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Conceptualising the person for career development

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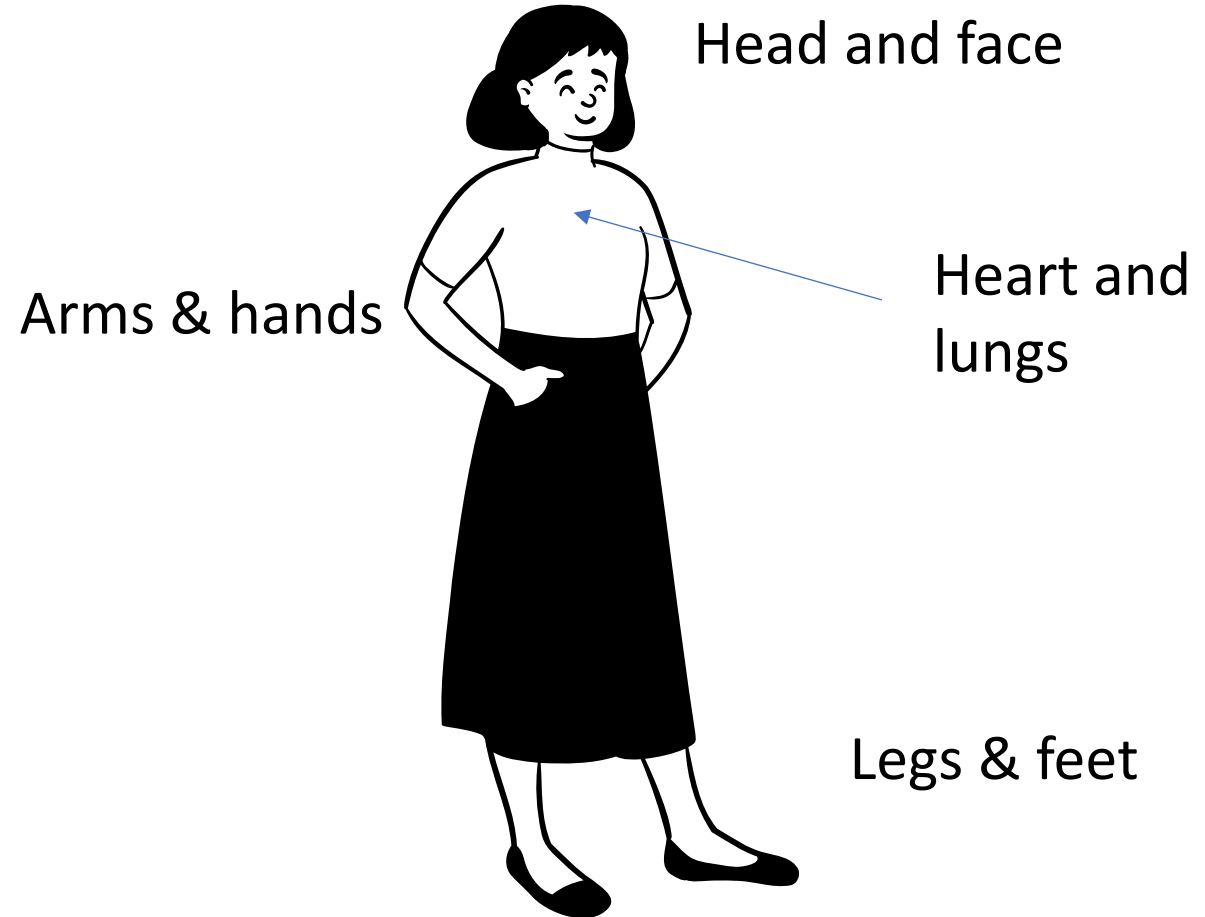
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A natural, childlike way
to think about a person

Is not good enough to
solve all medical
problems...



A functional model of the person for medical diagnosis & treatment

- Central nervous system
- Cardio-vascular system
- Muscular-skeletal system
- Immune system
- Digestive system
- Genito-urinary system



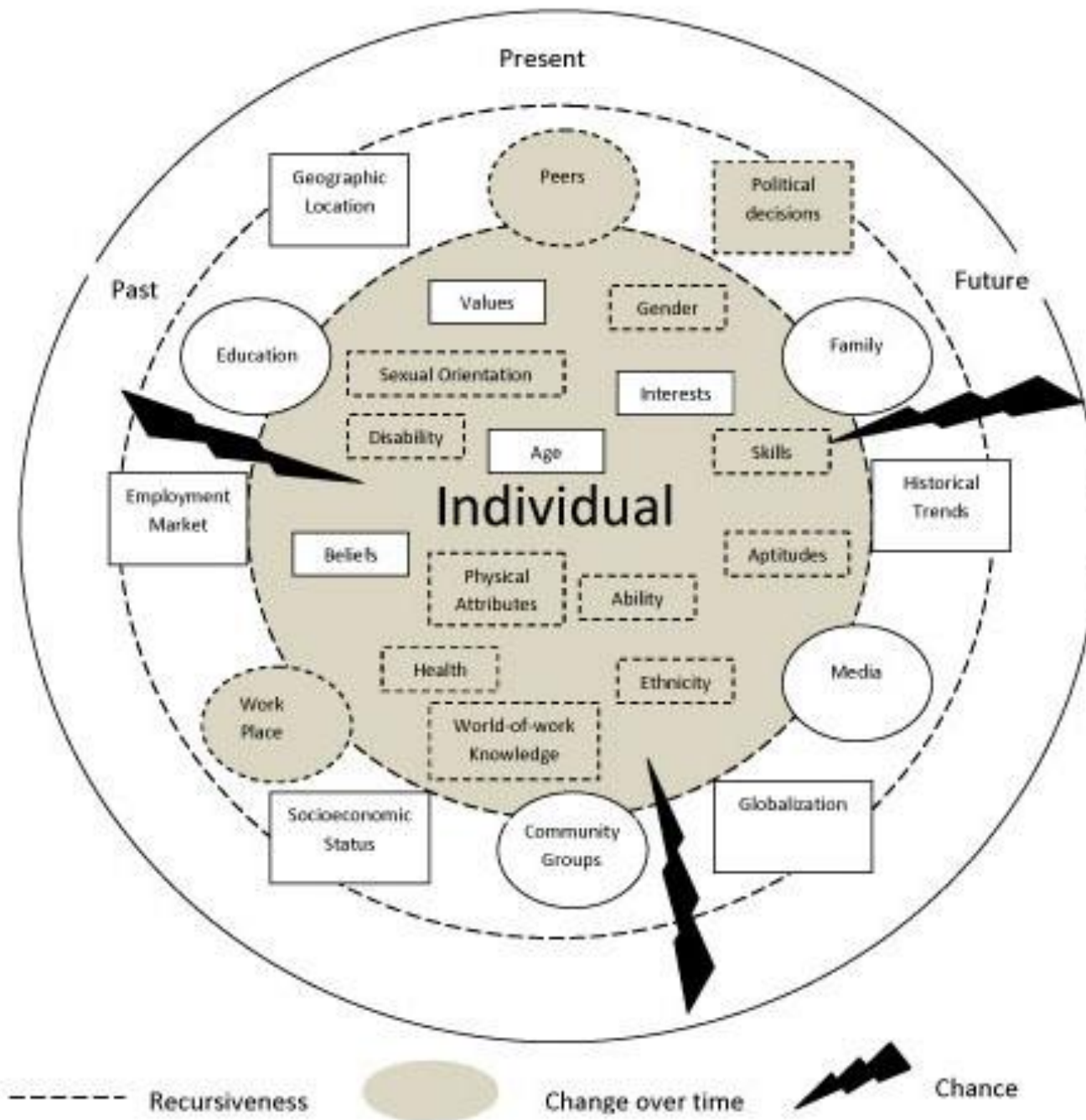
Do we need something like this?

A way to **organise** our understanding of the person

At an abstract level

Applicable across many settings

Overview of Patton & McMahon's model



Psychology is central to how the career profession conceptualises humans

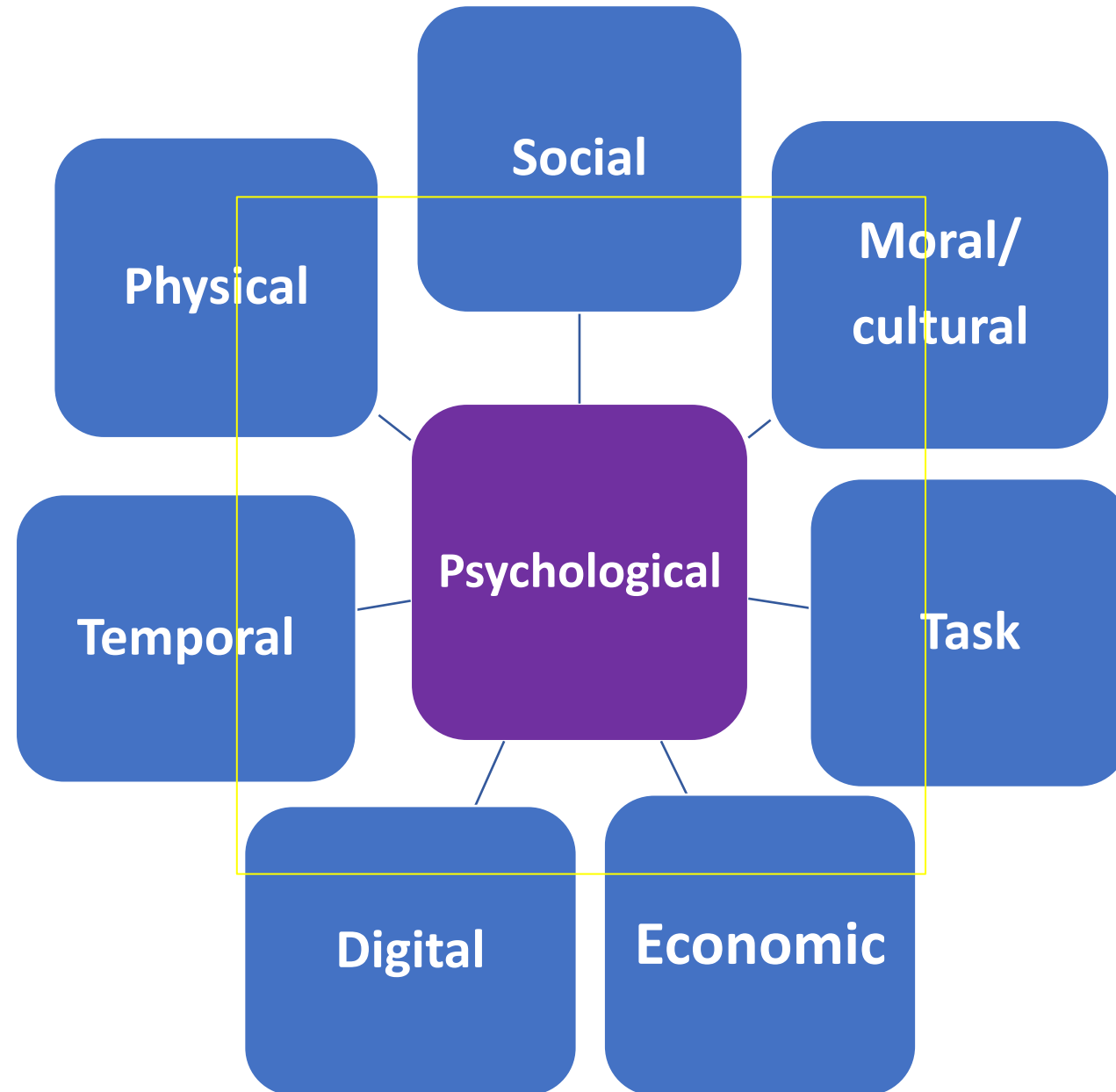


But other perspectives are available...

A person is a psychological entity, but also...

- A physical entity ...in a physical environment
- A social entity ...in a social environment
- A values-based entity ...in a moral/cultural environment
- An economic entity ...in an economic environment
- A temporal entity ...in a temporal environment
- An informational entity ...in an informational environment
- An active entity ...in a task environment

A model of the person and their environment(s)



Key insight

Resources arise in the interaction
between the person and the
environment...



...and so do barriers

A physical entity in a physical environment

Wider environment

Travel to work area; transport; geography

Immediate environment

Workstation; equipment;
workplace/home

The body

Physical health
Physique
Appearance/dress

A physical entity in a physical environment

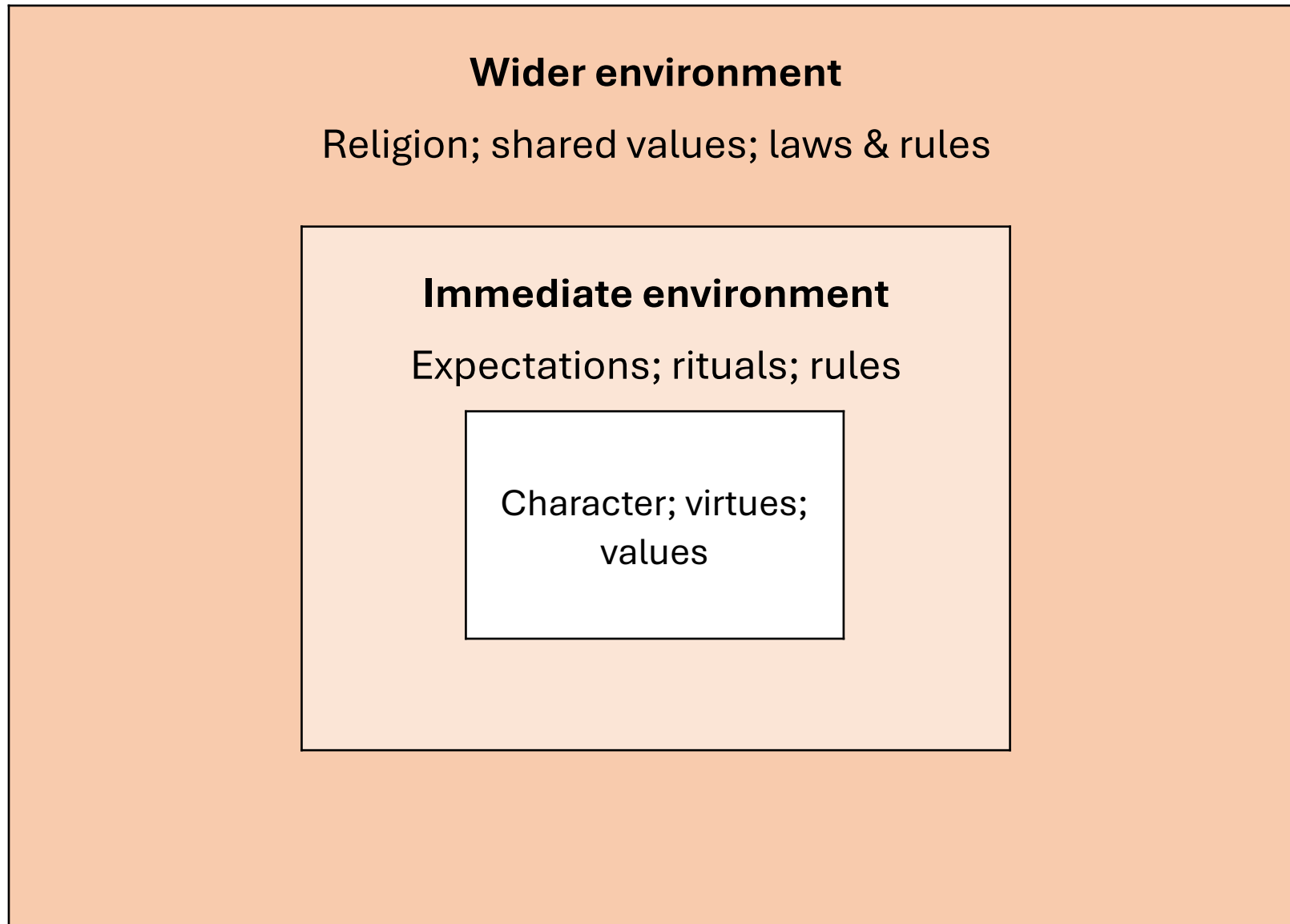
Resources

- Good health, physique, and appearance
- Safe/comfortable work environment
- Good location, proximity to opportunities
- Good transport links
- Capacity to relocate if required

Barriers

- Health condition or disability
- Lack of tools, equipment and/or skills to use them
- Lack of suitable clothing/protective gear
- Unsafe or uncomfortable workplace/workstation
- Lack of access to reliable transport
- Transport costs/time
- Geographical obstacles or isolation

A values-based entity in a moral/cultural environment



From the person interacting with a moral/cultural environment arises...

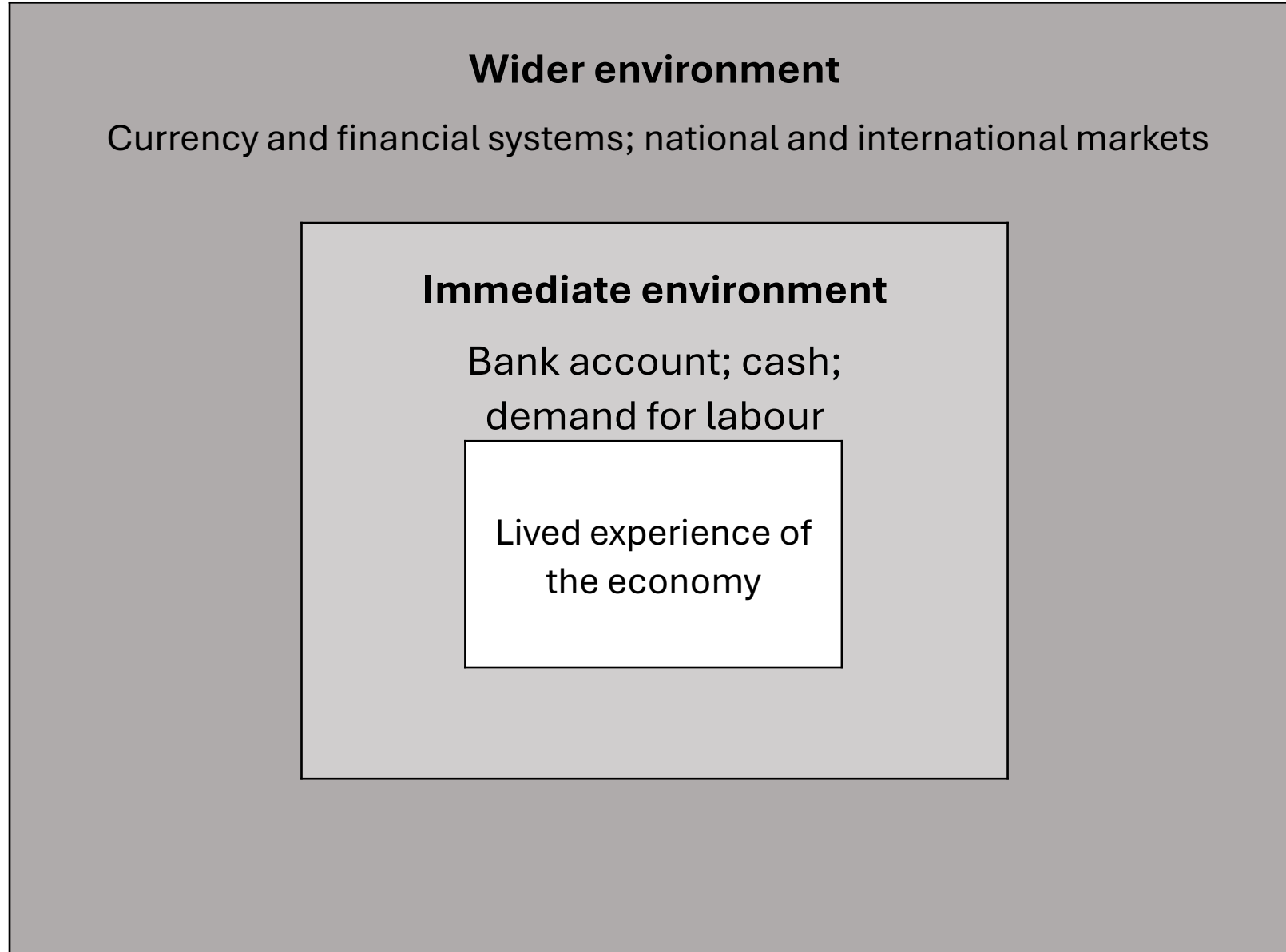
Resources

- Reputation
- Honesty
- Trustworthiness
- Dignity
- Priorities
- Reliability

Barriers

- Bad reputation
- Shame
- Stigma
- Discrimination
- Criminal record
- Conflict

An economic entity in an economic environment



From the person interacting with an economic environment arises...

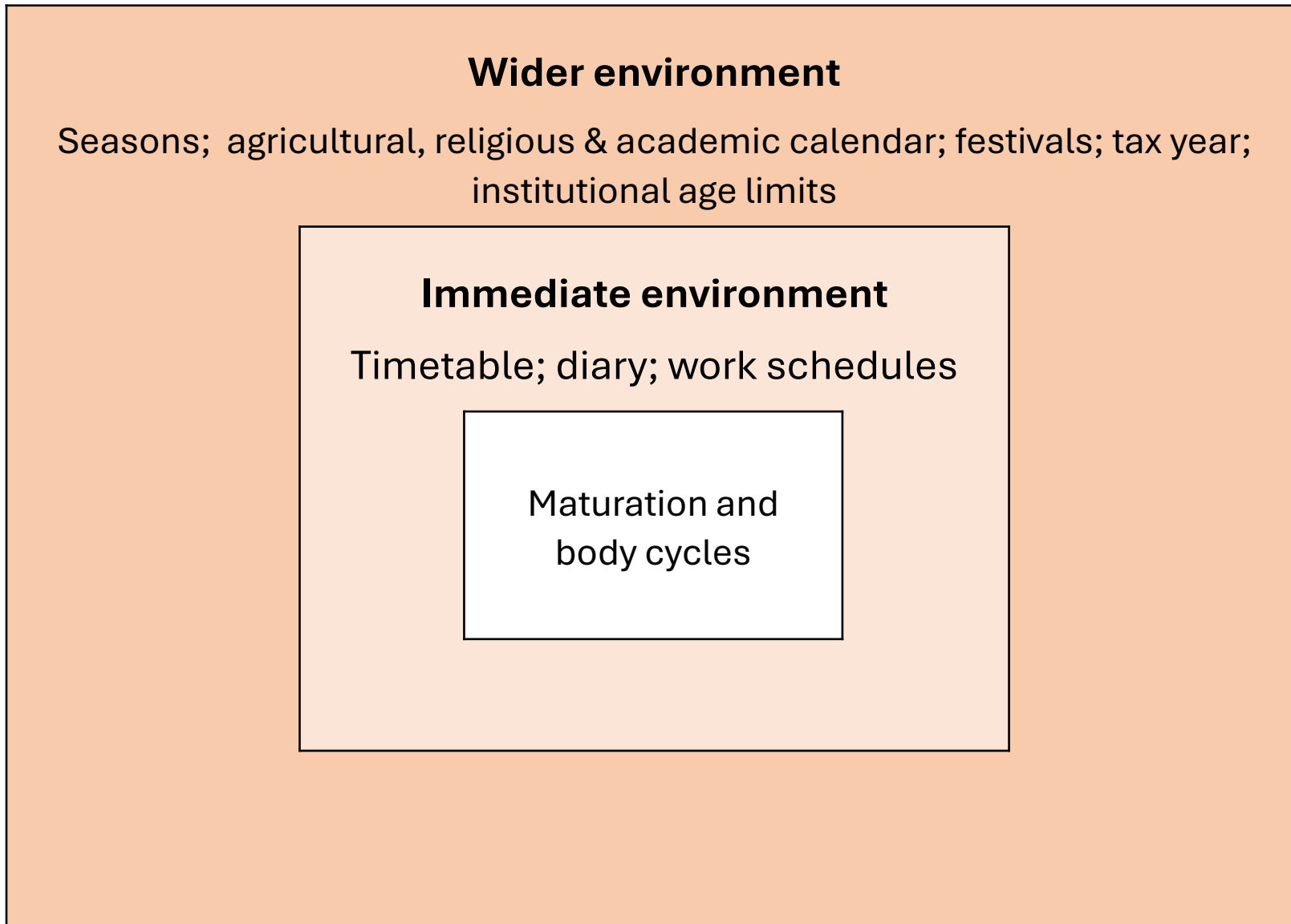
Resources

- Income (pay/grants/pensions)
- Capital assets & savings
- Equipment; tools
- Skills knowledge & attributes with value in the labour market

Barriers

- Living expenses; bills;
- Debts
- Dependents
- Insecurity of income or outgoings
- Inflation, recession, or instability

A temporal entity in a temporal environment



From the person interacting with a temporal environment arises...

Resources

- Youth
- Spare time
 - Daily; weekly; seasonally
- Time management skills
- Future focus
- Hope

Barriers

- Age limits
- Life stage constraints (biological)
- Life stage constraints(social)
- Time costs of work & travel
- Time claims of others
- Pessimism and anxiety

What can we do with this? #1

**Teach career counsellors how to think
about who (what) their clients are!**

An overview is a good start

What can we do with this? #2
Scope out the possibility space
for career assessment

A holistic conception of the person highlights how narrow traditional career assessment can be

There are many questions to ask!

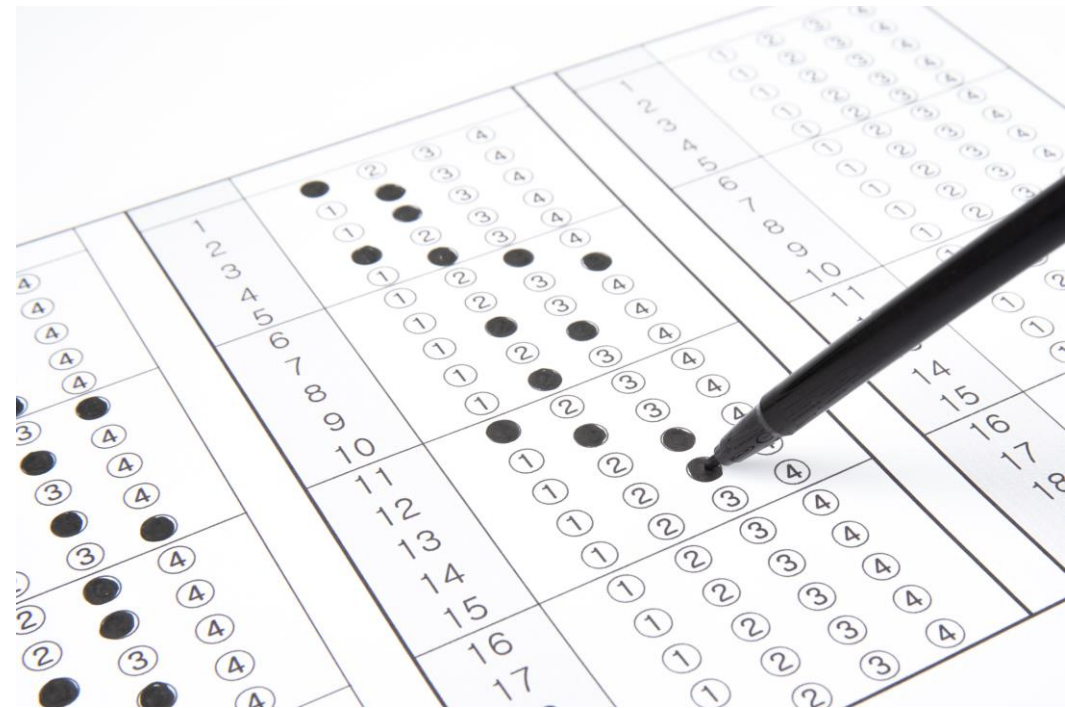
What can we do with this? #3

Do better matching

Traditional vocational assessment tools approaches often focus on matching task preferences to an occupation (task environment)

This neglects the other sub-systems

Is a more complete kind of matching possible?



What can we do with this? #4
Generate material for
discussion & exploration:

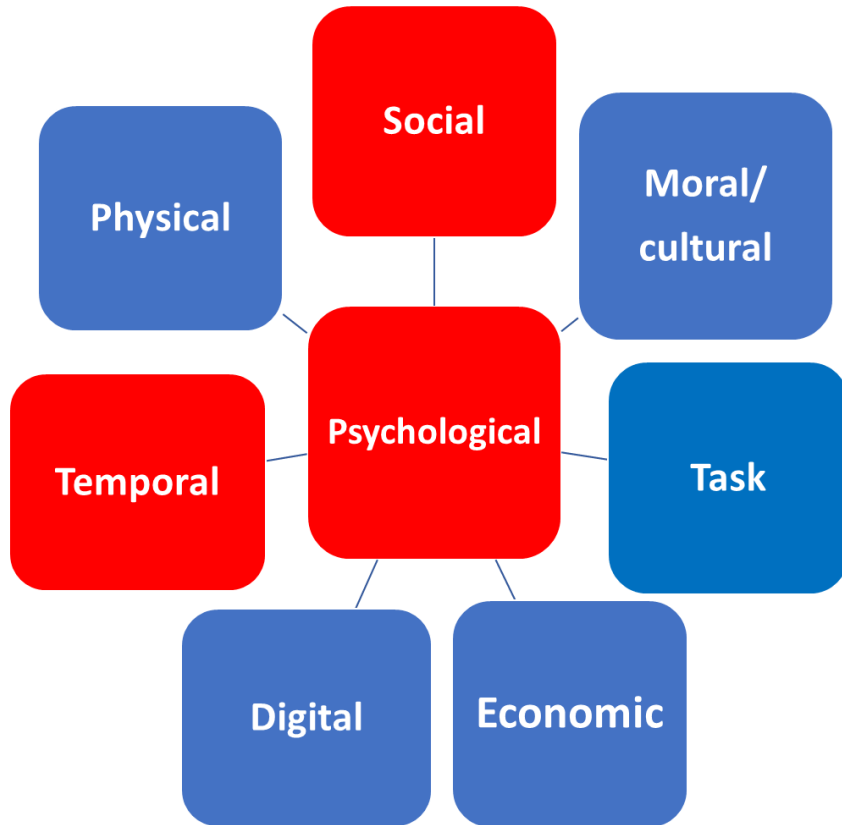
The guidance conversation be
used to identify:

- Resources and barriers
- Actions to strengthen & deploy resources
- Actions to mitigate barriers
- Define desirable environments

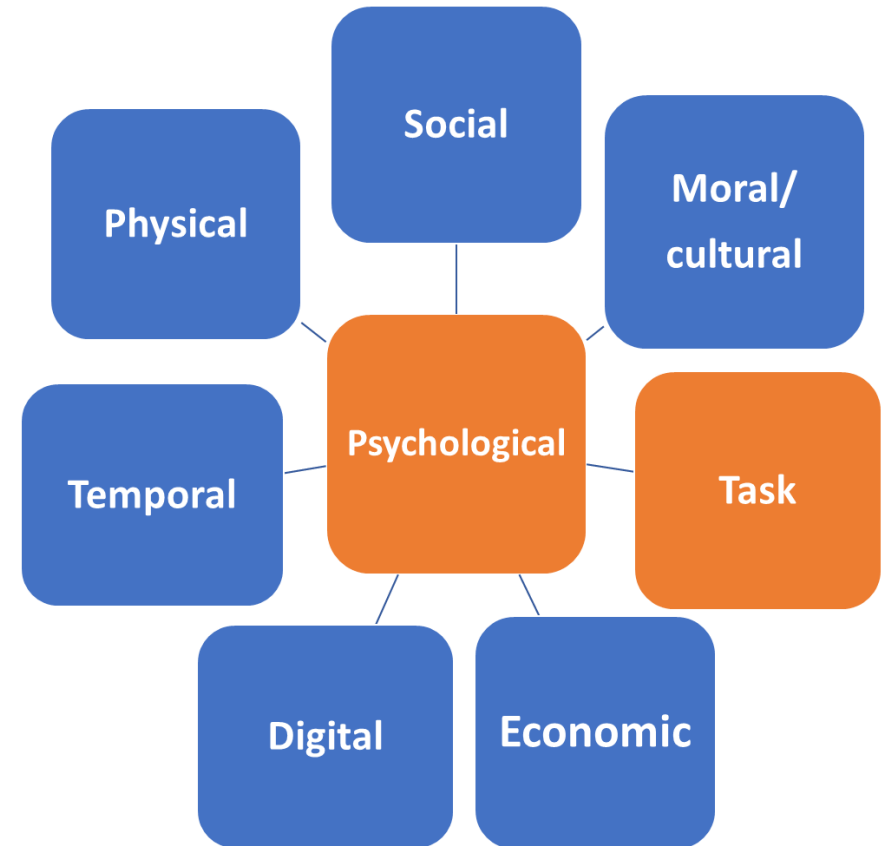


What can we do with this? # 5

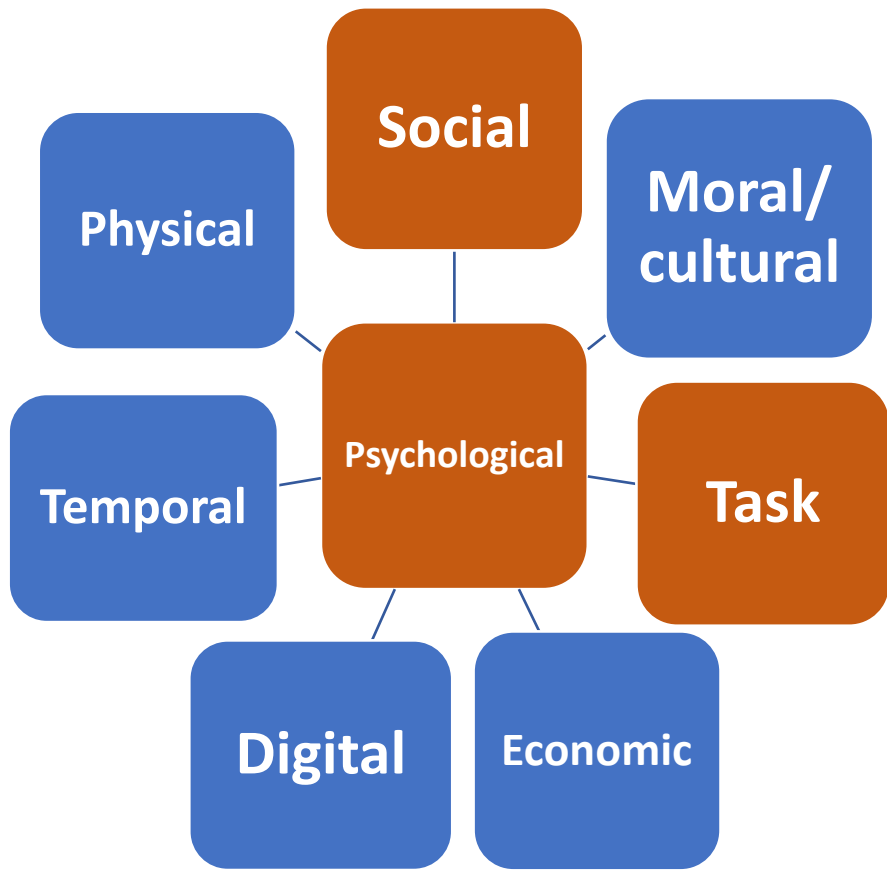
Assess the strengths and blind spots of career theories



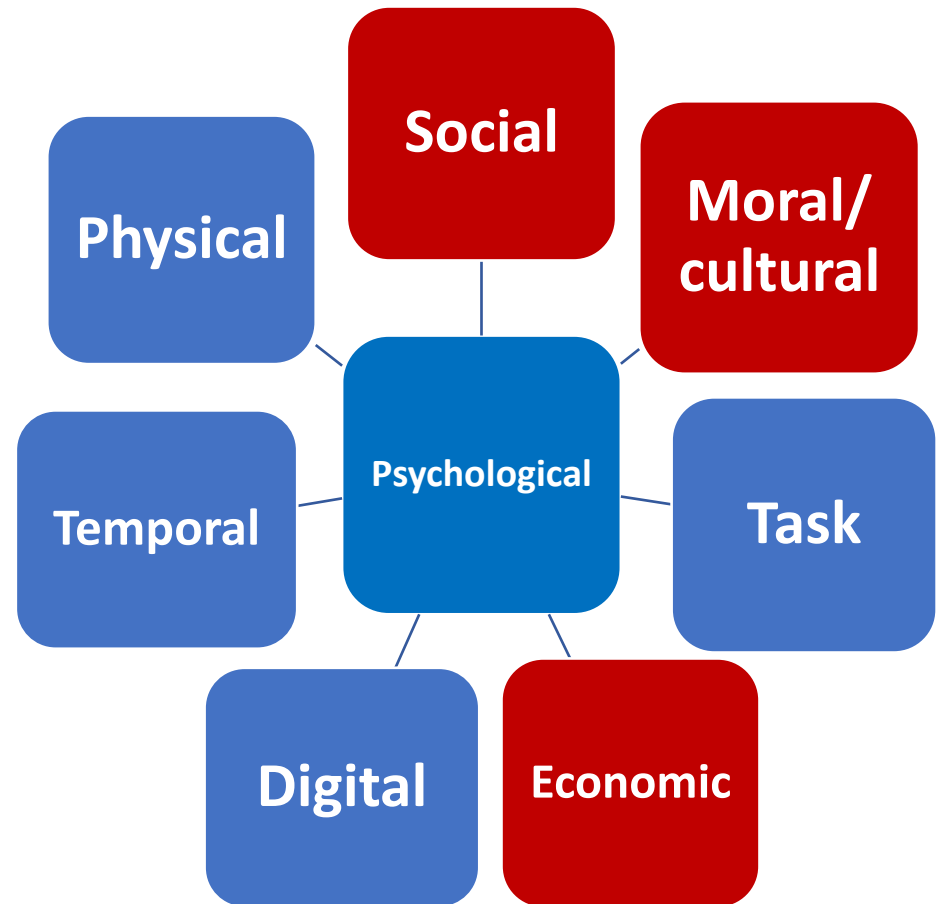
Donald Super's life-career



John Holland's vocational personality



Social learning theory



Sociological/structural theories

Conclusion

An abstract structure for conceptualising the person can help us to:

1. Train career counsellors to understand their clients
2. Scope assessment options (do better matching?)
3. Generate material for career conversations
4. Evaluate career theory

Contact me



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