

Table S1. Detailed Instructions to Complete a #PsychMapping Exercise Session.

Important steps	Suggestions and examples
Setting up the session	
Get training and download materials	In addition to this short guide, you can explore the theoretical foundations and practical application of the PsychMapping exercise by reading <i>PsychMapping in Sport, Exercise, and Performance</i> (Latinjak, 2024) or by engaging with free training materials available at www.psychmapping2.com . On the same site, you'll also find links to download all necessary materials—including question cards, the summary map, and other useful guides—in multiple languages to support the implementation of PsychMapping sessions.
Adapting the materials	Enhance your session preparation by customizing the question cards before your client arrives. Consider visual modifications such as adding colour, adjusting font size, or incorporating your organization's logo. Adapt the questions to fit your session by modifying their format. The intentionally broad wording allows for easy adjustment across different contexts and demographics, whether in tennis, rugby, or working with athletes and coaches. To streamline the exercise, specify a question relevant to the context or individual, reducing the need for on-the-spot verbal adjustments. You can also add or omit questions based on relevance. For instance, some practitioners may replace a personal descriptor question with the new “changes one has noticed in themselves” question. When working with younger clients, selecting fewer cards can help shorten the exercise. Both new and original cards can be combined—for example, using the original wording of the “coping strategies” question instead of the updated version. For optimal results in in-person sessions, print the question cards on sturdy A5 paper (e.g., 200g) and, if using a paper map, print the summary map on A3 paper.
Setting up the space in face-to-face and online sessions	For in-person sessions, sit beside your client with the blank summary map placed centrally for clear visibility and easy access. During the initial #PsychMapping exercise, where clients may need more guidance, you may do most of the writing. If you're right-handed, sit to the client's left; if left-handed, sit to their right. Arrange the question cards in front of the client to encourage active participation. If using a paper map, ensure you have red, orange, light green, and dark green crayons (or equivalents) ready before starting the exercise. If you choose to work online, consider downloading the PowerPoint version of the PsychMapping exercise from www.psychmapping2.com. Avoid using presentation mode, as it prevents making entries on the map. For a cleaner visual, you can hide ribbons and command bars if desired. While hyperlinks function well for quickly navigating between question cards and the summary map, they may not work on Apple operating systems. Another option is to upload and share the file with your client, allowing both of you to work on the map collaboratively—though some hyperlinks might not function in online mode. This shared approach is particularly useful for clients familiar with the exercise, enabling them to take a more active role in entering responses on the map.
Welcoming the client	Greet your client and take a moment to identify any urgent concerns that may need immediate attention, potentially taking priority over the #PsychMapping exercise. Additionally, assess whether the client is experiencing mental fatigue, which could hinder their ability to engage effectively. Since the initial #PsychMapping sessions can be cognitively demanding, consider postponing or splitting the exercise into two sessions if the client appears fatigued.

Before starting, provide a brief introduction explaining the purpose and objectives of the exercise. Ask if they are comfortable proceeding. For example, you might describe #PsychMapping as a 45- to 60-minute self-exploration process that examines both external and internal factors influencing their sports practice. If the client agrees, you can begin the exercise.

The opening section

Introducing the exercise Begin the #PsychMapping exercise by introducing its procedures (Card 1) and objectives (Card 2). Decide whether to share some theoretical insights (Card 3) and, while presenting the summary map, whether to show examples of external factors, personal descriptors, and self-regulation (Card 4). Card 3 is typically more relevant for clients who are familiar with the exercise, while Card 4 may be more useful for those new to it.

When proceeding to Card 5, ensure the header of the summary map is completed. Pay special attention to selecting a topic, as it will guide the focus of all subsequent questions. For instance, if the topic is performance, the central section of the map will explore performance-related aspects. If the topic is sport anxiety, the questions will focus on different dimensions of anxiety in sport. Broad topics like performance and well-being are well-suited for intake sessions or initial explorations, especially when a client struggles to define a focus. In such cases, a general exploration of their performance and well-being can be a helpful starting point. The #PsychMapping exercise also supports more specific topics, such as stress, conflicts with teammates, recent games, or an upcoming tournament. These narrower themes are particularly useful when the client presents specific concerns or when prior sessions have identified key issues. For example, a client may choose “anger after mistakes” as a focus after a recent emotional outburst.

Lastly, especially for clients new to #PsychMapping, take a moment to discuss their expectations. Misconceptions—such as expecting the exercise to provide immediate solutions—can lead to frustration. While #PsychMapping helps clients gain self-knowledge, it often raises more valuable and thought-provoking questions than it provides instant answers. Clarifying this can help set realistic expectations and foster a more constructive experience.

The central section

Formulating a question The wording of the cards may sometimes feel slightly awkward, as they are designed to be adaptable across different contexts and individuals. A key responsibility during a #PsychMapping exercise is to adjust the wording of each question to fit the client’s specific situation—unless modifications have already been made before the session by editing the wording on the cards before printing them or displaying them on a screen. For example, Card 6 states: *“Identify key people and aspects of their behaviour that you think are most relevant to exploring today’s topic.”* This can be tailored for a tennis player as: *“Who are the key individuals in and around tennis, and what do they do, that significantly influence your tennis performance?”* It is essential that each question or reflection prompt ends with a reference to the chosen session topic, ensuring relevance—such as “tennis performance” in this case.

While client responses may sometimes invite follow-up questions, it is generally best to stay focused on completing the exercise within a reasonable timeframe without disregarding the client’s concerns. For example, if a client mentions a conflict with their coach, it is advisable to acknowledge its importance while suggesting a deeper exploration after finishing the exercise. This approach prevents distractions from

overriding the process, allowing other significant aspects to emerge naturally throughout the session.

The question cards The sequence of questions in the #PsychMapping exercise is flexible, though they are typically grouped by category—external factors, personal descriptors, and self-regulation. In most cases, the exercise begins with external factors, followed by personal descriptors, and concludes with self-regulation.

Each question card consists of three key elements. First, the question or reflection prompt, which can be adjusted based on the practitioner's approach and the client's needs. Second, visual elements, such as images, support clients who benefit from visual input by providing examples and facilitating self-reflection. Third, each card includes either illustrative examples or prompts to guide the client's responses.

The inclusion of multiple examples allows clients to choose those most relevant to them, reducing bias in their responses. Prompts serve as helpful starting points for self-exploration. Throughout the #PsychMapping session, clients can refer to both visual and verbal examples. If they struggle to respond at first, practitioners can provide guidance by directing them to the examples on the card or verbally elaborating on them for further clarity.

Making entries on the summary map In the central phase of the #PsychMapping exercise, a key role of the practitioner is translating the client's responses into concise entries on the summary map, especially during their first session. As clients become more familiar with the process, they can gradually take on this task themselves.

Entries are typically short—either a single word like *"parent"* or *"emotion,"* or a brief phrase such as *"relationship with coach."* This process mirrors paraphrasing; for instance, after a long response, you might summarize to the client that *"self-esteem"* and *"extraversion"* are key descriptors that fit well on the map.

Clients often assign a valence to their responses, such as referring to *"negative thoughts."* You can choose to include the valenced concept or simply write *"thoughts."* The distinction becomes relevant in the final stage of the exercise when clients evaluate the helpfulness or problematic nature of their *"negative thoughts"* versus *"thoughts"* more generally. Both approaches are valid, and practitioners can use whichever they find most effective.

Sometimes, a response may relate to multiple sections of the map. In such cases, place the entry in the most appropriate column. For example, you might clarify to the client that while *"parents"* belong in the external influences section, *"feeling pressure"* fits better as a personal descriptor.

Paraphrasing also introduces clients to more precise terminology. You might suggest that their description aligns with *"somatic anxiety,"* helping refine their self-knowledge. At the same time, be open to adopting the client's language—such as when a client described successfully recovering from a poor performance as *"rebooting,"* which then became a useful term in later sessions.

Most importantly, always confirm entries with the client before adding them to the summary map. The map should ultimately reflect their perspective and make sense to them.

Giving feedback and Clients may sometimes struggle to answer certain questions. If the difficulty stems from a lack of understanding, try rephrasing the question. If they still find it challenging, encourage them to look at the images and examples on the question

guidance to the client card for guidance. However, be cautious when offering examples yourself, as they may unintentionally introduce bias. Remember that the #PsychMapping exercise serves as a tool for assessing the client's self-knowledge—an inability to answer a question can be just as insightful as their response.

In some cases, you may choose to challenge a client's response or omission, particularly when the goal is to enhance self-awareness. For example, you could ask why they didn't mention their anger during games, despite previous discussions on the topic. However, if the primary objective is exploration, it is often more effective to observe and allow the client to work through the exercise uninterrupted, saving any follow-up questions for after its completion.

The summary section

Rating the entries on the map The final stage of the exercise involves reviewing the summary map and rating the entries (Card 22). However, since the process up to this point may have been lengthy, it's advisable to give clients a brief pause—offering them a chance to rest, drink some water, or even stretch their legs before continuing.

To conclude the exercise, ask the client to review the map and make any necessary adjustments. Once they are satisfied with the entries, they can begin the rating process. This typically involves colour-coding the entries based on how problematic or helpful they are in relation to the chosen topic.

Clients sometimes make the mistake of evaluating entries based on their general theoretical value rather than their personal experience. For instance, a client might rate "*motivation*" as very helpful simply because motivation is generally beneficial, even though their current level of motivation is actually unhelpful. If you suspect this type of error, encourage the client to reassess their rating based on their specific situation.

Card 22 includes follow-up tasks. One task, usually completed within the session, is to underline or otherwise highlight the entries that the client feels stand out. Beyond enhancing the visual clarity of dense maps, this step helps identify the key issues the client may be most motivated to work on in the future.

Other follow-up tasks are typically left for a separate session or assigned as homework, as both the client and practitioner may feel mentally fatigued after completing the exercise. These tasks involve identifying relationships between different map entries to better understand how various experiences are interconnected. For example, a client might recognize that their lack of emotional control leads to feelings of anger, which then result in emotional outbursts that negatively impact their relationship with their coach.

To support future planning, clients can also reflect on aspects they would like to change and consider strategies for achieving those improvements. For instance, a client who identifies envy toward teammates as an issue may decide—with the practitioner's guidance—that shifting their goal orientation from ego-driven to task-focused could be a productive approach.

Lastly, it's important for clients to recognize that both they and their map will evolve over time. They can continue refining their map and comparing it to their everyday experiences. For example, a client might return after a week and realize they had overlooked the significance of a supportive friend or that their coach deserves a more positive rating, as they have been more helpful than initially perceived.

Client questions and summaries

As the exercise comes to an end, encourage the client to ask questions, helping them clarify any lingering uncertainties. For example, you might check if they recall the exercise's objectives or understand the significance of certain entries on the map. By fostering curiosity and reflection, you support their deeper engagement with the process.

While a brief review of the map can be helpful, more in-depth summaries and analyses are best left for a later time. Clients—especially those completing the exercise for the first time—often experience mental fatigue afterward. Depending on both your and the client's familiarity with the exercise, drawing meaningful conclusions from the summary map may be difficult immediately after completion.

However, experienced clients tend to complete the exercise more efficiently, experience less fatigue, and benefit more from post-exercise discussions. In such cases, you might even invite them to summarize their own map. Regardless of their experience level, it's valuable to reinforce the importance of the summary map. Remind the client that the map captures their reflections on a specific topic at a given moment. As their perspectives and thought processes evolve over time, so too will the map, serving as a dynamic representation of their psychological self-perception.

Terminating the exercise

End the session by reflecting on key insights that emerged during the exercise and expressing your intention to explore them further in future sessions. For example, you might remind the client that their academic struggles appeared as a highly problematic area on the summary map and will be worth discussing in more depth. Ask if there was anything from the exercise that they would like to revisit or explore further in upcoming sessions.

Emphasize that the #PsychMapping exercise can be repeated to enhance self-awareness or track changes over time. Suggest a periodic review—such as every six months—to gain deeper insights and assess progress throughout your work together.

Finally, ensure the client receives their summary map but not before taking a photo for your records.

