

# Systems practices you can do every day



Step back from the details to **see the bigger picture** and explore what else may be influencing a situation. *What else is going on here?*



**Be aware of your mental model** and how it influences your perspective and actions. *What beliefs and values inform how I see, engage, and react to this situation?*



**See yourself in the system** and how you engage, contribute and influence it. *What is my role in this situation? What can I influence?*



**Engage diverse perspectives** to see a situation from different vantage points. *Who has a different perspective from my own on this situation and how might they see it? Whose voice is not being heard?*



Be present in the moment and **listen deeply**, without trying to 'fix' a problem. *Am I listening or waiting to talk? Am I suspending judgement and criticism? Am I being open to new information?*



**Question assumptions** to surface what has informed them and to question if they are true. *What assumptions am I making about this situation and how can I test them?*



**Uncover unintended consequences** before committing to a decision or action. *What else might happen if we do this? What adaptations need to be made as a result?*



**Use visual modelling** to make sense of, or explain a complex situation, which may reveal new insights. *Can I draw or illustrate this situation with diagrams, metaphors, relationships or symbols?*



**Look for connections and relationships** between parts to gain new insights about the whole. *Which parts have a connection? What is their relationship? Is there an emerging or reoccurring pattern?*



**Reflect regularly** on a situation, interpret and give it meaning to draw deeper learning. *What did I intend to happen and what actually happened? What does it tell me about the system? How can I work with this new insight?*

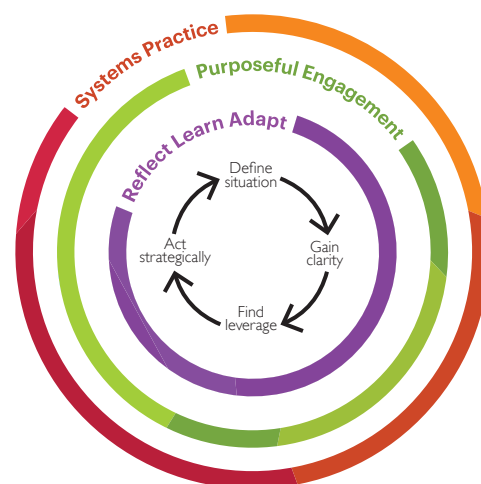
Systems practices develop your ability to better understand and make sense of complex situations, which enables more effective decision making. Applying these practices helps you to see the system, its parts, relationships and dynamics. Engaging in systems practice is an ongoing activity – like a muscle, it continually needs to be exercised.

On the left are 10 practices you can use every day – use the questions to help you apply them.

## Systems Change Framework

Systems Practices are a key part of the Systems Change Framework, which aims to support people to engage with the complexity of systems and work towards systems change. It has two key aspects:

1. An iterative inquiry process outlined in the centre of the diagram
2. The learning context within which the process should be carried out. This is denoted by the three nested systems on the outside of the inquiry process.



For further information visit [preventioncentre.org.au](http://preventioncentre.org.au)



We would like to acknowledge and are grateful for the work of others to identify and develop systems practices. Our practices are drawn both from these existing resources and our own experience working in systems. There are many more practices, but we feel these are the most practical for everyday use.