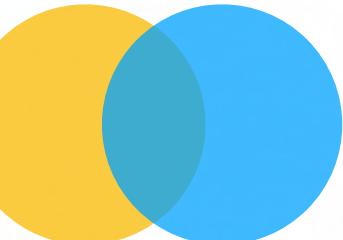


# **Practice Related to Perspectives, Frameworks, & Theories**

## **Commonly Used in Social Work**

Jacob Campbell, LICSW at Heritage University

Fall 2022  
SOWK 486w



# Agenda

## Plan for Week 02

Perspectives, theories, and frameworks

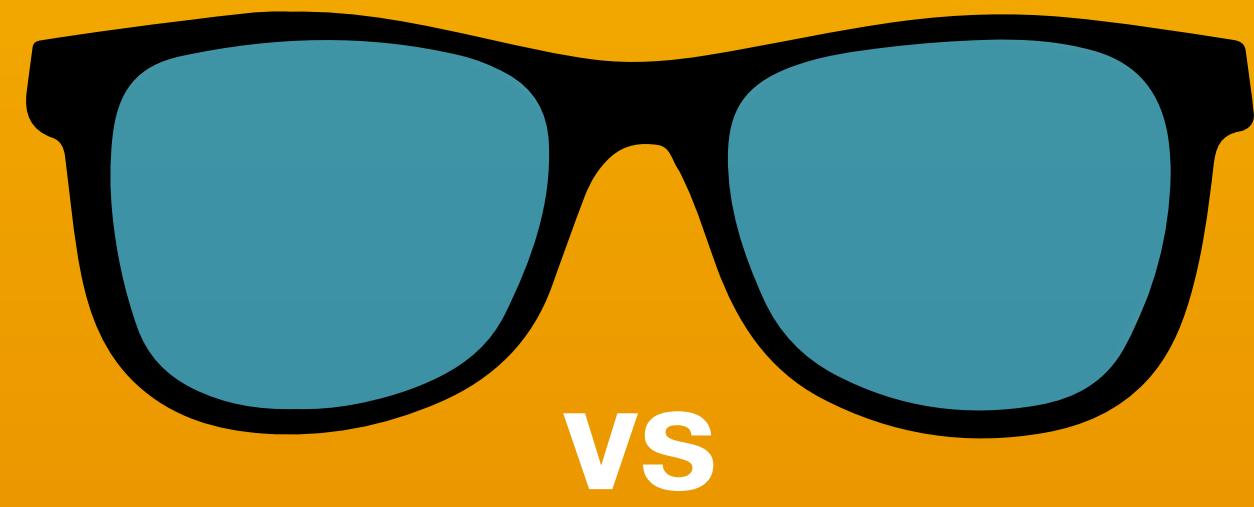
Systems theory

Ecological perspective

Strengths perspective

Solution-focused brief therapy

# Perspectives



vs

# Theories & Frameworks





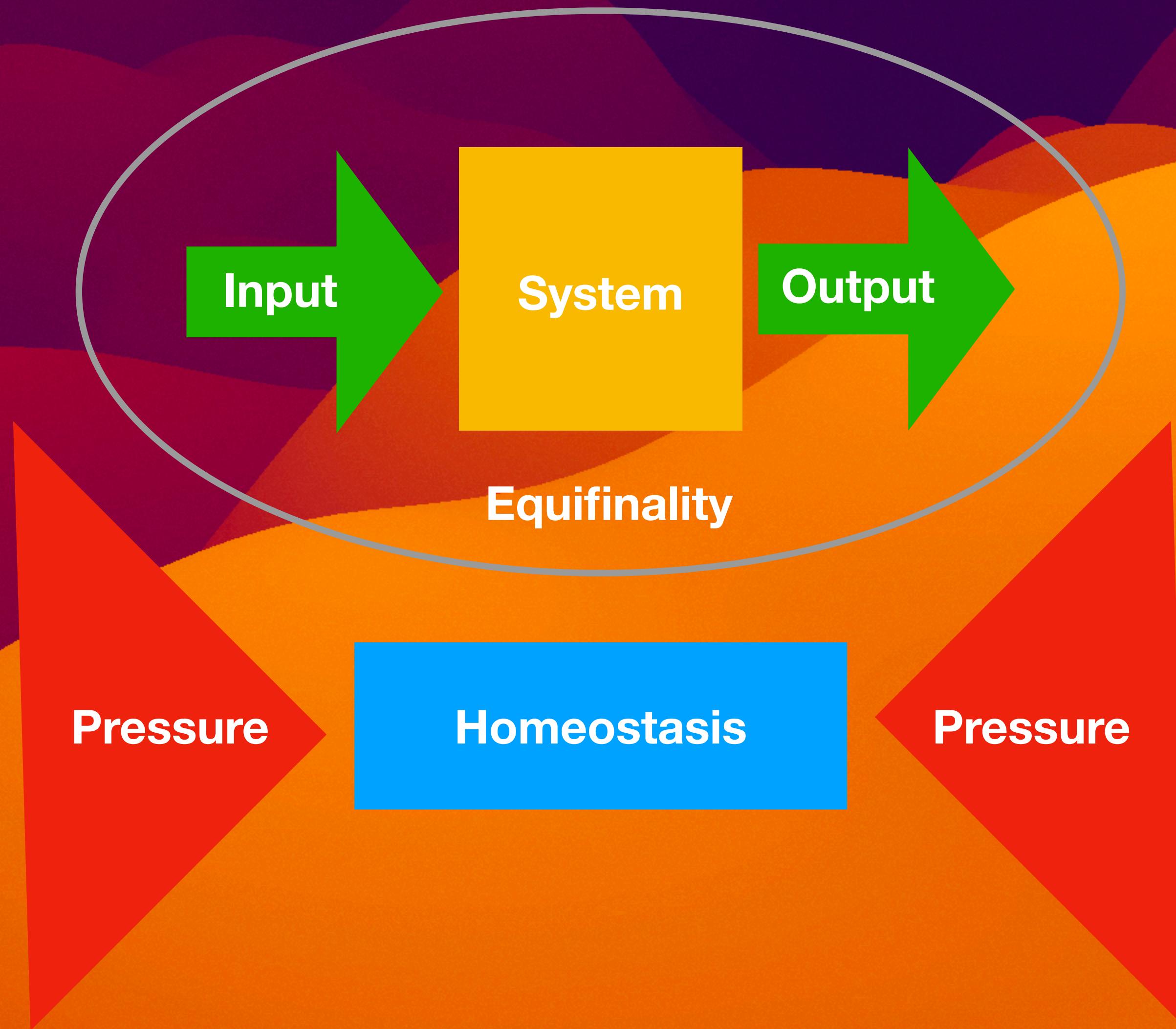
**Perspectives:** A way of perceiving the world flows from a value position

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



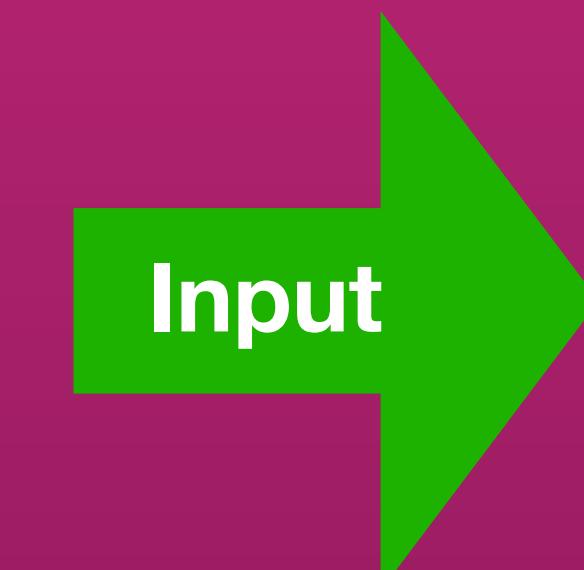
**Framework or Model:** Is a blueprint for action. It describes what happens in practice in a general way.

# Systems Theory

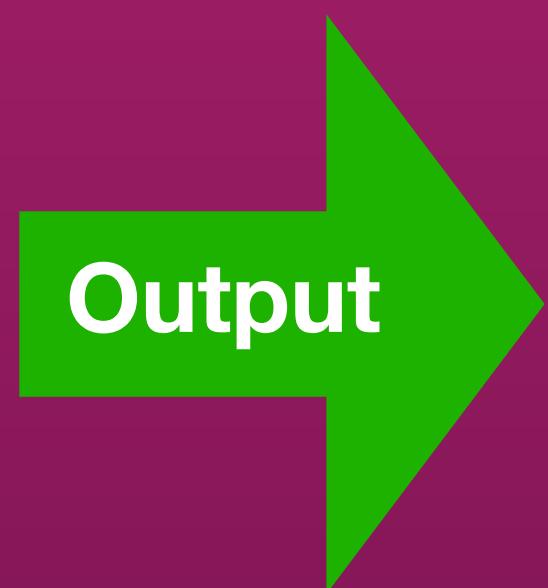


# Systems Theory

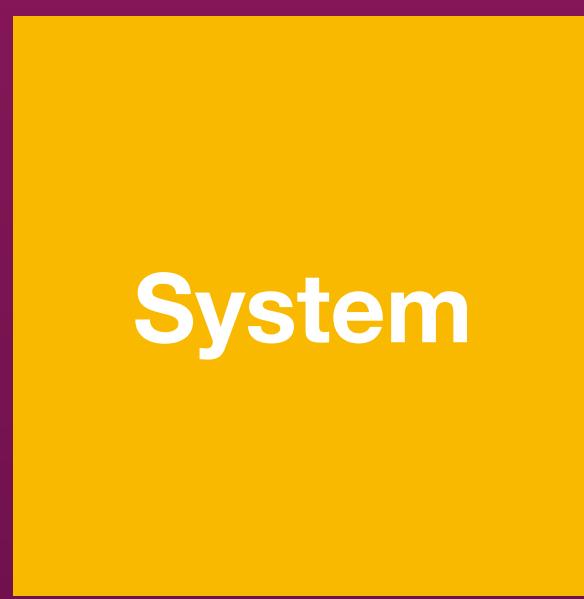
## Definitions



the information or communication flow received from other systems



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



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



constant state of equilibrium or balance

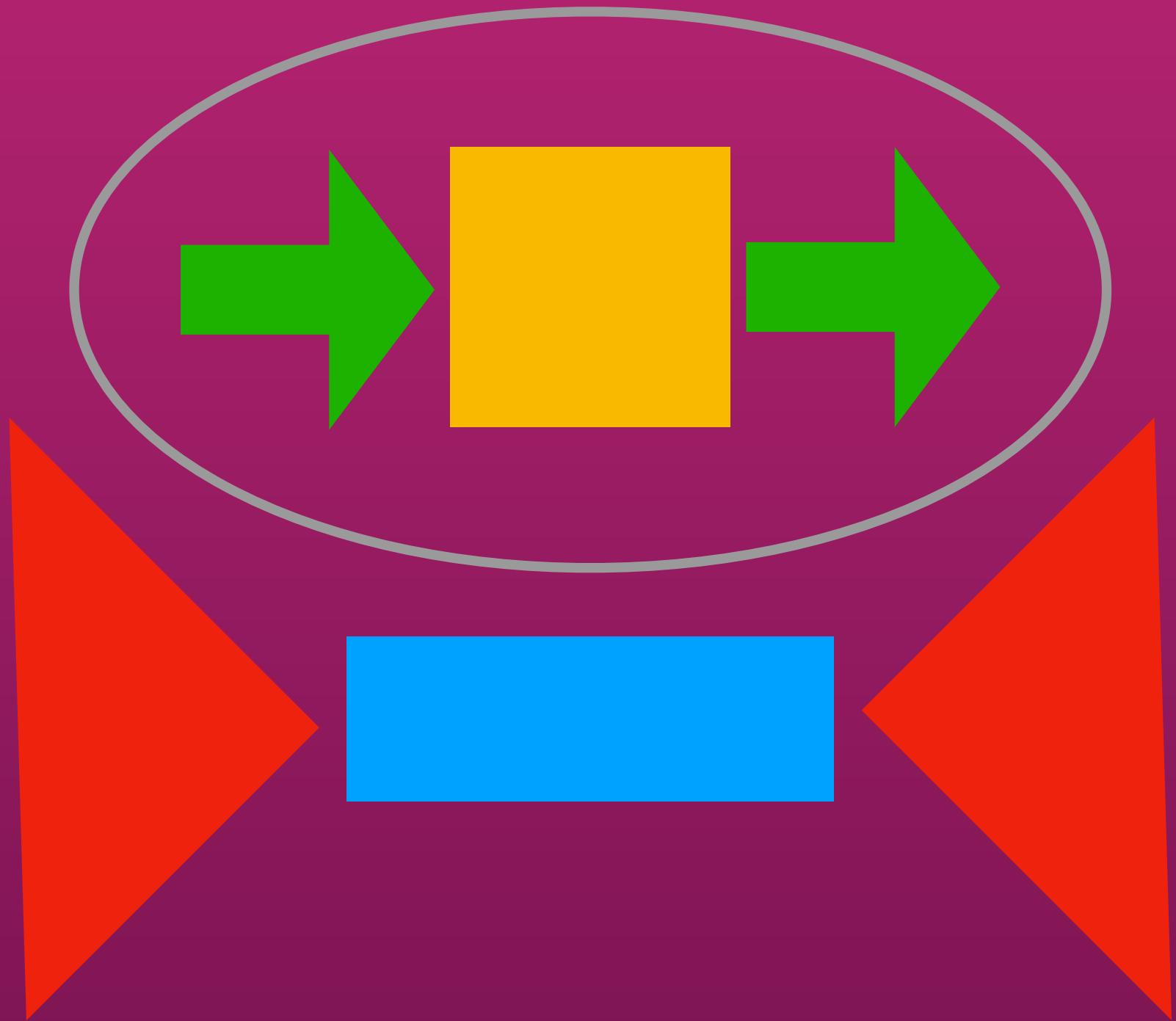
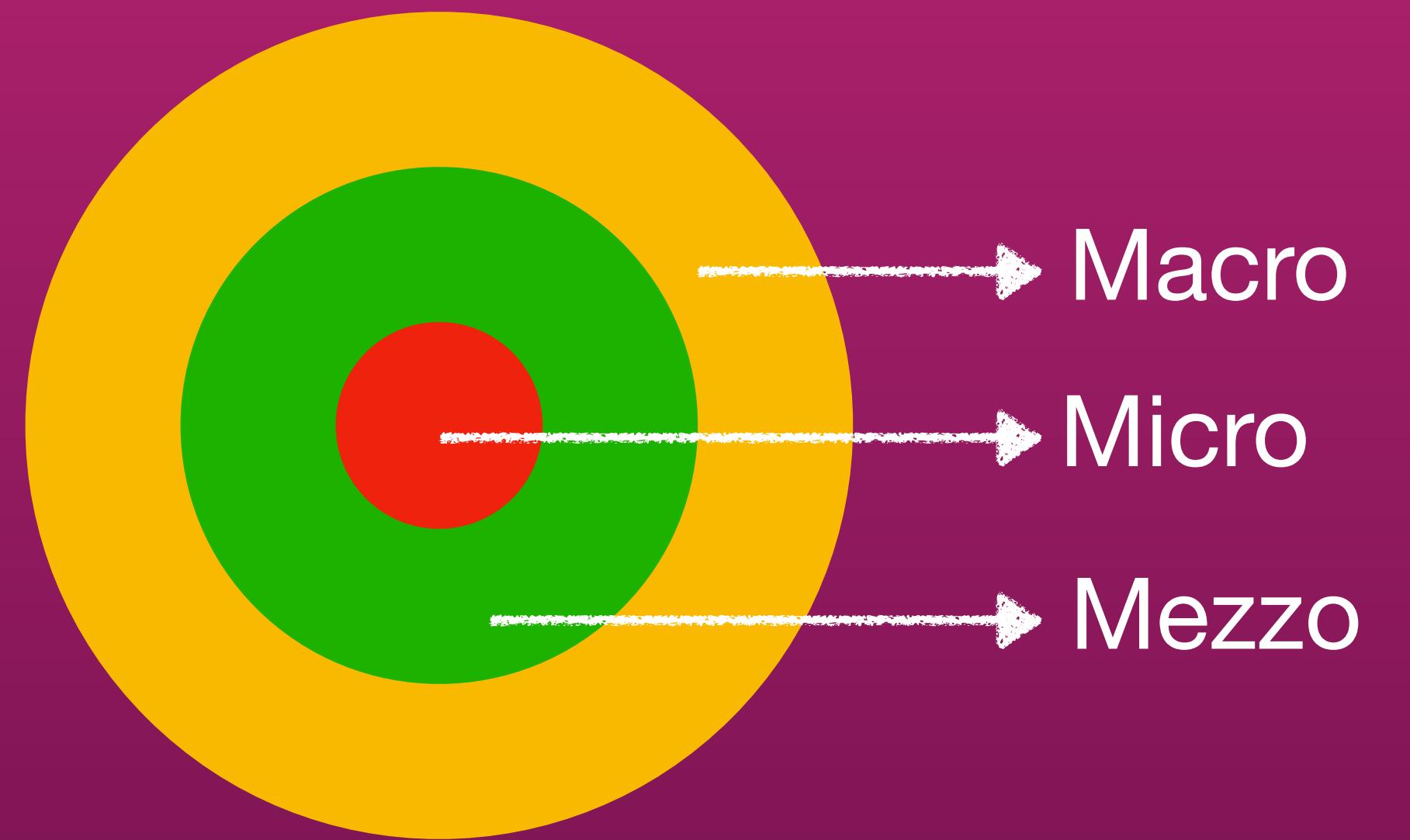


the fact that there are many ways of viewing a problem which ultimately will give you different solutions or means to solve it

**Equifinality**

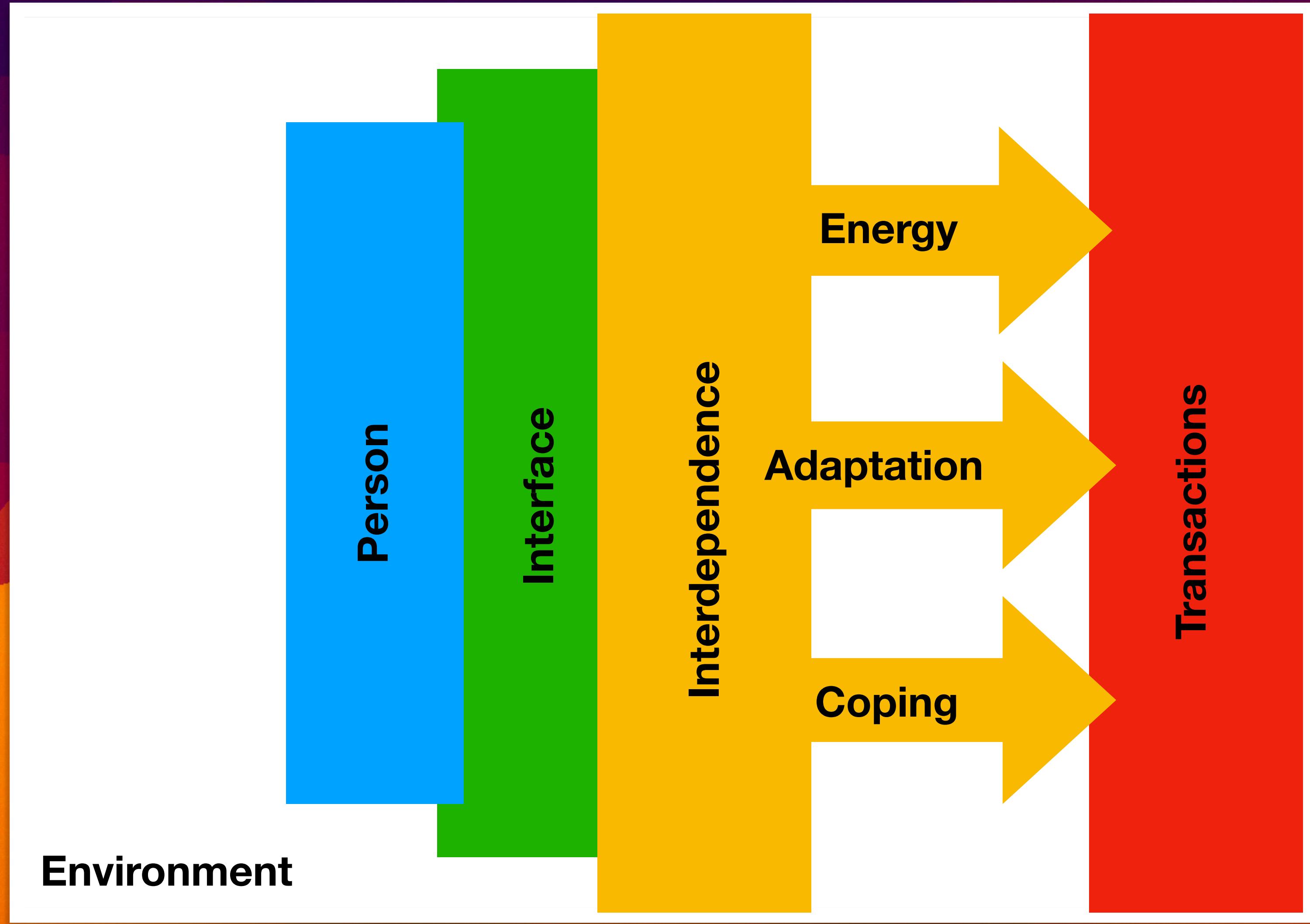
# Systems Theory

## Levels of interaction



# **Ecological Perspective**

## **Person in the Environment**



# 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

**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**

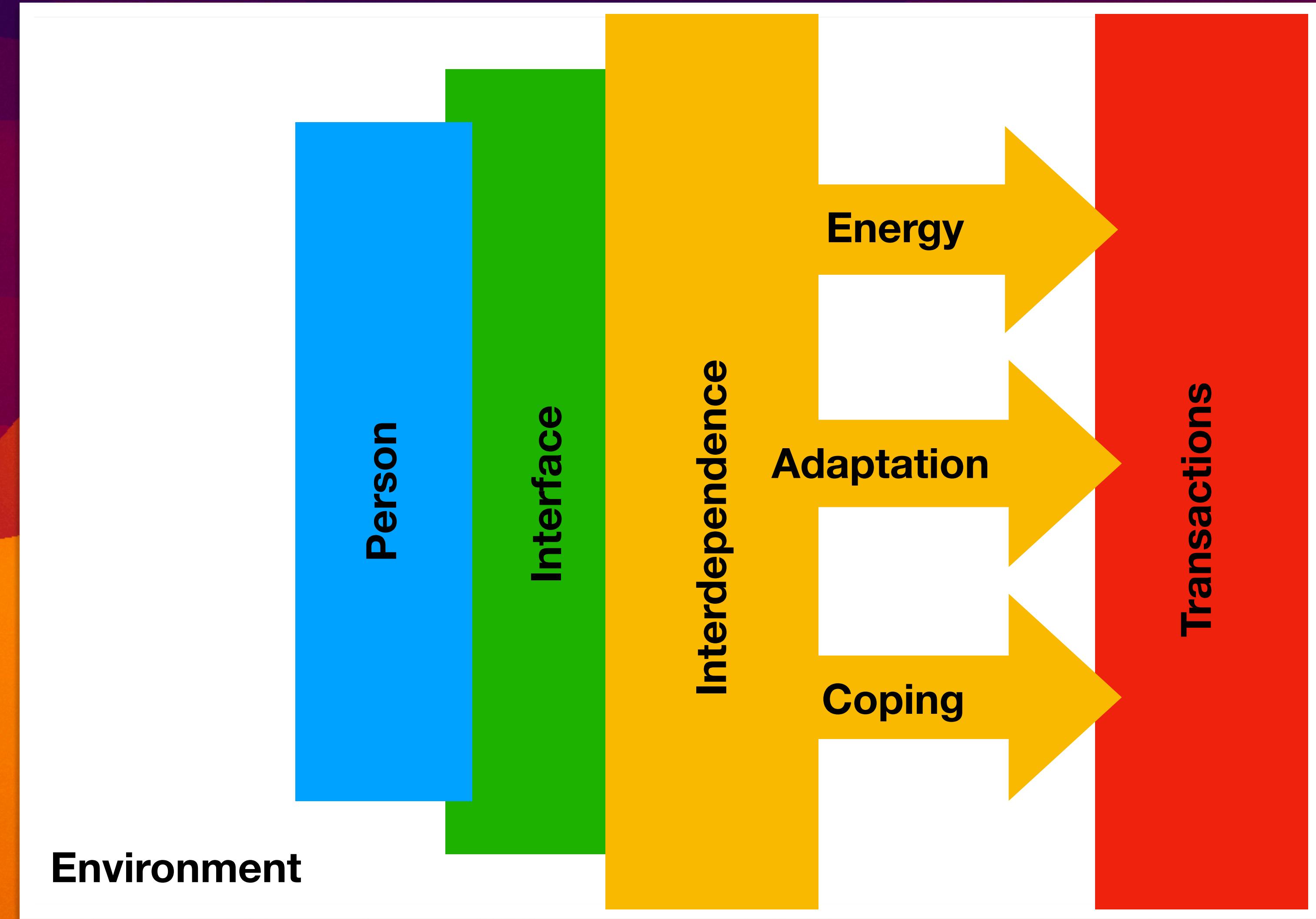
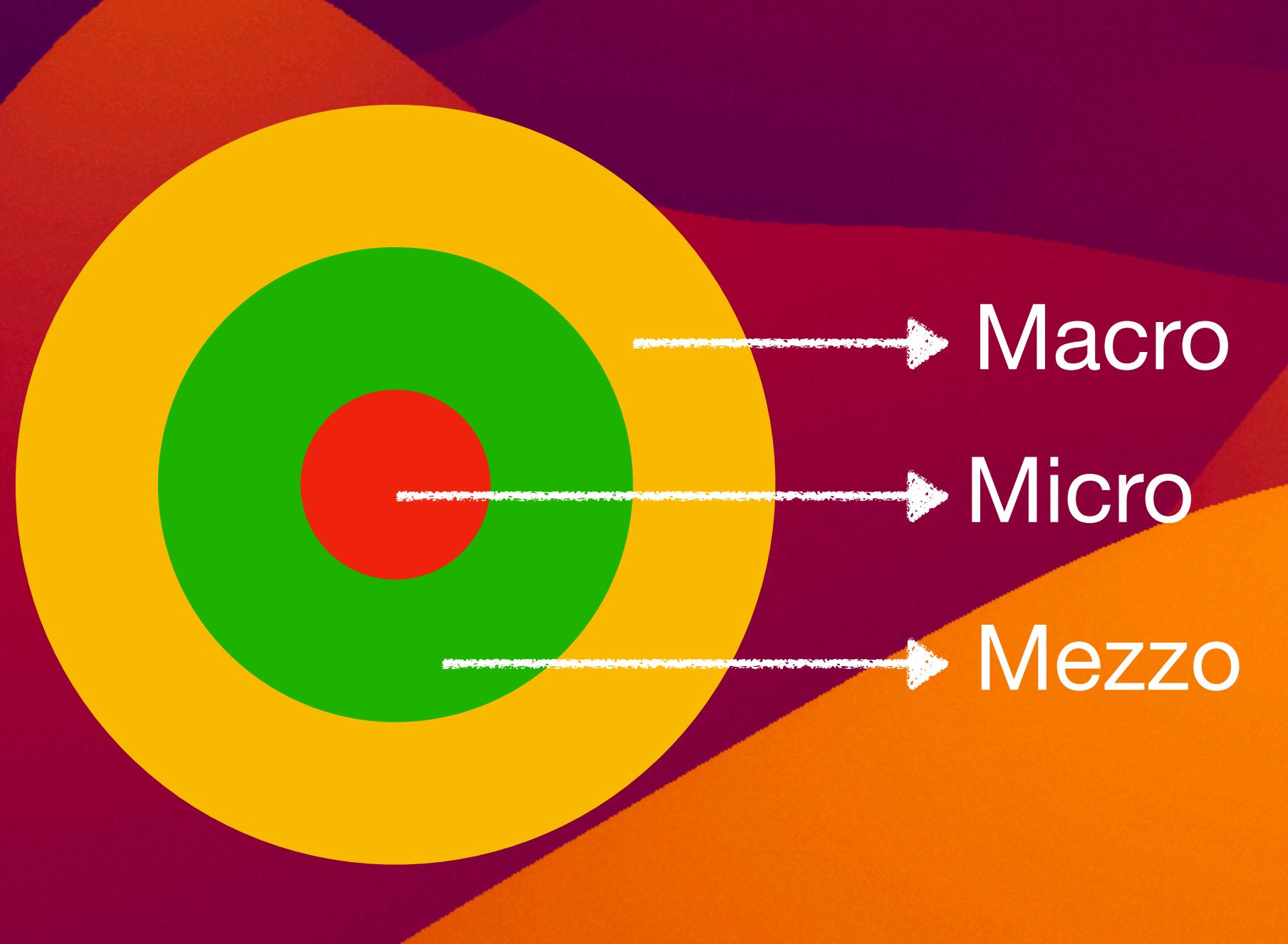
a form of human adaptation and implies a struggle to overcome problems. Refers to the way we deal with the problems we experience.

**Transactions**

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

# Ecological Perspective

## Levels of Interaction



# 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

### Resources

Personal  
Family  
Social environment  
Organizational  
Community

### Options

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

### Possibilities

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

### Exceptions

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

### 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?

# Strengths Perspective

## Types of Questions

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





No, I don't have a  
solution, but I  
certainly admire  
the problem.

Ashleigh Brilliant

## 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

# Solution Focused Brief Therapy

## Interventions

**Not knowing**

**Complementing strengths**

**Scaling questions**

**Exception questions**

**Coping questions**

**Miracle question**

# Solution Focused Brief Therapy

## Interventions

**Not knowing**

**Complementing strengths**

**Scaling questions**

**Exception questions**

**Coping questions**

**Miracle question**

- Clients experts
- General attitude communicating an abundant, genuine curiosity
- Micro practice skills

# Solution Focused Brief Therapy

## Interventions

**Not knowing**

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

**Complementing strengths**

**Scaling questions**

**Exception questions**

**Coping questions**

**Miracle question**

# 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

# Solution Focused Brief Therapy

## Interventions

**Not knowing**

- Problem description vs. exceptions

**Complementing strengths**

- Increase awareness of current/past successes

**Scaling questions**

- Turning past solutions into present solutions

**Exception questions**

- Finding out specifics

**Coping questions**

**Miracle question**

# 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

# Solution Focused Brief Therapy

## Interventions

**Not knowing**

- Amplifying what the client wants

**Complementing strengths**

- Formatting the question

**Scaling questions**

- Concrete, behavioral, measurable terms

**Exception questions**

- Realistic terms

**Coping questions**

**Miracle question**

# 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