The Super Simple Role Grid
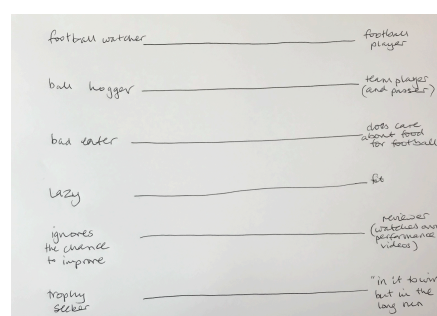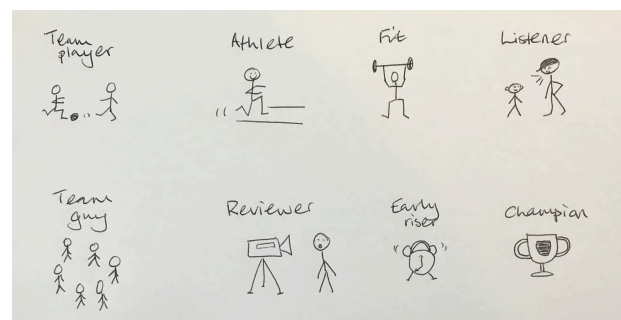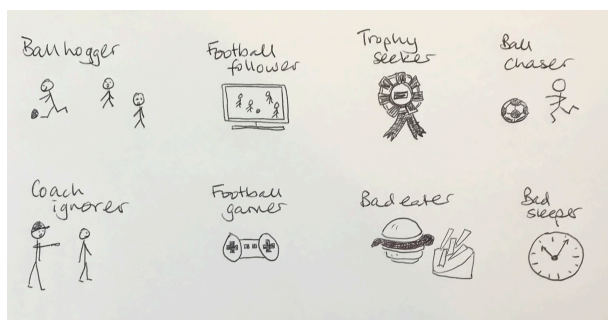
A PERSONAL CONSTRUCT PSYCHOLOGY TECHNIQUE

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INSTRUCTIONS

The Super Simple Role Grid

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All of us will have a number of roles to play in life (e.g. daughter, parent, grandchild, accountant, tennis player, patient, therapist, teacher, student). This technique can be used to explore any role.

It involves three parts: eliciting constructs, selecting the more important ones and then completing a rating scale. I have broken it down into a lot of steps to make it clearer but it is not difficult to do. Remember not to get drawn into discussion at the earlier stages of this technique otherwise the task will be hard to complete quickly. It will probably take 60-90 minutes if you follow these instructions and it could be completed across a couple of sessions (with a break before Part 3).

Make sure that you test it out on yourself before you use it with someone else so that you are clear about what to do at each step.

Equipment
•A4 paper x 5 (with a couple spare in case you need more space)
•Black pen

Process
Part 1 (Steps 1 & 2) - eliciting constructs and finding contrast poles
Part 2 (Steps 3 & 4) - selecting the constructs for the grid
Part 3 (Steps 7 - 9) - completing construct ratings and generating experiments to move towards the ideal on each construct.

Step 1 - Elicit the first set of emergent poles of constructs - the 8 worst XX
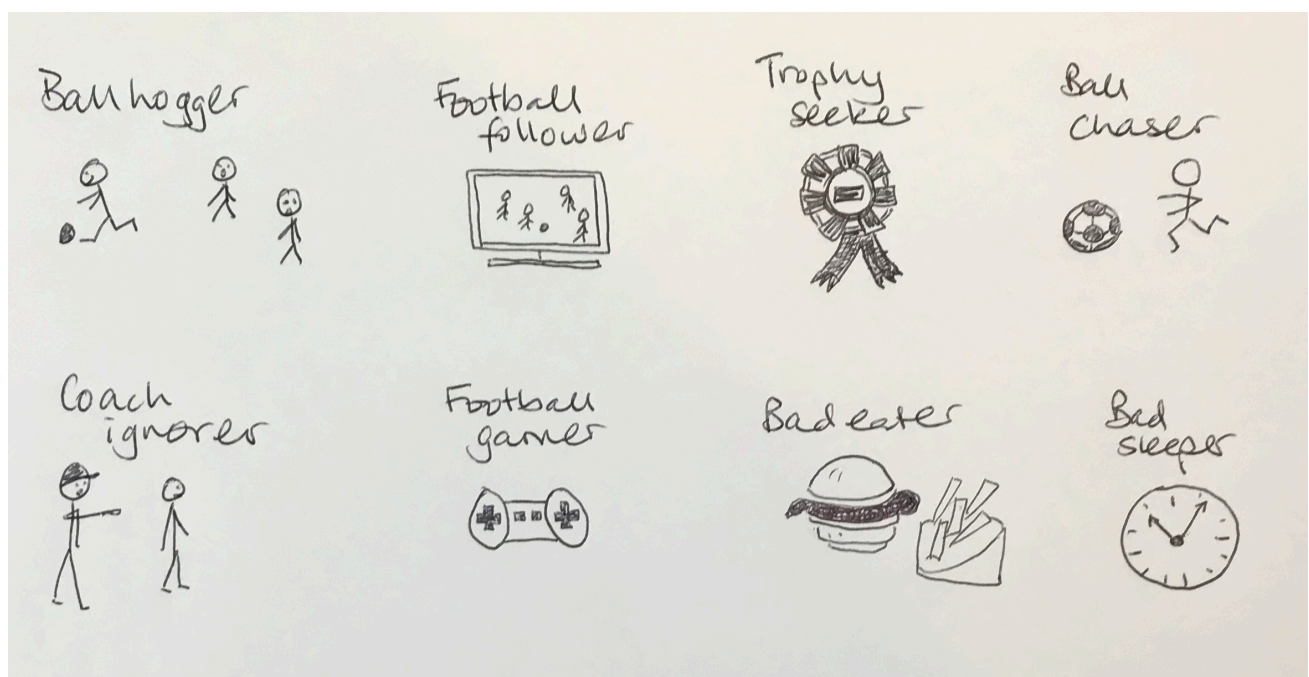
Paper 1 in landscape orientation.

Divide it into 8, giving you 8 boxes to draw in.

Ask the client to make a quick sketch of the **8 <u>worst</u> XX they can imagine** (where XX is the role you want to explore e.g. footballer), drawing one in each box.

When you have them all, ask the client to name each one in a way that characterises them: "Give each one a name that tells us what s/he is like." This is the emergent pole of the construct.

Fig 1: The 8 worst footballers

Step 2 - Elicit the second set of emergent poles of constructs - the 8 best XX

Paper 2 in landscape orientation.

Divide it into 8, giving you 8 boxes to draw in.

Ask the client to make a quick sketch of the **8 <u>best</u> XX they can imagine** (where XX is the same role from Step 1), drawing one in each box.

When you have them all, ask them to name each one in a way that characterises them. "Give each one a name that tells us what s/he is like." (This is another set of emergent poles.)

Fig 2: The 8 best footballers
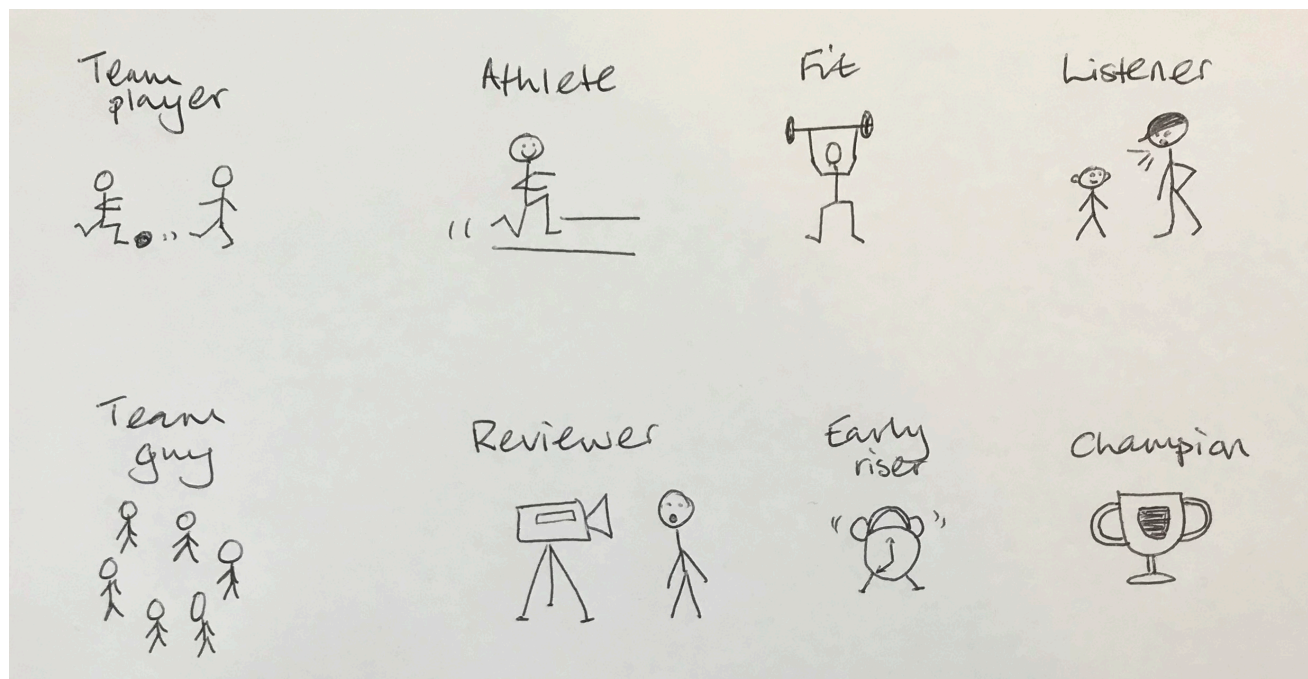
You now have two sets of 8 sketches. Lay them out, side-by-side allow you both to see all 16 pictures and to make the next step easier

Fig 3: 16 sketches together
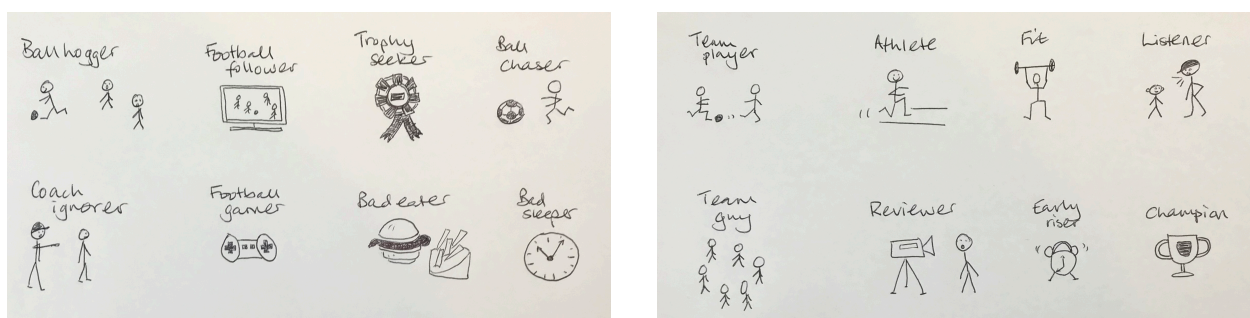
Step 3 - List the emergent poles of the 16 constructs

Paper 3 in portrait orientation.

On the left side of the paper, list the emergent poles of your 16 constructs from Steps 1 & 2 - the order does not matter but make sure you don't miss any.

Fig 4. List of 16 constructs

Emergent pole vs.

E.g.

Ball hogger vs.

Team player vs.

Ball hogger	vs.
Team player	vs.
Xxxx	vs.
Xxxx	vs.
Xxxx	vs.
Xxxx	vs.
Xxxx	vs.
Xxxx	vs.
Xxxx	vs.
Xxxx	vs.
Xxxx	vs.
Xxxx	vs.
Xxxx	vs.
Xxxx	vs.
Xxxx	vs.
Xxxx	vs.

Step 4 - Find the contrast poles for each of the 16 constructs

Ask for the contrast pole for each construct and write it on the right hand side - e.g. ask "How would you describe someone who is NOT XX ?" (where XX is the emergent pole).

Emergent pole vs. contrast pole   E.g.

Ball hogger vs. Good passer

Team player vs. Selfish player

Step 5 - Find the preferred pole of each construct

Circle the preferred end of each construct. Avoid the temptation to merge Steps 6 and 7 time because their selection may be different once they can see all of the constructs with both poles.

Step 6 - Choose the 6 most important constructs

Ask the client to choose the **six constructs** that matter most to the them. If they really need to have a couple more or fewer, that is fine - it will just take more or less time to complete the rest of the task. Asking for at least six means that they need to make some choices between constructs so you will get the more meaningful ones.

Fig 5. The 6 most important constructs
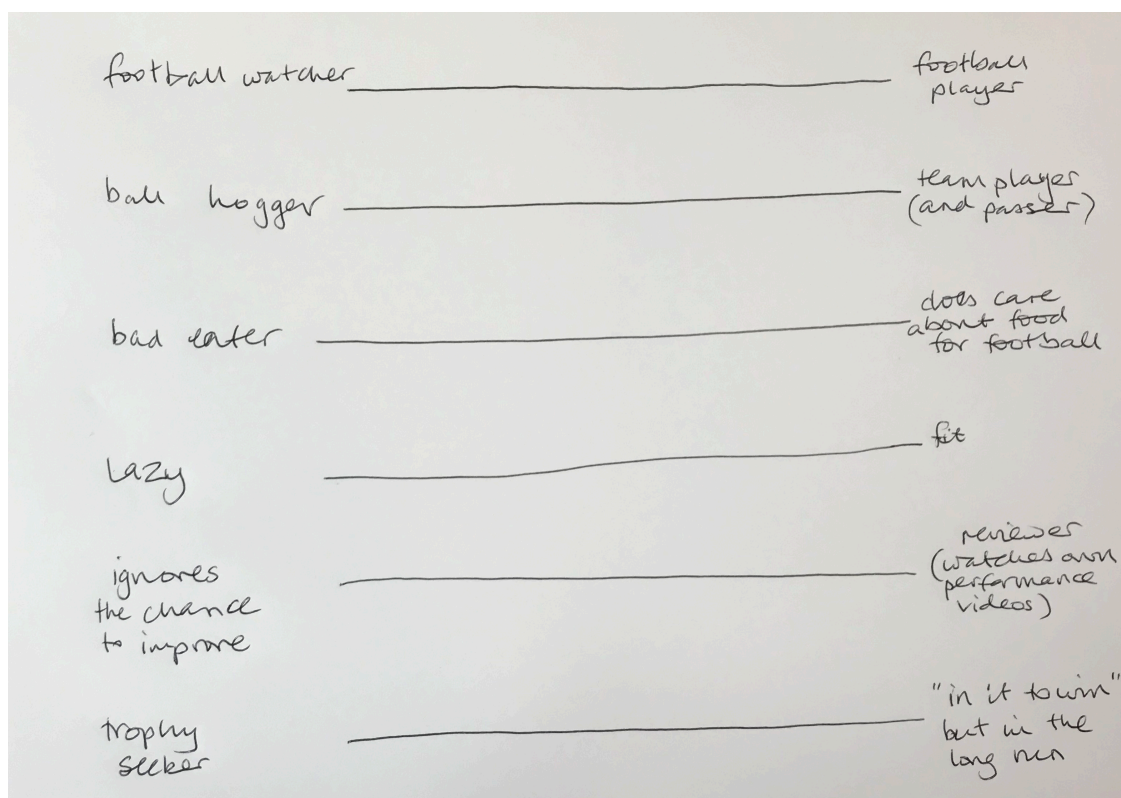
Step 7 - Grid preparation

Paper 4 & 5 in landscape orientation. Using your 6 constructs, write the non-preferred pole on the left hand side of the page (remembering that you may have to re-order some of them.) This means that all the preferred poles are on the right.

To give you plenty of room to work through the rest of the task, it will be easier if you have 3 constructs on paper 4 and then 3 on paper 5. Draw a line to the other side of the paper and add the other pole from your list.

Step 8 - Complete the grid by rating one construct at a time

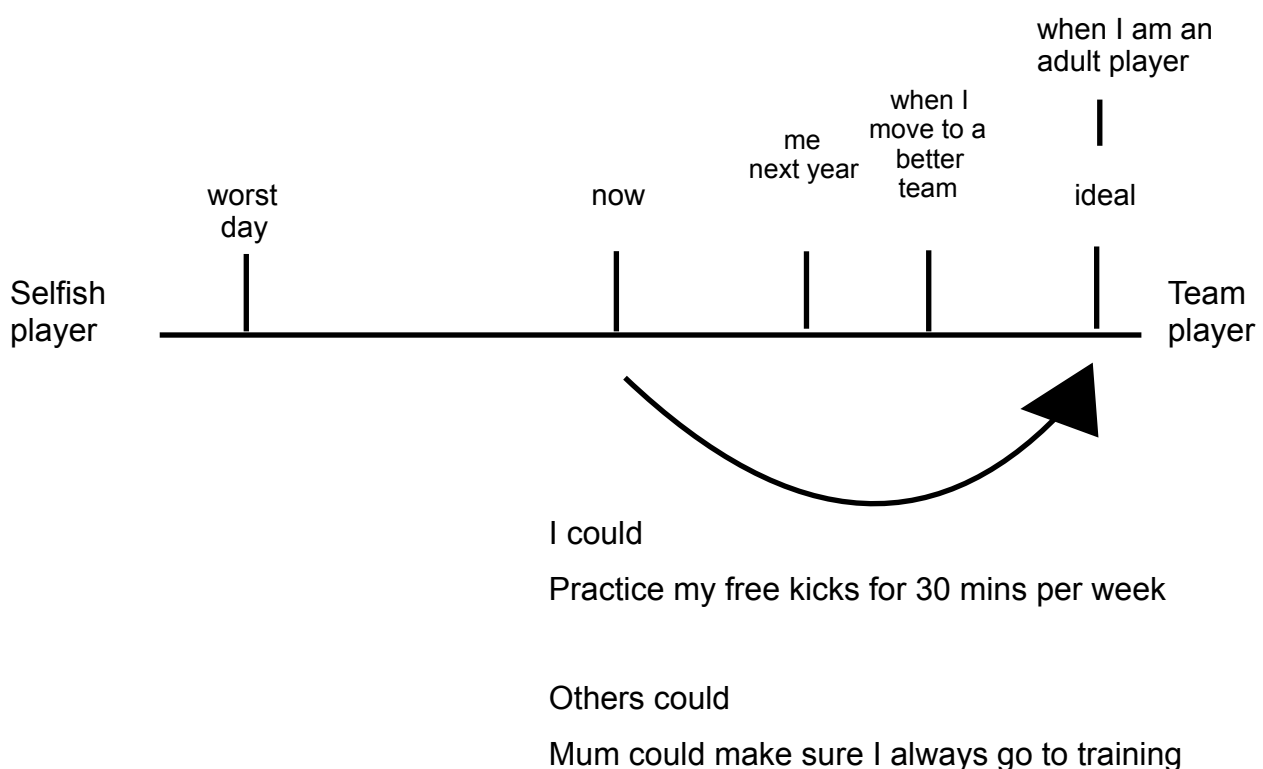To do this part of the technique means working methodically through each construct.

Take one construct at a time, repeating this process.

Ask the client to mark **self now**, **self on my worst ever day** and **ideal self**, self at a couple of relevant other time points (e.g. me when I move to a better team, me when I am an adult, me next year). (See example below.)

Step 9 - Generate experiments

Draw an arrow between **now** and **ideal** to illustrate the distance between the two and to show the direct of movement. The final step is to explore what could be done to help them to move closer to their ideal? Ask for 2 ideas for each construct - something the client can start doing tomorrow and something others could do. If the client wants to give you more than 2 suggestions, that is even better. These are potential ways forward for the client but you might also want to seek consent to let other people know about how they might offer effective support. If help and encouragement comes in a way that makes sense to the client, it is more likely to be construed as helpful. (See example below.)

Fig 6. Rating scale

I could

Practice my free kicks for 30 mins per week

Others could

Mum could make sure I always go to training

Note about the number of pictures and asking for drawings

If you work with someone who finds it too difficult to think of eight examples, you can reduce the number. Sometimes, that could be about not being able to visualise something

to draw, or about not having enough constructs in relation to the role to provide eight. This might also apply if you are working with someone very young, or if they struggle to construe people and psychological characteristics, such as in autism. However, it is important never to make a assumptions about the ability to construe so I would not recommend limiting how many you ask for before the session. You will be using all the constructs in the end (those on the **worst** *and* **best** lists) but the fewer you have, the less chance there is of you finding out what is important to that individual. As you go through the process, you can decide to reduce the number according to the response of that individual. You might want to offer the option to tell you rather than to draw, but I would encourage drawing because it will mean using other constructs, not only those that are easily translated into words. It is worth looking closely at the drawings because you will not know the significance of what is drawn and there might be something important to notice.

Sharing this technique

I am always very happy to hear about how people use this technique and how/where when they find it useful. I have made this technique freely available so that it can be used without concern for the cost. My aim is to further the understanding and support for people who are struggling in some aspect of their lives. The more free techniques there are, the more easily they can be helped. I also believe that professionals should share what we know as much as possible. I have benefitted enormously from the work of experts in the PCP world and I want to be able to make a contribution too. Please do tell other people if you find it helpful and give them a copy yourself or direct them download one from my website.

Training sessions or publications

This booklet may be used, copied and passed on free of charge, as long as it remains intact, with the cover and all pages included. Selling it is prohibited and that goes against my personal purpose - it must be free. It cannot be used as the main item in any course or training without my permission. However, I am unlikely to deny permission, especially if it is delivered to a public sector service, but I would like to know so that I can see whether professionals are finding it useful. It can be referenced with a link to my website to show people where they can find it: drawingtheidealself.co.uk.

Modifying this technique

You may modify this technique to make a new development of it, but please reference my technique in your own work and provide a link to my website. This is how many so interesting techniques come into being and I would be delighted to hear about any modifications you make, mainly so that I can use them too!

Get in touch

I love to hear from people who are trying out my techniques, especially if you find they are useful. If you would like to email me, I will reply. There is sometimes a little delay before I get back to people, purely to do with volume of work so please don't take it personally! You can email me at drawingtheidealself@icloud.com. Remember that you can also download other free PCP techniques from my website: drawingtheidealself.co.uk.

Find out more

If you are interested in learning more about PCP or attending CPD days, go to the Coventry Constructivist Centre's website: http://covpcp.com. These are low cost because the organisation operated on a not for profit basis. Have a look at my website for more information about PCP: drawingtheidealself.co.uk. The website also includes links to publications about this technique and to the PCP community.

There are two publications that might satisfy a developing interest in PCP without reading heavily academic texts:

Coventry Foundation Guide to Personal Construct Psychology: 2018 Edition. Coventry Constructivist Group: https://amzn.to/2BzFway.

"This book is based on the 5 day foundation course in Personal Construct Psychology which is run on an annual basis in Coventry. The course is taught by Diane Allen, Peter Cummins, Heather Moran, Sally Robbins and Grant Weselby. Although this book was initially designed to be used with our course because it provides reading materials which are then expanded in course sessions, it can be used as a brief introduction to Personal Construct Psychology."

A beginners guide to Personal Construct Therapy with Children and Young People, Heather Moran: https://amzn.to/2tmBO3G

"This introduction to using a Personal Construct Therapy approach with children and young people will be most useful to professionals who already have a some knowledge of Personal Construct Psychology and would like to know more about the practicalities of therapy. It might also be a starting point to readers who are trying to find out about therapy styles and want to see what a PCP therapist might do.

This book includes details that are not available in other texts. Heather Moran draws attention to issues around referrals, setting up for therapy and measuring progress. There is an explanation of what happens at the start, middle and end of an episode of Personal Construct Therapy.   The book ends with some thoughts about how to write about therapeutic work.   Sample letters and explanations are included. There are also explanations for six Personal Construct techniques which can be used in sessions, including two newly developed techniques, The Belgrade Difficult Experience Comic Strip Technique and The Super Simple Role Grid."