

## ‘My Social Self’ File: A Tool for Supervision

Social and political influences in our lives can have an impact on how we feel, as much, if not more, than our individual histories and past experiences. In our work as therapists and supervisors such influences are important to recognise and reflect on, as they can inform how we relate to our clients and colleagues. Thinking about these influences may help you consider any that have been important over your life and how these influence your own identity and practice as a therapist or supervisor.

The list below gives examples of such influences, and aspects of personal identity. Please use this in a way that feels helpful for you. For different clinicians this may mean different things, for example you could:

- treat it as a checklist and tick some boxes that feel relevant for you
- write in some more comments to reflect on and discuss further in relevant spaces (eg supervision, personal development or therapeutic settings)
- use your reflections to seek out additional training or personal development opportunities
- use your reflections to help identify and hypothesise about areas where the ‘social self’ of both you and your client/patient or supervisor/supervisee may have particular meaning, or potential for enactment
- consider how aspects of your ‘social self’ may interact with colleagues, teams, or the culture of your service setting

### Aspects of myself or my life that have had an impact on me:

- in how others relate to me (other-to-self)
- in how I relate to others, (self-to-other) and/or
- in how I see or relate to myself (self-to-self)

	<b>Applies strongly ++</b>	<b>Applies +</b>	<b>Does not Apply -</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Age and/or stage of life				
Accent				
Abilities/disabilities (eg <b>physical, sensory</b> or <b>intellectual</b> , or <b>neurodivergence</b> eg autism, dyslexia, ADHD)				
Body size or shape				
Being born female, male or intersex				
Being a carer for others				
Class (eg money/status/job)				

	<b>Applies strongly ++</b>	<b>Applies +</b>	<b>Does not Apply -</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Culture				
Education				
Employment				
Ethnicity				
Finances/wealth/poverty				
Gender identity				
Gender expression				
Geography				
Housing problems or homelessness				
The law/criminal justice system				
Marital/family situation				
Mental health				
Nationality/ migration/ asylum/refugee status				
Being a parent (or not being a parent)				
Personal appearance				
Physical health				

	<b>Applies strongly ++</b>	<b>Applies +</b>	<b>Does not Apply -</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Politics or other personal beliefs				
Race				
Religion				
Sexuality/sexual orientation				
Sexual expression or preferences				
Spirituality				
Anything else that's important – please write below				

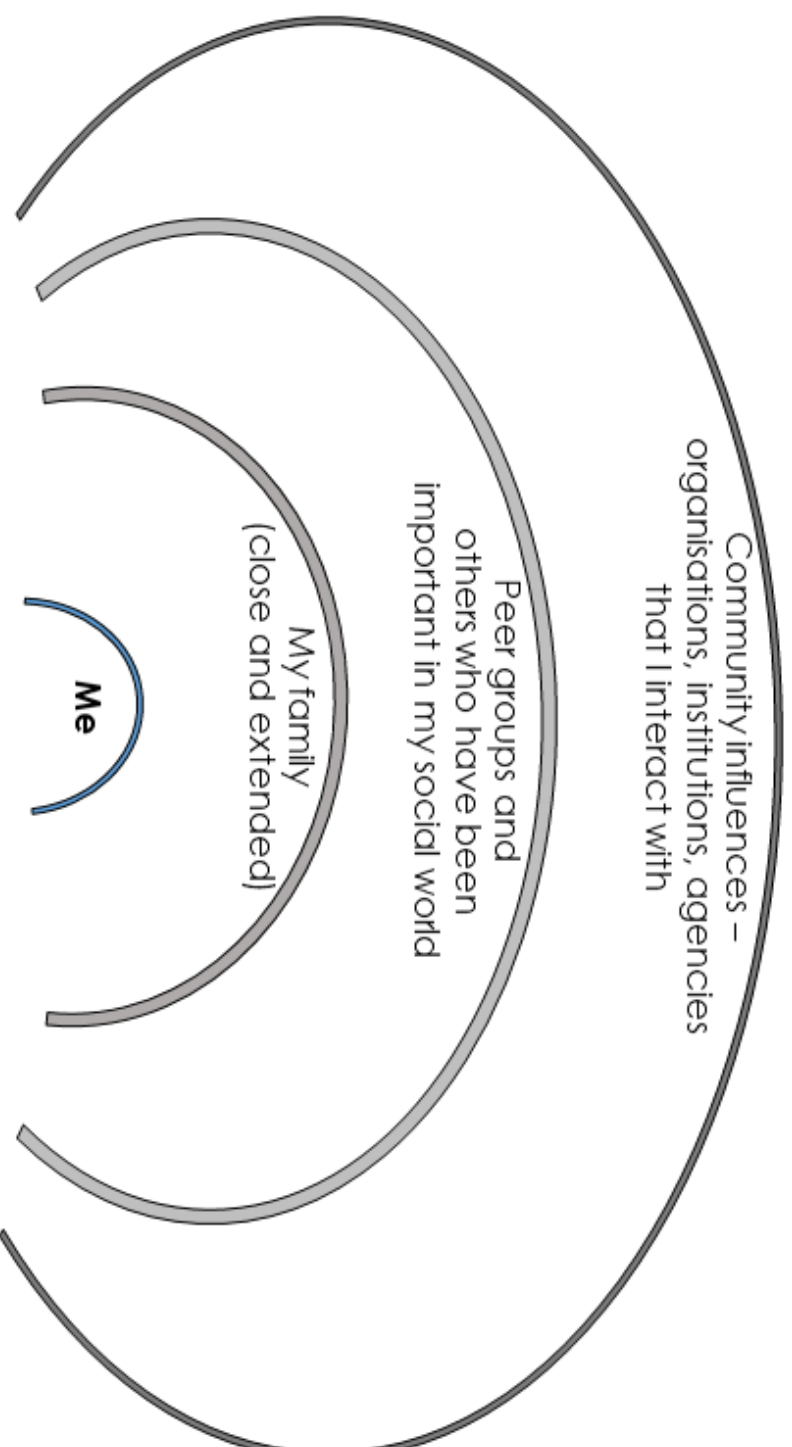
This draft 'My Social Self' File was adapted by Rhona Brown from the Psychosocial Checklist (see Pollard & Toye 2006). Original version available at [Pollard, R. and Toye, J., 2006. Updating the Psycho-Social Checklist. Reformulation, Winter, pp.19-21.](#)

It grew from consideration of integrating systemic approaches with CAT with Paddy Crossling, and draws on the Social Graces framework developed by John Burnham and Alison Roper Hall (eg see Burnham J (2012) 'Developments in the Social GRRRAAACCEEESSS: Visible-invisible and voiced-unvoiced' in Krause I (ed) Culture and Reflexivity in Systemic Psychotherapy: Mutual Perspectives. London: Karnac).

This draft (January 2024) has also drawn on feedback from cognitive analytic therapist colleagues, including trainees, and people using it in therapy.

# My Social Self Template

↓ Bigger influences that have an impact on me (eg media, global, political, economic, legal influences, or broader inequalities) ↓



Use this template to make any notes or doodles about important messages you have had from these different levels of influence in your life. You and your therapist can look at this together and add to it as you go on in therapy.