Communication in interdisciplinarity: are we speaking the same language?!

Communication – what is it?

Go to: Menti.com
Code: 44052308

Getting to know each other

Who are you? (name, place of birth)

What/where do you work ?

What drives you?

What obstacles do you encounter when doing interdisciplinarity?

10 challenges in working together…

We don’t have time for that kind of bullshit!

We don’t get any help!

This (perspective) isn’t relevant anyway

They themselves don’t do what they say!

Old wine in new bags

This doesn’t work!

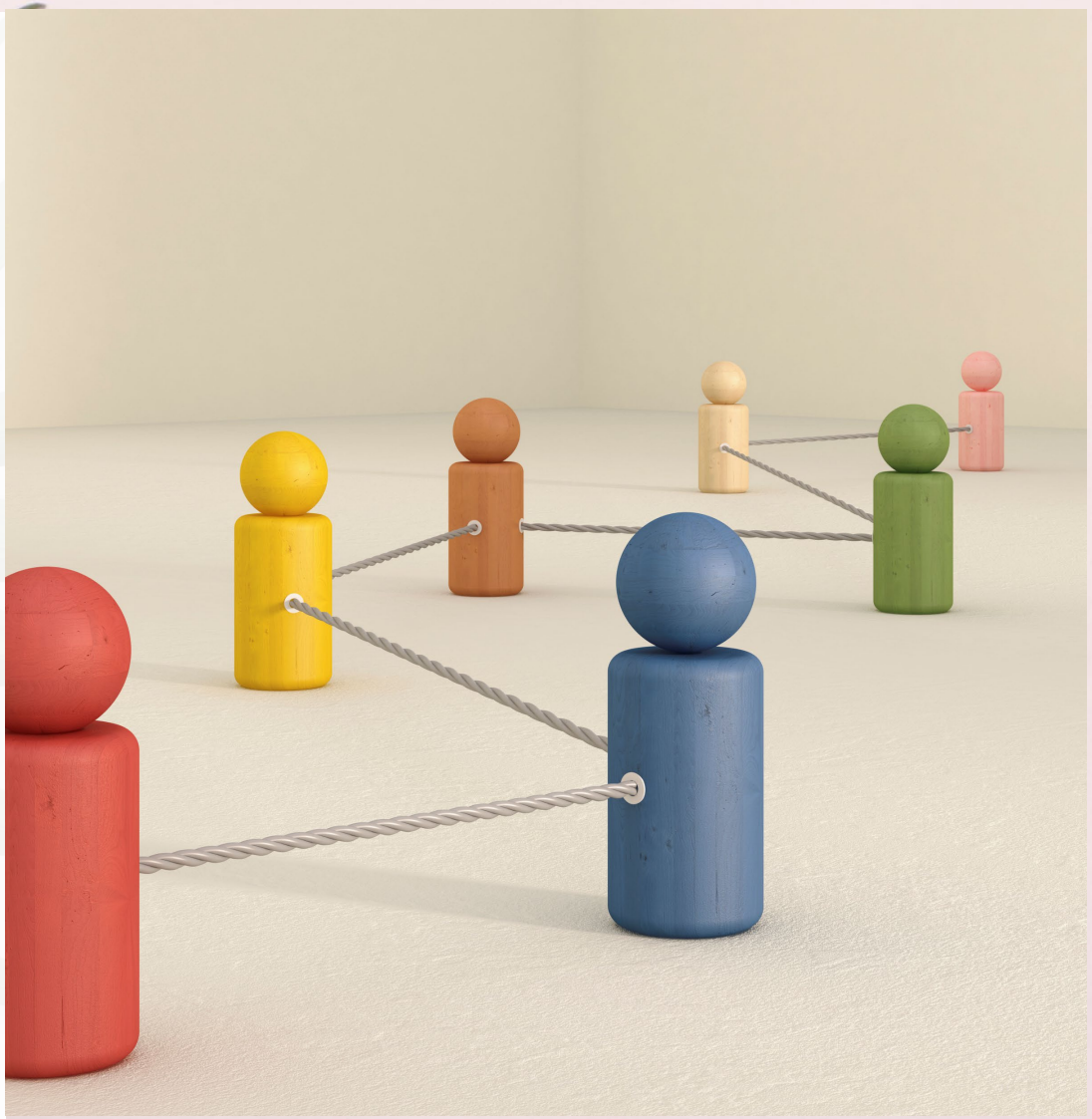
We have got it right!

Who is in charge here?

We keep inventing the same wheel

Where to, for what

The power of communication...



Exercise: Assumptions

Listening exercise....

Exercise: assumptions

Listening exercise…. (yes, no, don't know)

- Does the man get up at 8?
- Does he walk downstairs to make a pot of tea at 8.15?
- Did he and his family drink this tea at 8.30?
- Does he have two children?
- Do his wife and children kiss him goodbye?
- Does he drive to work after breakfast with his car?

Obstacles on the road...

What if communication does not run smoothly?

5 basic principles of Watzlawick

1. All behavior is communicative, one cannot **not** communicate
2. Communication takes place at **several levels** (at the same time)
3. The sent message is **not necessarily the same** as the received message
4. Communication is **digital** and **analogic**
5. Communication is **symmetric** or **complementary**

Basic principle 1

Even if someone doesn't say anything or there is silence, he or she still has, or provides a message or signal

Basic principle 2: communication levels

Content
what you say

Relationship
how you say it

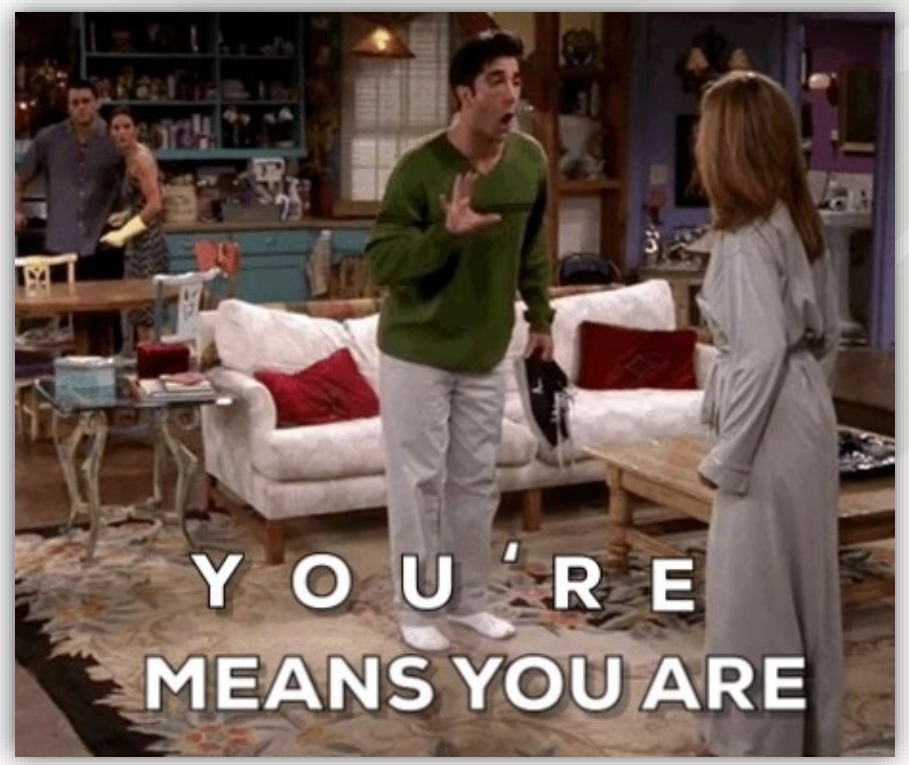
Metacommunication
talking **about** the talking

When there is tension in teams it ALWAYS has to do with the relationship level

- With disagreements it often seems to be about 'who is right' (content level)
- But it actually is often about who gets it right, who is the boss (relationship level)

Basic principle 3: interpunction issues

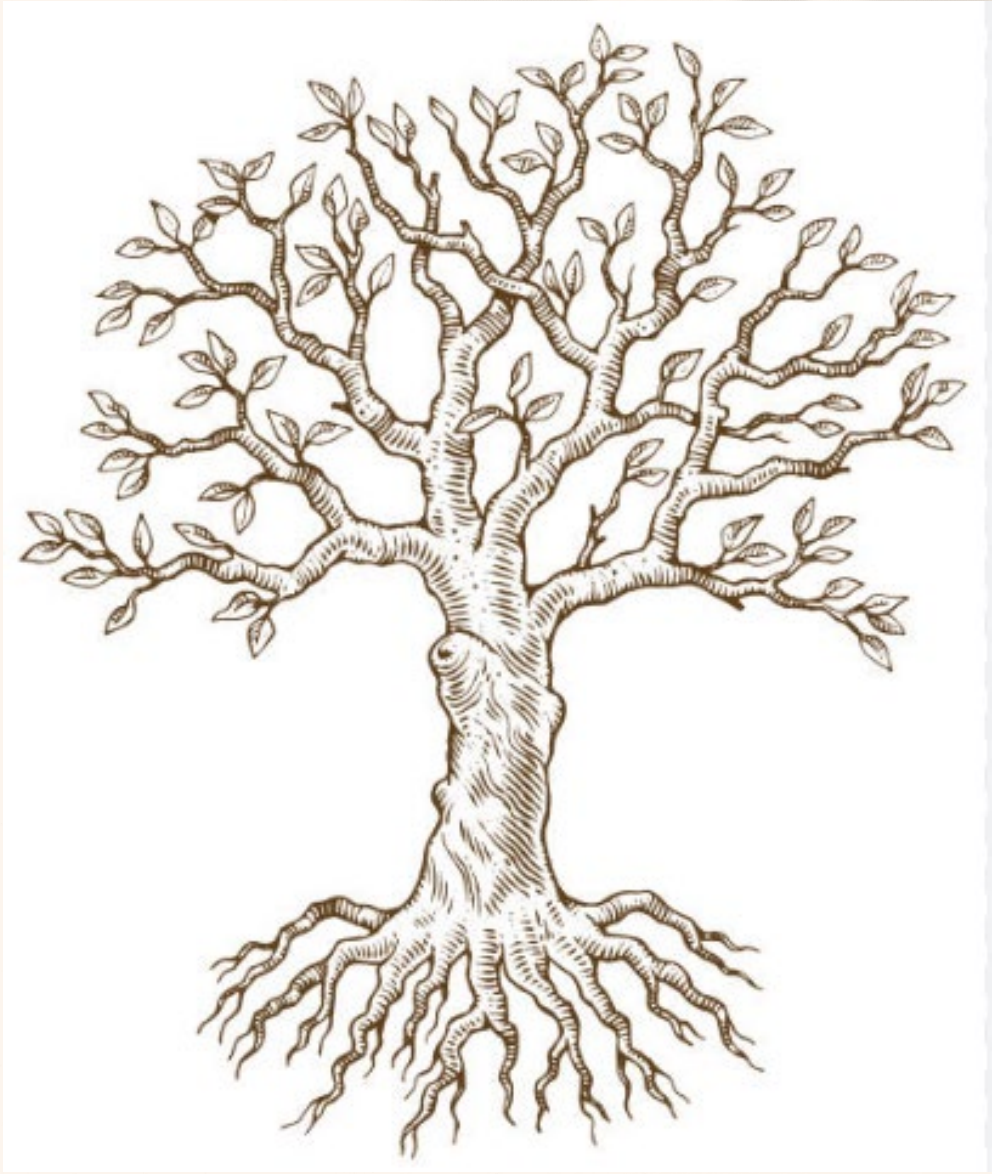
- The message sent is never the same as the message received
- Often conversation companions unconciously think that the person they communicate with has the same perspective or vision
- Or has one or both of the people interacting the idea that there is only one reality



Exercise

Draw a tree!

We all bring our **OWN perspective** in relation to the perspectives of the other person!



Basic principle 4: digital & analogic

Digital (verbal or explicit)

- What the person says
- What the words actually mean
- Verbal cues

Analogic (non-verbal or implicit)

- How it's being said
- Tone of voice
- Facial expressions
- Body language

Miscommunication:

➢Sending opposing messages

Basic principle 5: symmetric vs. complementary communication

Symmetric

- Equal power dynamics
- Mirroring behaviors

Complementary

- Assymetrical power dynamics
- Complementary roles
- Parent/child, boss/employee
- Dominant/submissive

Miscommunication:
Complementary roles may be misinterpreted or misunderstood leading to assumptions about intentions that may not aligns with reality

Perspectives…

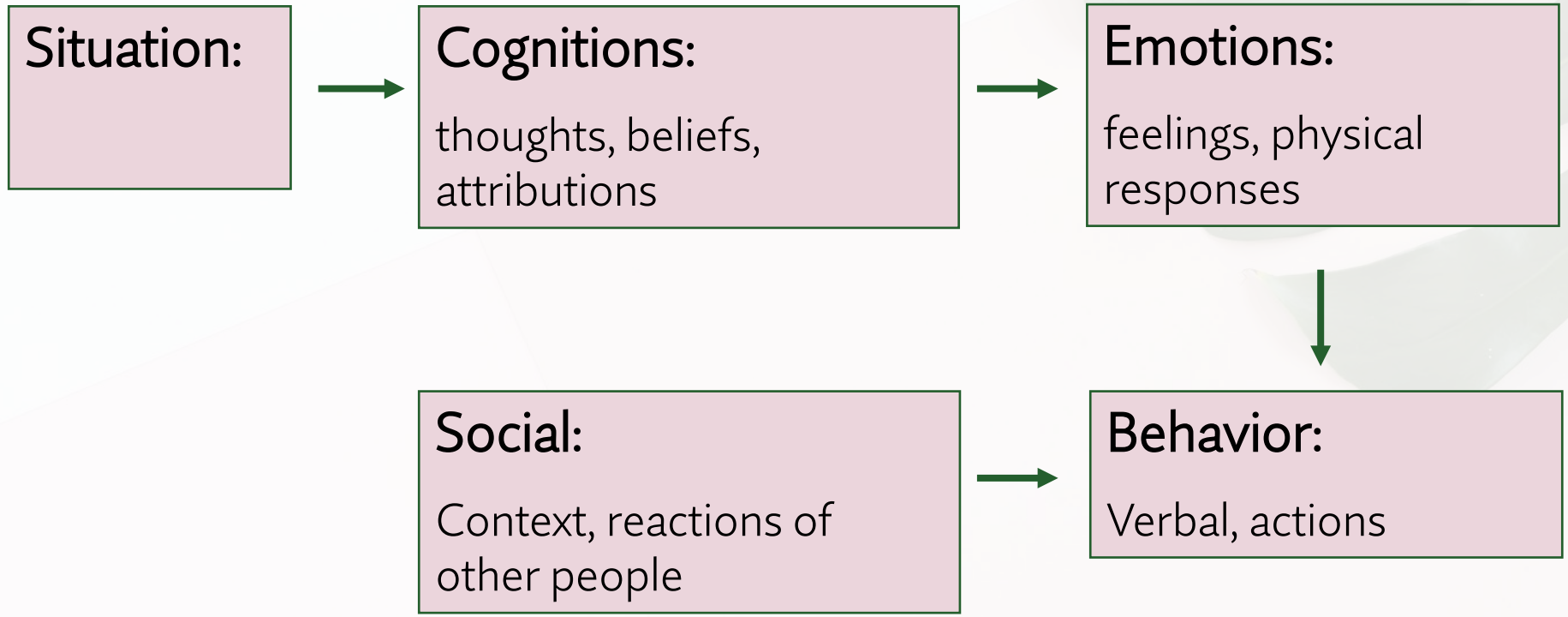
What's underneath…

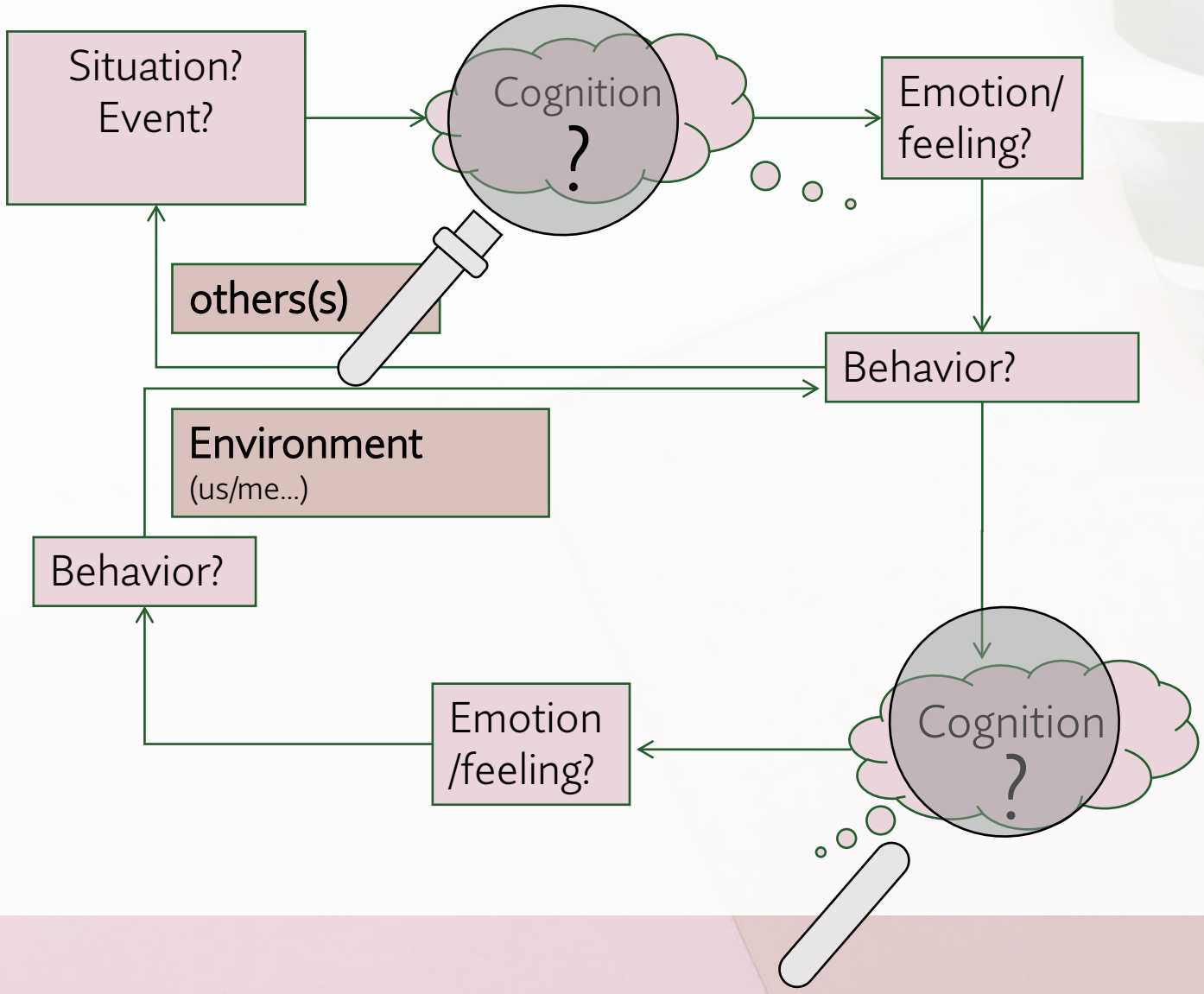
What you see on the outside, BEHAVIOR:

- What the other person says or does
- Can be observed by you

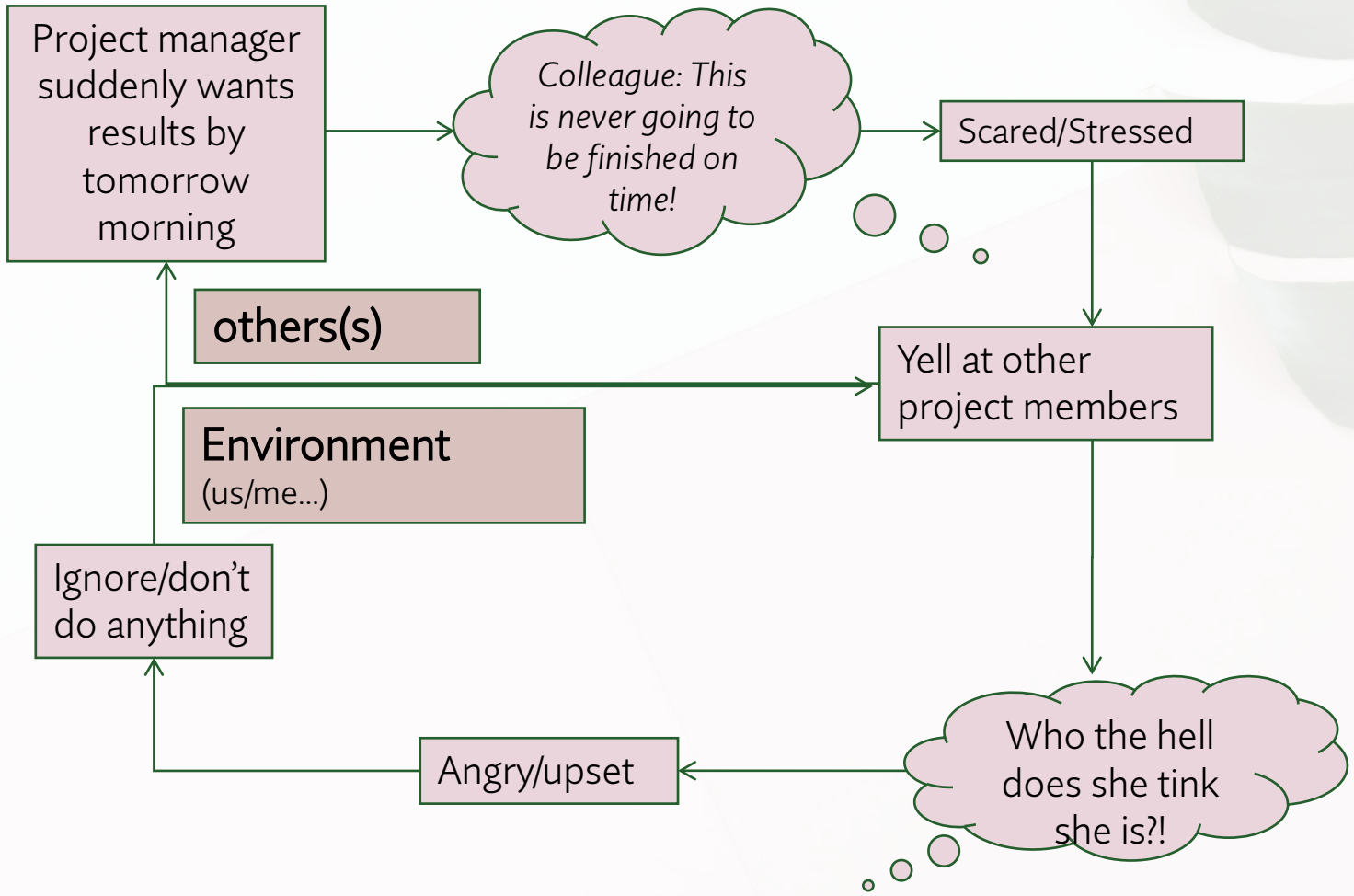
What happens "under water", COGNITIONS & EMOTIONS:

- Deeply routed thoughts, feelings, opinions, assumptions, memories, traumas
- Only becomes clear when you listen well and ask empatic questions


Situation:
Cognitions:
thoughts, beliefs, attributions
Emotions:
feelings, physical responses
Social:
Context, reactions of other people
Behavior:
Verbal, actions



Reflection on **own** part (thoughts/actions) in the communication


Project manager suddenly wants results by tomorrow morning
Colleague: This is never going to be finished on time!
Scared/Stressed
others(s)
Yell at other project members
Environment
(us/me...)
Ignore/don't do anything
Angry/upset
Who the hell does she tink she is?!

Finding common ground...

Emotional reflections…

1. Internally articulate (with yourself) the emotion you think you are observing
2. Give that back in a slightly asking tone of voice

   (you can never know exactly how the other person feels)
3. In the right intensity
4. Wait for a response

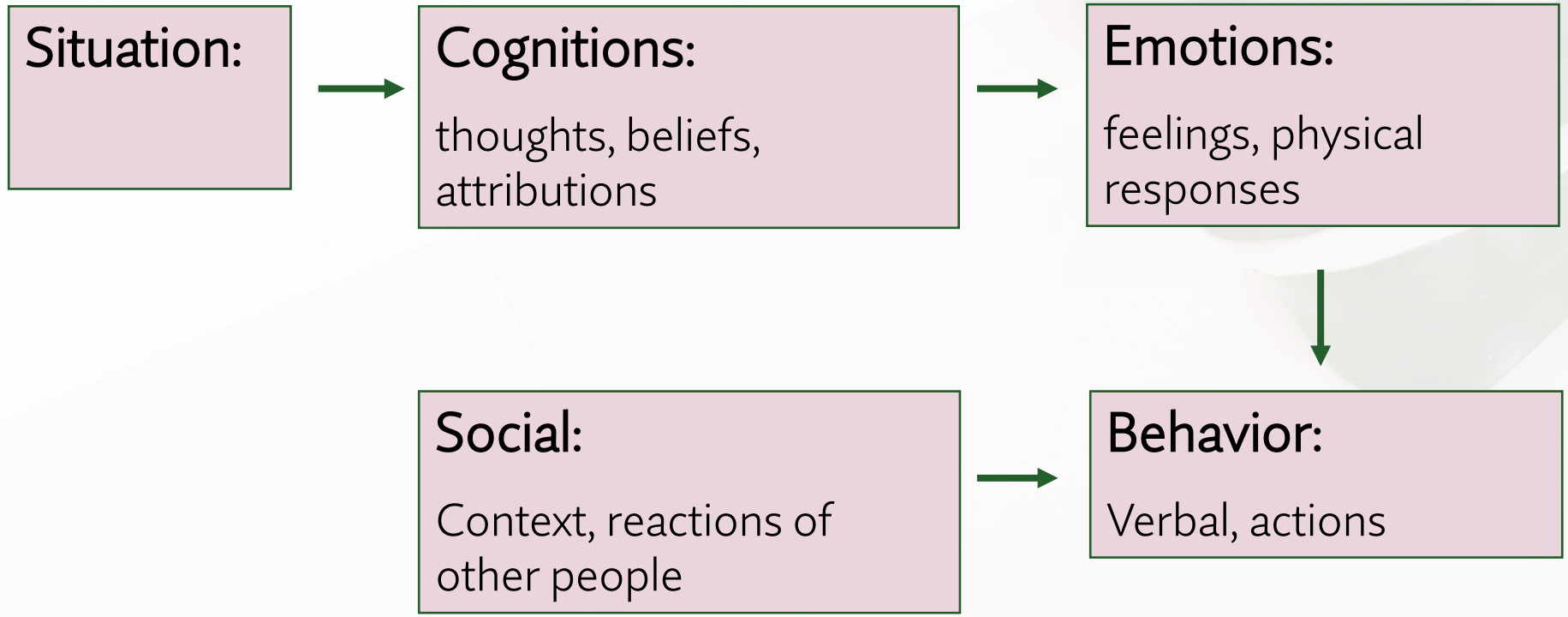
Utility of emotional reflections:

- Other person feels seen, heard and understood.
- Emotional processing can take place, people get less emotionally blocked and space arises to take up (new) information

Exercise

Role-play (5 min): communication challenge in interdisciplinary collaboration:

- Enrolled in project to foster youth health
- Challenge: conflicting priorities, language barriers, power dynamics
- Practice with different roles/emotional reflections
- Oberservers: Communication pearls? Pitfalls?


Situation:
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Communication pitfalls

Assumptions & misunderstandings

Jargon & language barriers

Power dynamics

Conflict avoidance

- Assumptions can lead to misunderstandings and hinder collaborations
- Disciplinary jargon can impede communication
- Power imbalances can affect communication & collaboration in interdisciplinary teams
- Danger of avoiding conflicts rather than addressing them constructively

Communication pearls

Clear communication

Active listening

Respectful dialogue

Adaptability

- Need for clarity in conveying ideas across disciplines
- Listening attentively to understand different perspectives
- Respectful interactions to foster collaboration
- Adapt communication styles to accomodate diverse team members

Thank you!

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