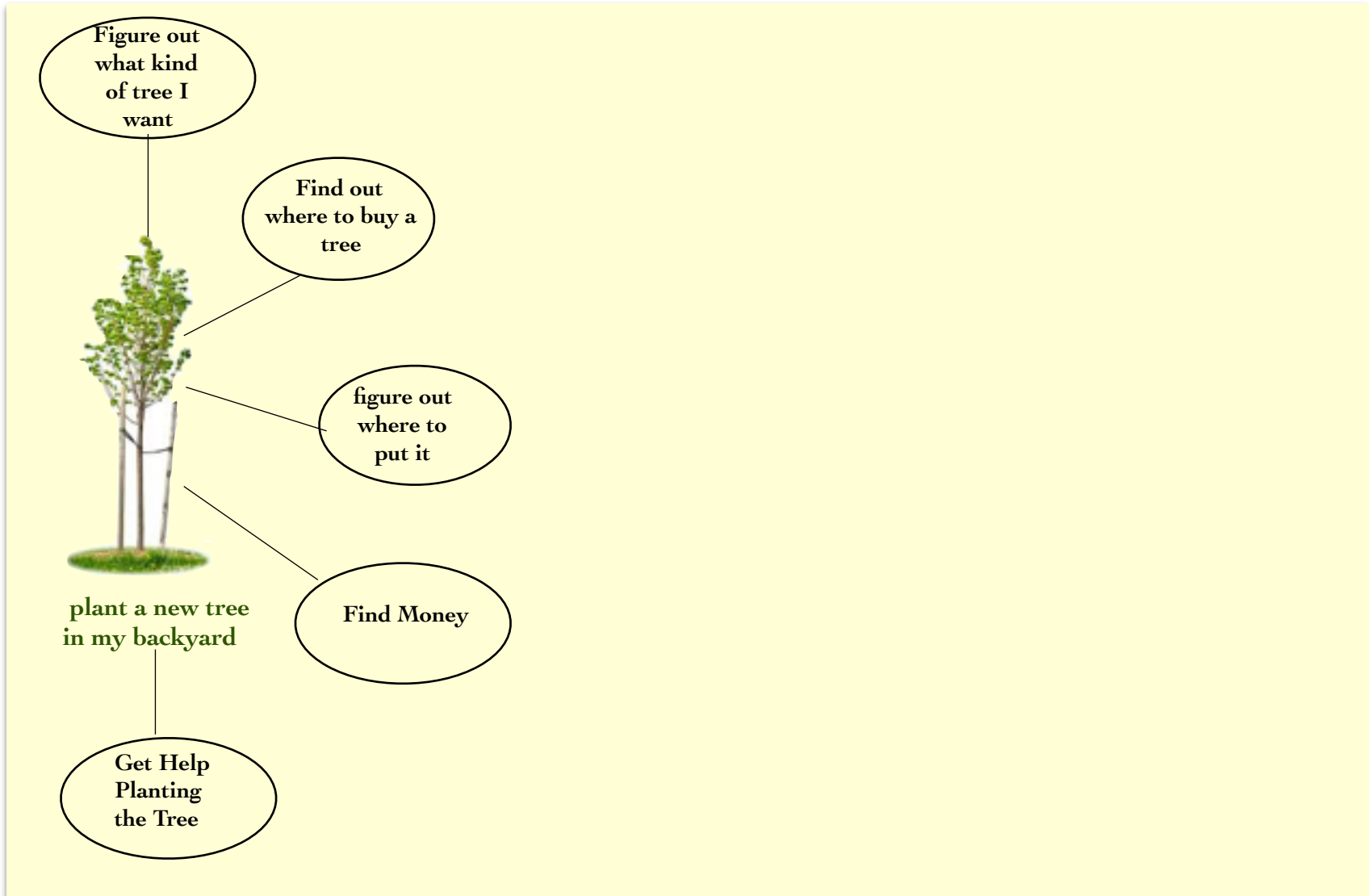
Flipping the obstacles looks like this: you simply take the obstacle and restate its opposite. So, "I don't know what kind of tree I want" becomes "Figure out what tree I want." "I don't know where to put the tree" becomes "Figure out where to put it." State each one as simply as possible, and you'll be left with a sub-goal you can start to break down. Here are my five:



This flipping of obstacles is especially helpful when the goal or dream you've set your heart on seems too huge to tackle, and you are overwhelmed by the obstacles. (Doing this actually harnesses the power of **NEGATIVE** thinking!) Note: the very common obstacles of "no time" and "no money" can be flipped and mapped *just like any other obstacle*.



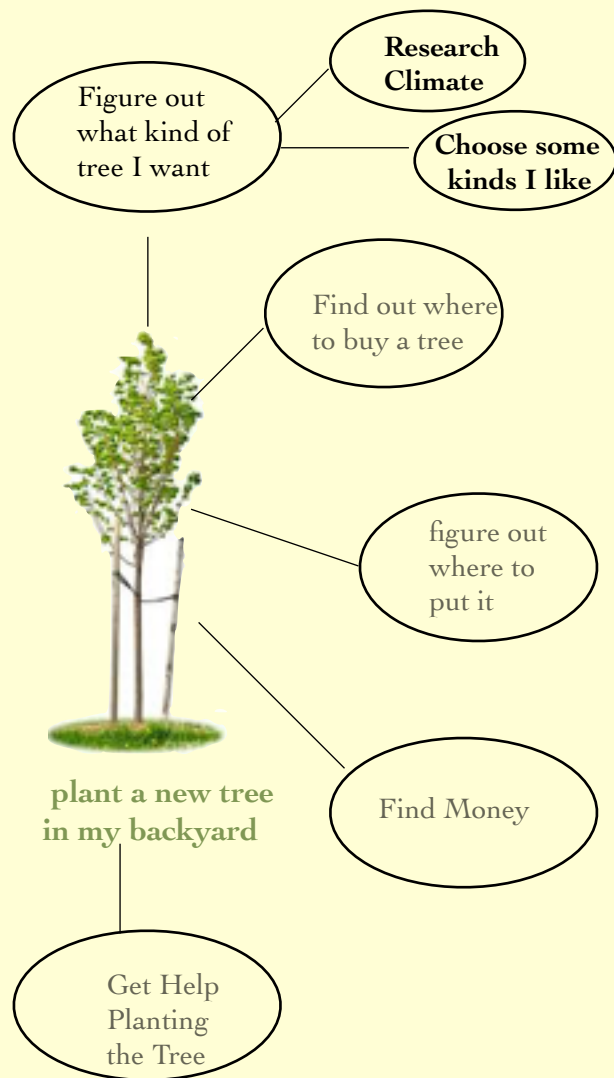
I've got my 5 sub-goals now, so I'm ready to put them on my map, circle, and connect them.



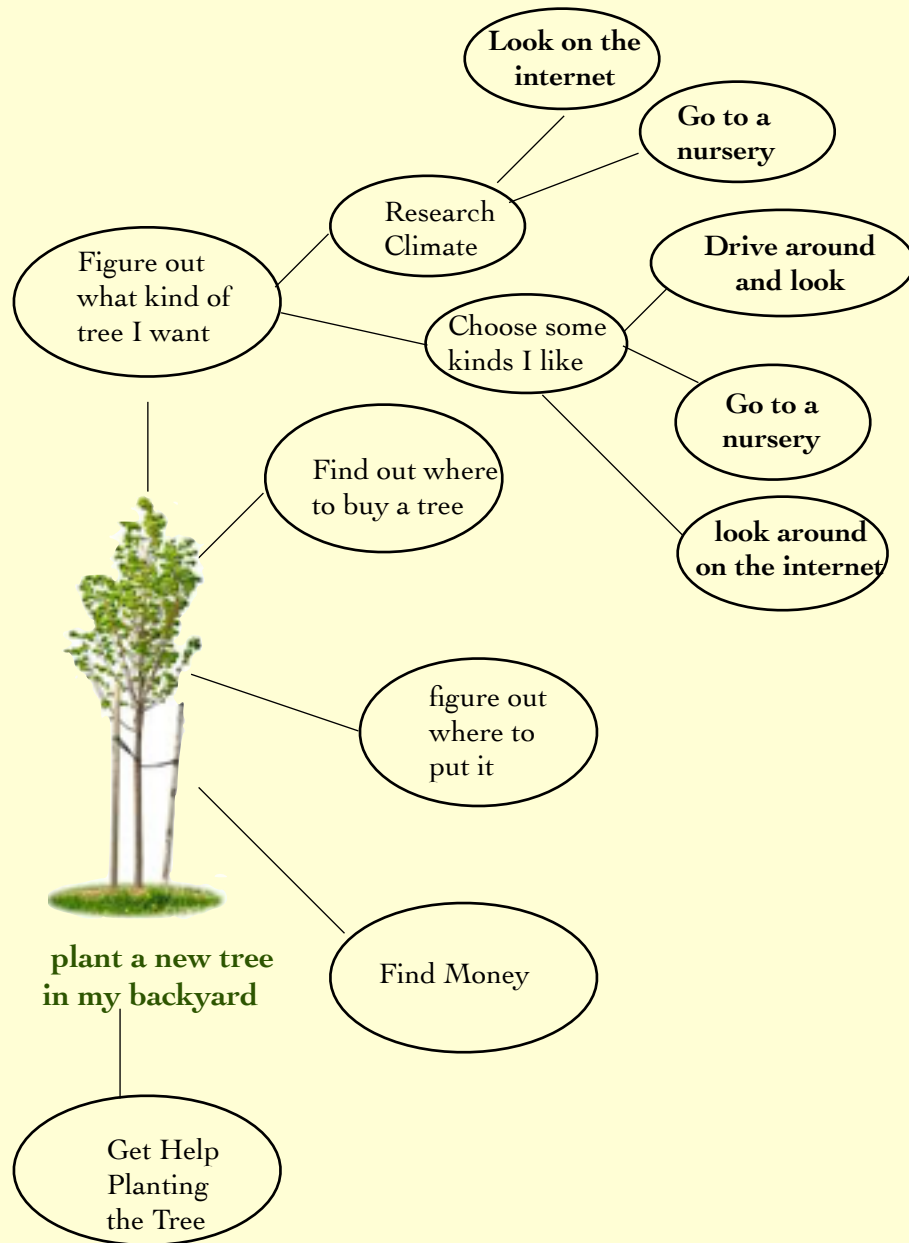
Now I'm on my way!

3. Keep going, working to the right, breaking each chunk into smaller chunks.

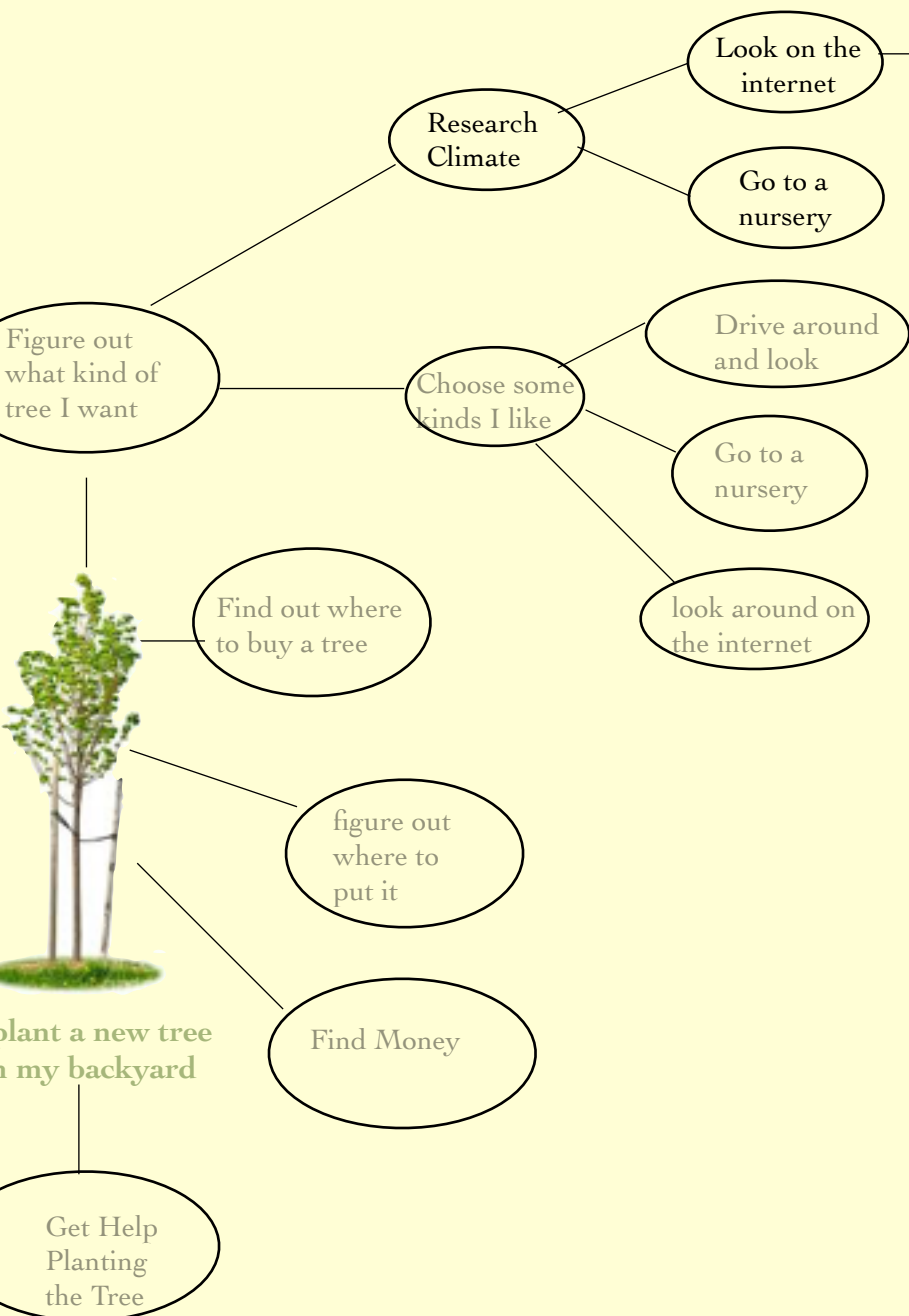
Choose a chunk to start with. You can see some are harder than others. Let's start with "Figure out what kind of tree I want." For that, I think to myself, "How can I break that down?" The two things that occur to me right off the bat are I want to find a tree I like, but I also need to find out that can survive in my backyard, in this climate. That's two smaller chunks right there. So I put them in, moving to the right.



Just keep going, breaking them down. I think some more and come up with:



Ha! Something great has happened. When I went to break down the circle “Look on the Internet” I realized this was something I could do in a 15 minute chunk (or even less). That is **Step 4**. So I make a GO BOX out of that step, like this:



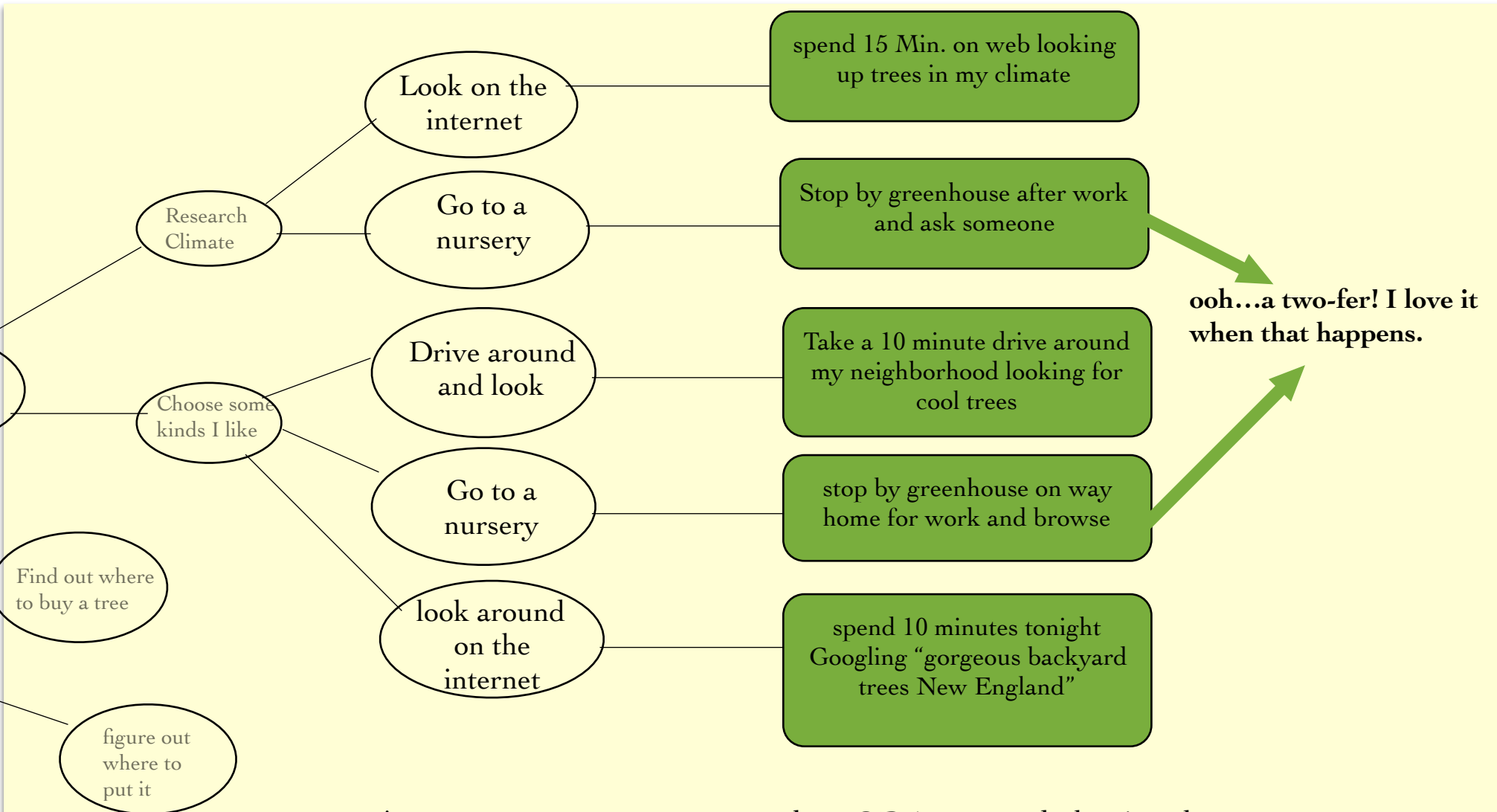
spend 15 Min. on web looking up trees in my climate



The magic of Go Boxes are that they take a scary, expensive project that is overwhelming me, and give me a small, concrete step I can do right now, maybe even today.

Looking things up on the internet? I can do that in my sleep (in fact...I probably have.....)

5. Keep going until you have a nice stack of Go Boxes to choose from. I'm going to fast forward here, and show you a few Go Boxes that might come from these steps:



Now I've got 5 concrete steps I can take TODAY toward planting that tree.

This is **the most important part of mapping** - to show you a few non-scary ways to plunge right in and get started. Because **action begets more action**. You can see if I end up at the greenhouse, I may have a conversation that leads me to a landscaper, which is going to help me with another one of my sub-goals ("get help planting the tree"). Or I'll run into another customer who will tell me about her tree, and offer to send me a photo...Synchronicity lives out there in the world in a million places - but you've got to get out there!

If you're curious, take a few minutes try it with a made up goal...this is just a practice, so it can be silly or serious. (With the teenagers I work with I always start with "how to adopt a penguin.")



At the retreat, you are going to get some practice breaking down your goal into doable-chunks, We'll work through the hard pieces, like what to do when you are staring at your map with no ideas at all, or how to break down seemingly impossible obstacles like "No time" and "no money."

We'll also have a good laugh at my sketching capabilities...

By the end of the first meeting of Wayfinders you will have a working map in hand of steps to get you to your goal. And from there, it is just one small step at a time.

