

MEANINGFUL GUIDANCE

(when job insecurity has been normalised)

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Over the next 50 minutes we will discuss...



Definitions and context

Implications

What is our role?



MEANINGFUL GUIDANCE

Career Construction & Life-designing

- The goal is **not** to enable self-realisation (discovering an inherent 'self') but self-creation (create the self you want to be) (Savickas 2011)
- How useful is it for marginalised individuals facing social and structural barriers to secure employment?



Narrative guidance counselling methods



- Client narrates - tells the story of his/her **past** and **present** career development and **constructs future career**
- Time consuming
- There is a risk that the pervasive individualism underpin the process without an explicit critical narrative counselling method

Career Management Skills (CMS)

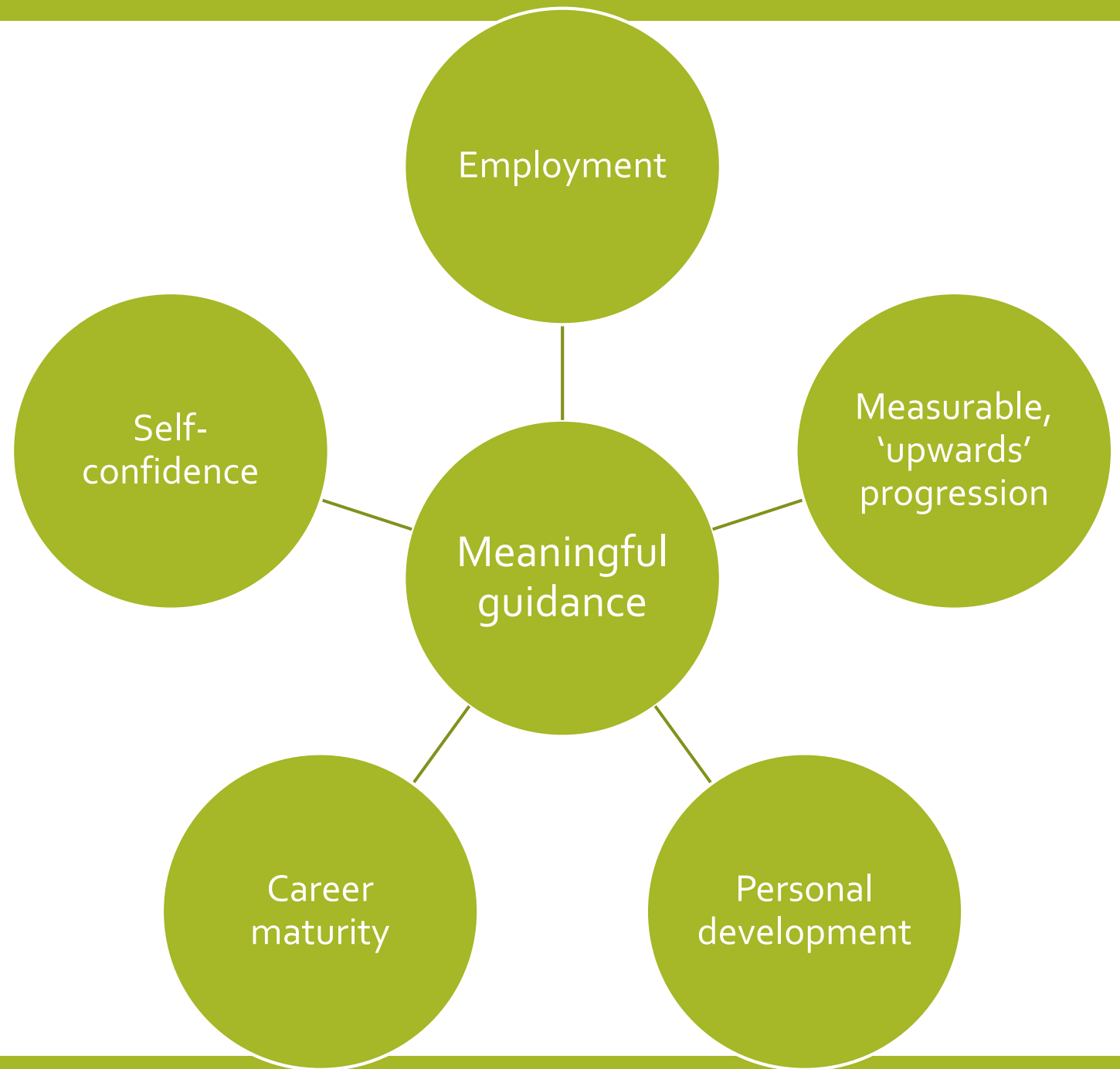
Strengths

- Encourages agency and prevents 'helplessness'
- Equips the person with useful career and life skills
- Provides a framework and structure for practitioners

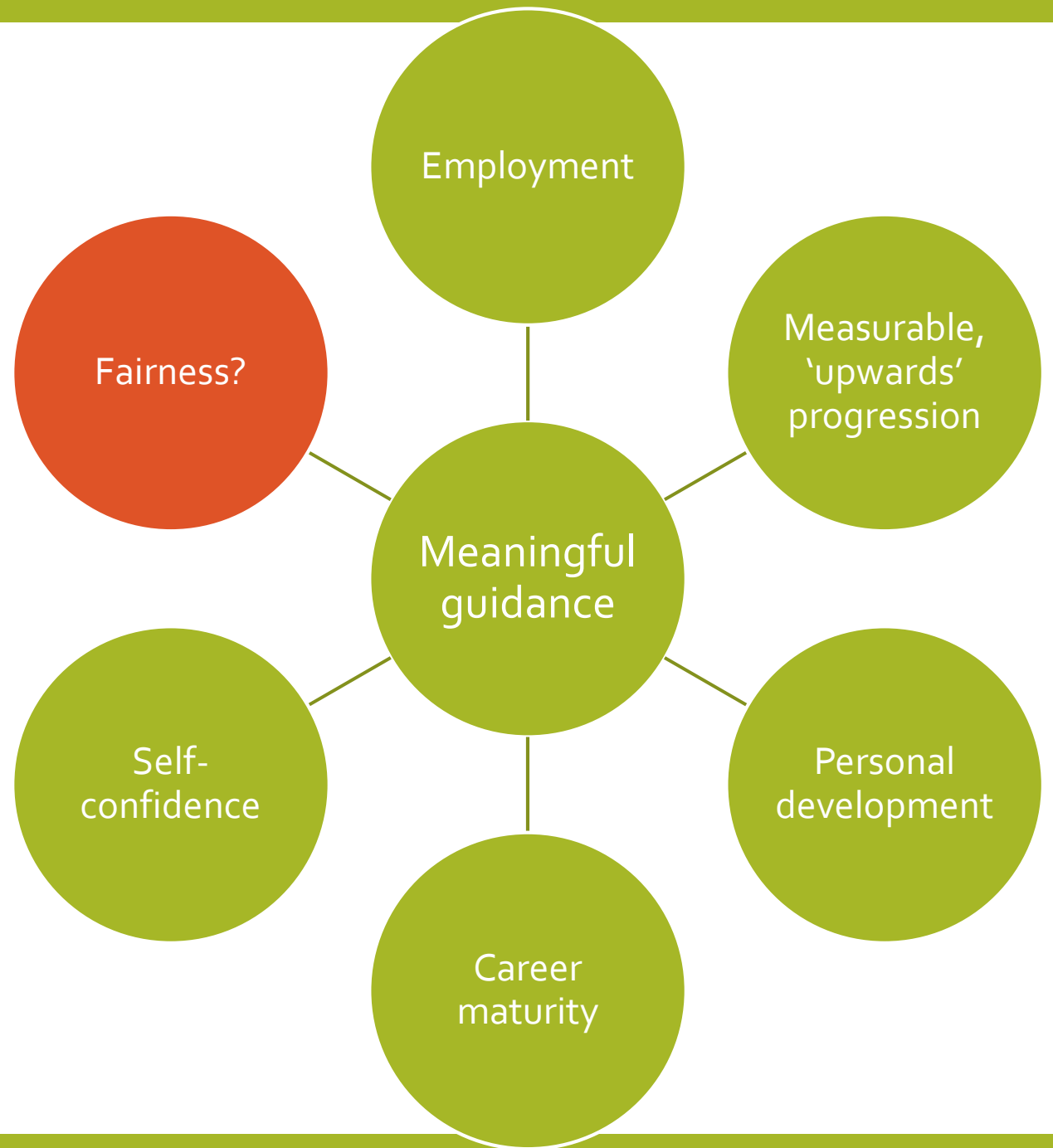
Critique

- Do not recognise social factors sufficiently
- Suggests unemployment is due to lack of CMS (you have 'failed')
- Can really all CMS skills be taught? Do they have to be experienced and developed over long time?

Outcomes of 'meaningful' guidance



Outcomes of 'meaningful' guidance



CAREER

Current career metaphors

- Protean career (Proteus – Greek god who could change shape and adapt)
- Boundaryless career (metaphor a bare landscape! Nothing is stopping you from going where you want...)
- Life designer - career as constructed and we can craft our own careers over time



Changing ideas about careers

Past

- One job 'for life' – or upward progression
- (probably your father's job or in local industry)
- (generally not available for women, people with a disability, marginalised etc.)

Present

- Change, change, change, upskill, re-skill, up-skill!
- Be passionate!
- Precariousness, short-term, project based, 'self-employed'

Future

- Automation & Artificial Intelligence?
- Impact of the fourth industrial revolution?
- Employment law?

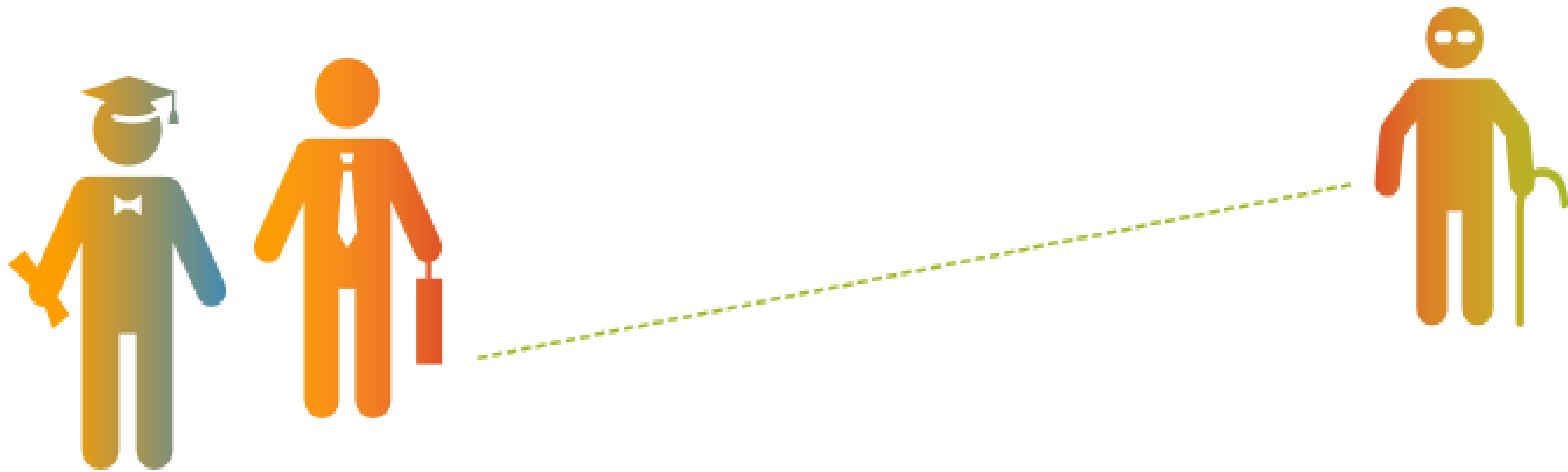
“The horse is here to stay
but the automobile is only
a novelty – a fad”

President of Michigan Bank 1927 - to Henry Ford's
Lawyer



The Problem with Predictions...

- ...is that they are 'only' predictions! – and they have been wrong before.
- Large amount of resources are placed on creating reports predicting 'future jobs' and skills needs on the labour market.
- Focus on structural shifts in employer demand.
- **However**, employment opportunities will arise when workers retire from the workforce –and replacement needs are expected to provide significantly **more job openings than employment growth** over the next decade, even in those occupations where employer demand is otherwise expected to fall.



Lifelong learning replacing lifelong career



THE LABOUR MARKET

Perception

However...

Many jobs have become obsolete due to technology

Technology is creating more jobs than it is taking away

Increase in entrepreneurialism (self-employment)

Not their own boss....

High unemployment levels amongst migrants

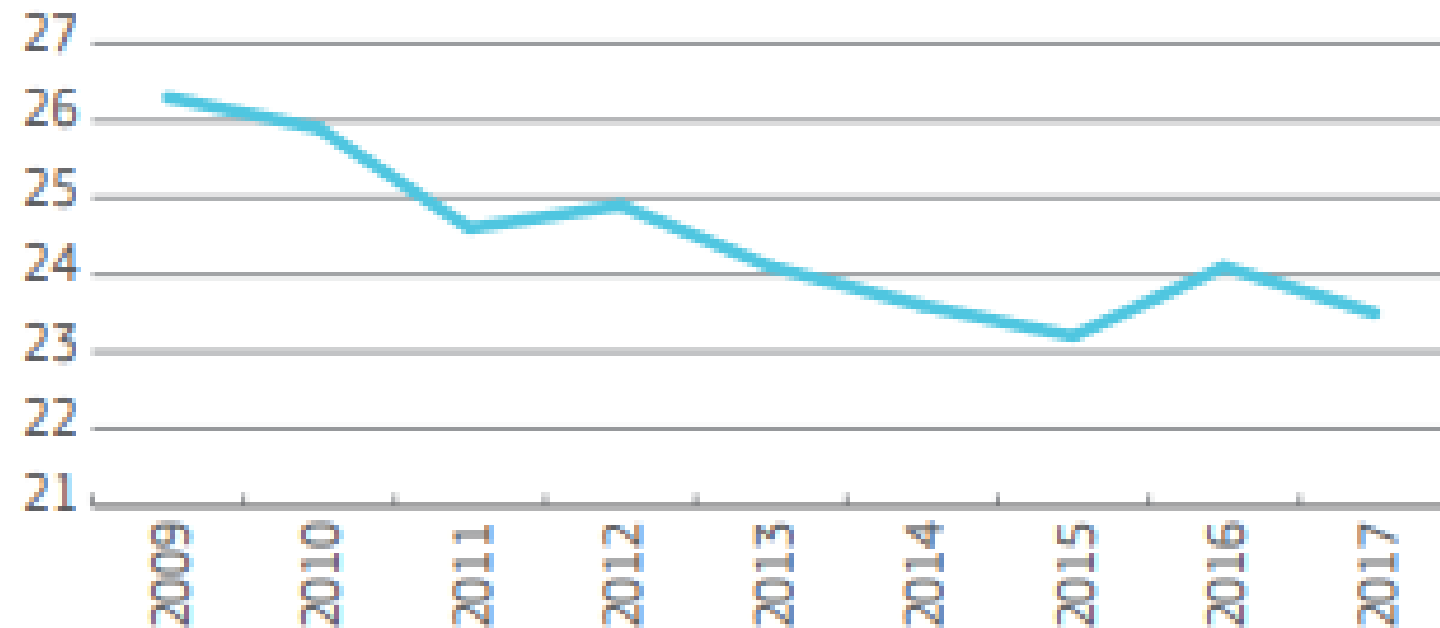
Needed to address 'aging population issues'

"Rapid changes on the labour market"

Not that fast - just difficult to see the trends!

Trapped in transition? Fewer workers are today able to move from temporary to permanent contracts

Percent of workers moving from temporary to permanent contract between two consecutive years, EU28



Source: [European Commission, 2018](#)



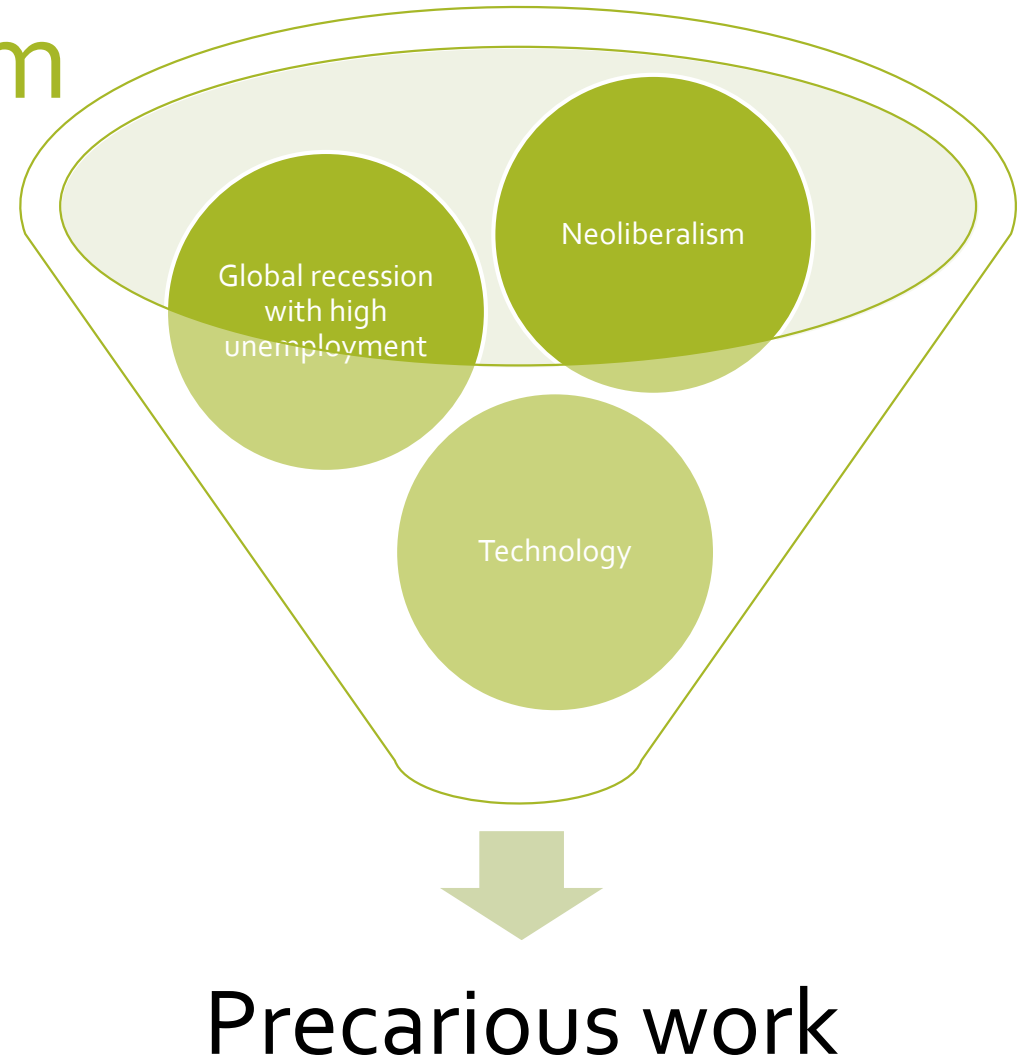
https://twitter.com/FreeNow_IE/status/1181229802214346757?s=09

The 'Gig economy'

- Often associated with 'platform' companies such as AirBnB, Deliveroo, Uber
- Contingent workers, virtual workers, remote workers, independent contractors, consultants, freelance workers...
- But insecurity and precariousness has become normalised in many sectors
- Young academic lecturers, accountants and architects (for example) face lower pay, less stable jobs, poorer working conditions and more freelancing than their older colleagues.

Why? The perfect storm

- Recession with high unemployment rates
- Technological innovations – smartphones and apps
- Neoliberalism - deregulation of markets
- To Survive - Take whatever job you can (i.e. temporary work, poor conditions etc.)



IMPLICATIONS

Will employment law catch up with the economy and change the landscape?



Implications...

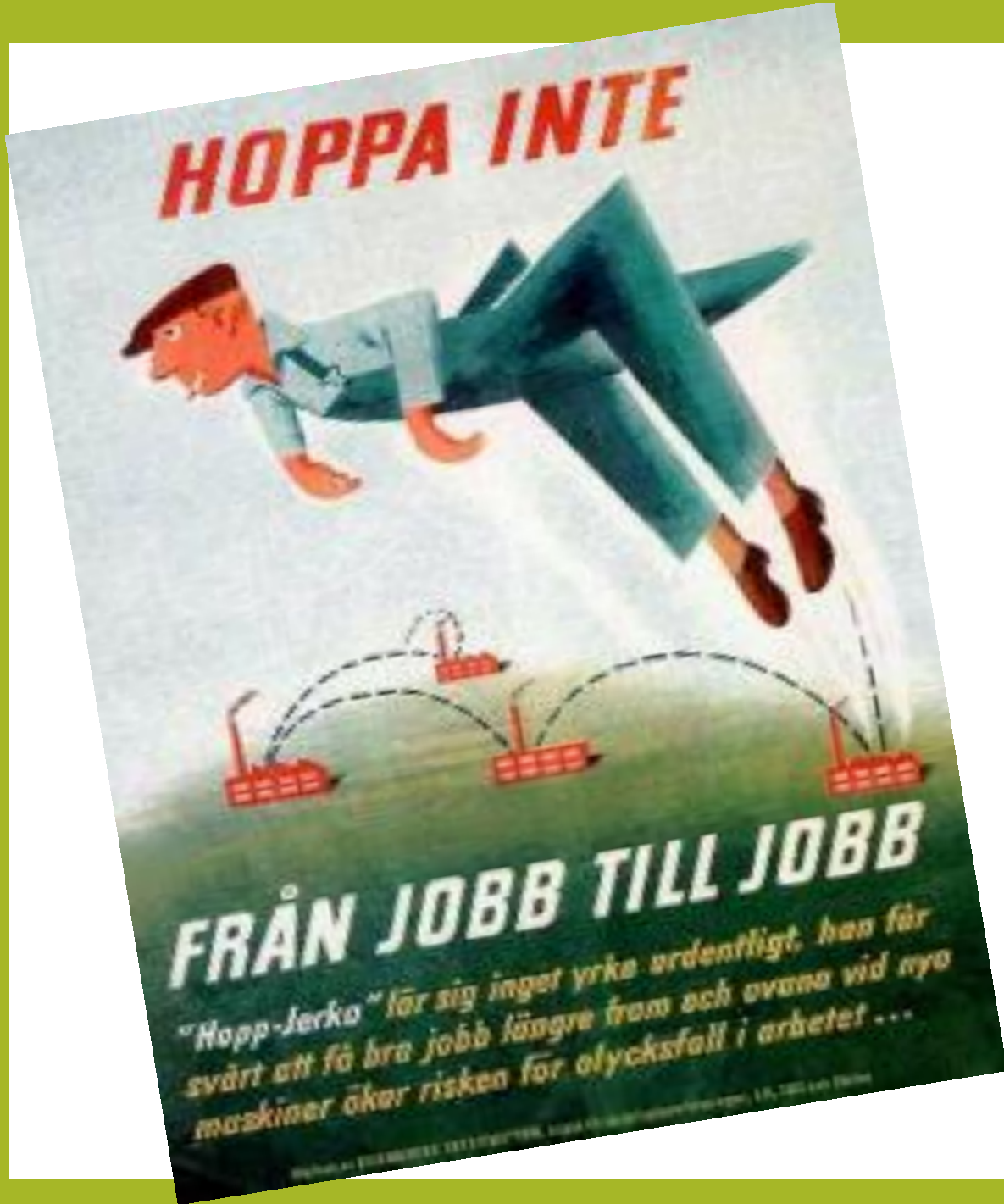
- **Career decision making** - more difficult as job profiles change and there is a fear that vocational training will be outdated (more difficult to commit to long courses)
- **Social impact** – difficult to save for the future, affecting home ownership, long-term relationships and having children.
- **Union membership** - not accessible for workers who frequently change employment status
But workers organise themselves in new ways:
 - Agency staff organised wildcat walkouts, and takeaway couriers used their bikes and motorcycles to bring major roads to a standstill.
 - Cooperatives – as alternative to global gig economy platforms

Implications for our sense of self

- Careers are intertwined with our identity
- Job insecurity threatens a person's identity as an 'employed person'
- Reduced well-being, less commitment to peers

(source Menéndez-Espina et al. 2019)





translation:

Don't jump

from job to job

[a drifter] doesn't learn anything properly, he will have difficulties getting a good job in the future and will not be used to new machines which increases the risk of accidents in the workplace...

1949 advert in Sweden

Attitudes and values

- The labour market has changed - But have our expectations and values surrounding 'career development' changed?
- Still get suspicious of someone who 'can't hold down a job' – a 'drifter'
- Responsibilisation – individualisation of social structures and problems

What can we do?



Advice from employers:

- Ensure workers are more flexible!
- Information, information, information
- Make them more 'employable'!
- Make workers resilient!



Advice from career development theories:

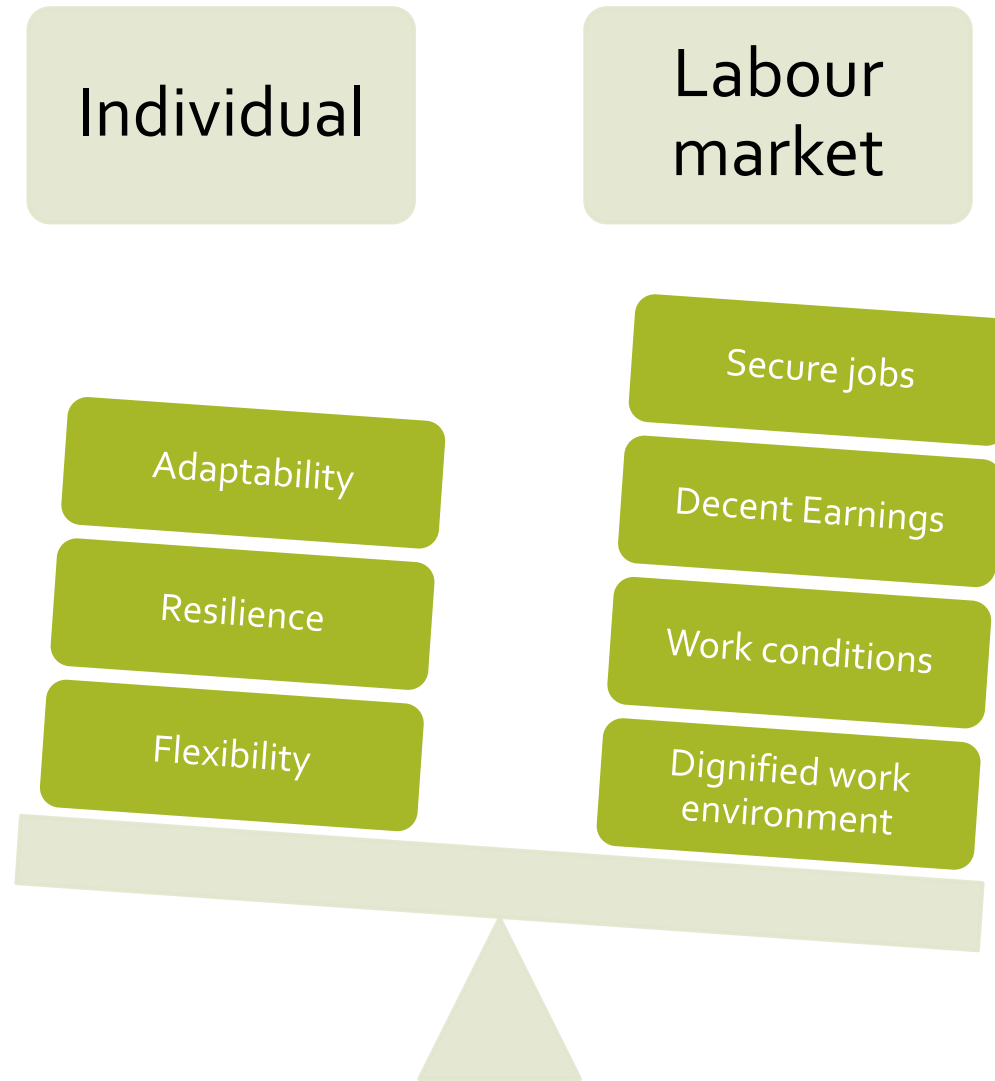
Many career theories are rooted in psychology and focus on

- self-development
- self-improvement
- self-efficacy
- self-creation and
- self-regulation.



Part of the neoliberal discourse, involving: Individualisation of structural problems

Distribution of responsibilities



What is our role?

Watts (1996) identified four broad ideologies in guidance

Conservative

- Guidance counsellors as agents of social control

Liberal

- Non-directive guidance

Progressive

- Guidance as means of individual change

Radical

- Guidance to promote social change

The Adjust – Challenge Dilemma

(Prilleltensky and Stead 2012)

neither adjust to the system nor
challenge it

adjust to the system but do not
challenge it

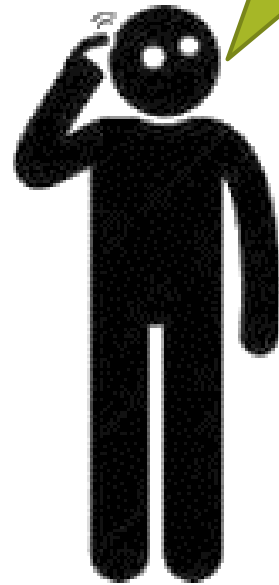
challenge the system but do not
adjust to it

adjust to, and challenge the system,
at the same time

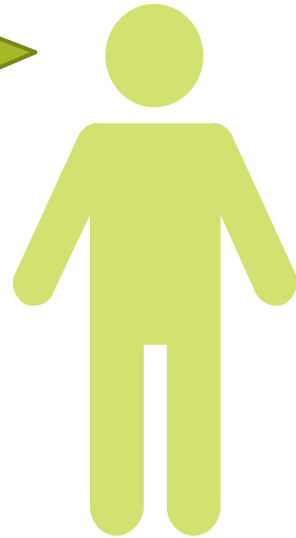
WHAT DO YOU DO?

The Adjust – Challenge Dilemma

Why do some adapt
and others challenge?



I just thought I was stupid you know. Going to school I thought 'what a stupid girl, can't do a thing, I just can't do anything'.



I want to have it explained in a different way. I'm not thick, I'm quite intelligent. And I'm not arrogant, I just know that it could be explained in a different way. And I ask for it.



Elftorp (2017) 'A Study of the Guidance Counselling Needs of Adults with Dyslexia within the Irish Adult Educational Guidance Service'



Precondition: Becoming aware of an injustice (Honneth 1995; Dewey 1973)

CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN GUIDANCE?



Paulo Freire

Critical consciousness in guidance?

- **Critical Consciousness** is the ability to **identify, critique, and challenge** the social forces that produce inequity and oppression.
- AND subsequently **take action** to dismantle the systems and institutions that sustain them.
- Examples of advocates for CC in guidance: Blustein; Sultana, Thomsen and Hooley; Elftorp

Developing critical consciousness through guidance?

- Identify and name oppression
- Question normalised values
- Encourage collectivism (working together)
- Guidance on all levels (individual and societal)



See Hooley, T., Sultana, R. and Thomsen, R. (2019). [*Career guidance for emancipation: Reclaiming justice for the multitude*](#). London: Routledge.

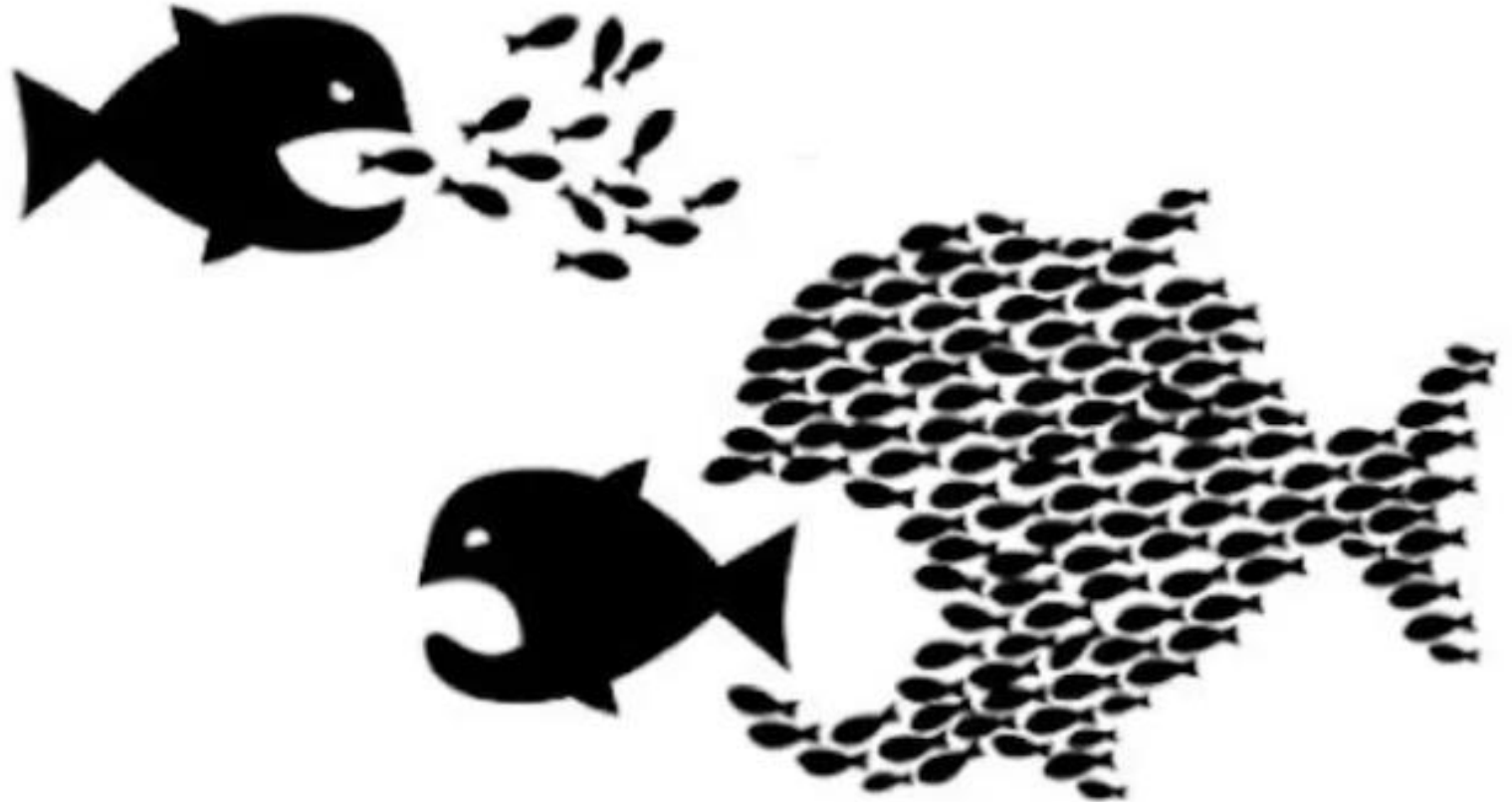
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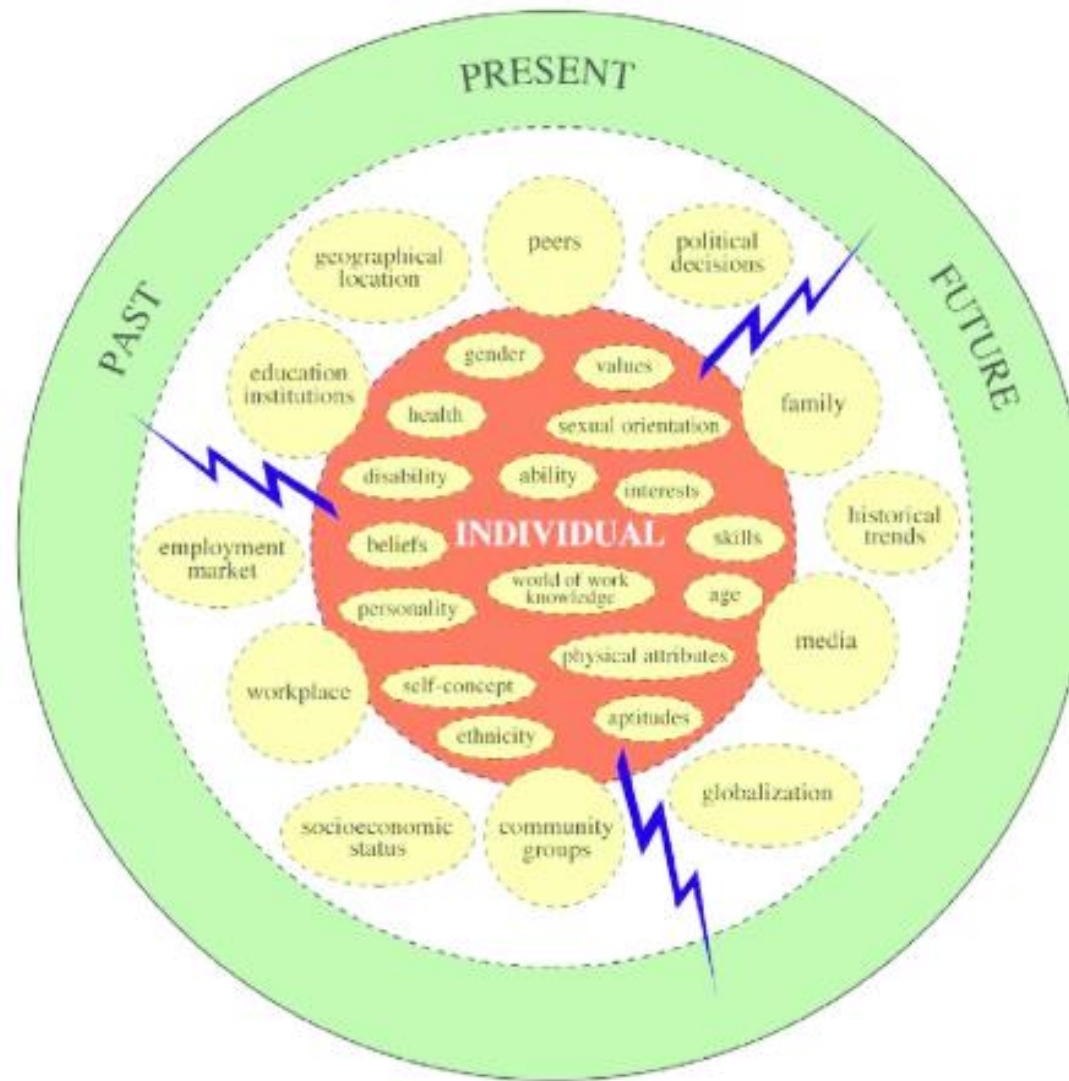
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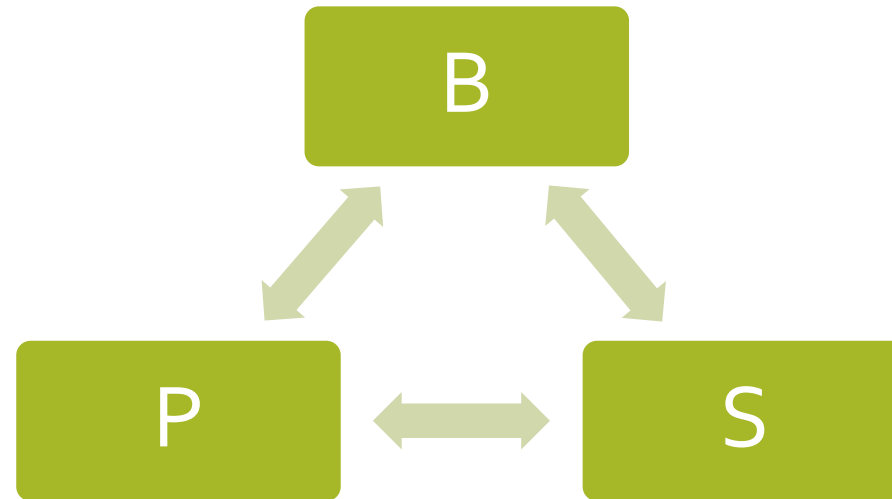


Barriers to using CC in guidance

- System justification - We have a strong psychological need to justify the current system. (we need it to be right as it is too difficult to cope with system failure)
- GROUP dialogue has traditionally had a key role in the development of CC (group affirmation and solidarity) – but group work is not always possible in a guidance context.
- Fairness is everyone's responsibility – but it is challenging to foster CC and to raise concerns about oppression amongst privileged groups and to criticise the system we are part of!

An approach stemming from disability research and advocacy - for everyone?

- A holistic and interactionist model
- Bio-Psycho-Social (BPS) model (WHO 2011)



- For practitioners in planning and reflecting on meaningful guidance

Level	Potential Barriers	Potential Enablers	Appropriate Guidance Counselling Interventions
Biological			
Psychological			
Social			

Level	Potential Barriers	Potential Enablers	Appropriate Guidance Counselling Interventions
Bio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Physical disability • Hidden disability • Allergies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable accommodations • Medicine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of accurate information • Identify and refer to appropriate services • Source and advocate for access to reasonable accommodations
Psychological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative self-perceptions • Anxiety & Stress • Self-efficacy • Behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal coping strategies • Awareness of own strengths • Validation (can be Diagnosis) • Peers – role models • Normalising 'X' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-1 guidance to address self-efficacy and self-esteem issues • Refer to appropriate support services • Group guidance - facilitate peer support
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination • Prejudiced systems • Economics / Labour market • Globalisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social network • Informal/family support • Legislation • Trade Unions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure access to guidance • Develop self-advocacy, self-determination skills • Challenge social barriers, e.g. lobby for change, strengthen awareness

Develop Critical Consciousness

THANK YOU

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