

Social Network Mapping: A 20-30 Minute Exercise

Personal identity is at least partly derived from the social networks to which one belongs. Group memberships having a strong, reciprocal relationship with self-identity, values and beliefs. In addition, situational factors influence which social identity is likely to be salient in each context.

In the [Social Identity Mapping](#) exercise, you visually represent and self-assess one's network of group memberships (adapted from Cruwys, Steffens, Haslam, Haslam, Jetten & Dingle. (2016). Social identity mapping: A procedure for visual representation and assessment of subjective multiple group memberships. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 55 (4), 613-643).

However, during this Social Network Mapping exercise you will construct a list of key resources with whom you have personal connections. While these relationships are typically not as intimate as your "family" or most-significant others, nor may the frequency of interactions be as often or regular as with your "friends" or playmates, list only people who you think can recall your name when they see your picture and/or hear your voice. In other words, these are folks who you have, at a minimum, a working personal relationship.

Recommended process to begin this exercise

1. **Avoid reaching for your phone or other resource manuals** until you have completed your initial list of Social Network members (#2). Download [this](#) spreadsheet to start your Social Network Mapping.
2. Begin with 10-minutes of thinking of the people who immediately come to mind that you call upon to provide essential resources for yourself and/or the peers whom you serve. For example, in the spreadsheet list the organizations you call on regularly or periodically – maybe these are local jails, prisons, Department of Community Supervision offices, Sheriff or Police Departments, or courts; Community Service Board or other behavioral health service providers; clothing or food banks; housing providers; employers... hopefully you get the idea of what is meant by essential resources. It is good to have names of more than one person from each organization in your list.
3. Once the initial list of organizations and people is compiled, take 10-20 minutes to add the information that is currently available to you by referring to your resource manuals, phone lists, etc. and fill in as many of the cells in each row as possible.
4. Finally, after #3 is done, notice the cells that are blank. These blanks suggest topics to work into subsequent conversations/interactions when the opportunity is appropriate for curiosity ([PINK OARSI](#)) about that person and their cultural worldview. Feel free to add columns to the spreadsheet for items that are personally relevant to you regarding pertinent character strengths, skills, talents, hobbies, etc. The fundamental point is building mutually beneficial and mutually challenging relationships where the exchange of professional resources is enhanced by intentionally sharing personal (but not too intimate) information for reciprocal trust-building and create those little but magic moments of oxytocin squirts = you get (validate and appreciate) me!

