

SYS-MATS™

– the Systemic Table-Top Tool for Therapy, Coaching and Play.

Background and advantages:

The three shapes of the SYS-MATS – squares, triangles, circles – represent the most archetypal forms and symbols. They reach deep into the human psyche with the potential to represent all its aspects. These three shapes form the foundations of sacred geometry, and were probably already used by humans more than 25,000 years ago. The circle symbolized the sun/moon the godly, spiritual world. The square was the earth and the material world. The triangle represented fire, will-power and creativity.

During work in a family constellation these three shapes can be used to represent the male (square), the female (circle) and the childlike/objective aspect (triangle).

The colours of the mats relate to information generated and processed in the right side of our brain, whilst the shapes relate to information from the left side. Together these two aspects create an ideal combination for use in wholistic assessments and processing.

How to address an issue using the SYS-MATS:

To start off with the client chooses a shape to represent him/herself, and positions it on the table.

They then choose mats to represent the current situation, and position these appropriately. Further mats to represent other people, the goal, the problem and so on can also be added.

The mats get chosen intuitively and should be positioned with intent, at a place on the table that feels 'right', correct and congruent to the client.

When a specific issue is first represented visually it can be more easily addressed and analysed verbally.

The two different sizes of the shapes represent proportions according to the clients perception.

This universal mat-set can be used for constellations, as well as in combination with a classical system- or family-board. The key difference to the more common use of 3-D representational figures lies in the 2-dimensionality of the mats. The absence of the 3rd-dimension has the advantage of leaving this imaginary space open, waiting to be filled by the client's unique story.

The symbolic nature of the shapes, without faces or any reference to specific people, makes it easier for the client to express abstract or even severe trauma-bearing issues.

Practice has shown that SYS-MATS are a valuable tool when working with people who have difficulty expressing themselves verbally.

For further processing of the current theme, mats can be repositioned or new ones can be chosen, according to the client's perception of changes.

Therapeutic interventions may vary. Other supportive/helpful tools, like adding little notes, might be used together with the SYS-MATS. Carry on until the session feels complete.

It may be important to document and photograph certain steps, and the visual end-result, for reference and as a resource at later stages of the therapy or counseling.

Useful Extras:

We suggest keeping paper and pen to hand for use with the SYS-MATS, to make notes or small labels for shapes. In the clinical setting it has been found that two add-ons from PANGARDEN, a game to transform and answer your life questions that we created, are very useful.

Details of these follow below, and both can be ordered easily through our website: www.sys-mats.com

1. Sprinkles in a heart-shaped box:

These sparkly figures are well received by teenagers and children. In adults too, creativity and playful enjoyment of self-expression get awoken. In this heart-shaped box you will find a lot of different sparkly shapes, e.g. stars, spirals, dolphins and other animals, hearts, angels, flowers, etc.

These shiny figures can be used to express qualities like joy, gratitude, happiness, fulfillment, relief, optimism, feelings of completion, and other things that can't easily be put into words.

Simply open the heart-shaped box, have a look inside and see what delightful treasure you can find.



Note: Because of small parts these are not suitable for children under 6 years.

2. The Needs-Cards

These cards are a very valuable support if the client has difficulty contacting their needs. They get chosen intuitively. Reflecting upon their words and processing the reaction towards them can give very helpful insights for the therapeutic direction.

The Needs-Cards set contains 72 small cards. The cards are made up of words like *Acceptance*, *Inspiration*, *Love*, *Self-Expression* and *Connection*, which can provide insights and point towards unknown issues and/or ask the client to take a stand.

The needs of our soul must be acknowledged to enable personal growth and progress, just like the fulfilled needs of a plant enable its growth. We chose a tree as a symbol to represent this on the backside of the Needs-Cards.

The 12 Colours:

The SYS-MATS come in 12 carefully selected colours. These colours enable the client to express a wide variety of qualities and feelings. Each time a client makes a choice (unconscious or conscious) to use a particular colour, it means and represents something to the client, should be noted, and might be discussed with the client to elicit more information.

The meaning of the colours:

There are many systems and personal and cultural associations used to interpret the meaning of colours. Please follow personal feelings and your own/your client's association when interpreting the colours, as it may vary a lot with each person and situation.

Here are some suggestions:

- White:** Light, spirit, soul, God, Christ, Angels, purity, dream, hope, new vision, isolation.
- Yellow:** Sun, talents, treasure, inheritance, intellect, ideas, inner peace, inner happiness, plans, the future, wisdom, detachment.
- Orange:** Joy, play, creativity, child-likeness, socialising, nourishment, food, happiness.
- Pink:** Tenderness, love, forgiveness, safety, sweetness, harmlessness, naivety.
- Red:** Energy, life-force, anger, rage, activity, sexuality, instincts, desire.
- Magenta:** Change, letting go, equilibrium, new consciousness, release, rebirth, detachment.
- Violet:** Transformation, respect, dignity, knowledge, worthiness, higher realms.
- Blue:** Relaxation, oneness, openness, welcoming, calmness, peace, healing.
- Green:** Balance, neutral, regeneration, cleansing, the new, hope, growth, optimism, health.
- Brown:** Earthiness, old values, the past, foundations, working with hands, durability, commitment, ageing, maturity, common sense.
- Grey:** The void, negation, ash, true service, work in offices, boredom, depression, destruction, internal suicide, denial.
- Black:** Mystery, creativity, attraction, potential, shadow, frustration, blockage, trauma, emptiness, sadness.

Suggestions for SYS-MATS lay-outs:

- **State of affairs lay-out:** Which of the mats represents me today? What does it stand for/ what does that mean about my inner life? How am I doing today? (Good warm-up exercise for groups!)
- **Classical family-constellation lay-out:** One mat to represent the client, with other mats representing members of their past or current family.
- **Theme lay-out:** One mat to represent the client, and a mat (or several) to represent their issue/problem.
- **Blockage lay-out:** The client, the goal and the blockage towards it.
- **Find your resource lay-out:** The client, the problem and the resource/help for it.
- **Dilemma lay-out:** 1. A mat for 'the one' 2. A mat for 'the other one' 3. A mat for 'both' 4. A mat for 'neither of these two'.
- **Personality lay-out:** The client and the different aspects of their personality (i.e. in the form of a stack of mats, which then gets separated and discussed/processed one by one).
- **Organisation constellation:** A business/institution and parts of it or certain projects in it and/or the co-workers.
- **Project constellation:** The project, the team-members plus other relevant aspects.



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www.sys-mats.org

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