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Practice Related to Perspectives, Frameworks, & Theories

Commonly Used in Social Work

Jacob Campbell, Ph.D. LICSW at Heritage University

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SOWK 486w

Agenda

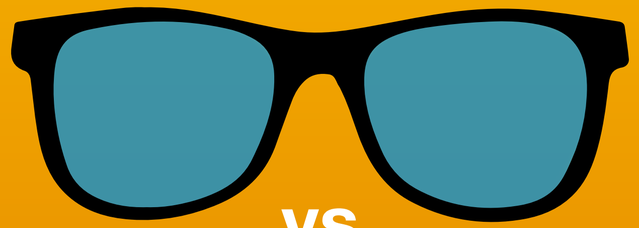
Plan for Week 02

- Perspectives, theories, and frameworks
- Systems theory
- Person-in-envornment
- Ecological perspective
- Strengths perspective
- Solution-focused brief therapy

Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to articulate the difference between perspectives, theories, and frameworks.
- Students will gain general knowledge of system theory, ecological perspective, strengths perspective, and solution-focused brief therapy.
- Students will integrate theory knowledge and how it can be applied to client situations.

Perspectives



VS

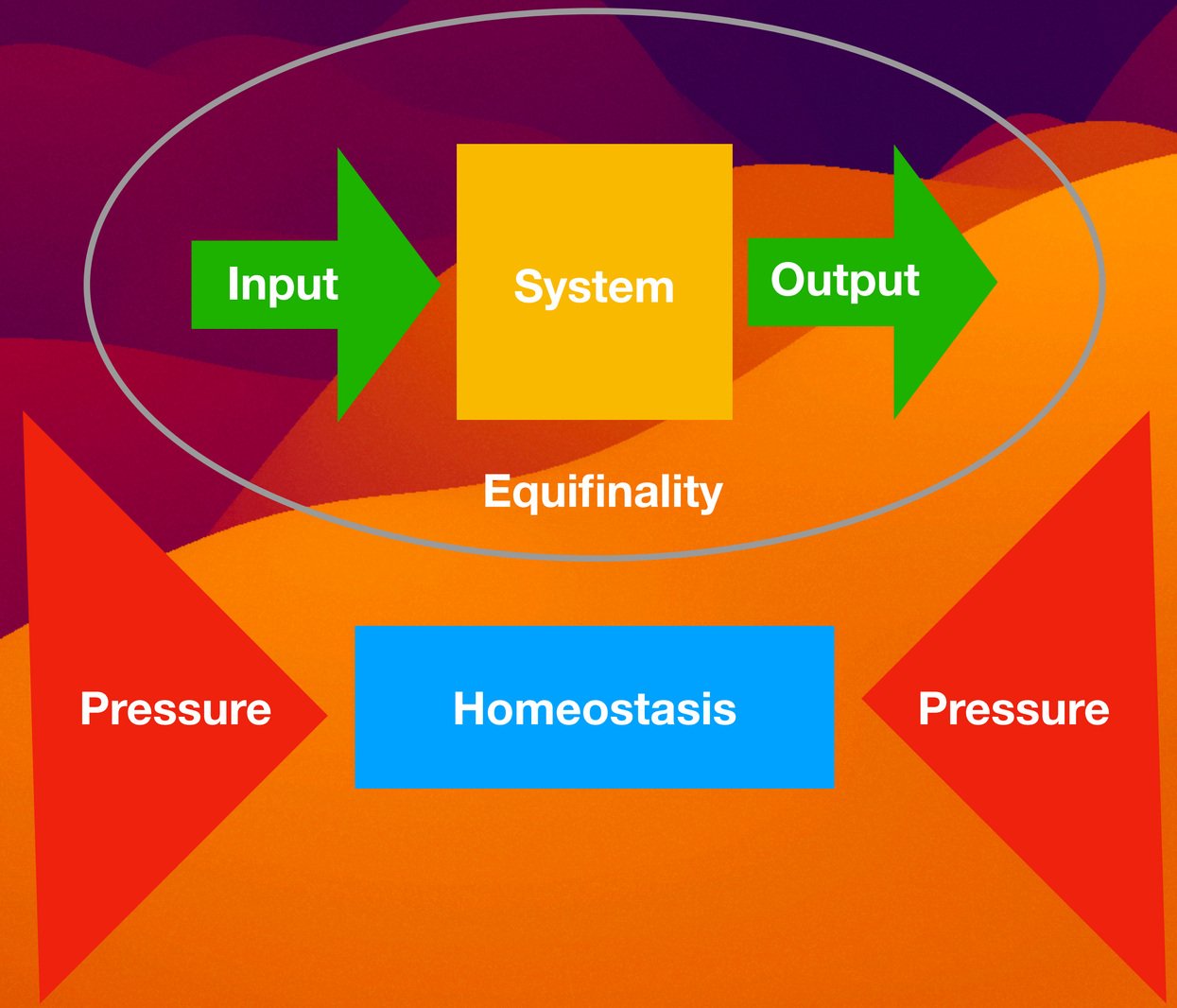
Theories & Frameworks

Perspectives: A way of perceiving the world flows from a value position

Theory: A general statement about the real world whose essential truth can be supported by evidence obtained through the scientific method

Framework or Model: Is a blueprint for action. It describes what happens in practice in a general way.

Systems Theory



(Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2015)

Systems Theory

Definitions

Input

the information or communication flow received from other systems

Output

the same flow from a system to the environment or to other systems

System

constantly interacting, can be an individual, group, or large organization

the fact that there are many ways of viewing a problem which ultimately will give you different solutions or means to solve it

Equifinality

Pressure

The forces that keep homeostasis

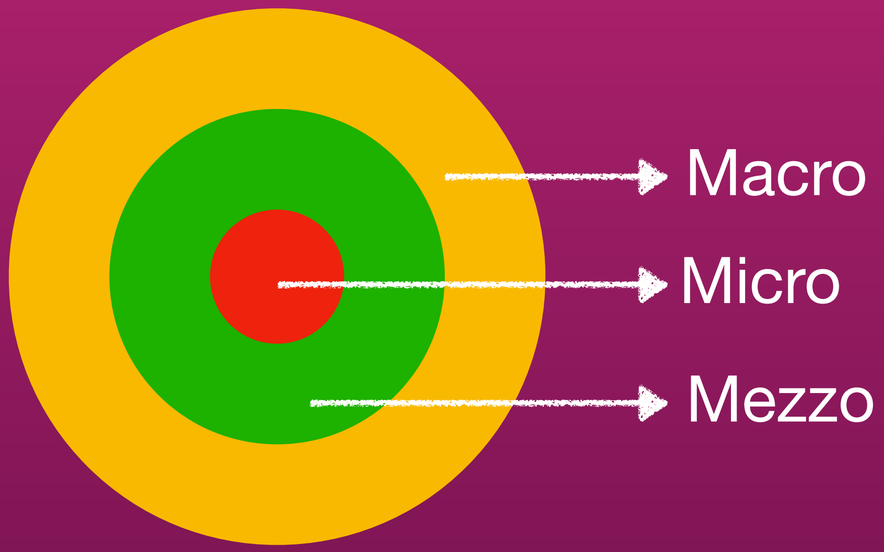
constant state of equilibrium or balance

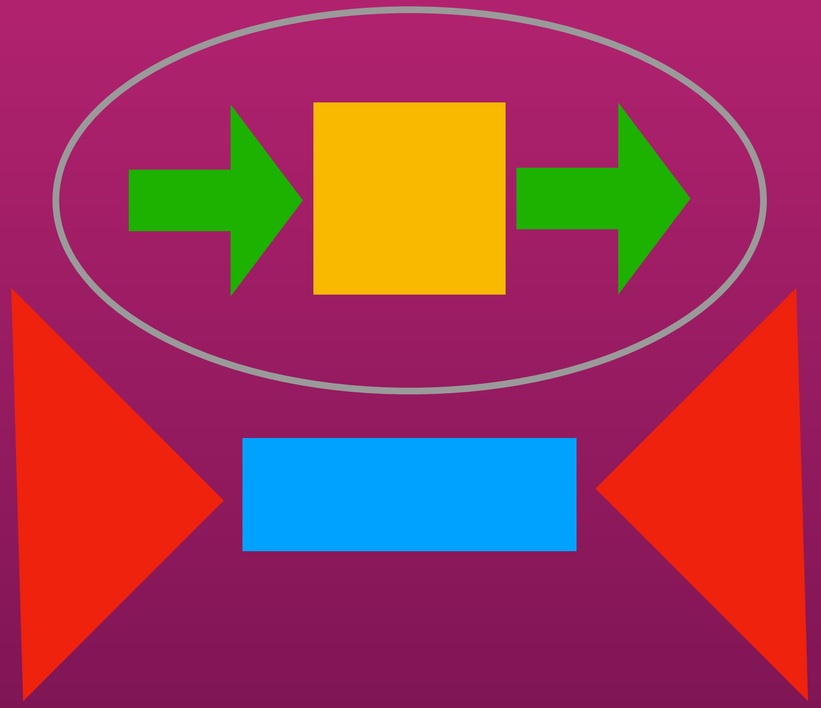
Homeostasis

(Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2015)

Systems Theory

Levels of interaction





(Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2015)

A-03: Theory and Practice Integrative Paper

Purpose: Students show the integration of theories of practice into their real-world implementation through the assigned *Theory and Practice Integrative Paper*. Students work with a partner to describe an interprofessional conceptual framework, a fictional client, and the implementation of direct practice with a client using the framework.

Must Include

- APA formatting in strong academic writing (e.g., tone, word choice, writing perspective), paper style (paper sections, headers and footers, page layout, and spacing), and citations (in-text citation and reference list)
- Description of the theory examined using peer-reviewed academic journal articles (must use both in-text citations and a reference list)
- Discussion of a fictional client and their circumstances
- Application of the theory to direct practice actions a clinician would use

A Practice Guiding Principal for Social Work

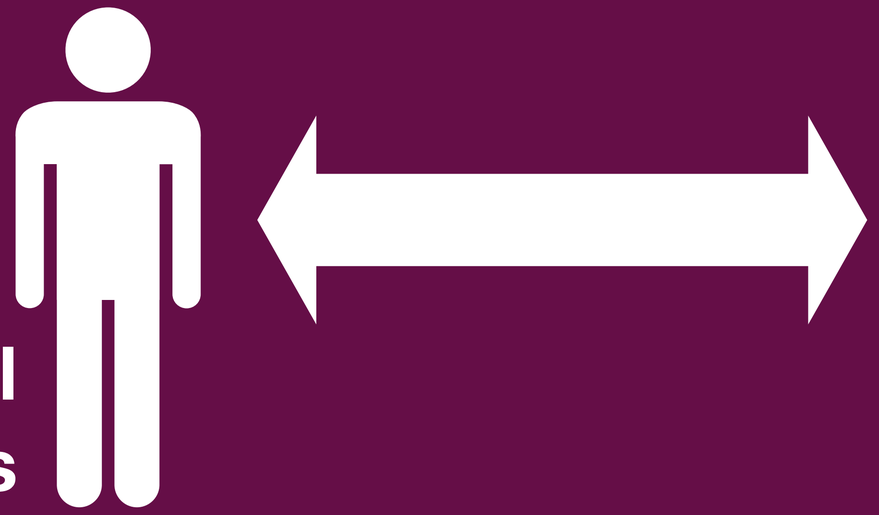
(Kondrat, 2008)

- Represented in early social work's dual focus of social reform (through the settlement house movement) and direct practice with individuals and families (in social casework) (Cornell, 2006)
- The first formal conceptualization of social casework included a focus on both the person and their environment (Richmond, 1922)
- The concept has been linked to definitions of social work practice since the first working definition of practice in 1958 (Barlette, 2003)
- Described as social work's most distinctive primary addition to the social and behavioral sciences (Green & McDermott, 2010)

(Kondrat, 2008)

Reciprocal Relationship

Biopsychosocial Needs



Person

Environmental Contexts

- Social
- Economic
- Political
- Communal
- Historical
- Religious
- Physical
- Cultural
- Familial

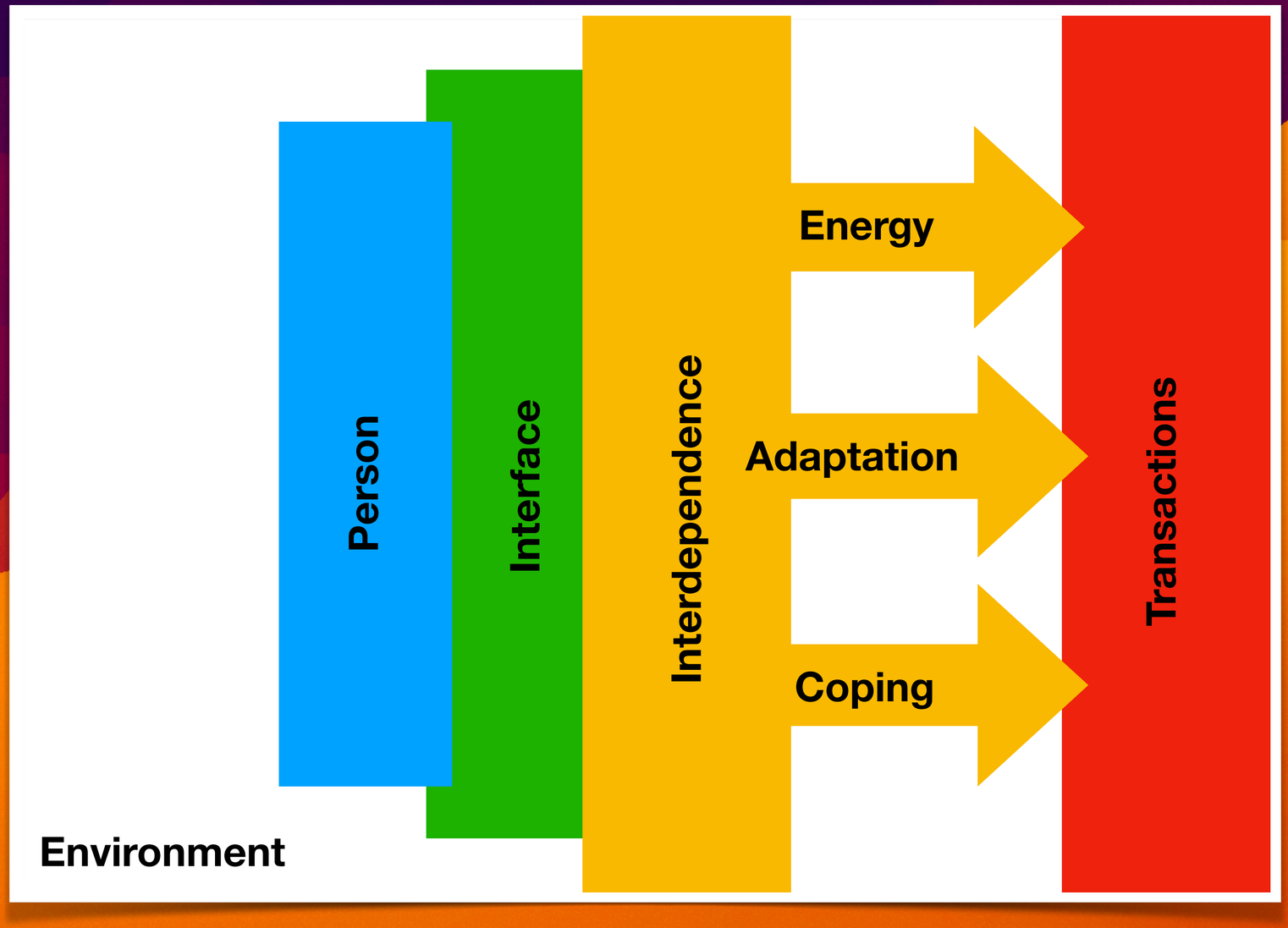
Enviornment

What Individual and Environmental Factors Do You Hear?

Soda Bottle Vectors by Vecteezy

Ecological Perspective

Person in the Environment



(Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2015)

Ecological Perspective

Definitions

Person

Environment

A focuses on people constantly interacting with various systems around them. So the social workers focused improving the interactions between the person and systems.

Interface — the exact point at which the interaction between an individual and the environment

Interdependence — the reliance on one person to another. People depend on each others input, energy, services, and consistency

Transactions — people communicate and interact with those in their environments [can be positive or negative]

Energy — the natural power of active involvement among people and their environments takes place [input or output]

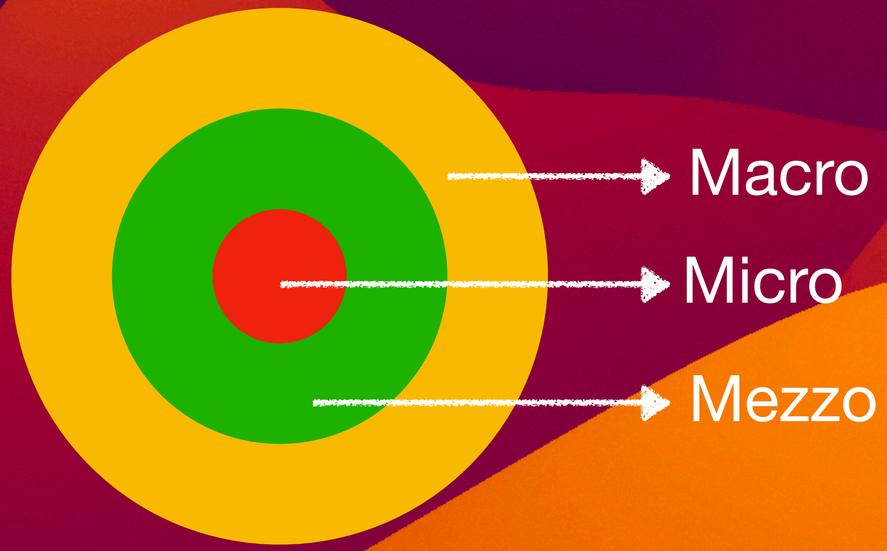
Adaptation — the capacity to adjust to surrounding environmental conditions. This implies change because a person must adapt to change in order to continue functioning in their environment. Social workers help individuals during this process to direct their energies so that they are able to adapt

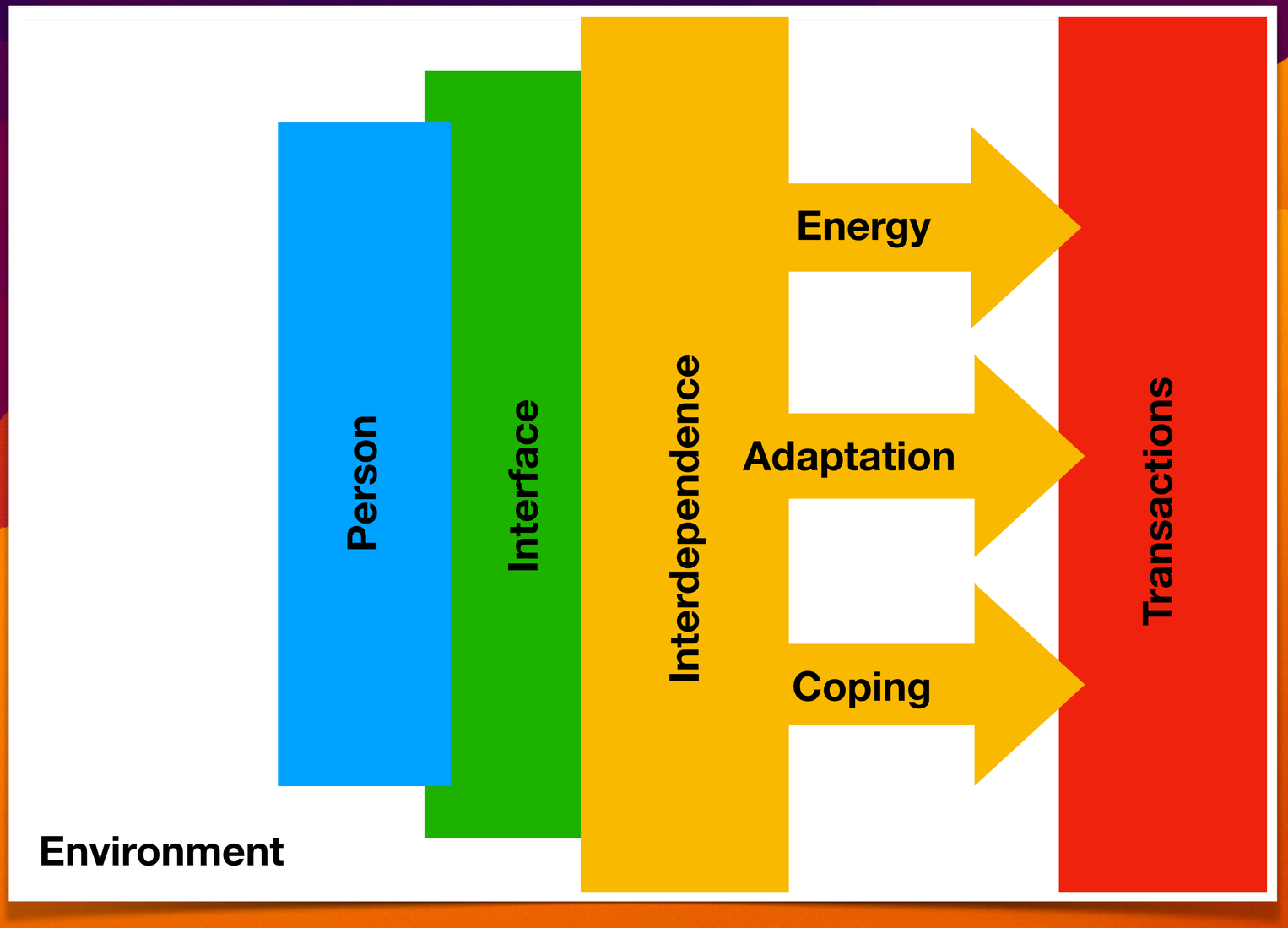
Coping — a form of human adaptation and implies a struggle to overcome problems. Refers to the way we deal with the problems we experience.

(Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2015)

Ecological Perspective

Levels of Interaction





(Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2015)

Strengths Perspective

Implementing Strengths Perspective

- Don't take no for an answer
- Help correct the effects of being labeled
- Take advantage of the considerable resources of culture and ethnicity
- Normalize
- Possibility, solution and strengths focus

Focus of Attention: Area's to look at

What people learn as they struggle

Personal qualities and virtues

Talents that people have

Cultural and family rituals, beliefs, stories, and lore

Dreams and hopes

The community

Spirituality / Faith

Identifying Strengths

Use the ROPES

Possibilities

- Future focus
- Imagination
- Creativity
- Vision of the future
- Play
- What have you thought of trying but haven't tried yet?

Solutions

- Focus on constructing solutions, not solving problems
- What's working now? What are your successes?
- What are you doing that you would like to continue doing?
- What if a miracle happened?
- What can you do now to create a piece of the miracle?

Options

Present focus
Emphasis on choice
What can be accessed now?
What is available and hasn't been tried or utilized?

Resources

Personal
Family
Social environment
Organizational
Community

Exceptions

- When is the problem not happening?
- When is the problem different?
- When is part of the hypothetical future solution occuring?
- How have you survived, endured, thrived?

(Graybeal, 2001)

Strengths Perspective

Types of Questions

- Survival questions
- Support questions
- Exception questions
- Esteem questions

[Small Group Activity] Have students work in groups of two to talk about their experience going to school so far with a focus on eliciting strengths in the four areas.

(De Jonge & Miller, 1995)

Solution Focused Brief Therapy

Search for Solutions, not Admire the Problem

Solution Focused Brief Therapy

Tenants

- If it’s not broken, don’t fix it
- Look for exceptions
- Asking questions rather than telling clients what to do
- Future is negotiated and created
- Complements
- Gentle nudging to do more of what is working
- Change is constant and inevitable
- The solution is not always directly related to the problem

(De Jong, Kim Berg, 2012)

Solution Focused Brief Therapy

Interventions

- Not knowing
- Complementing strengths
- Scaling questions
- Exception questions
- Coping questions
- Miracle question

(De Jong, Kim Berg, 2012)

Solution Focused Brief Therapy

Interventions

Not knowing

Complementing strengths

Scaling questions

Exception questions

Coping questions

Miracle question

- Clients are the experts of their own lives
- General attitude communicating an abundant, genuine curiosity
- Micro practice skills

(De Jong, Kim Berg, 2012)

Solution Focused Brief Therapy

Interventions

Not knowing

Complementing strengths

- Strengths perspective
- Building rapport and giving hope
- Direct complements: positive evaluation or reaction
- Indirect complements: a question implying something positive

Scaling questions

Exception questions

Coping questions

Miracle question

(De Jong, Kim Berg, 2012)

Solution Focused Brief Therapy

Interventions

- Not knowing
- Complementing strengths
- Scaling questions
- Exception questions
- Coping questions
- Miracle question

- Motivation, hopefulness, depression, confidence, progress…
- Techniques for follow-up

(De Jong, Kim Berg, 2012)

Solution Focused Brief Therapy

Interventions

Not knowing

Complementing strengths

Scaling questions

Exception questions

Coping questions

Miracle question

- Problem description vs. exceptions
- Increase awareness of current/ past successes
- Turning past solutions into present solutions
- Finding out specifics

(De Jong, Kim Berg, 2012)

Solution Focused Brief Therapy

Interventions

- Not knowing
- Complementing strengths
- Scaling questions
- Exception questions
- Coping questions
- Miracle question

- Tailored to help client from feeling overwhelmed
- A method for exploring exceptions

(De Jong, Kim Berg, 2012)

Solution Focused Brief Therapy

Interventions

Not knowing

Complementing strengths

Scaling questions

Exception questions

Coping questions

Miracle question

- Amplifying what the client wants
- Formatting the question
- Concrete, behavioral, measurable terms
- Realistic terms

(De Jong, Kim Berg, 2012)

Other Theories to Consider

A Non-Exhaustive List

- Social Exchange Theory
- Behaviorism & Social Learning Theory
- Social Constructionism
- Psychodynamic Theory
- Symbolic Interactionism
- Psychosocial Developmental Theory
- Conflict Theory
- Transpersonal Theory
- Contingency Theory
- Feminist Perspective
- Erikson's theory of stages of development
- Piaget's theory of cognition
- Cognitive-behavioral framework
- Task-centered framework
- Narrative model

Orienting Perspectives
for Social Work Practice

Ecosystem Perspective

- Strengths Perspective
- Cultural Humility
- Antioppressive Practice
- Trauma-Informed Practice
- Evidence-Informed Practice

Direct Practice

(Heptworth et al., 2023)