

# The Eco-map: Assessing family and social network support

Kelly Pollitt & Alissa McAlpine  
Supervisor: Dr. Trevor Crowe



# What is Eco-mapping?

- Graphic representation of family and wider social network
- Interactive and collaborative process
- Used extensively in social work and child welfare

# Background

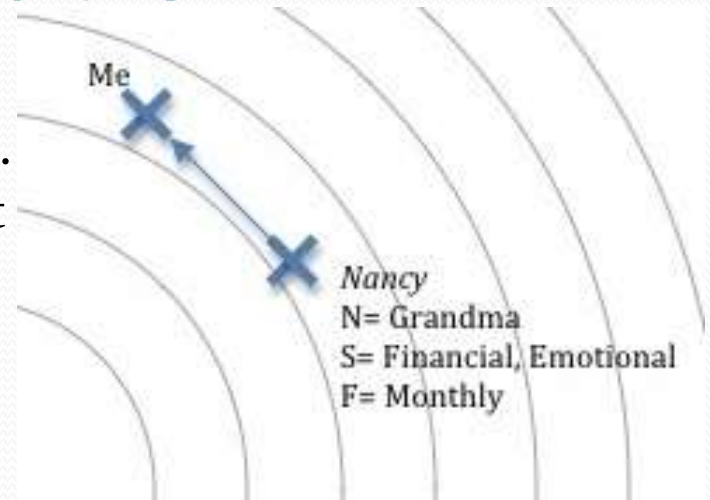
- Developed by sociologist Hartman (1978)
- Ecological systems = balance between living things and their environments
- Human environments include networks of relationships

# Relevance to AOD Treatment

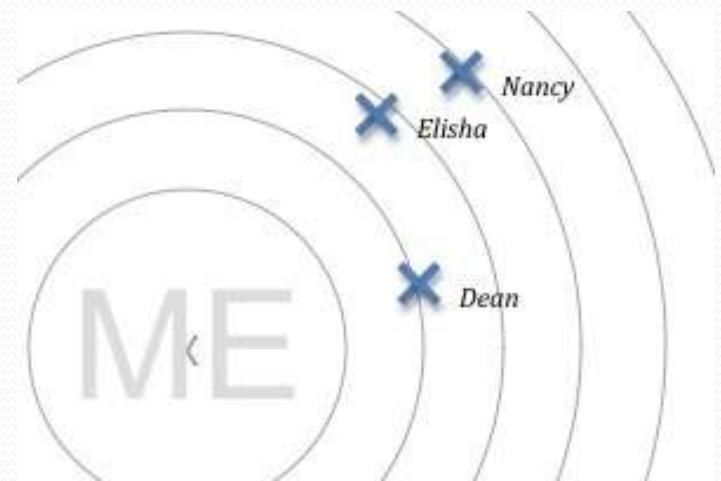
- Builds upon genogram
- Recognises non-traditional conceptualisations of the “family”
- Develops awareness of existing and potential sources of support
- Addresses broader context of recovery

# Eco-map Administration

Eco-map 1: Requires the participant to draw (i.e. map out) his/her family and other significant supports. This method configures the participant's relationship structures overall without necessarily being "participant centred".



Eco-map 2: Participant is located at the centre of the eco-map, and advised to locate family and support network relationships in terms of emotional closeness from him/herself.



# Additional Measures

- Participants also completed an assessment battery including the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scale (FACES IV), the Hope Scale – Short Form, and the Mental Health Continuum – Short Form.
- Clients were debriefed post-administration, and asked if they would like a copy of their eco-map. In addition, copies of client eco-maps were placed in client files.

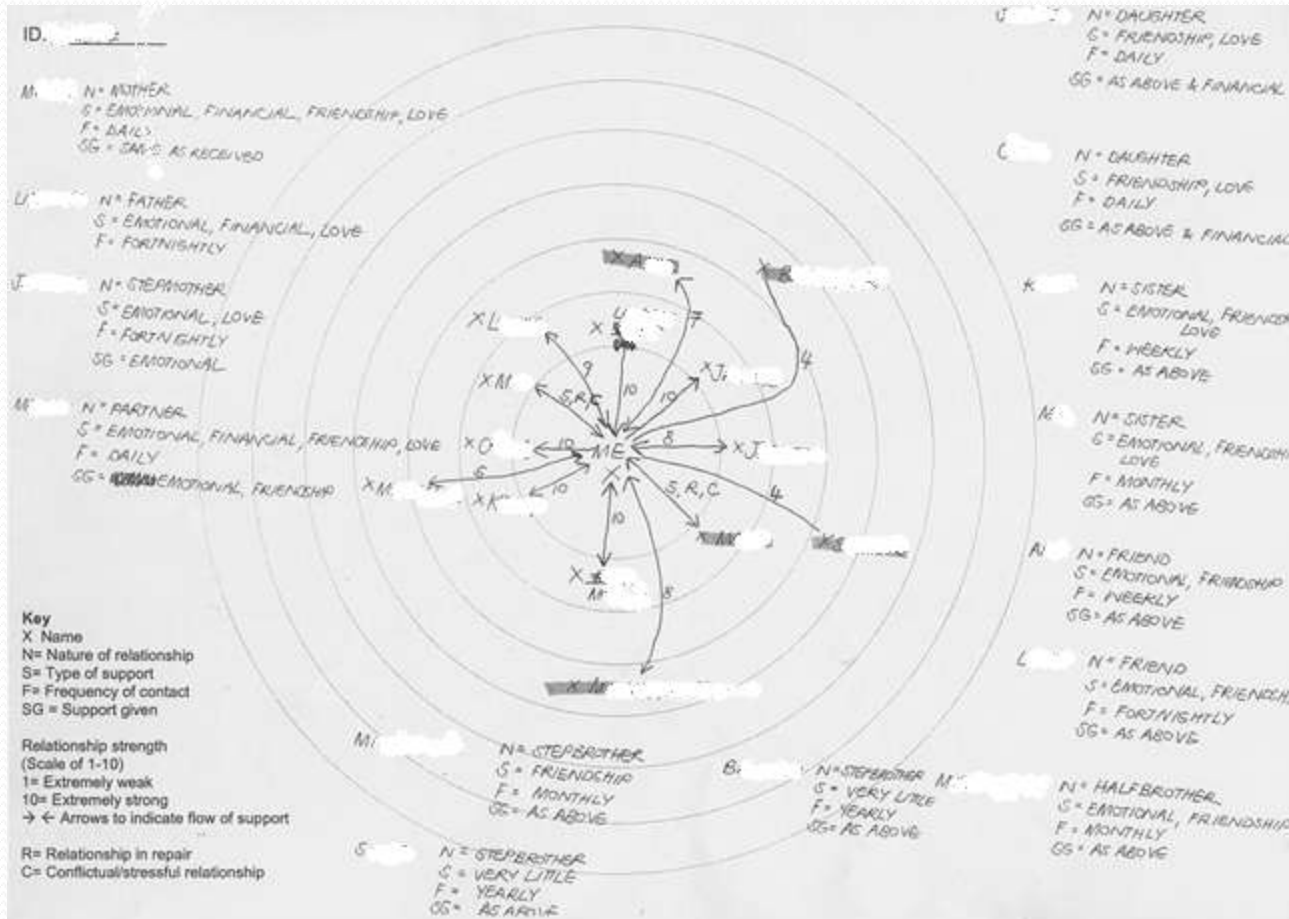
# Aims

- Establish the quantitative properties of the eco-map:
  - Number of relationships (network size)
  - Strength of relationships (scale 1-10)
  - Distance (mm)
- Explore the utility of different eco-mapping strategies:
  - Ego-centred
  - Emotional closeness
- Identify qualitative themes that emerge in eco-map administration through concurrent semi-structured interview

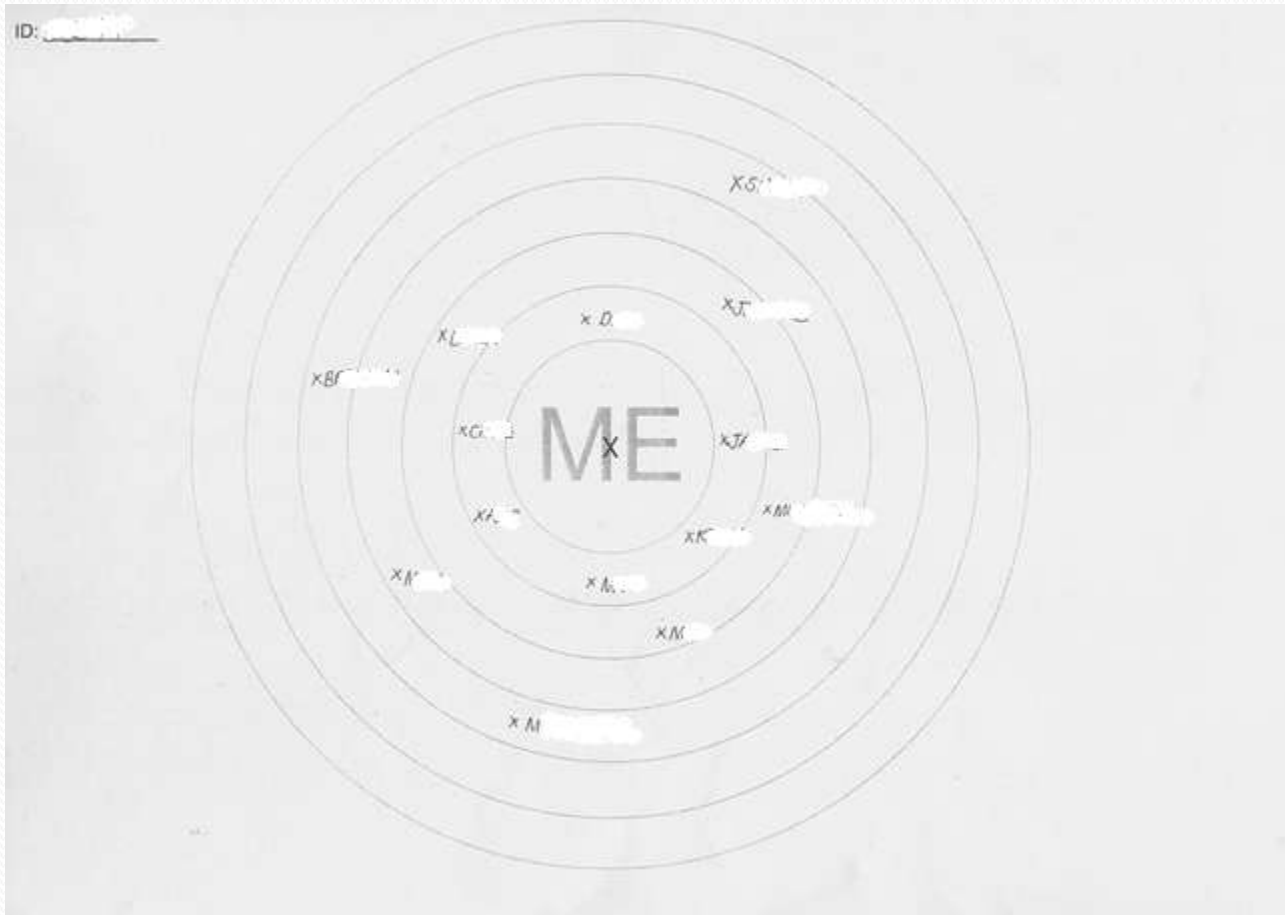
# Hypotheses

- H1: The average relationship distance between participant and family/support network members on the modified eco-map will be negatively associated with family cohesion, hope and well-being
- H2: The average emotional closeness of relationships on the strategic eco-map will be negatively associated with family cohesion, hope and well-being
- H3: The average distance on the modified eco-map will be positively associated with the average emotional closeness on the strategic eco-map
- H4: Average no. of relationships and relationship strength will be associated with distance/emotional closeness, family cohesion, hope and well-being

# Eco-map 1



# Eco-map 2



# Qualitative Results

- Phenomenological responses
- Ego-centred preferences
- Use of metaphor
- Participant evaluation

# Categorisation of Social Support

Orford (1992)

- Instrumental
- Emotional
- Esteem
- Informational
- Social Companionship
- Unclassifiable (general, specific, conditional, and inactive)

# Quantitative Results

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>1. Number of Relationships</b>	“ “						
<b>2. Relationship Strength</b>	-.31	“ “					
<b>3. Distance</b>	.19	-.38*	“ “				
<b>4. Emotional Closeness</b>	.29	-.58**	.62**	“ “			
<b>5. Cohesion Ratio</b>	.35*	.27	-.05	-.23	“ “		
<b>6. Hope</b>	-.35*	.38*	-.37*	-.37*	.14	“ “	
<b>7. Well-being</b>	-.13	.24	-.24	-.15	.29	.62**	“ “

- As distance and emotional closeness decreased, relationship strength increased
- Highly significant positive association between emotional closeness and distance
- Significant positive association between family cohesion and no. of relationships
- Role of hope

\*\* Correlation significant at  $p = .01$

\* Correlation significant at  $p = .05$

# Procedural Findings & Recommendations

- Useful in developing rapport
- Amalgamation of two versions of the eco-map
- Grouping family/support network members
- Flexibility, creativity & collaboration
- Person-environment interaction from an ecological perspective
- Activating environmental resources

# Implications

- Research
- Clinical
- Personal