

MAPPING THE SELF

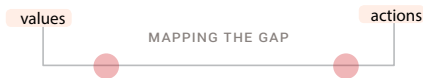


TOOL

What is it?

To better understand how we can shift and shape systems around us, we must first gain a clearer understanding of our positionality in the system that we are working to change - the values that guide us, the commitments we hold and the resources at our disposal, and how we are/could be leveraging them to see meaningful change in the world around us. This tool provides space for personal reflection around these themes in the form of a series of interconnected prompts -- where gaps exist between assets or commitments and actions represent spaces for continued inner work and personal growth*. It can surface insights and how these affect how you show up in the world, in your work, in community, and on a particular initiative. It can also be used dialogically with a team to help them get to know one another more deeply.

***Example:** A wide gap between values and actions represents space for more personal work and intention.

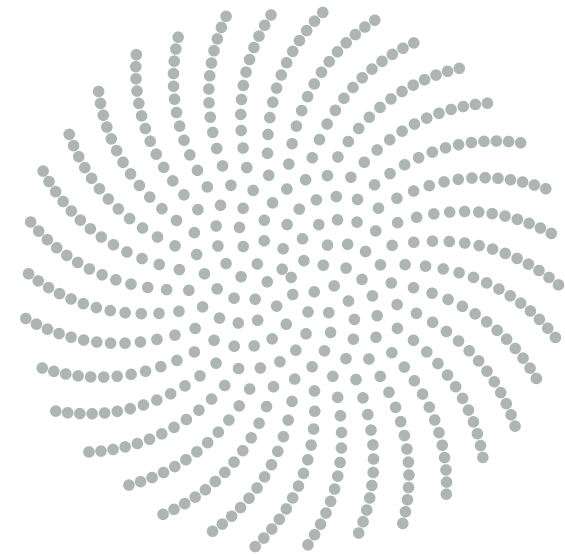


When is it used?

Mapping self in the system can be used at any point in a social innovation process. If it is used early on it may help in team building and resource mapping. By using it later in a process, team participants may have built safety with one another to take this mapping work to another level and it can also be integrated into what the group is learning about the system that they are trying to change, and how this particular group of actors understands their personal roles in that. It can also be used if some tensions are coming up within a team, perhaps by changing some of the prompts around the edges, to support reflective practice and transformation if there are difficult dynamics showing up.

How it works:

1. Provide the team with 11x17 copies of this technique. Working individually, either in session or as homework in between sessions (recommended), encourage people to set aside at least 30 minutes of quiet, focused, and reflective time to work through the prompts.
2. People can work in any order that they like, adding detail in response to each prompt. You can encourage people to keep their responses focused on the specific creative question that you are working on together, or they could respond more generally, depending on how you use the results.
3. Sharing back the responses can take a few different forms. You could do a round, hearing from everyone, about a particular insight or thought that they would like to share back. You could get people to pair up and share their maps with one another and discuss them. Or you could ask everyone to post their maps and share them back in some detail with the whole group. Right-size the share back strategy based on the level of safety in the group, and what the most important objectives are for undertaking this exercise in your unique situation.



Self as System

Adapted from Alexander Dirksen and Lisa Gibsons.

