

Mapping Out Your Community

Before we engage in community work, it can be really useful to think about our relationships and connections with others, be they neighbours, members of the local community, friends and family, or any others whose needs we are aware of. By 'mapping' these relationships and connections on paper, we can visually place ourselves in the wider community ecosystem and identify where we would like to focus our attention and who we would like to reach out to.

Map Out Your Relationships

Draw a map of yourself and **your relationship to others**. Place yourself in the middle of the page and draw lines out to others, be these people, communities, organisations or groups. The length of the line should represent your closeness or distance to those you identify.

This map can include both those that you are emotionally close to/far from and those you are physically close to/far from.

Once you have completed your map, consider the following questions:

- What struck you whilst you were creating the map?
- What is the relationship between those you are physically close to and those you are emotionally close to? Is there any crossover?
- Has the Covid-19 crisis impacted your map in any way? If so, how?
- Is there anything you would like to change on your map? If so, what?

Consider People's Needs

This activity encourages us to think about who we need to be looking out for and what needs they might have. This activity can be difficult – thinking about those who are vulnerable and who need support can have an emotional impact. If you feel this is the case for you, then take some time out to think about what it is that is impacting you or reach out and talk to someone.

When completing the following questions, stay broad; you don't just need to think about the people in your local community, you can think about people nationally or globally. Sometimes it helps to expand our vision outwards as we may not be aware of everything that is going on in our local communities.

- Who has needs which need to be considered? Create a list.
- What are their needs? If different groups, people or communities have different needs identify each need.
- Whose needs are currently being considered and supported?
 1. How is this being done?
- Whose needs are not currently being considered or supported?
 1. Why is this the case?
 2. How might their needs be considered and supported?
- Are there any groups, people, or communities being forgotten?
 1. Why might they be forgotten?
 2. What can be done about this?
- Select one group or community and think about the following:
 1. What can the global society do to better consider their needs and support them?
 2. What can the national government do to better consider their needs and support them?
 3. What can the local government do to better consider their needs and support them?
 4. What can the local community do to better consider their needs and support them?

Map Out Your Community

Now focus on your local community, using your ideas generated by the questions above and your knowledge of the area in which you live.

Draw a map of your community, using the following questions to guide you:

- Who is in your community?
- Do any of those in your community have needs?
 1. If so, who and what are they?
- What is in your community (think groups, services, facilities)?
- How do you know who is in your community?
 1. Are there any local events?
 2. Do people congregate in certain places?
- Of the different people and groups you have identified, are there any groups or people you particularly want to reach out to?
 1. If so, why is this the case?
 2. How might you reach out to them?
 3. What barriers exist?

- What is your place within your community?
 1. Would others view you as part of a group?
 2. How might this impact your interaction with them?

 - If you wanted to reach out to and support someone in your community tomorrow, what would you do?
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