

Effecting Change

Empathy, Confrontation, & Barriers



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Fall 2025 SOWK 486w**

Agenda

Plan for Week 13

Additive Empathy & Interpretation

Confrontation

Barriers to change



W

e each see
the world
differently



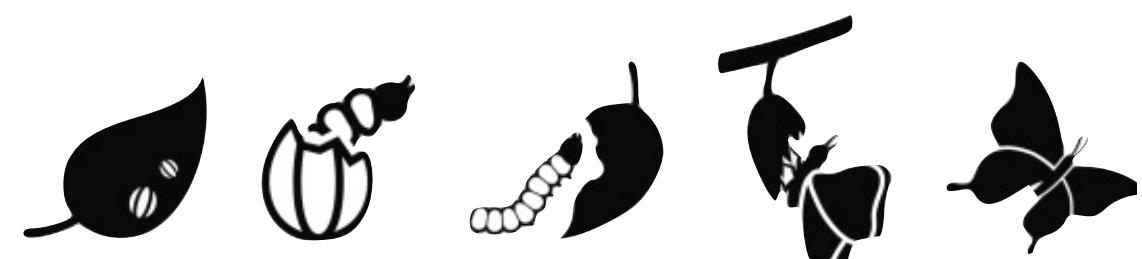
Photo from Boating excursion from Margarita Island in Venezuela

(Lieber, 1994, as cited in Kingma, 2013)

1. Individually write down words or phrases that give the word meaning to you
2. Share individual meanings with group members
3. Follow the group process for defining a term for the group

Success	Freedom	Morality
Injustice	Community	Democracy
Police	Human rights	Love
Tolerance	Prejudice	Friend
Sexism	Family	Racism

(Lieber, 1994 as cited in Kingma, 2013)



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

(Hepworth, et al. 2023)

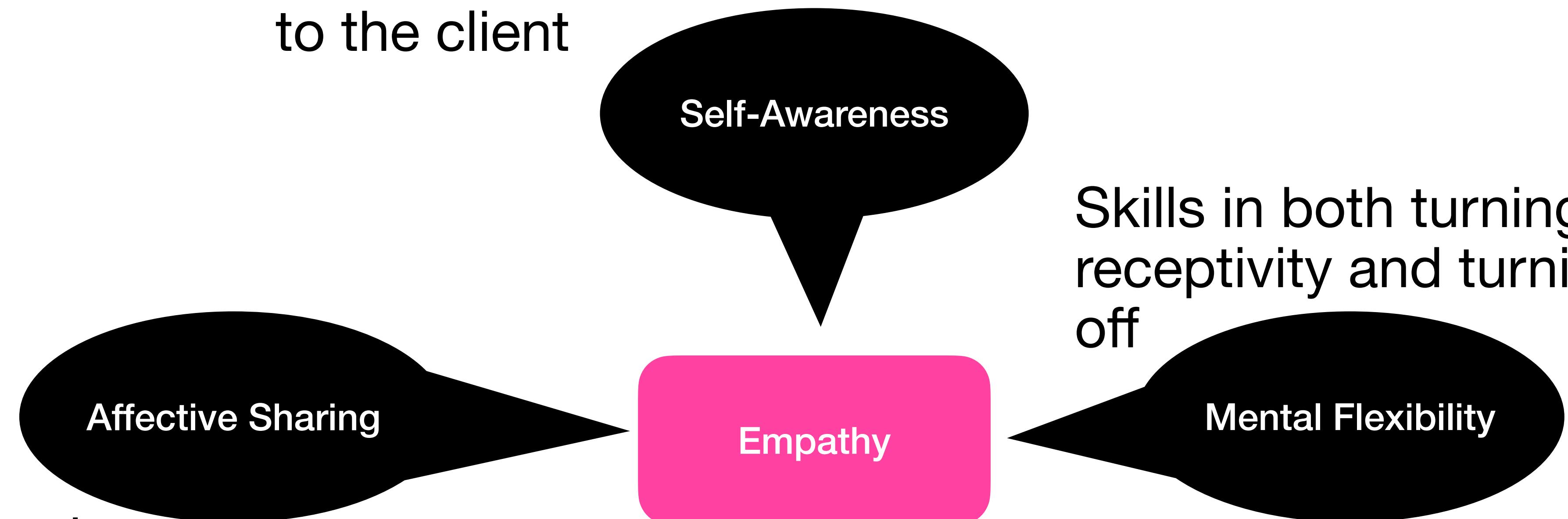


Components of Empathy

Three Parts of Empathetic Responding

We recognize ourselves
as different and similar
to the client

Person
sharing
something to
respond to



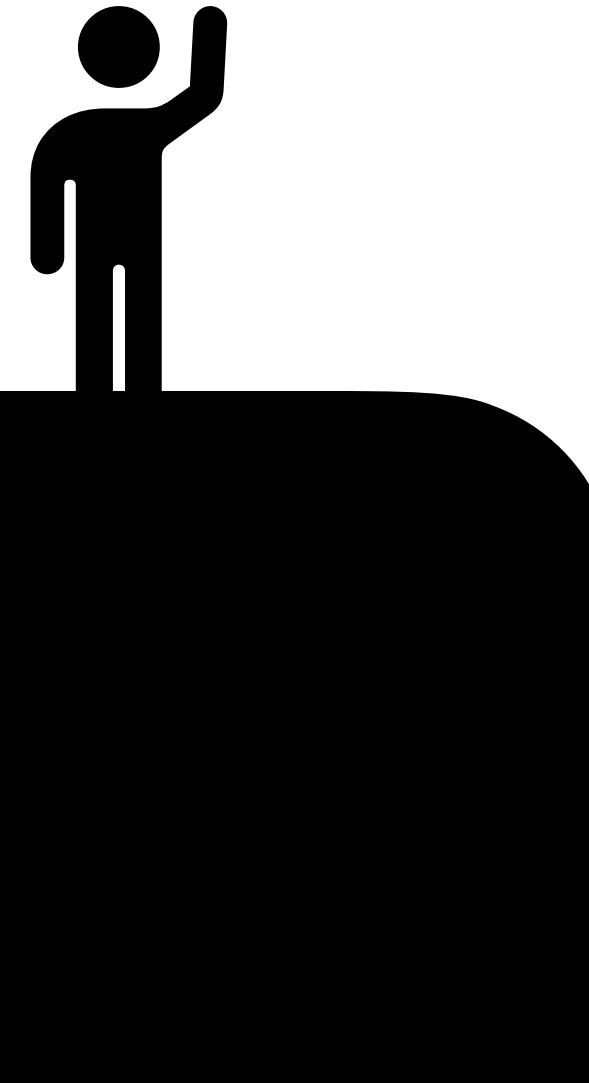
(Hepworth, et al. 2017)



Going Beyond What the Client Has Expressed

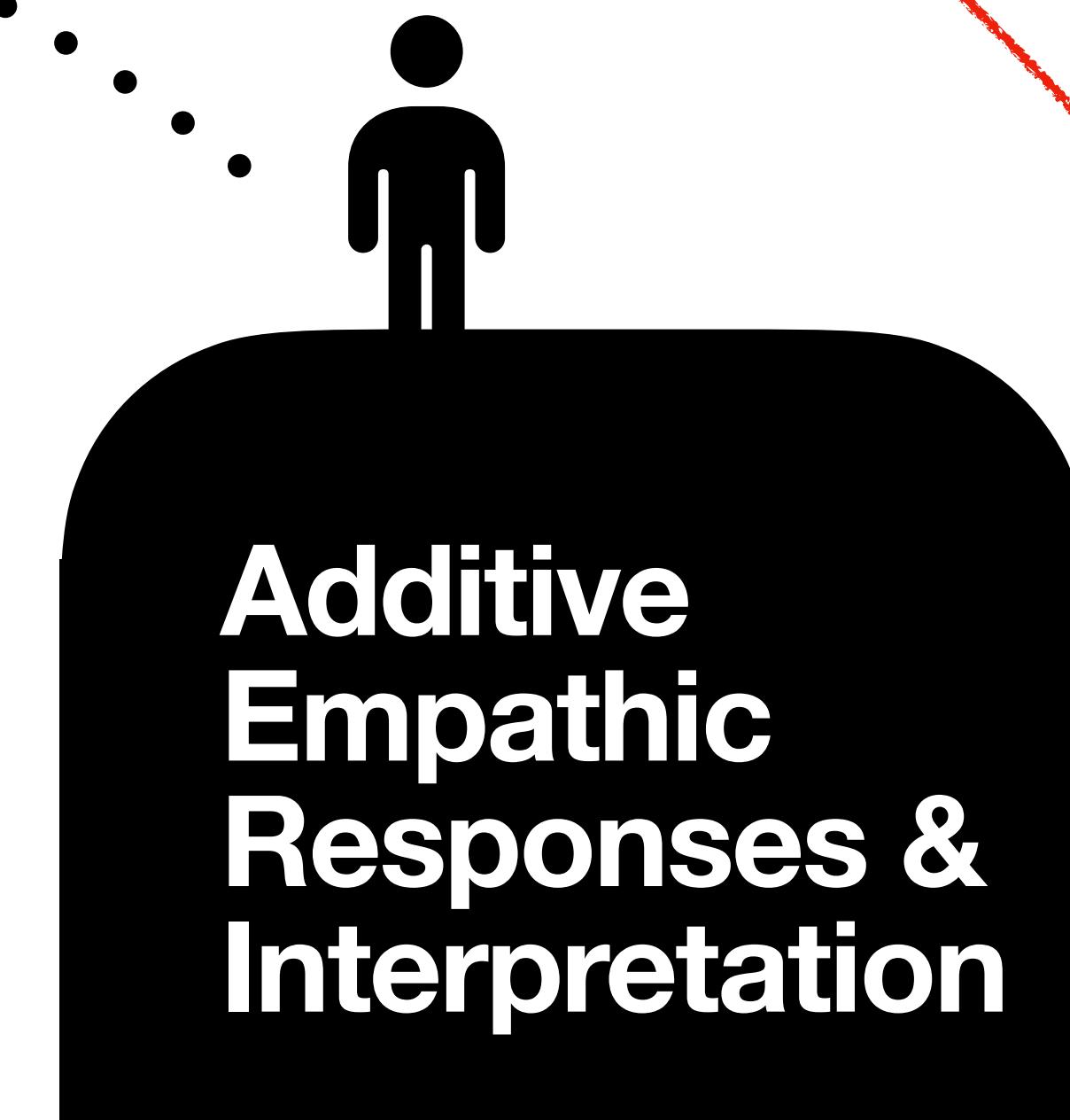
Interpretation is intended to help clients view their problems from a different perspective, thereby creating new possibilities for remedial courses of action

Too
Far



Simple Reflection

**What the client
knows about
themselves**



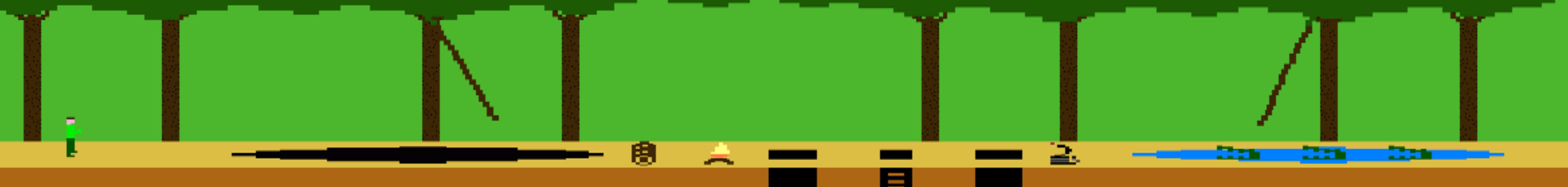
(Hepworth, et al. 2023)

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

(Hepworth, et al. 2023)



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

(Hepworth, et al. 2023)



Additive Empathy and Interpretation

Practice with Client Statements

Review Skill Development and Exercises
for Addictive Empathy and Interpretation

Client Statements on pp. 401–402.

With a partner take turns
going through each
example and offering
potential interpretations.

- **What would you say**
- **Role-play saying it**
- **Review and compare the modeled responses**
pp. 402–403



(Hepworth et al. 2023)

Confrontation

A Range of Confrontation Skills



Self- Confrontation

When clients, in response to social workers' questions, reflect on the relationship between their behaviors and their own values.

Assertive Confrontation

Social worker-initiated confrontation in which the connection between troubling thoughts, plans, values, and beliefs is stated in declarative form, connecting them explicitly for the client.

(Hepworth, et al. 2023)



Effective Assertive Confrontation

Four Elements

- Expression of concern
- A description of the client's purported goal, belief, or commitment
- The behavior (or absence of behavior) that is inconsistent or discrepant with the goal, belief, or commitment
- The probable negative outcomes of the discrepant behavior

(Hepworth, et al. 2023)



Effective Assertive Confrontation

Illustrative Example

I am concerned because you _____ (want, believe, are striving to)

(describe desired outcome)

but you _____ (describe discrepant action, behavior, or inaction)

is likely to produce _____ (describe probable negative consequences)

**Review Skill
Development and
Exercises for
Confrontation:
Situations and Dialog on
pp.403–404.**

With a partner take turns
role playing responses and
talking through the
examples.



Barriers to Change

What Gets in the Way Sometimes

- Problematic social worker behavior
- Cross-racial and cross-cultural experiences
- Difficulties establishing trust
- Transference
- Countertransference

(Hepworth, et al. 2023)



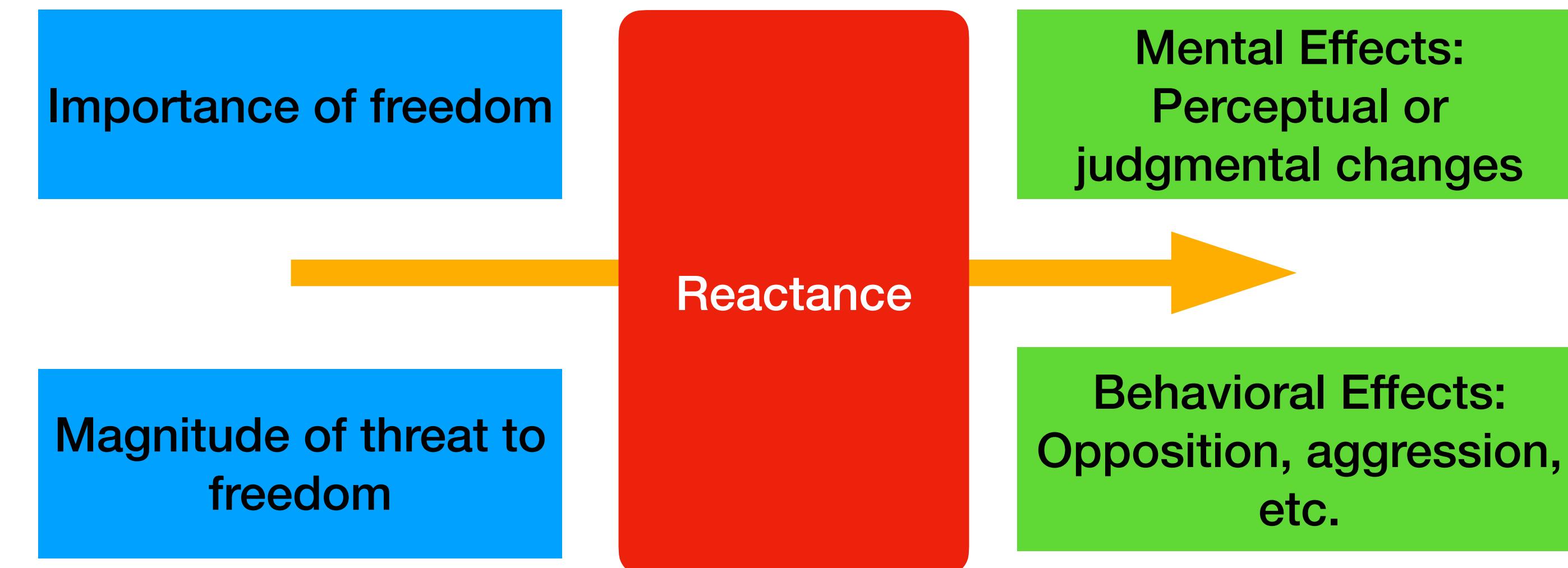


Death Therapy - Counter-transference

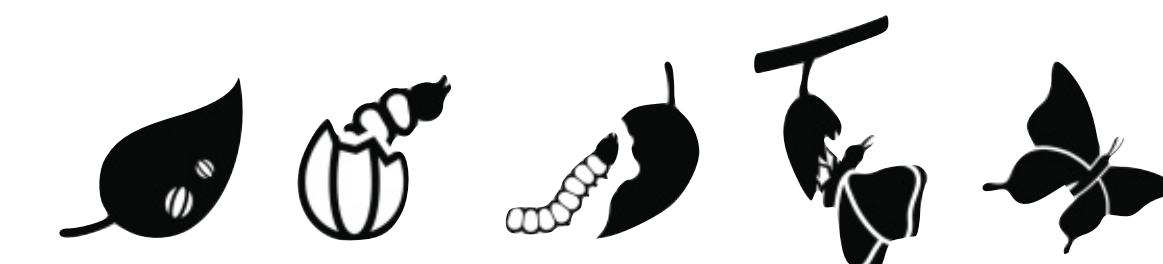
What About Bob?

Reactance Theory

The Larger the Loss, the Larger the Reaction



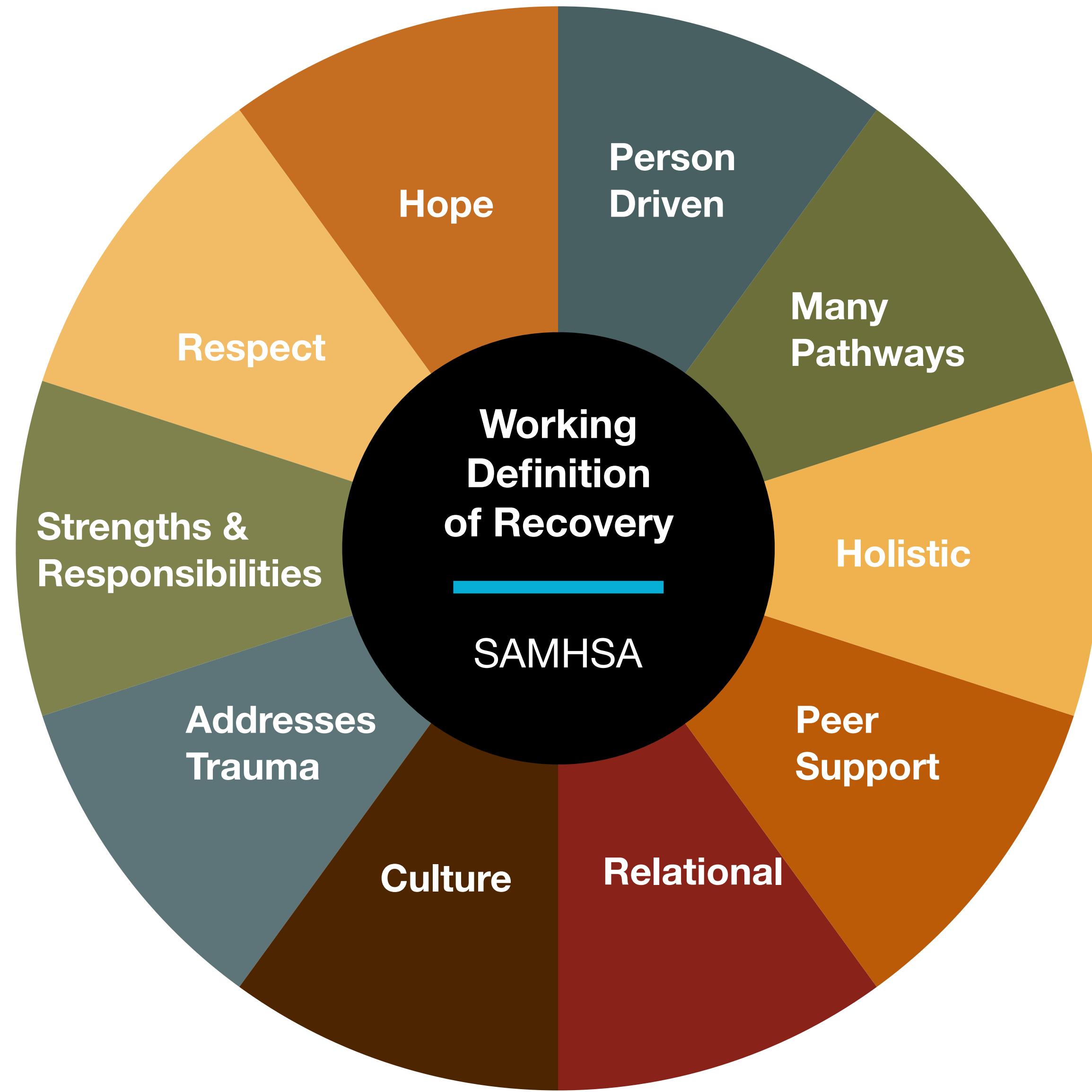
(Brehm, 1972)





(SAMHSA, 2012)





(SAMHSA, 2012)





(SAMHSA, 2012)

Recovery emerges from hope

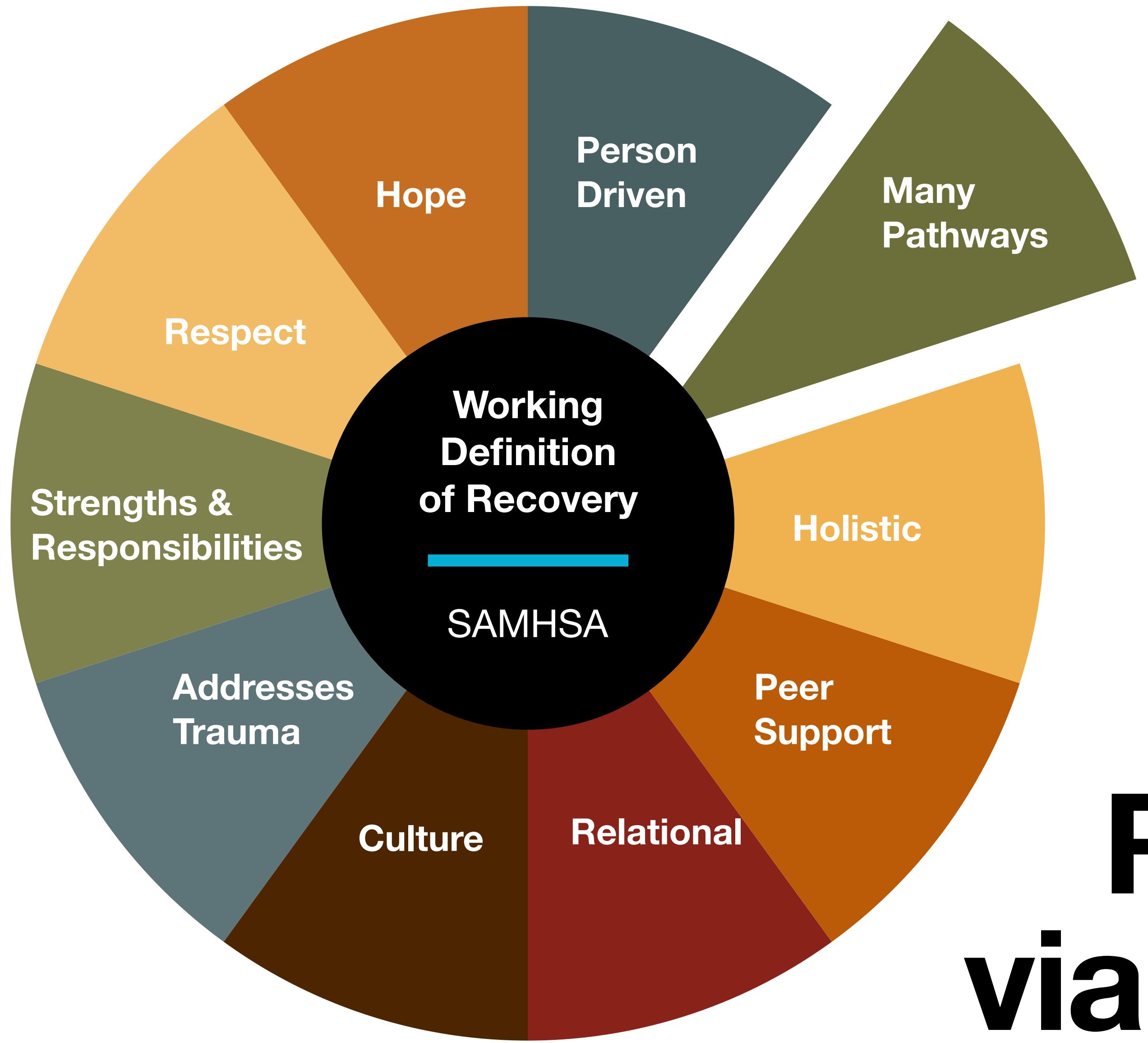
- Recovery is real
- People can and do overcome
- Hope is internalized
- Hope is the catalyst of the recovery process





(SAMHSA, 2012)



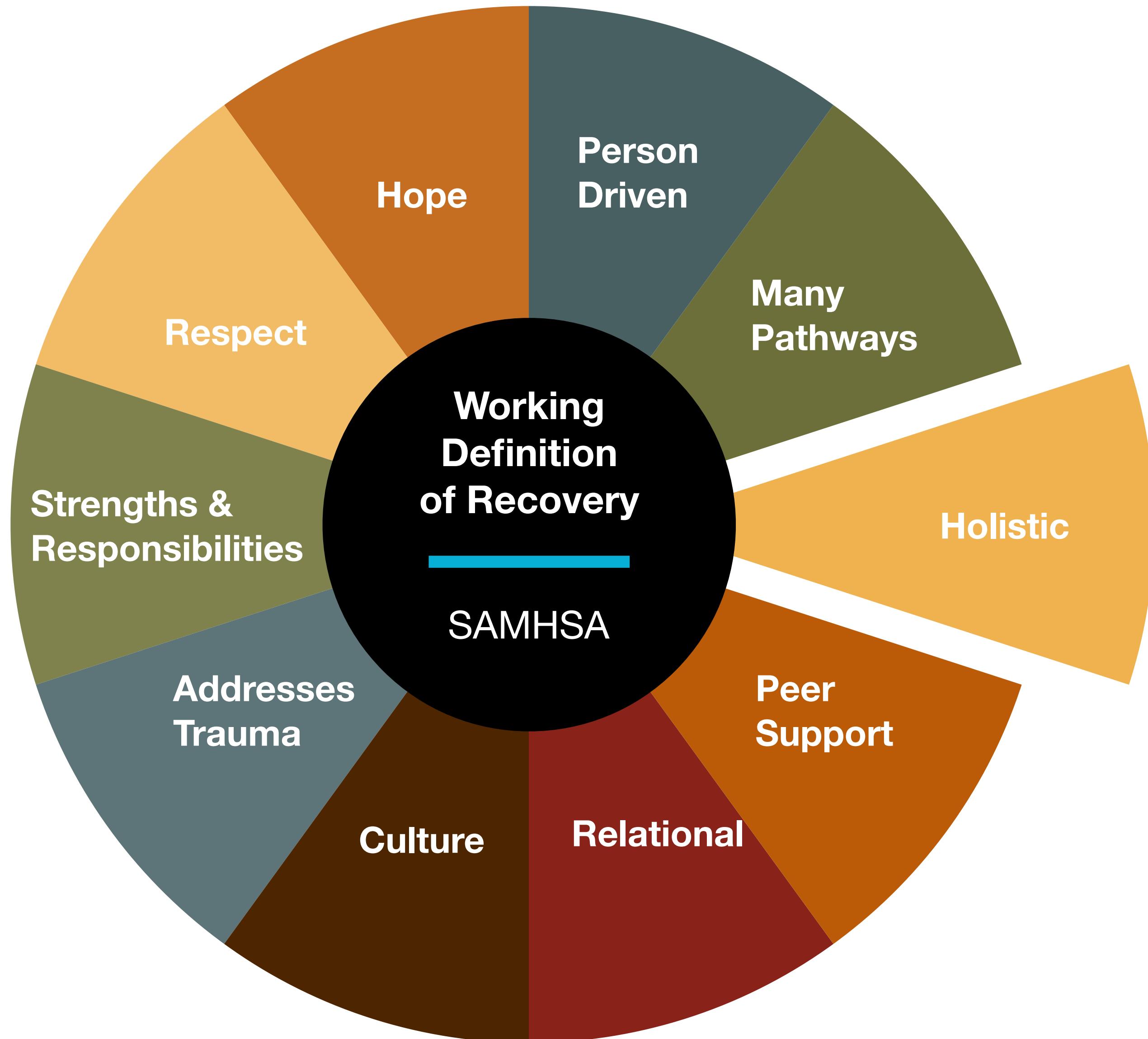


(SAMHSA, 2012)

- Individuals are unique
- Pathways are highly personalized
- Recovery is non-linear
- Must foster resilience
- Focus on abstinence
- Creating a supportive environment

Recovery occurs via many pathways



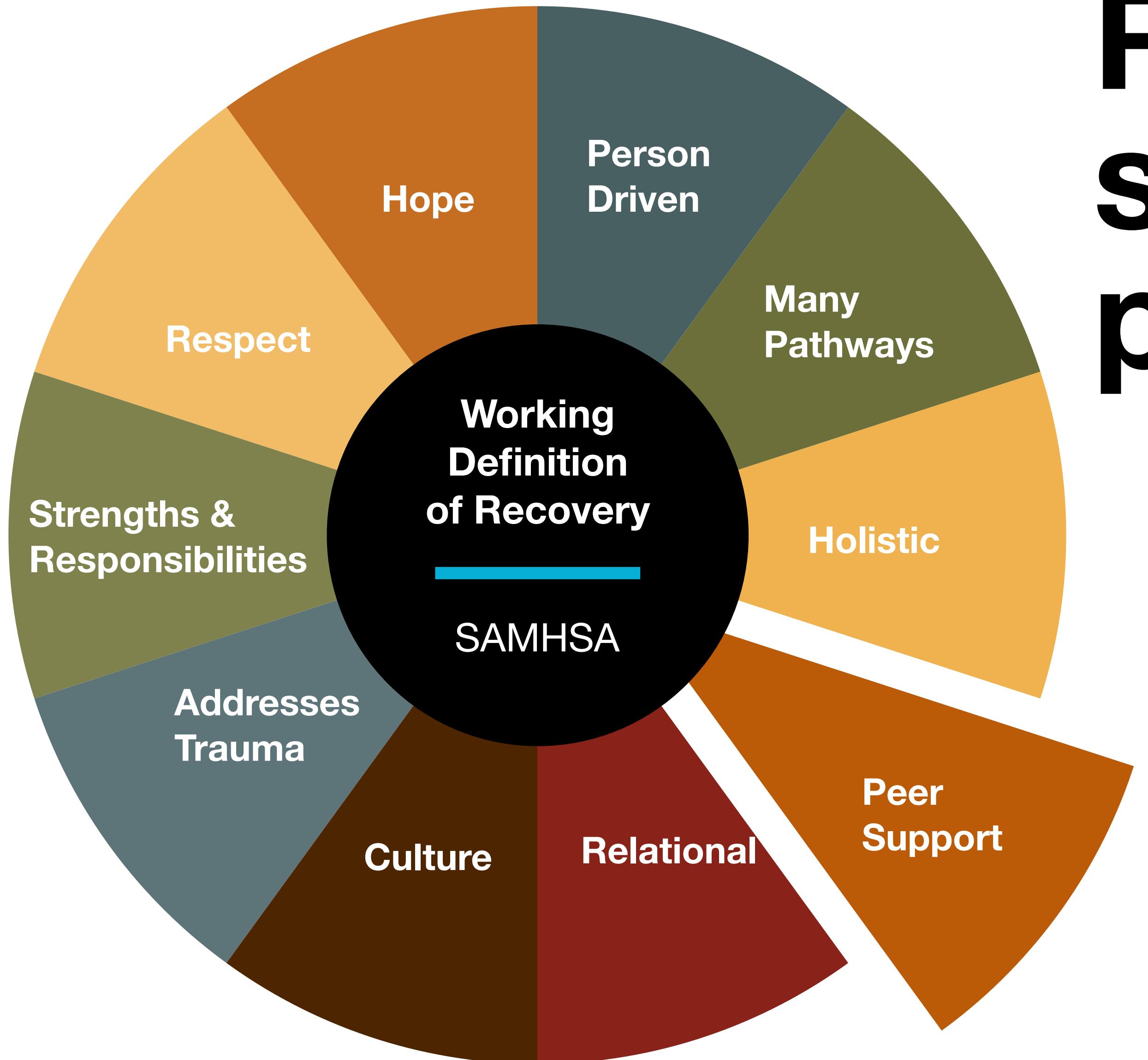


(SAMHSA, 2012)



Recovery is holistic

- Encompasses an individual's whole life
- Addresses a range of areas
- Integrated and coordinated services and supports



(SAMHSA, 2012)



Recovery is supported by peers and allies

- Mutual support and mutual aid groups
- Developing a sense of belonging
- Using peer operated supports & services
- Very important for children with behavioral health problems



Recovery is supported through relationship and social networks

- Presence and involvement of people who believe in the person's ability to recover
- Through relationships people engage in new roles

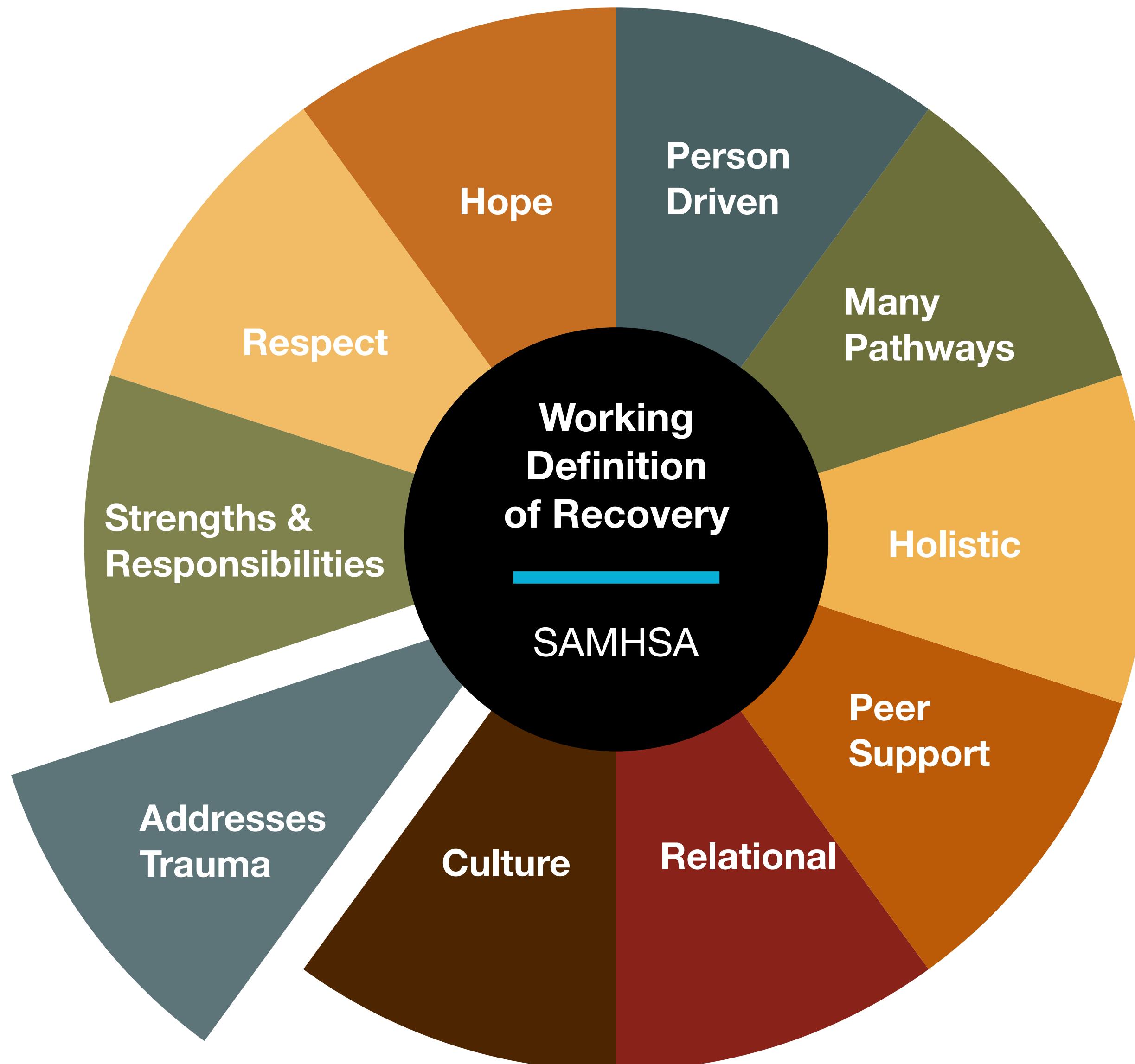




Recovery is culturally-based and influenced

- Services should be culturally grounded



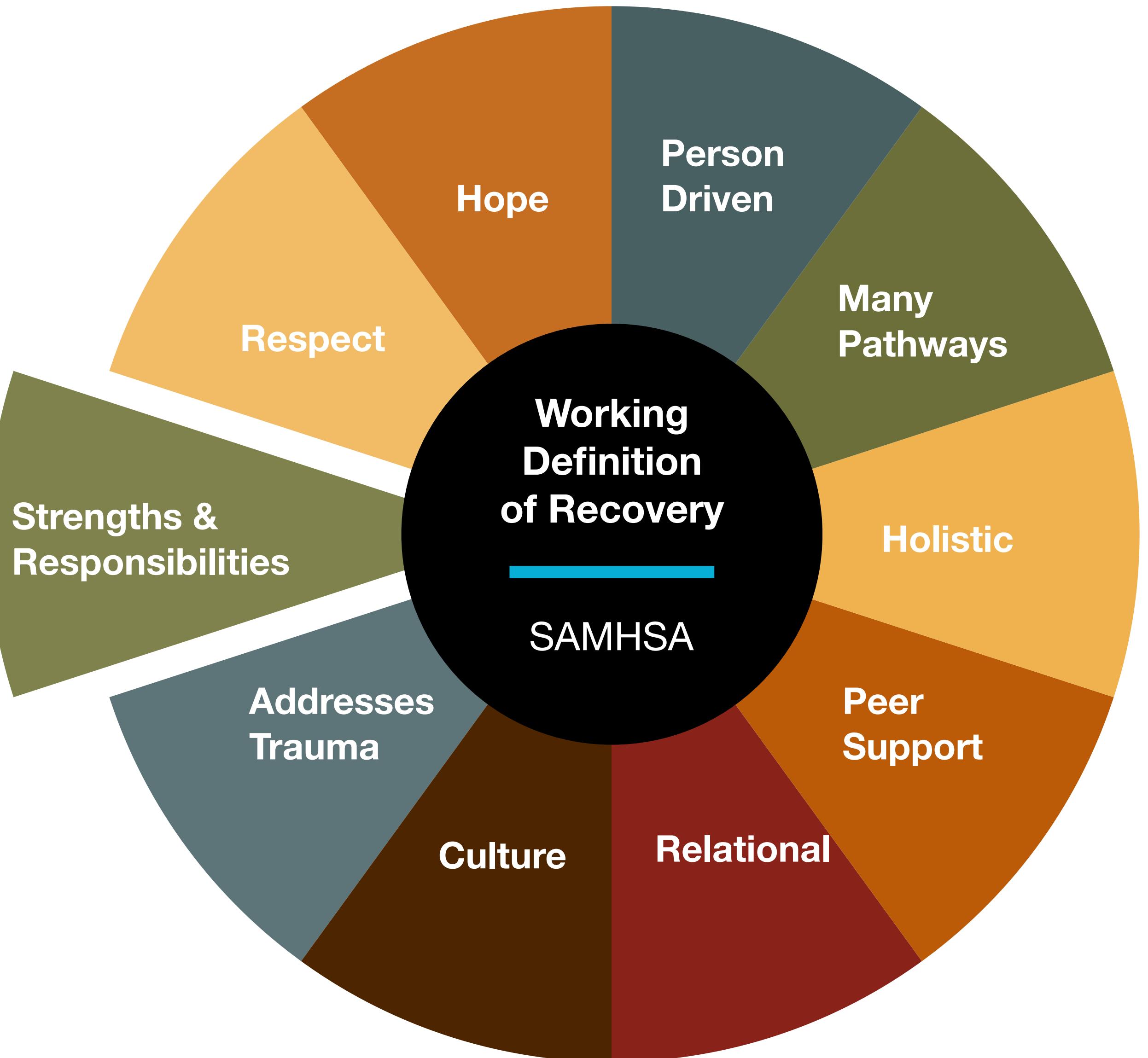


(SAMHSA, 2012)

Recovery is supported by addressing trauma

- Trauma is often a precursor to or associated concerns
- Should be trauma-informed



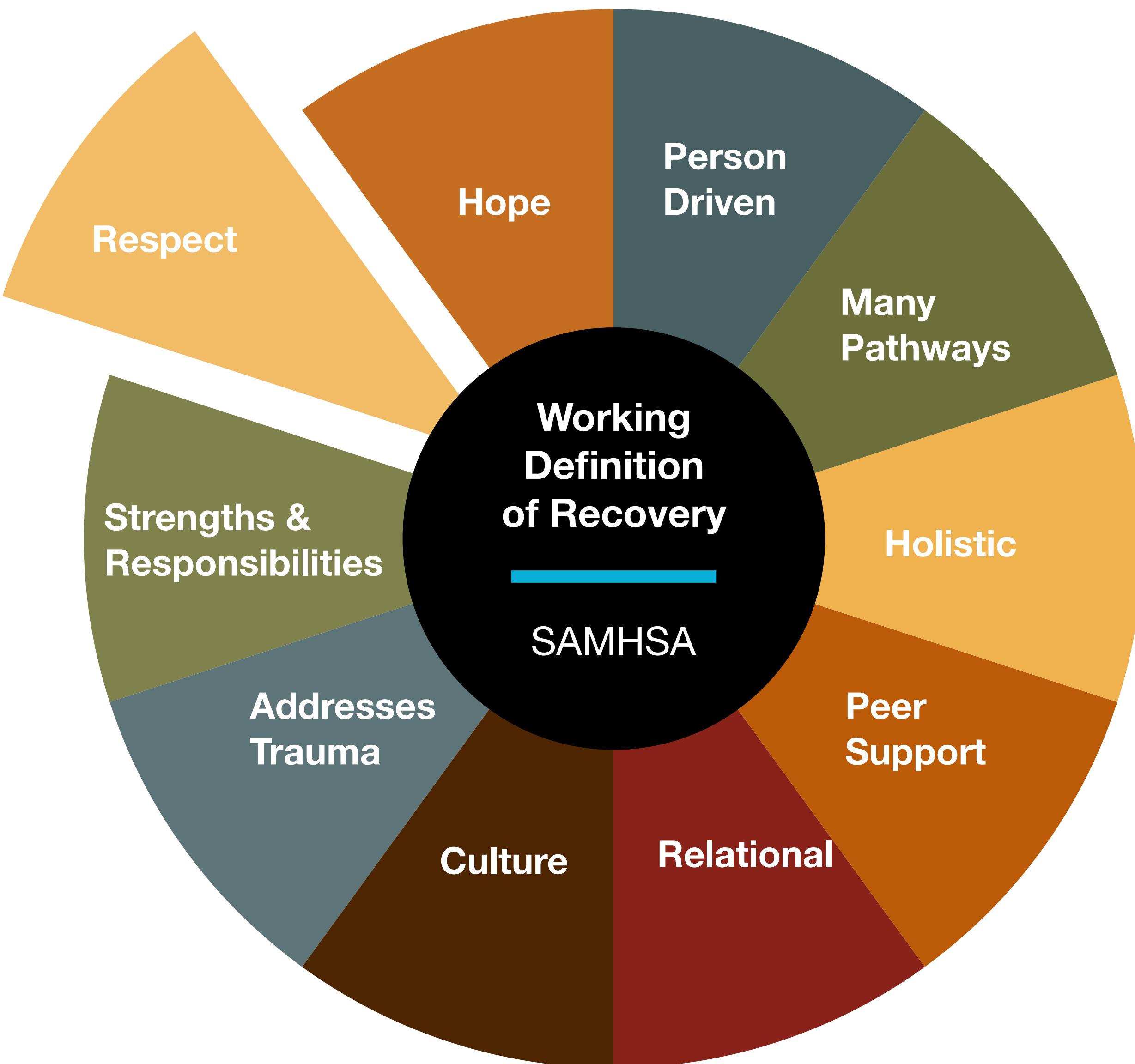


(SAMHSA, 2012)



Recovery involves individual, family, and community strengths and responsibility

- Have strengths and resources
- Empowerment
- Communities have responsibilities to provide opportunities and resources
- Work collectively



(SAMHSA, 2012)

Recovery is based on respect

- Focus on protecting rights and eliminating discrimination
- Steps towards recovery take great courage
- Self acceptance

