

# **Additive Empathetic Responding**

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Fall 2025 Week 12 SOWK 530**

# **Agenda**

- Week 12 expectations
- Additive empathy and interpretation

# **Learning Objectives**

- Identify and apply the components of additive empathy and interpretive responses in client interactions.

**Plan for  
Week 12**

# **Week 12 Activities**

## **What You Should Be Doing This Week**

**Read and do  
a quiz for  
chapter 17**

### **Six Replies Across any of the Forums**

- Chapter 17 Discussion
- Develop a Handout or Information Sheet About Content in the Chapter
- Exploring the Meaning and Use of Confrontation in Practice
- Practice Effective Assertive Confrontation
- Using Reddit to Practice Surface and Additive Empathetic Responses

# Types of Empathy

## Fundamental Expressions

Emotional Empathy

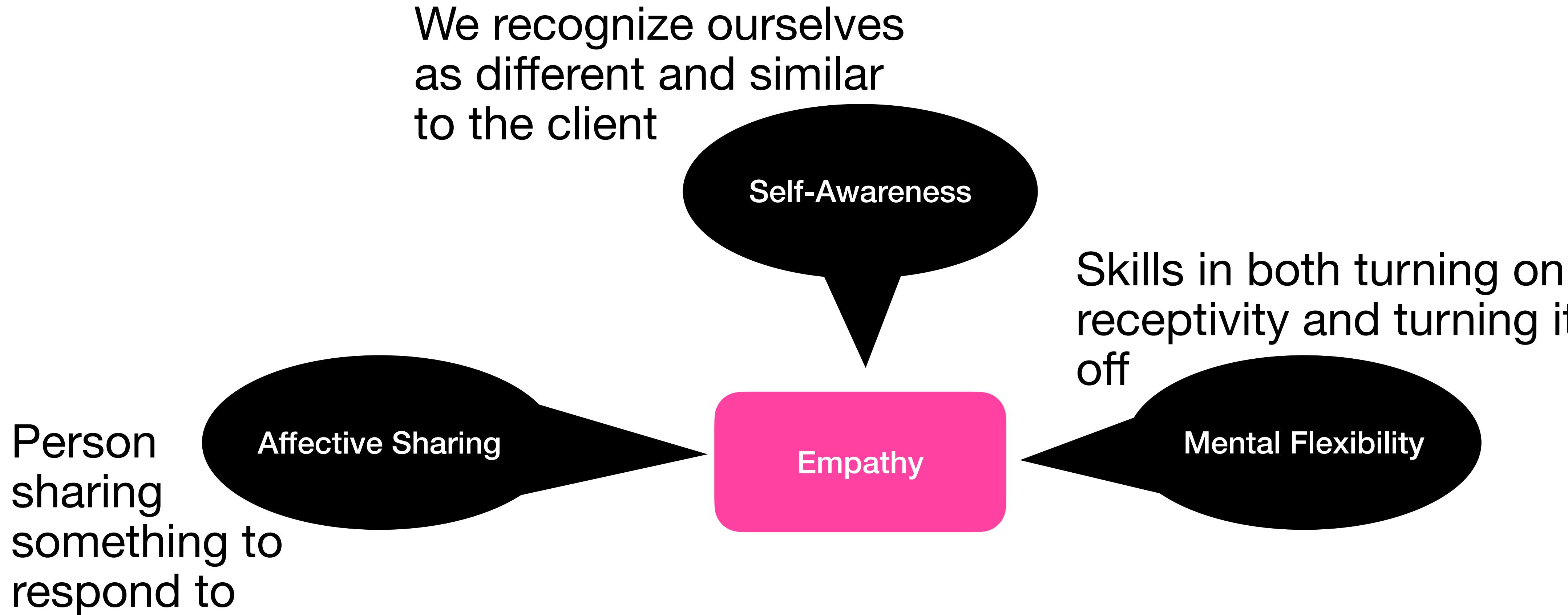
expressed feeling and an understanding that infers or reflects clients' emotions

Cognitive Empathy

is the translation of such feelings into words

# Components of Empathy

## Three Parts of Empathetic Responding



(Hepworth, et al. 2017)

# Going Beyond What the Client Has Expressed

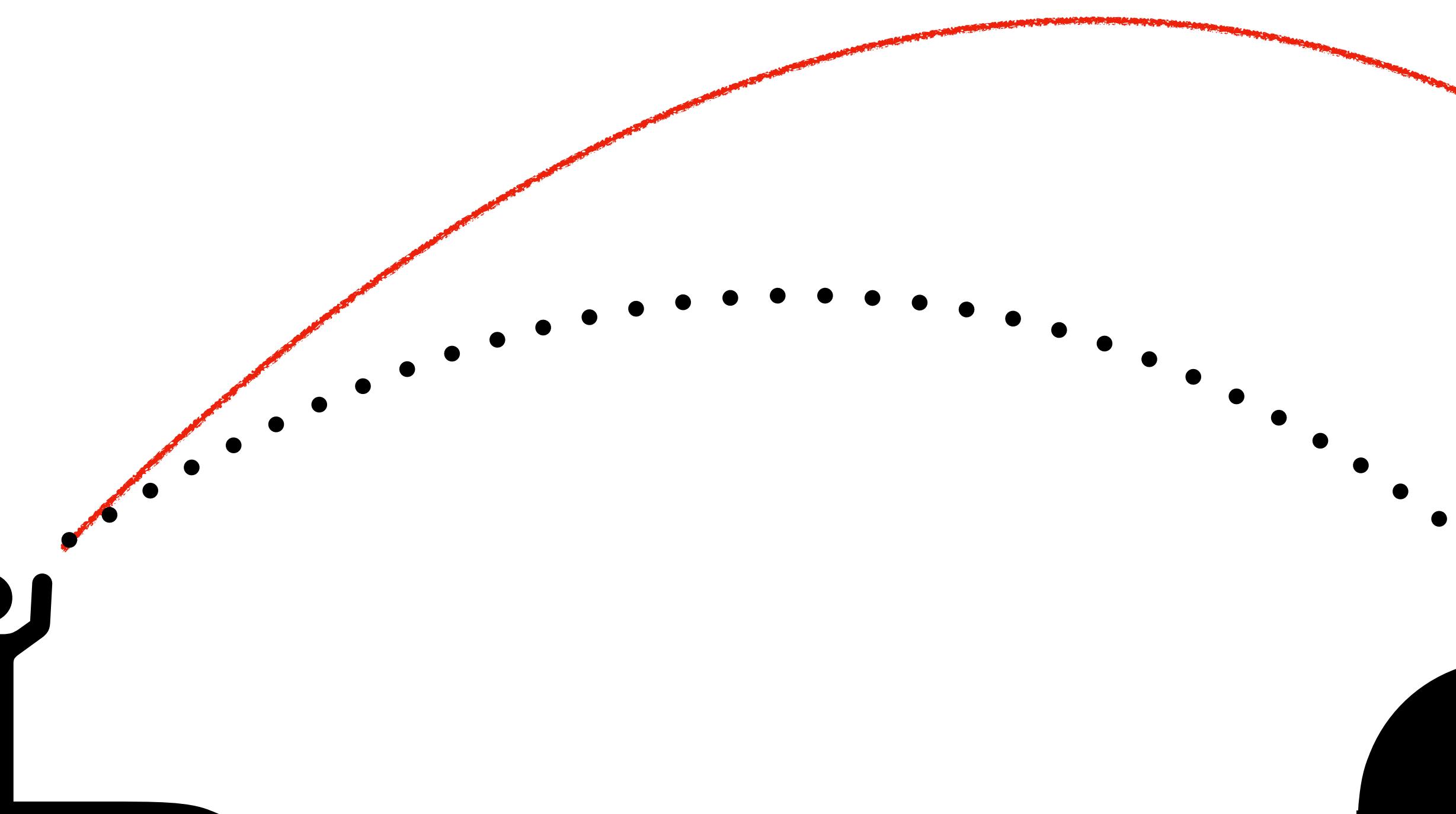
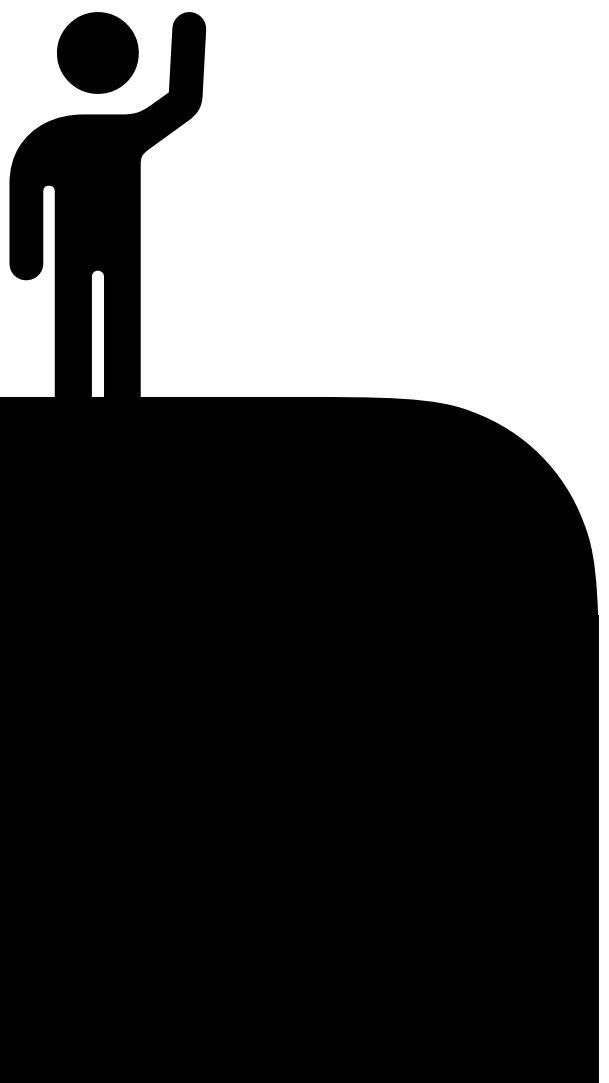
Interpretation is intended to help clients view their problems from a different perspective, thereby creating new possibilities for remedial courses of action

Too  
Far

Additive  
Empathic  
Responses &  
Interpretation

Simple Reflection

What the client  
knows about  
themselves



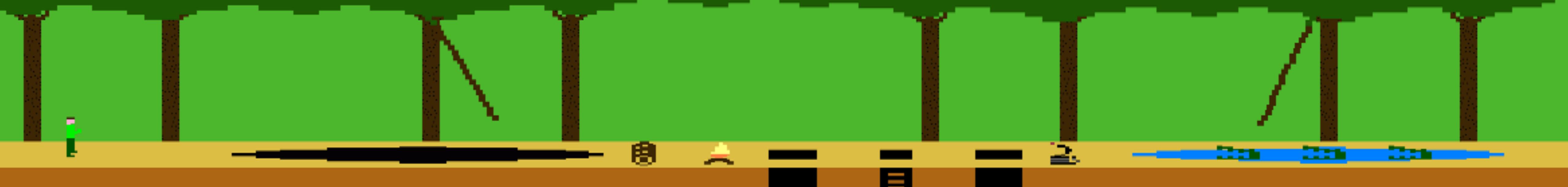
(Hepworth, et al. 2023)

# Pitfalls of Additive Empathy

(Hepworth, et al. 2023)

## Moderate Interpretations vs. Deep Interpretations

- Working relationship has evolved
- Engaged and ready for self-exploration
- Pitch these responses to the edge of clients' self-awareness
- Avoid making several additive empathic responses in succession
- Phrase interpretive responses in tentative terms
- Note clients' reactions after offering the interpretation
- Acknowledge your probable error & respond empathically
- Culturally differences



# **Ways of Using Additive Empathy**

## **What Context Do we Use it**

- Deeper feelings

- Identify feelings implied or hinted at in clients' verbal messages
- To identify feelings that underlie surface emotions
- To clarify the nature of feelings clients express only vaguely
- To identify feelings manifested only nonverbally
- Challenging beliefs stated as facts

# **Ways of Using Additive Empathy**

## **What Context Do we Use it**

- Deeper feelings
- Underlying meanings of feelings, thoughts, and behavior
- Wants and goals
- Hidden purposes of behavior
- Challenge beliefs stated as facts
- Unrealized strengths and potentialities