

# Systemic Thinking Application Activity

Bring a client to mind and work through these reflective questions to apply your systemic thinking.

## Systems Focus:

Who is in the family system? Who is in the broader system e.g., other services?  
What are the broader levels of the system e.g., school/work, hobbies/clubs, SES, culture, spirituality, gender, community, era in time.  
Which relationships are you exploring? Or could explore?

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## Identified Patient (IP):

Who is the person identified as having the symptoms? Or problems? Or being problematic?  
Who is the person referred for counselling/therapy?  
What are the problems, challenges, issues or symptoms is the IP showing? And what might the IP as the 'barometer' be representing or highlighting with these problems in the family system?

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## Circular Causality:

What circular patterns or cycles do you notice?

How might patterns perpetuate problems or maintain challenges in the system?

How does something in one part of the system impact another part? Or have a ripple impact throughout the family/system?

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## Process and Content Distinction:

What is the content that is brought to sessions?

What is the process of how content is discussed?

What processes do you notice in how the family has tried to solve the issue? E.g., the process of communication and other interpersonal processes, and past attempted solutions.

Are any processes perpetuating unhelpful or problematic patterns?

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## Family Strengths:

What strengths are there in family members, the family as a whole, their support network and community?

What is working well in the family?

In what aspects of life is the problem not present, or present to a lesser extent?

What are other aspects of life that stand outside the problem?

How are the family coping with challenges?

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**Family Life Cycle (Leaving home as a single young adult; Joining of families through partnering up/marriage; Families with young children; Families with adolescents; Launching teenagers; Families in later life)**

What are the current life cycle stages of family members? What are the current transitions?

How is the family managing their current stage and transitions? Are there any points of 'stuckness'?

Are there multiple stages/transitions happening at the one time?

Are there any unscheduled transitions or challenges e.g., untimely loss, trauma, job loss?

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