

# Spirituality and the Dynamics of Addicted Families

Addiction is a systemic problem.

# Roles Available in Addicted Families

	Motivating Feeling	Identifying symptoms	Payoff for Individual	Payoff for Family	Possible Price
DEPENDENT	Shame	Chemical use or other compulsive behavior	Relief of pain	None	Addiction
ENABLER - Codependent	Anger	Compulsive but unsuccessful effort to control	Importance, Self-righteousness	Responsibility (None?)	Illness (martyrdom)
HERO	Inadequacy	Over-achievement, perfectionism	Attention (Positive)	Self Worth	Compulsivity
SCAPEGOAT	Hurt	Delinquency	Attention (Negative)	Focus away from family	Self-destruction, addiction
LOST CHILD	Loneliness	Solitariness	Escape (No attention)	Relief	Social Isolation
MASCOT	Fear	Clowning, Hyperactivity	Attention (Amused)	Fun	Immaturity, emotional illness

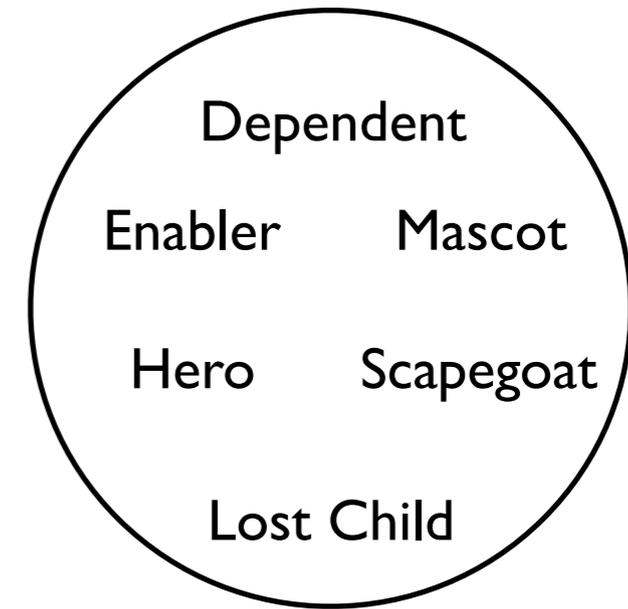
Adapted from: Sharon Wegscheider-Cruse, *Another Chance: Hope and Health for the Alcoholic Family*

## About roles:

1) powerful

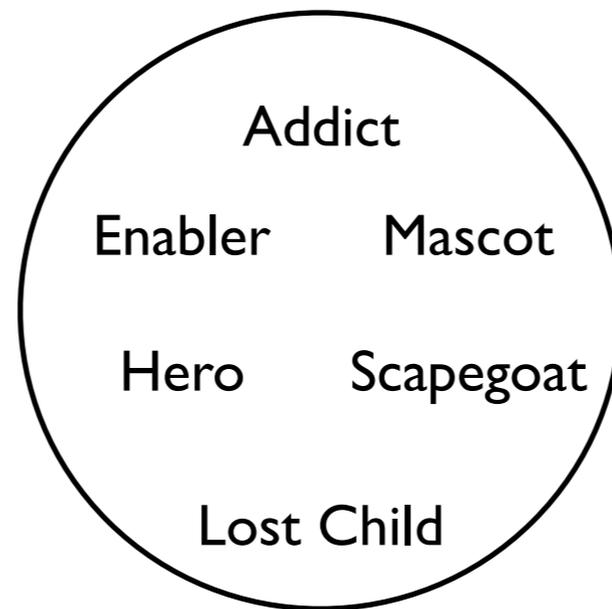
2) easily reassigned

3) care givers will be invited to participate in this system (which role would you prefer?)

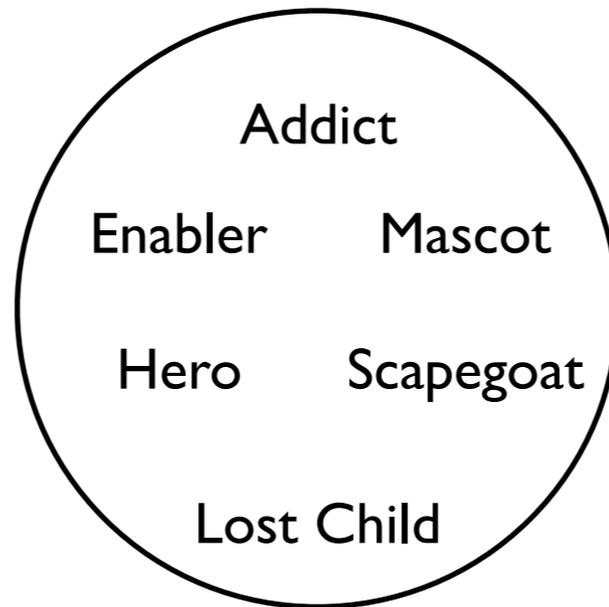


# **Distorted Images of God in Addicted Family Systems**

- 1) the gap between our formal theology and our spiritual attachments**
- 2) the power of images/attachments**
- 3) the difficulty of changing our attachments**

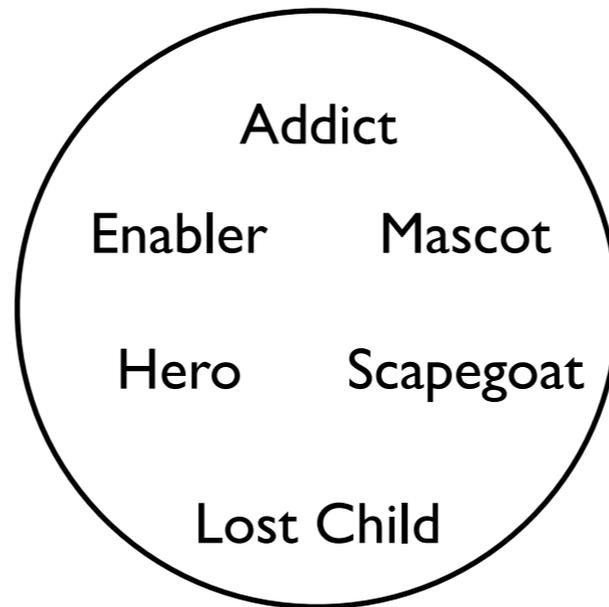


narcissistic gods  
irrelevant gods



narcissistic gods  
irrelevant gods

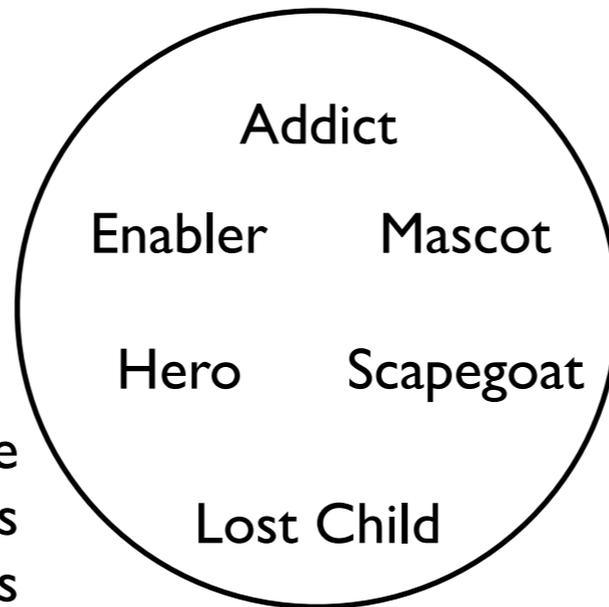
absent gods  
inadequate gods  
gods of martyrs

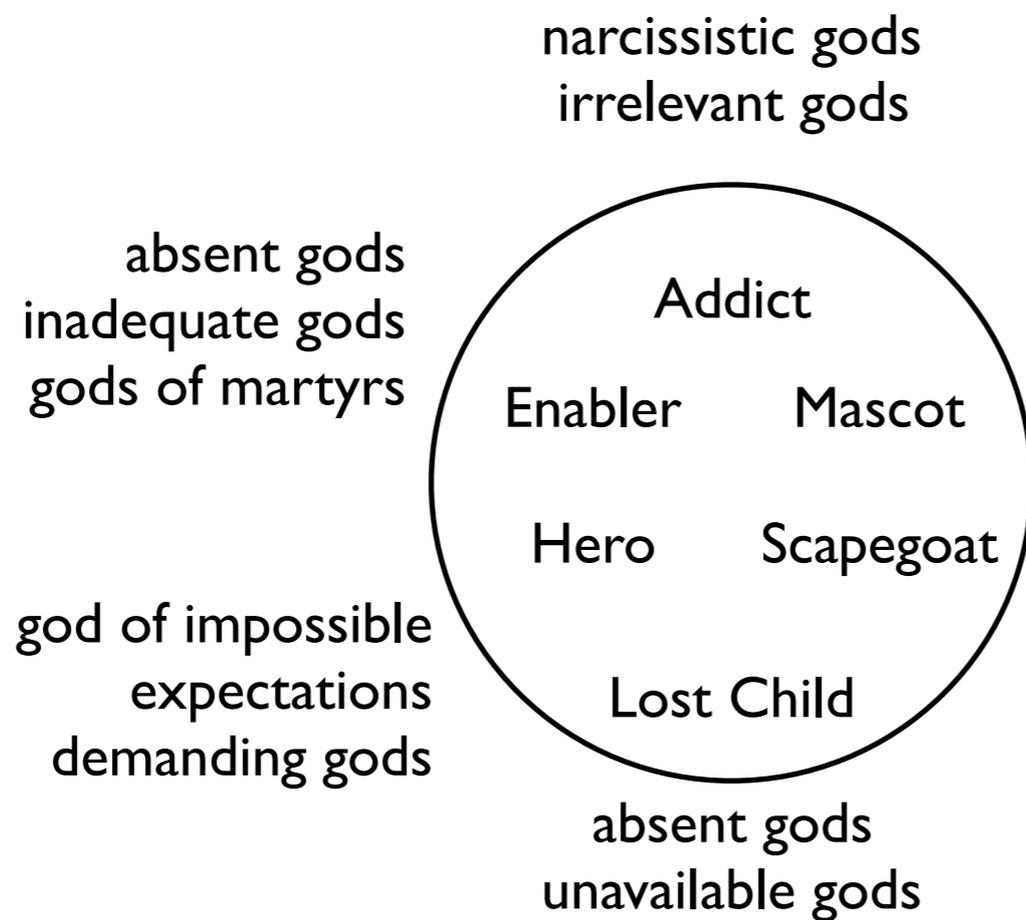


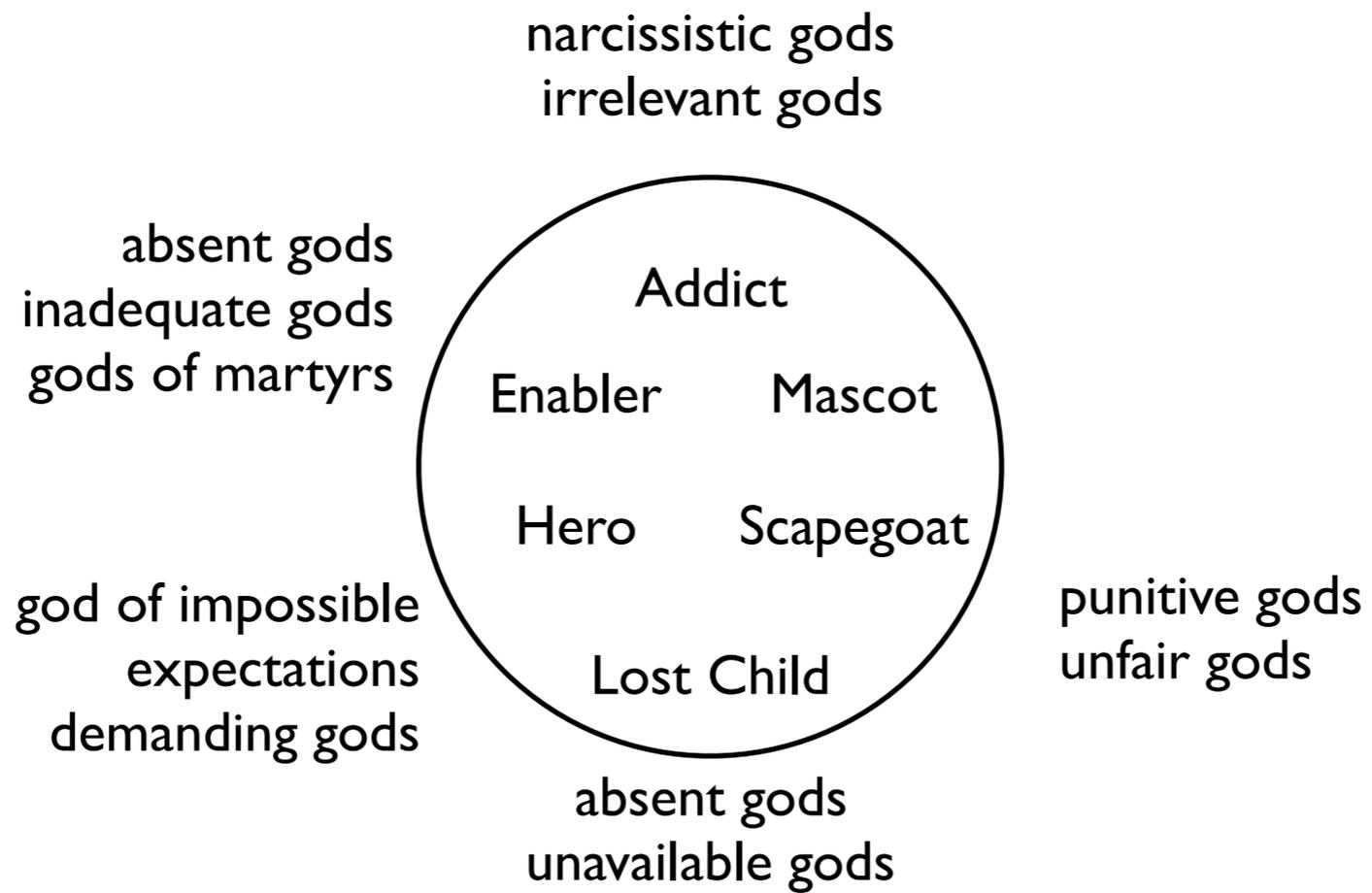
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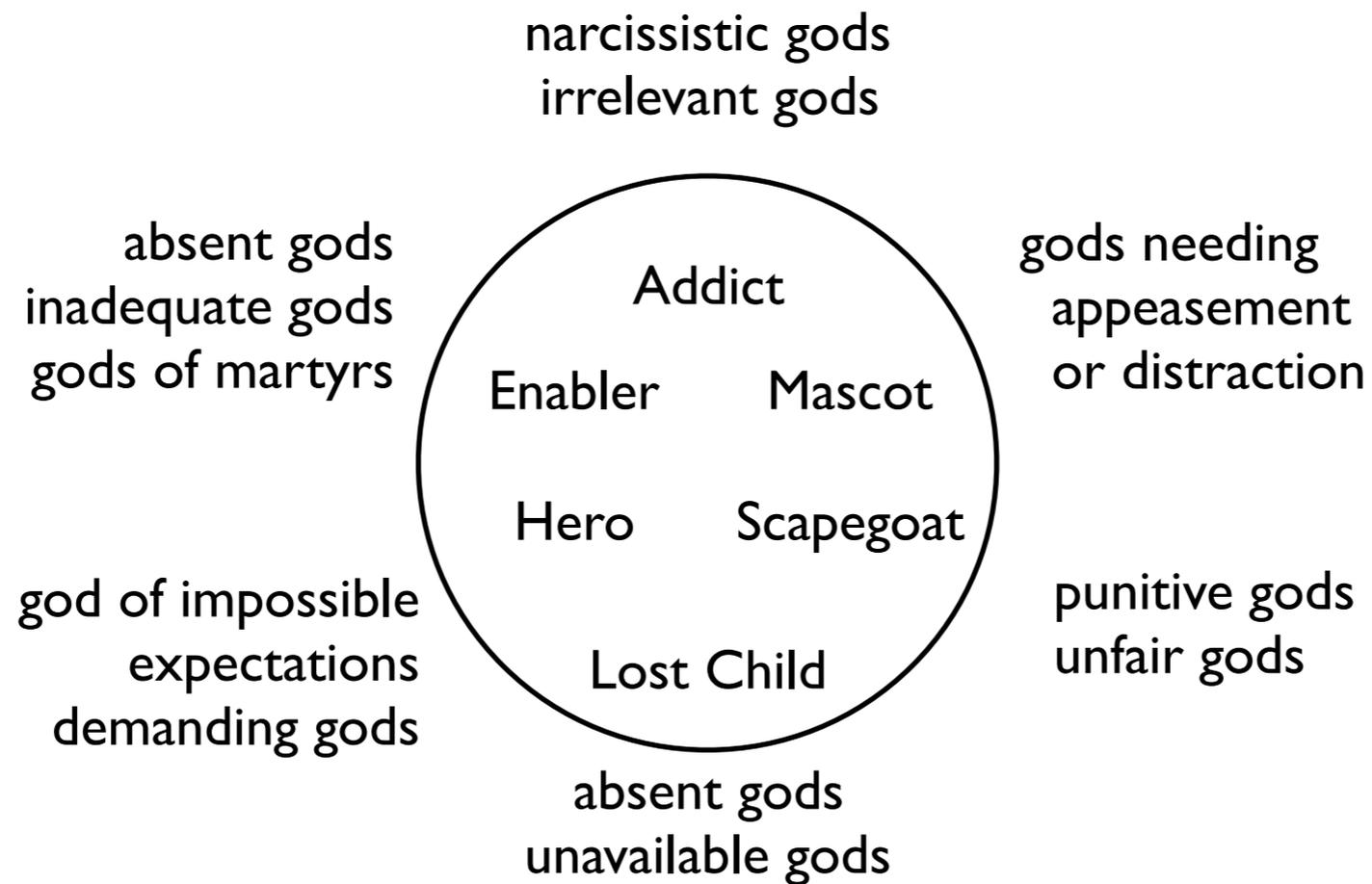
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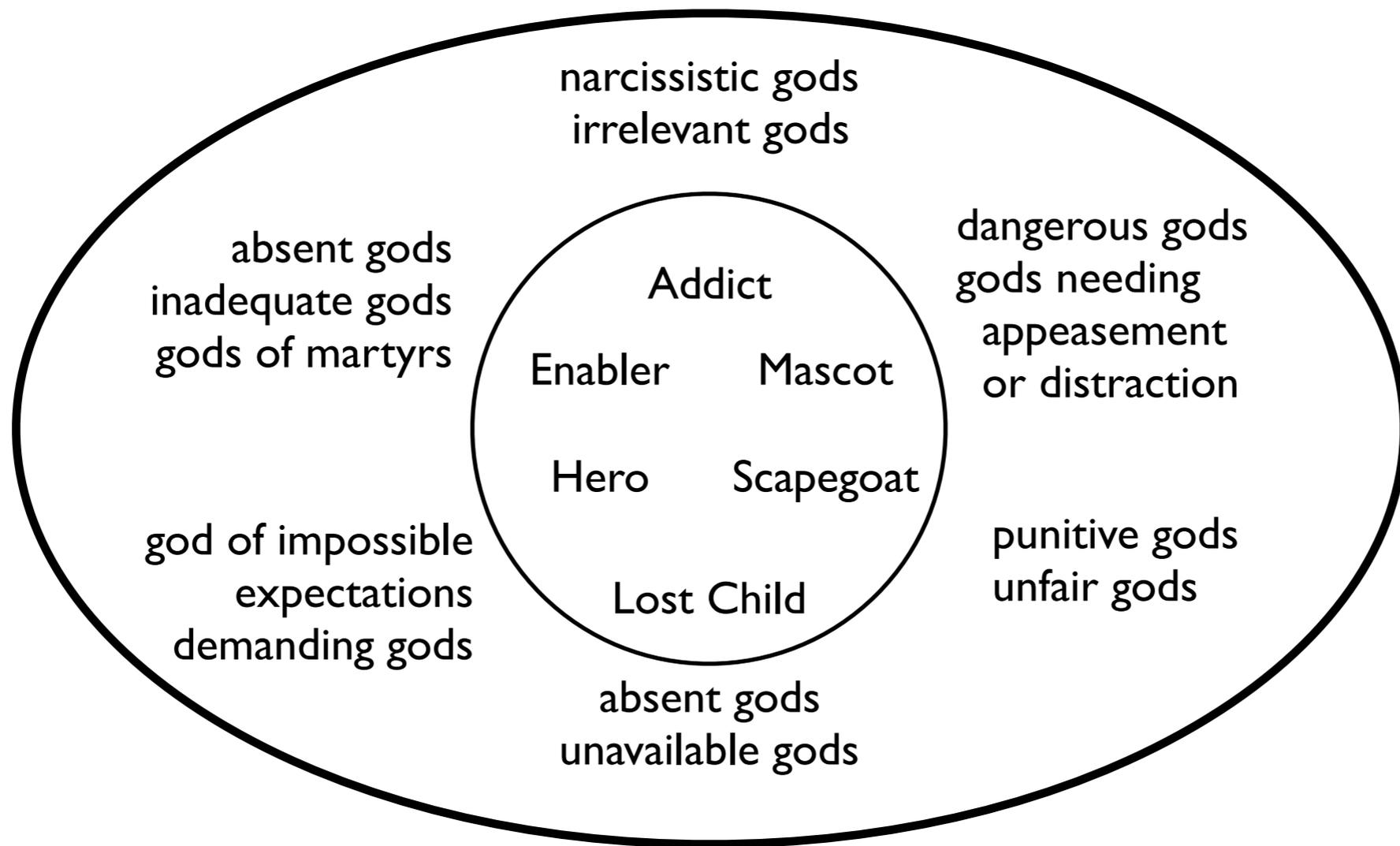
god of impossible  
expectations  
demanding gods



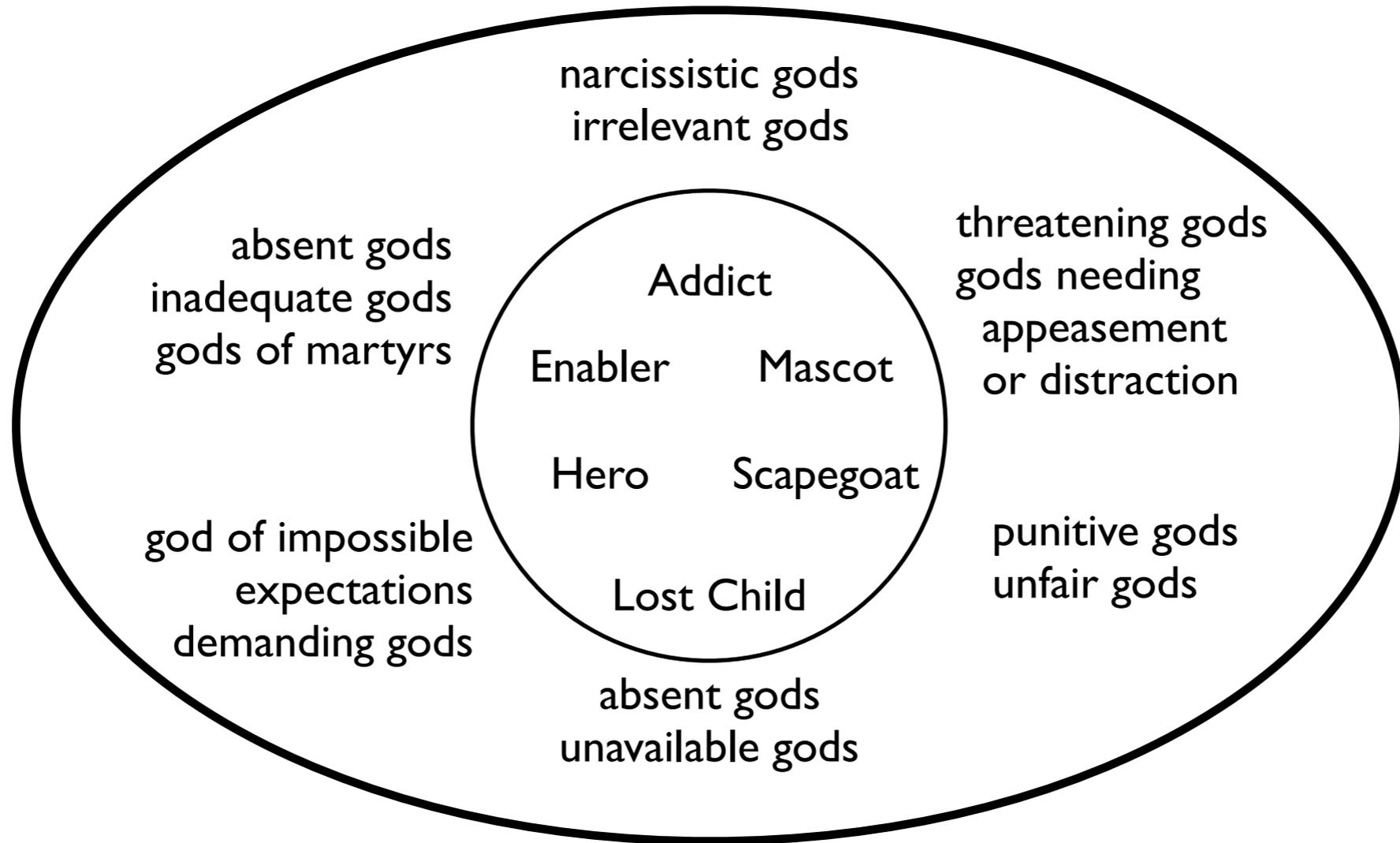






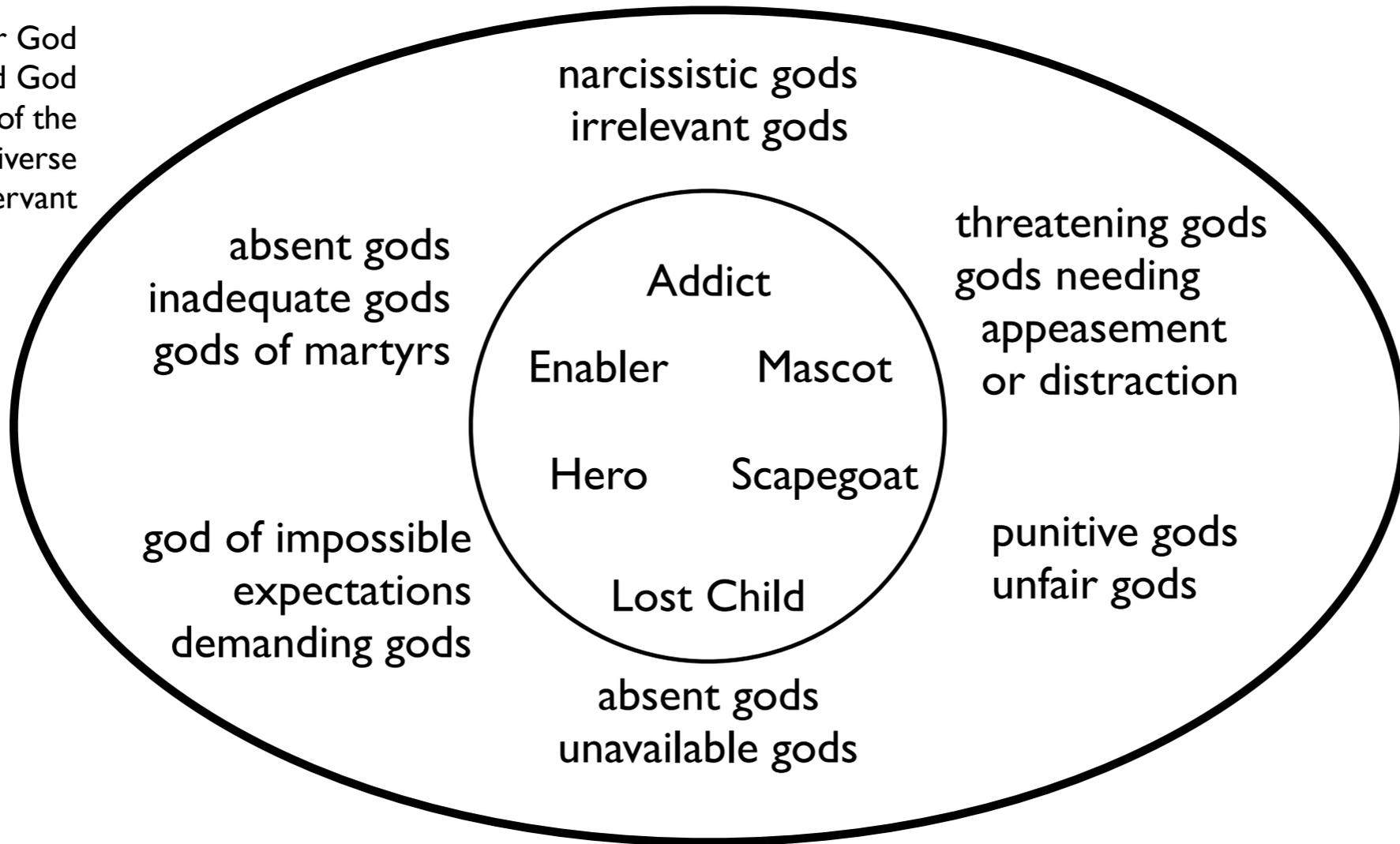


God who is intolerant of 'images'  
The Jealous God  
God who seeks the lost



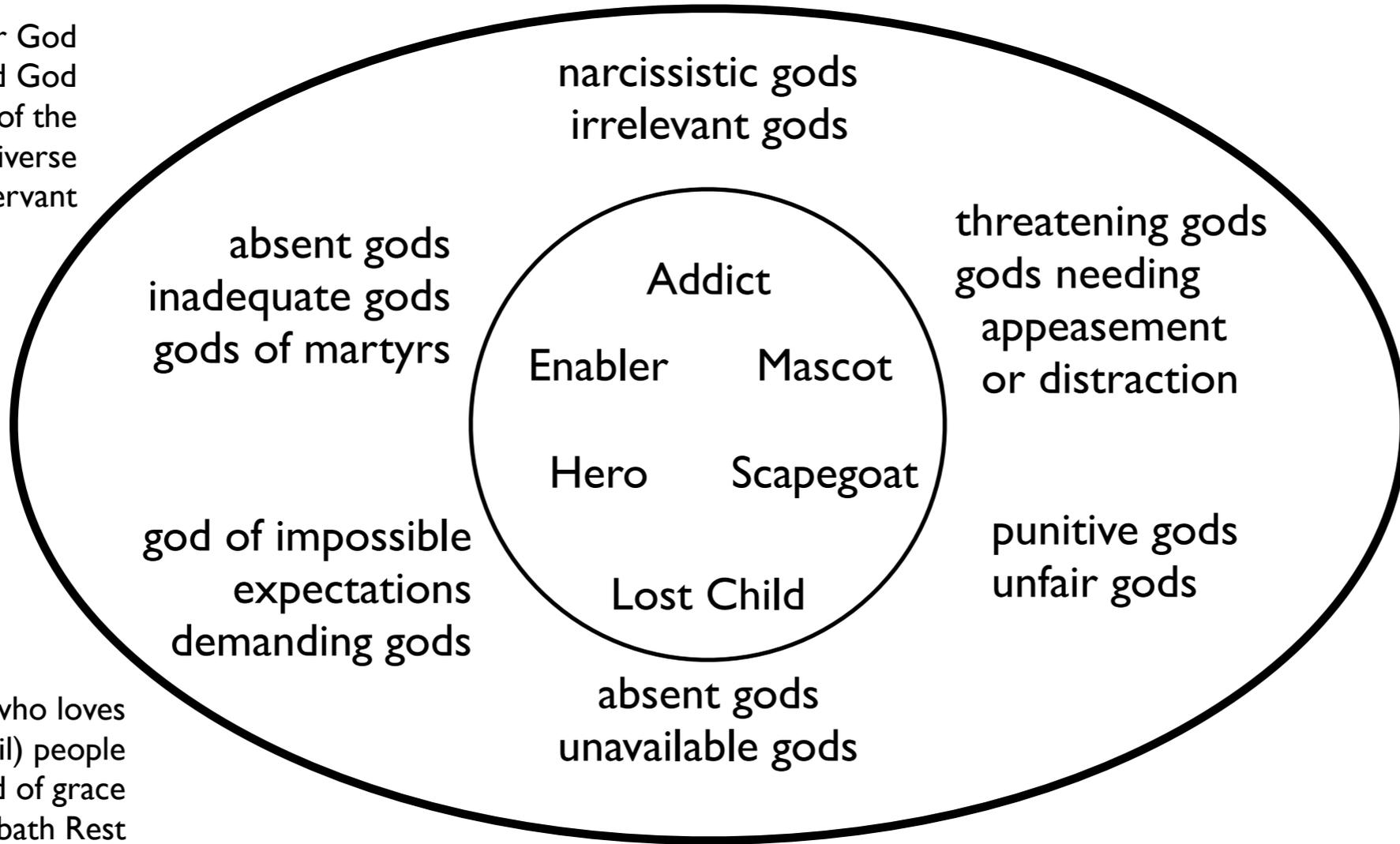
God who is intolerant of 'images'  
The Jealous God  
God who seeks the lost coin

the Creator God  
the Resurrected God  
God who is the Lord of the  
Universe  
God as Suffering Servant



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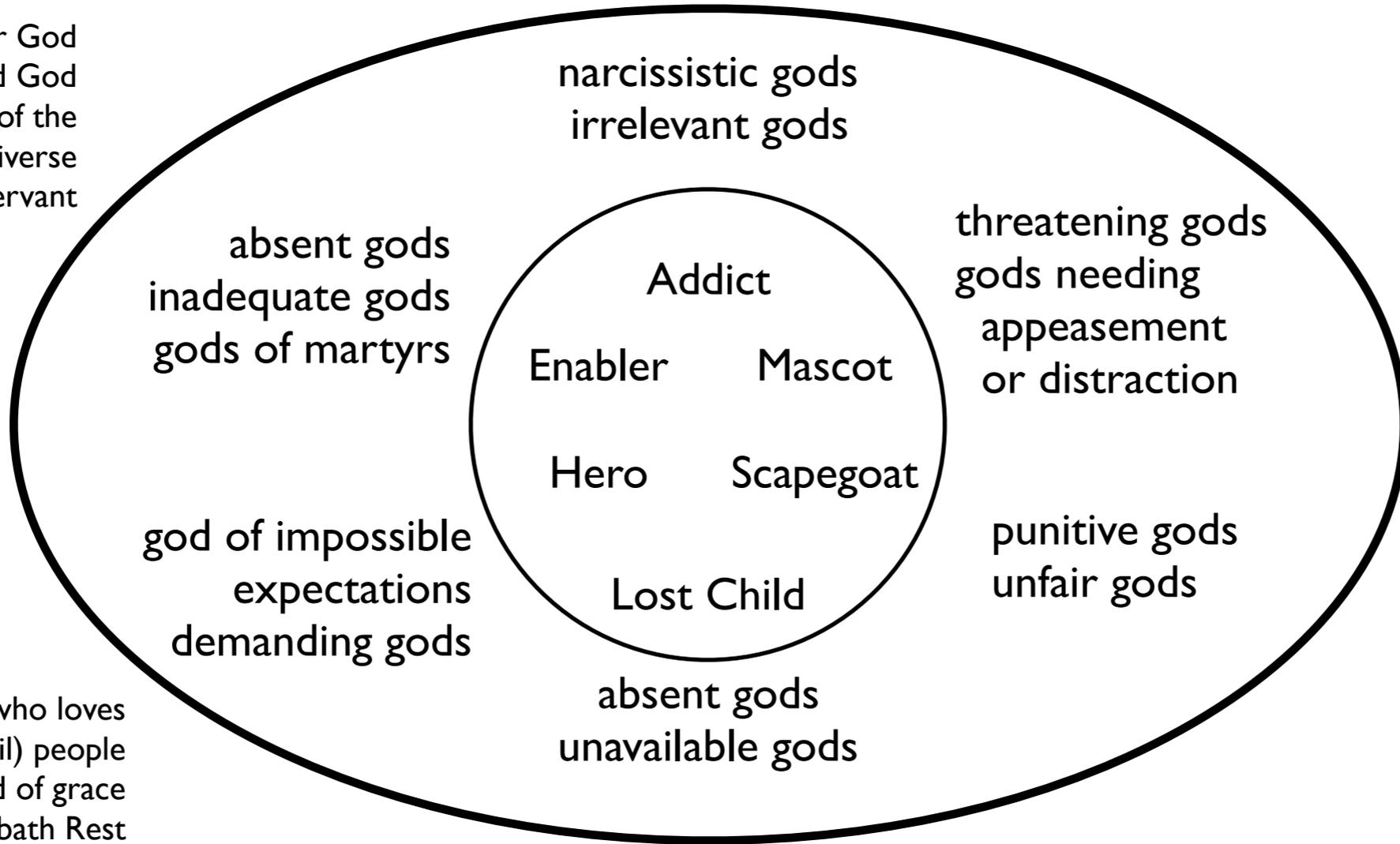
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the God who loves  
imperfect (and evil) people  
the God of grace  
the God of Sabbath Rest

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The Jealous God  
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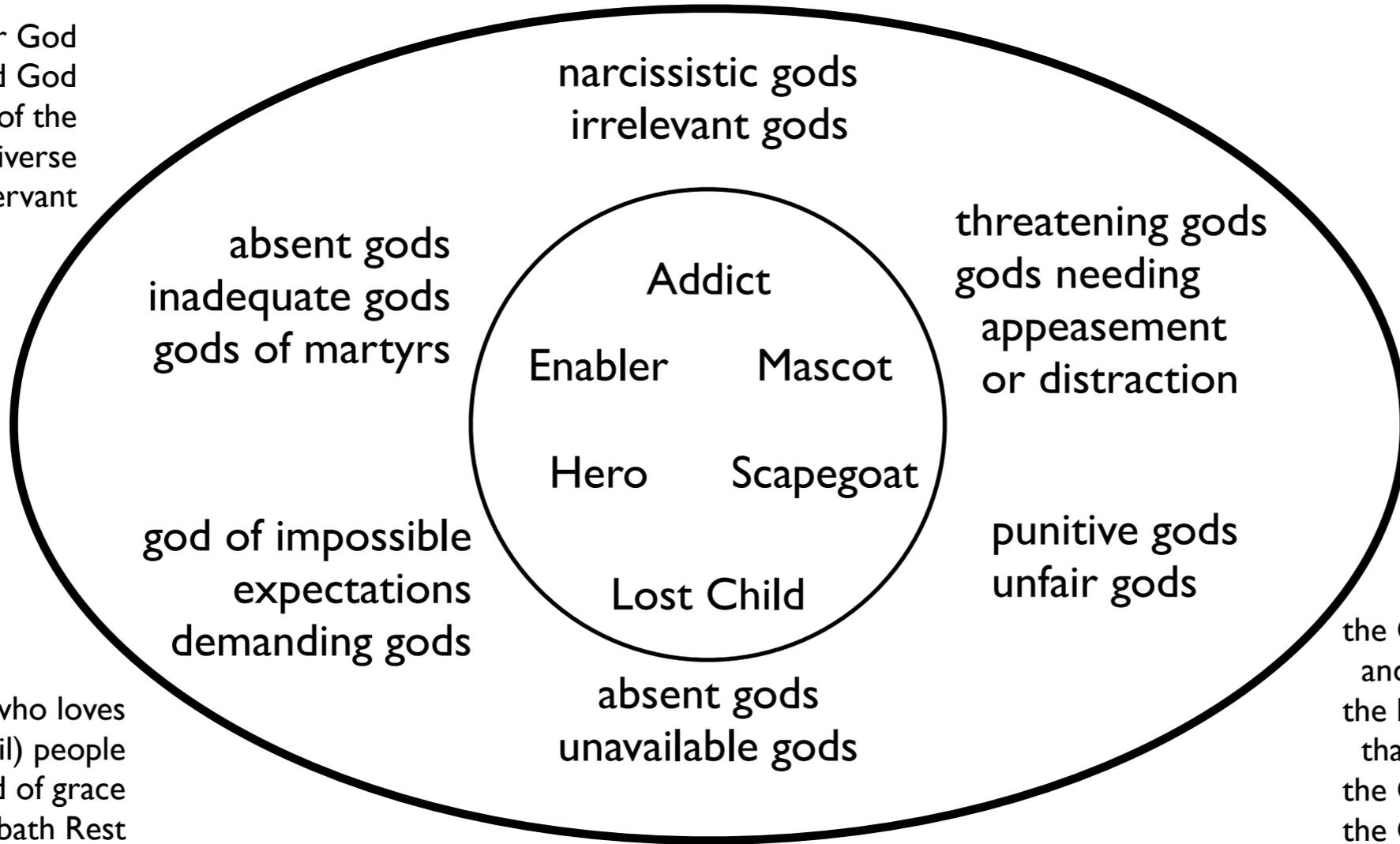


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God with us, Incarnation  
the God who pursues us (lost sheep, lost coin)  
the God who is present with us (even if we make our bed in hell)  
the God who listens

God who is intolerant of 'images'  
The Jealous God  
God who seeks the lost coin

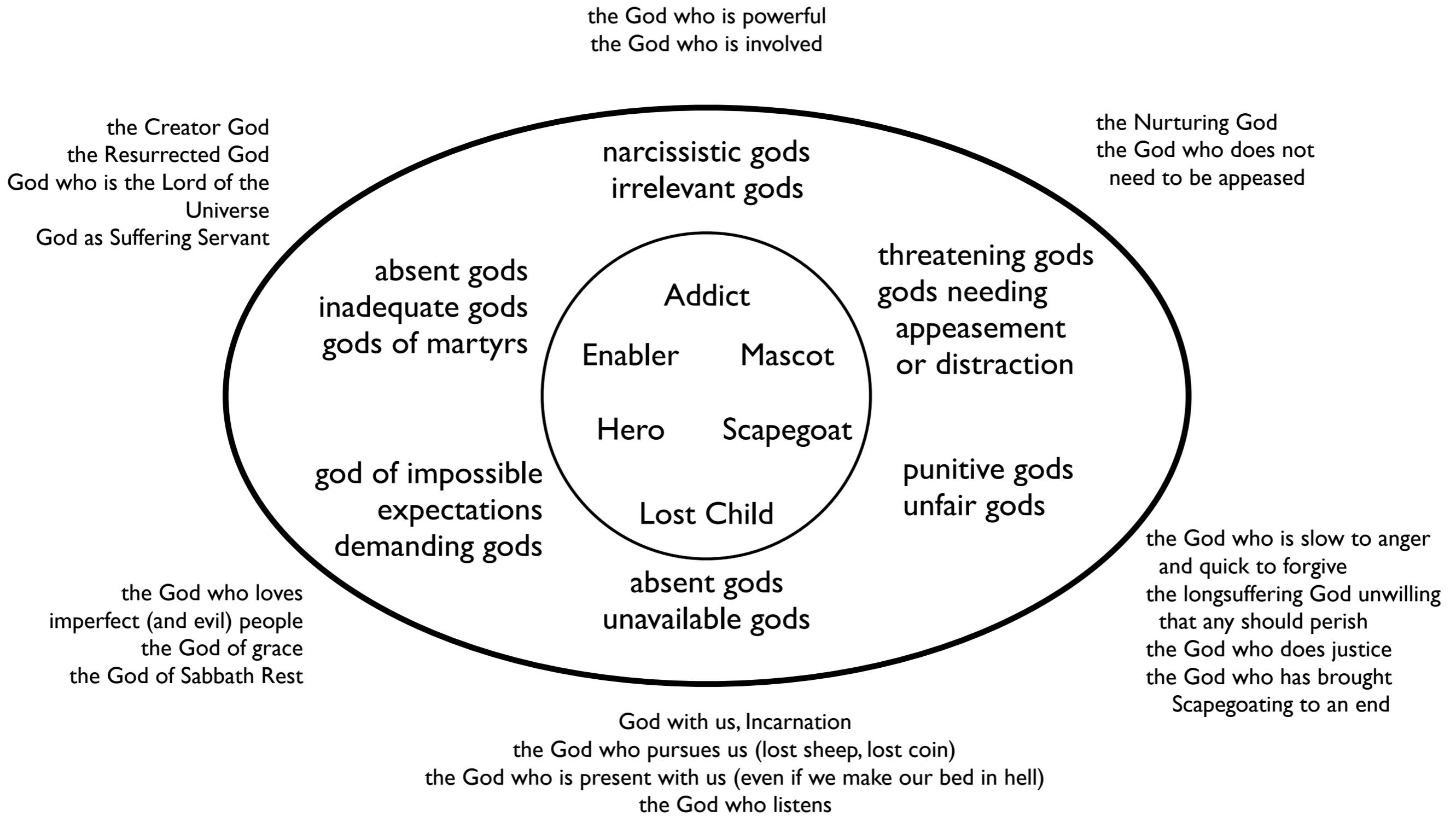
the Creator God  
the Resurrected God  
God who is the Lord of the  
Universe  
God as Suffering Servant



the God who is slow to anger  
and quick to forgive  
the longsuffering God unwilling  
that any should perish  
the God who does justice  
the God who has brought  
Scapegoating to an end

the God who loves  
imperfect (and evil) people  
the God of grace  
the God of Sabbath Rest

God with us, Incarnation  
the God who pursues us (lost sheep, lost coin)  
the God who is present with us (even if we make our bed in hell)  
the God who listens





## Firing gods who are not God

- identifying spiritual attachments/distortions
- exploring the source of idolatrous attachments and the ways these attachments have been reinforced.
- confession/telling-the-truth... renouncing idolatrous attachments
- letting God compete with our idolatrous attachments

## **An example : Competing with the God of Impossible Expectations**

- **God knows our limits**

“As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust”

Psalm 103:13-14

## **An example : competing with the God of Impossible Expectations**

- **God knows our limits**
- **God accepts limited resources**  
“We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish,” they answered. “Bring them here to me,” he said.

**Matthew 14:17-18**

## **An example : competing with the God of Impossible Expectations**

- **God knows our limits**
- **God accepts limited resources**
- **God accepts limited faith**  
“I do believe, help me overcome my unbelief!”

Mark 9:24

## **An example : competing with the God of Impossible Expectations**

- **God knows our limits**
- **God accepts limited resources**
- **God accepts limited faith**
- **God accepts limited courage**  
“Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid”

**Mark 16:8**

## **An example : competing with the God of Impossible Expectations**

- **God knows our limits**
- **God accepts limited resources**
- **God accepts limited faith**
- **God accepts limited courage**
- **God accepts limits in ministry**  
“I still had no peace of mind.. so I said good-bye to them and went on to Macedonia”

**2 Cor 2:12-13**