

‘My Social Self’ File (Draft 4)

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. It can sometimes help make sense of how we feel if we recognise and reflect on the effects of these. Thinking about these influences may help you and your therapist talk about any that have been important over your life.

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 people 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 discuss further in sessions, or
- not tick or write anything to share, but instead keep these areas in mind to discuss with your therapist if and when the time feels right.

Aspects of myself or my life that have had an impact on me, in how:

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

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

	Applies strongly ++	Applies +	Does not Apply -	Comments
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				
Politics or other personal beliefs				
Race				

	Applies strongly ++	Applies +	Does not Apply -	Comments
Religion				
Sexuality/sexual orientation				
Sexual expression or preferences				
Spirituality				
Anything else that's important – please write below				

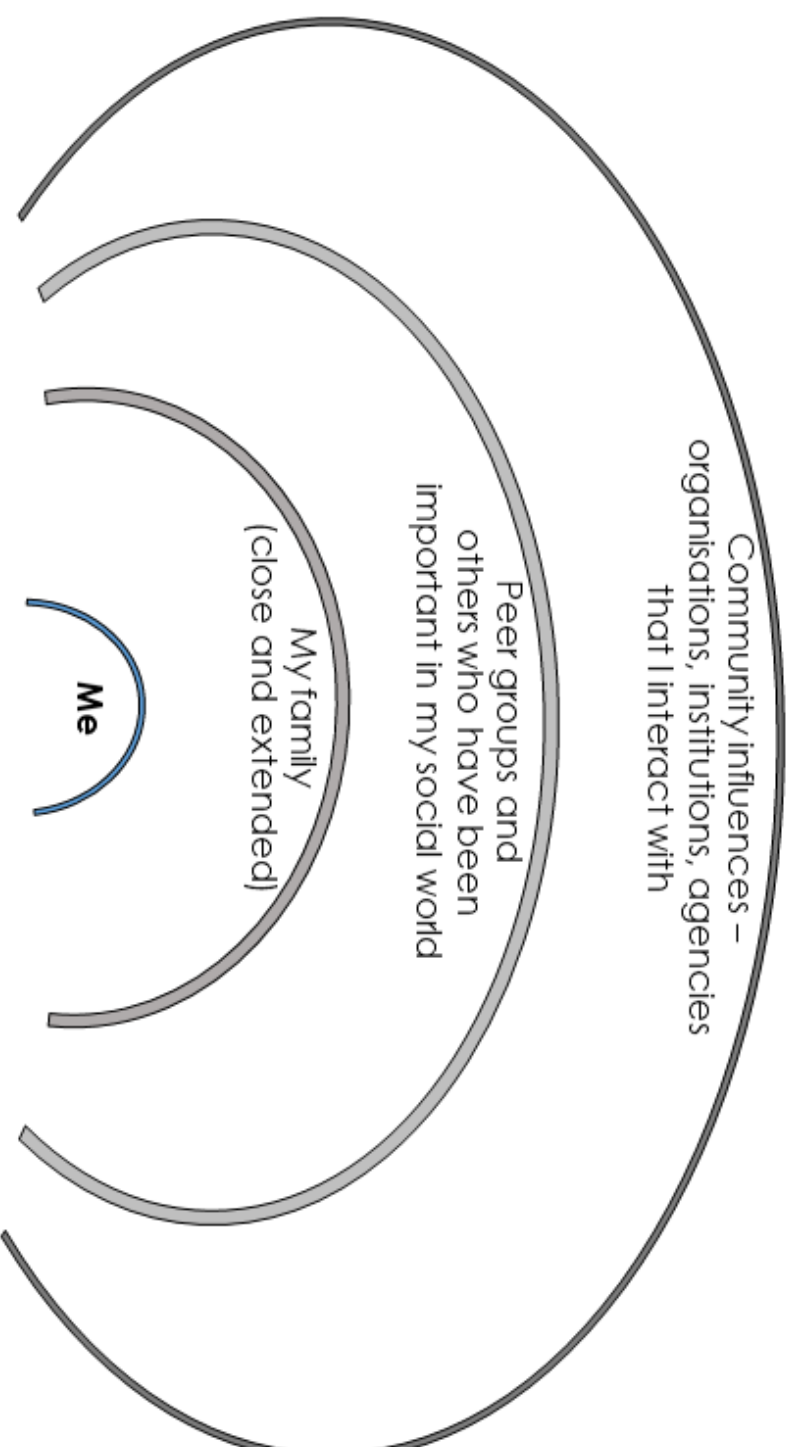
This draft 'My Social Self' File was adapted by Rhona Brown from the Psychosocial Checklist (see Pollard & Toye 2006). Original version available at [Pollard, R. and Toye, J., 2006. Updating the Psycho-Social Checklist. Reformulation, Winter, pp.19-21.](#)

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 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.