UNM CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT & DISABILITY

WHOLE SYSTEMS, WHOLE PEOPLE

USING INTERSECTIONALITY AND SYSTEMS THINKING TO BETTER THE EXPERIENCE OF OUR CLIENTS

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UNM CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT & DISABILITY

UNM Indigenous Peoples' Land and Territory Acknowledgement

Founded in 1889, the University of New Mexico sits on the traditional homelands of the Pueblo of Sandia. The original peoples of New Mexico – Pueblo, Navajo, and Apache – since time immemorial, have deep connections to the land and have made significant contributions to the broader community statewide. We honor the land itself and those who remain stewards of this land throughout the generations and also acknowledge our committed relationship to Indigenous peoples.

We gratefully recognize our history.

Developed by the Special Assistant for American Indian Affairs to the UNM President in consultation with the Native American Faculty Council.

Approved and adopted by President Garnett S. Stokes February 2020
Photo by Dr. Tim Schroeder

Sam Emord

Samuel is a Queer/Transman and a born and raised Burqueno. He has worked with both children and adults with disabilities for almost a decade.

Learning Objectives

- How can you use Systems Thinking to better see our job seekers as Whole People?
- How can you use a greater awareness of identity to better connect with your job seeker and build stronger rapport?
- How can you further incorporate Systems Thinking into our work in Supported Employment an what effect would that have on the work?

Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators Competencies

1. Learning what Systems Thinking is and how it can be incorporated into our work.
2. Understand how to assist job seekers with making decisions about disclosure, considering both the benefits and risks of disclosing and providing approaches to disclosing.
3. Identify the impact of an individual's cultural and social background, including socio-economic status,race, gender, ethnicity, native and spoken language, and sexual identity, as well as their role in the family, religious organization, and community.
4. Discuss the use of person-first, identity-first, and the evolving language of inclusion in all interactions, including those with employers. g. Discuss multicultural impacts and considerations in services delivered.

Thesis

Systems Thinking is a tool that can help us see how we can best help our job-seekers in a way that addresses all facets of their identity and how they intersect with their disability.
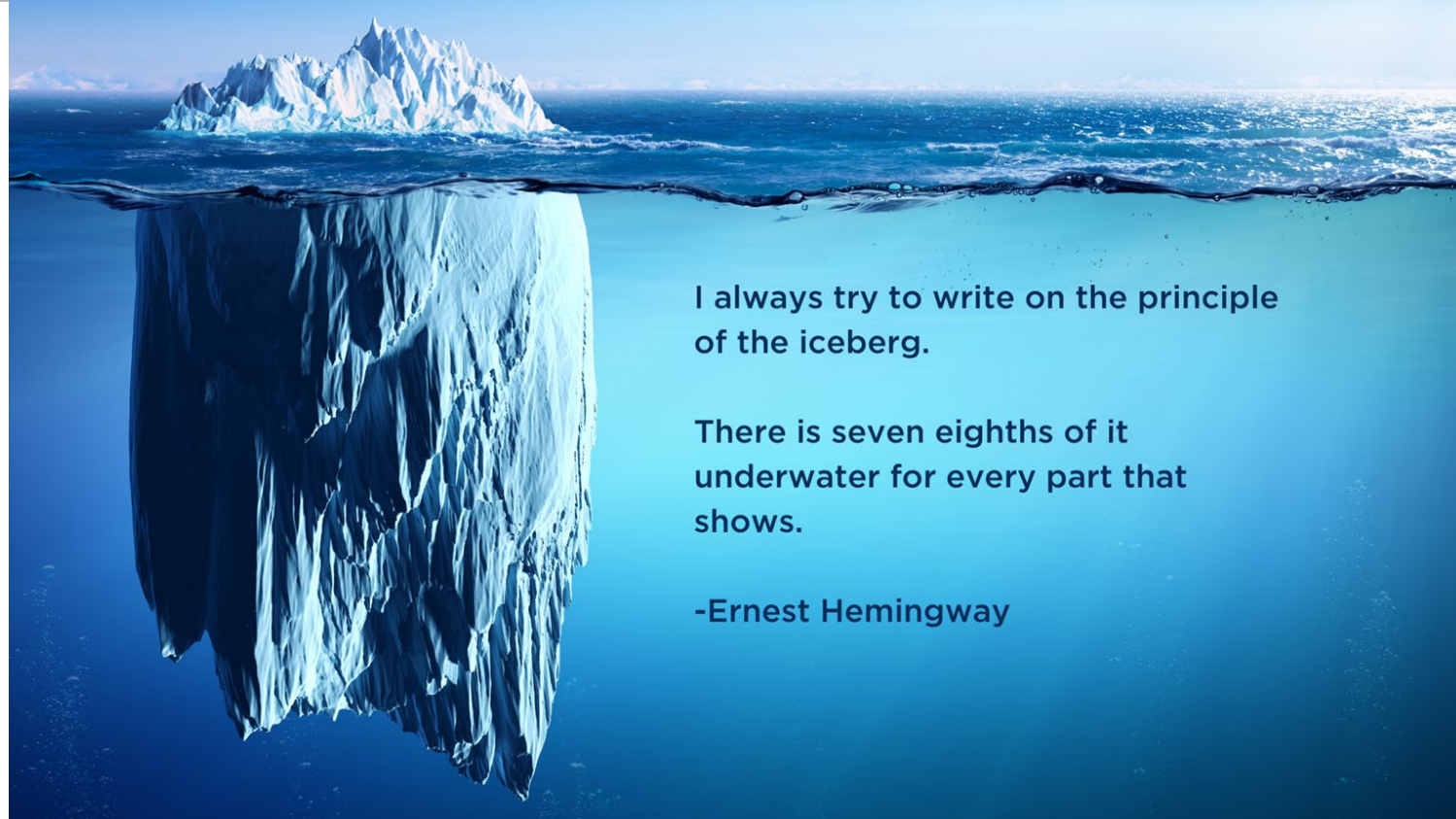
Outing Myself…..duhn-duhn-DUHN

Bobby Corso: the marginalizing of our job seekers

Why make jokes when the topic is not that funny?

Hemingway, Freud, and the Iceberg Theory/Principle

I always try to write on the principle of the iceberg.

There is seven eighths of it underwater for every part that shows.

-Ernest Hemingway

We're starting with the one in the mirror…woah!

Think about your own identity and how complex it is. What parts of you are seen and unseen?

Reflection Activity

Everyone was given a worksheet.. Please take out your phone and set up the camera. Take a few moments, look at your reflection: what do you see? What don't you see?

How do these things that you see readily define you?

- What are some things about yourself, that you feel define you, that are not readily visible in the mirror?

- Take some time to jot these things down in the worksheet.

Intersectionality: *(noun)*

theory that the categories of intersecting relations such as race, gender, social class, sexuality, ability and age are interrelated and mutually shaping one another.
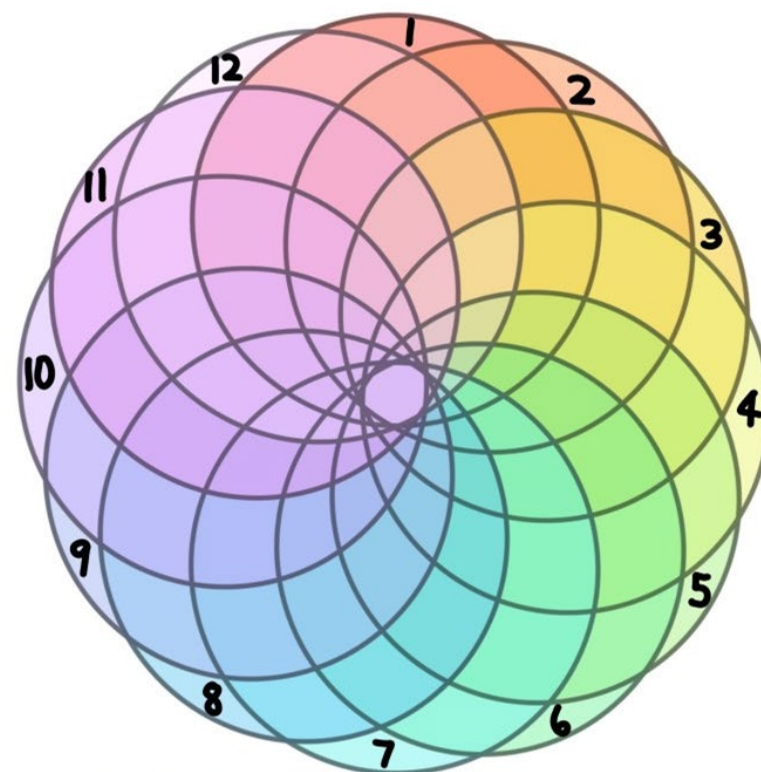
1. Race
2. Ethnicity
3. Gender identity
4. Class
5. Language
6. Religion
7. Ability
8. Sexuality
9. Mental health
10. Age
11. Education
12. Body size
(...and many more...)

Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it locks and intersects. It is the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and privilege.
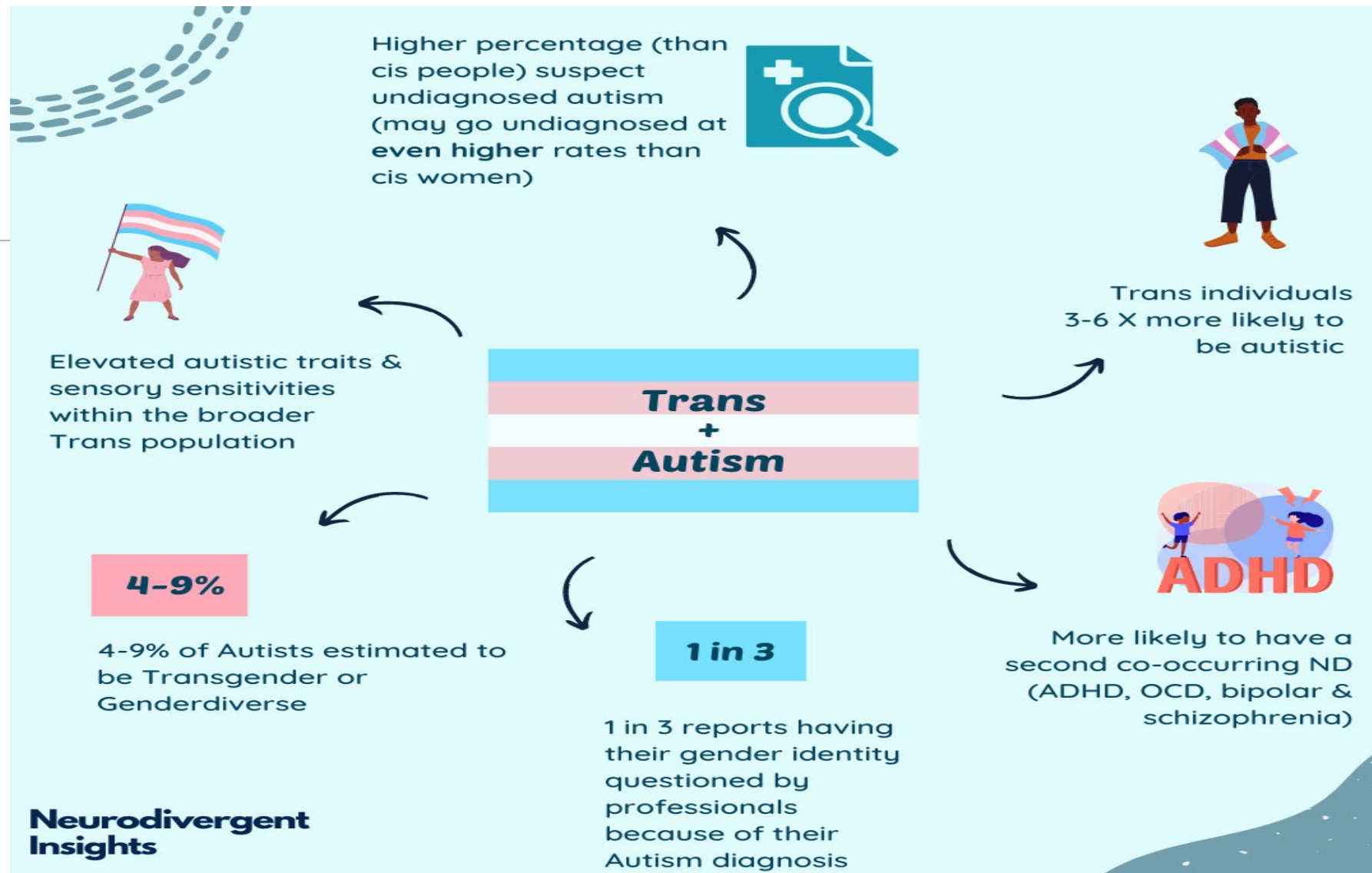— Kimberlé Crenshaw —

@sylviaduckworth

Minority stress:

(noun)

The physiological and psychological effects associated with the adverse social conditions experienced by ethnic, racial, sexual, and gender minorities, and others who are members of stigmatized social groups

Higher percentage (than cis people) suspect undiagnosed autism (may go undiagnosed at **even higher** rates than cis women)

Trans individuals 3-6 X more likely to be autistic

Elevated autistic traits & sensory sensitivities within the broader Trans population

Trans + Autism

4-9%

4-9% of Autists estimated to be Transgender or Genderdiverse

1 in 3

1 in 3 reports having their gender identity questioned by professionals because of their Autism diagnosis

ADHD

More likely to have a second co-occurring ND (ADHD, OCD, bipolar & schizophrenia)

Neurodivergent Insights

Gender Dysphoria: *(noun)*; a state of severe distress or unhappiness caused by feeling that one's gender identity does not match one's sex as registered at birth.

Transgender/ Autistic people, in their own words…

"Just to function in neurotypical spaces, Autistic people have to do a lot more introspection and consideration of their thought processes and interactions. So I'm not surprised that we find out more about ourselves, as we have constant pressure to analyze ourselves!" –Autistic Transperson, as quoted from video "Gender Criticals and Autism" on EMBER GREEN channel (YouTube)

"You need to think about all the facets of your identity and behavior and this makes it easier to recognize your transness." –Autistic Transperson, as quoted from video, "Gender Criticals and Autism" on EMBER GREEN channel (YouTube)

"When kids are young, categories are perhaps even more important than they are to adults, and gender is among the most important of them all. I didn't fit." –Drake Keeper, Autistic Transperson, self-advocate (from *Spectrums: Autistic Transgender People in their Own Words*, Maxfield Sparrow)

"I've taken many steps…to take ownership of my body. It's my body now. I want it to reflect the soul it houses." –Joelle Smith, Autistic Transwoman, self-advocate (from *Spectrums: Autistic Transgender People in their Own Words*, Maxfield Sparrow)

Systems Thinking: *(noun)*

"an approach to problem-solving that views problems as part of a wider dynamic system"-- The Alliance for Health Policy & Systems Research

Systems Thinking

"Systems thinking is a discipline for seeing wholes rather than parts, for seeing patterns of change rather than static snapshots, and for understanding the subtle interconnectedness that gives living systems their unique character."
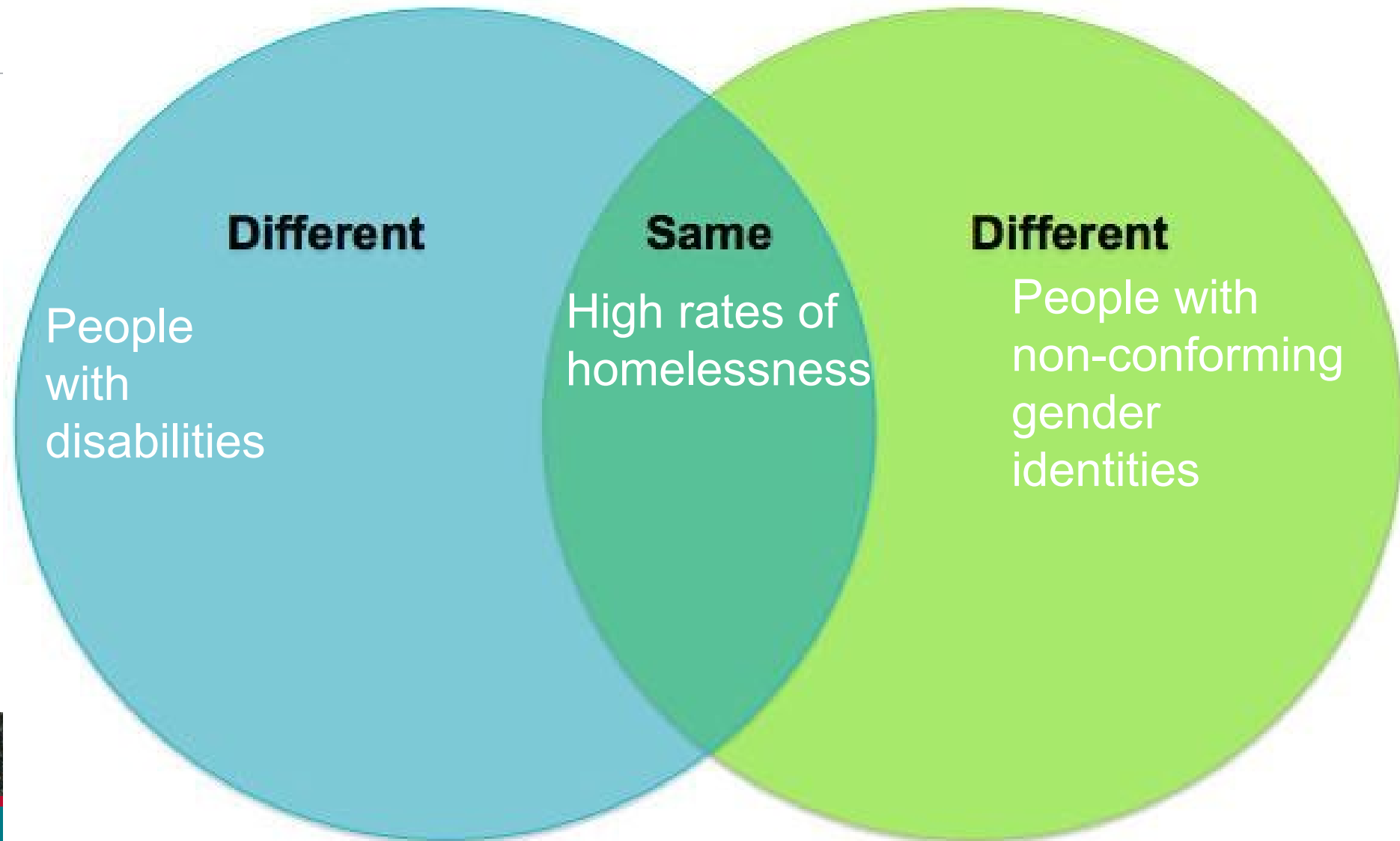
Peter Senge, author of

*The Fifth Discipline:
The Art and Practice of
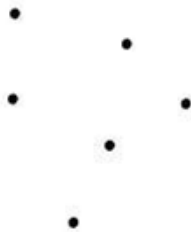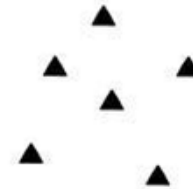the Learning Organization*

MARGINALIZATION

Different

Same

Different

People with disabilities

High rates of homelessness

People with non-conforming gender identities

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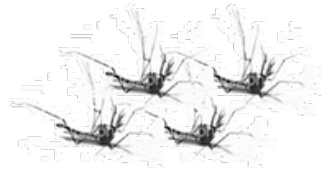# Tools of a system thinker

"OPERATION: CAT DROP"....Systems Thinking in Action

Malaria is spreading across Borneo → WHO sprays DDT → DDT kills mosquitos → Parasitic Wasp dies off → Caterpillars Flourish → Caterpillars eat thatch roofs

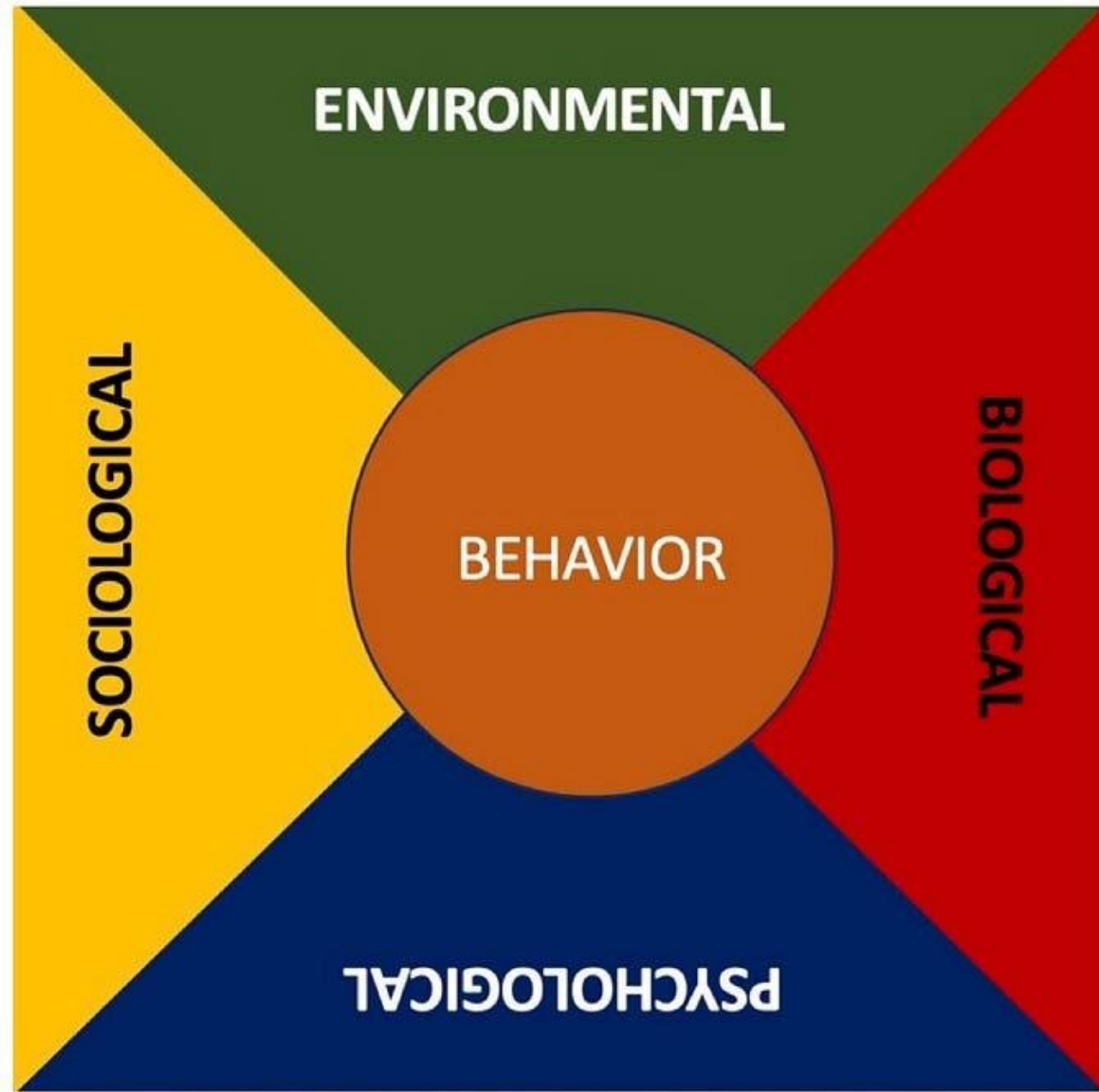DDT consumed by flies → Geckos eat flies and pass DDT → Cats eat Geckos and die from DDT → Rats survive and spread the plague

-Borneo, 1950's-1960's (image taken from Medium Online Magazine)

Graphic and text created by Dak Kopec, published on Medium Onlin
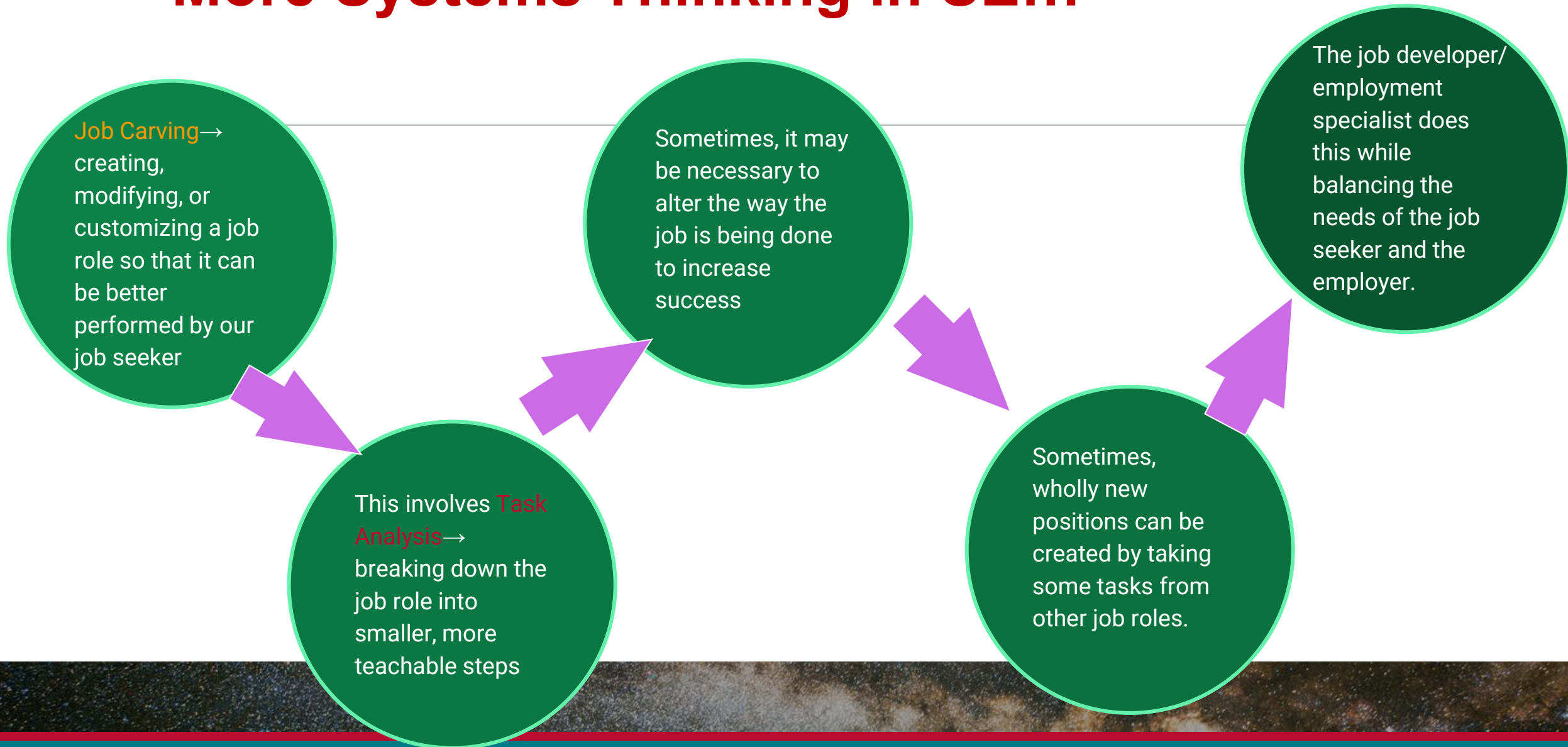
Positive Behavior Supports: *(noun)*

a set of research-based strategies used to increase quality of life and decrease problem behavior by teaching new skills and making changes in a person's environment.

Positive Behavior Supports

🚫 Behavior Management= Medical Model	✅ Positive Behavior Supports= Social Model
Focus on changing the individual	Focus on changing the environment
Focus on Coercion	Focus on Adaptation
Focus on Control	Focus on Choice
Reacts to Behavior	Responds to the Person
Identifies the Person as a Problem	Identifies Quality of Life and the Environment as the Problem
Person is the sum of their behavior	Person has thoughts & feelings
Person acts without reason	Person acts with reason

More Systems Thinking in SE...

Job Carving→ creating, modifying, or customizing a job role so that it can be better performed by our job seeker

This involves Task Analysis→ breaking down the job role into smaller, more teachable steps

Sometimes, it may be necessary to alter the way the job is being done to increase success

Sometimes, wholly new positions can be created by taking some tasks from other job roles.

The job developer/ employment specialist does this while balancing the needs of the job seeker and the employer.

Melissa Corso: Families are also Systems

Gossip is a system…

Turn & Talk:

How does acknowledging the impact of a job-seekers identity impact and/or inform the way you approach job development?

The Doctors: the responsibility of providers to treat the "whole person"

Addressing what you can do..

"Providers have the opportunity to intervene and positively impact patient experiences…but they first require an adequate knowledge base and understanding of the importance of sensitive and inclusive care."--*'Gender-affirming Care for Transgender Patients'*-PubMed Central

What you can do…

Helping people assert their chosen names & pronouns in new settings, such as interviews or meeting new coworkers

- My barista story
- If a job seeker shares a personal struggle about their gender identity, stay open while you listen.
- The coworker who had the absolute best response when I was misgendered.
- Listen to understand rather than to respond, be an interactive or observational listener.
  - Krista Ratcliffe's "Rhetorical Listening"

Rhetorical Listening: *(noun)*

A concept created by researcher & professor Krista Ratcliffe, it is "a code of cross-cultural contact…a rhetorical stance of openness that a person may choose to assume in cross-cultural exchanges."

MORE on what you can do….

- Feel *"enable(d)...to hear and value and know the person first…sort of a person-centered start to a therapeutic relationship"*- quote from Canada study (S. Lindsay, 2021)
  - Build rapport with your job seeker by getting them to talk about themselves. Let them know they are in a safe place.

Asking the names & pronouns people go by

- Mom's story
- Avoiding terms like "preferred pronouns". Using words like "chosen" rather than "preferred" puts the individual's identity into their own hands.

Be the change….

"In this whole process, we are probing for information. So, we are trying to poke holes at where can I connect with this person...trying to help them with their goal...and to get them to open up."-- participant in Canada study (S. Lindsay, 2021)
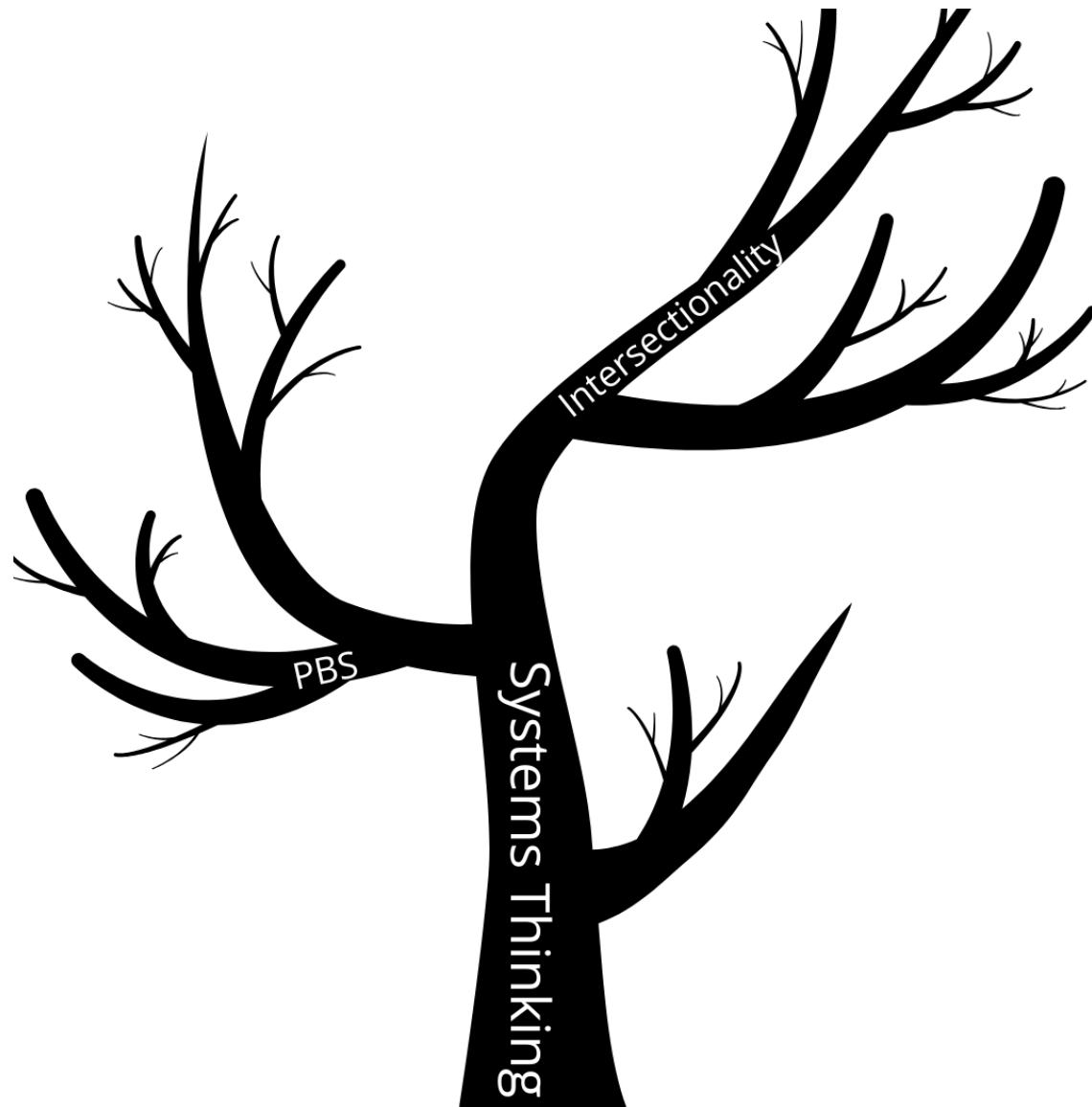
"**Spoiler alert: It's not really about language. It's about the quiet, persistent message that marginalized cultures, unless neatly packaged for a public event, are optional and can be dismissed.**" *–'Choosing Mess Over Easy Answers: Systems Thinking and Intersectionality'*--Stella Hye Chung Jeon

What's next…

"I won't pretend this is easy. The path ahead of us is hard, but so was the path behind us." –Joelle Smith, Autistic Transwoman, self-advocate (from *Spectrums: Autistic Transgender People in their Own Words*, Maxfield Sparrow)