

A psychological perspective on addiction

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namespace

/ˈneɪmspeɪs/ 

noun **COMPUTING**

noun: **namespace**; plural noun: **namespaces**

a class of elements (e.g. addresses, file locations, etc.) in which each element has a name unique to that class, although it may be shared with elements in other classes.

Use over time for: namespace



What follows falls in the namespace of:

RW100

which is short for

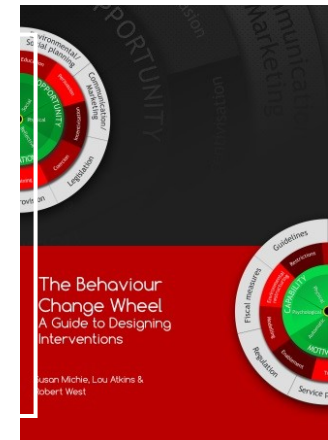
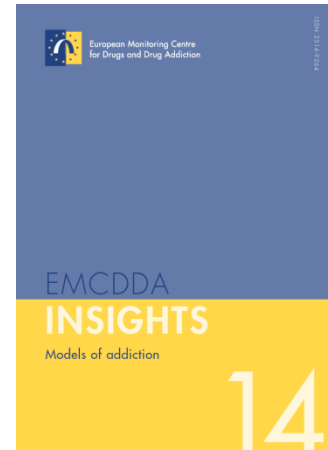


RW100: psychology
RW100: addiction

Detailed
in

Models of Addiction.
EMCDDA Insight
Report, 2013

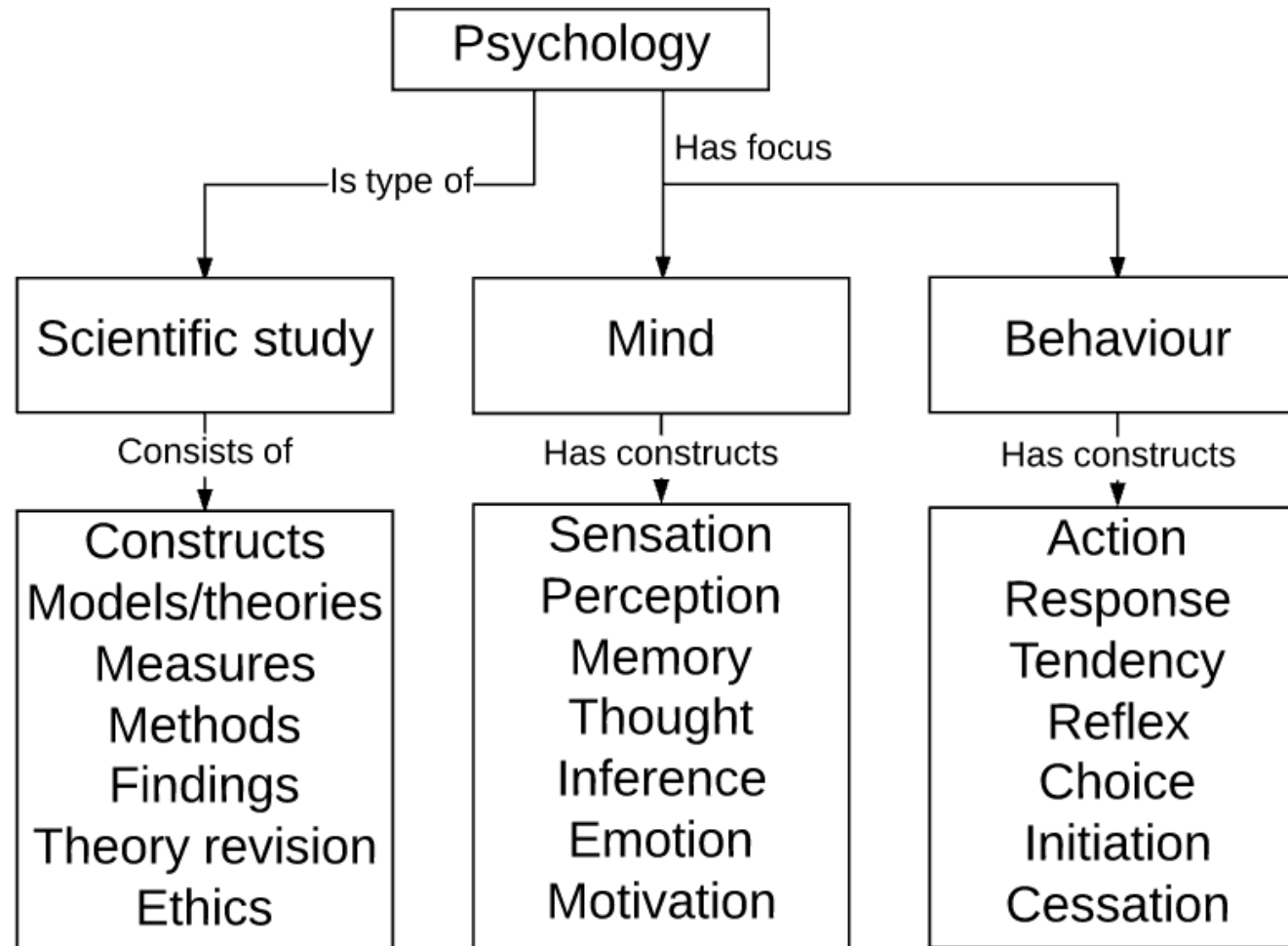
The Behaviour
Change Wheel: A
Guide to Designing
Interventions



Addiction is a disorder of motivation

- **Addiction** is a chronic condition involving a **strong acquired motivation** to engage in behaviours in a way that causes significant harm
- It is distinct from **dependence**, which is a chronic condition involving a **physiological need** for something in order to maintain healthy functioning

Psychology is the scientific study of mind and behaviour

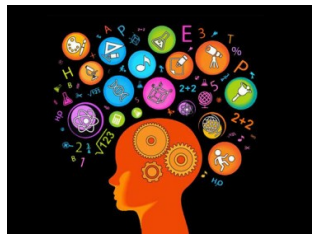


Scientific study

1. A controlled vocabulary of constructs that are clearly defined
2. A set of models and theories involving those constructs
3. A set of measures for identifying, or measuring values of, those constructs with known degrees of precision
4. Methods involving those measures for describing phenomena and characterising or inferring relationships between them
5. Findings arising from those methods that can be replicated and generalised
6. Procedures for discarding, revising or creating models and theories in the light of findings
7. A set of ethical principles for minimising bias

Mind and behaviour in a dynamic system

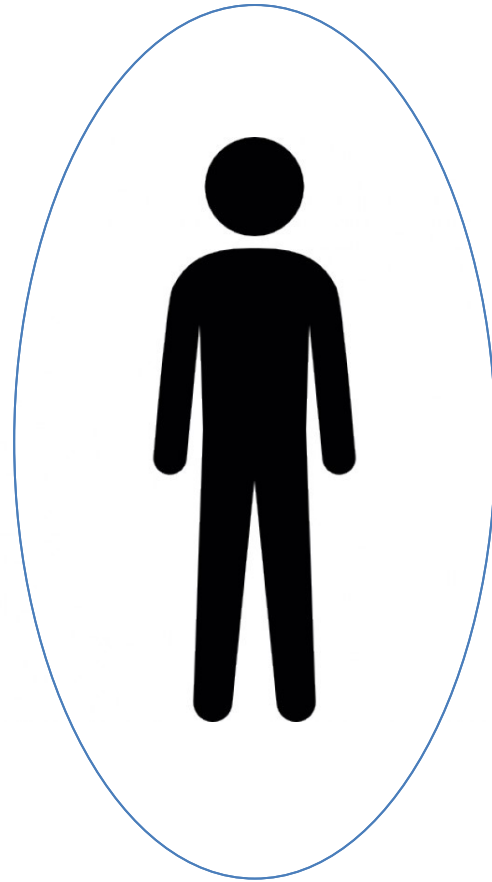
Personal characteristics



Capabilities



Motivations



Opportunity (environment)



Social



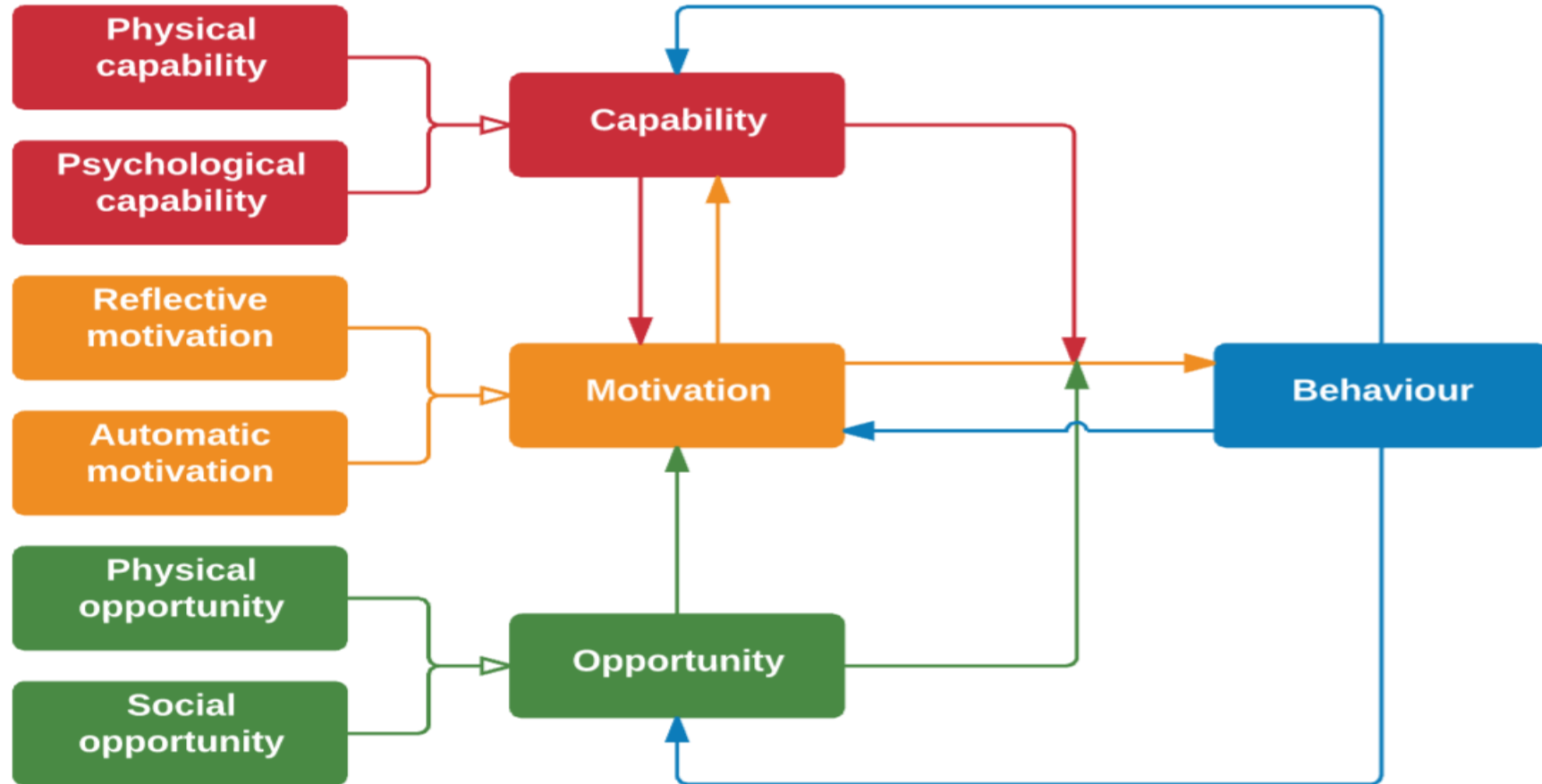
Physical

The COM-B model of behaviour

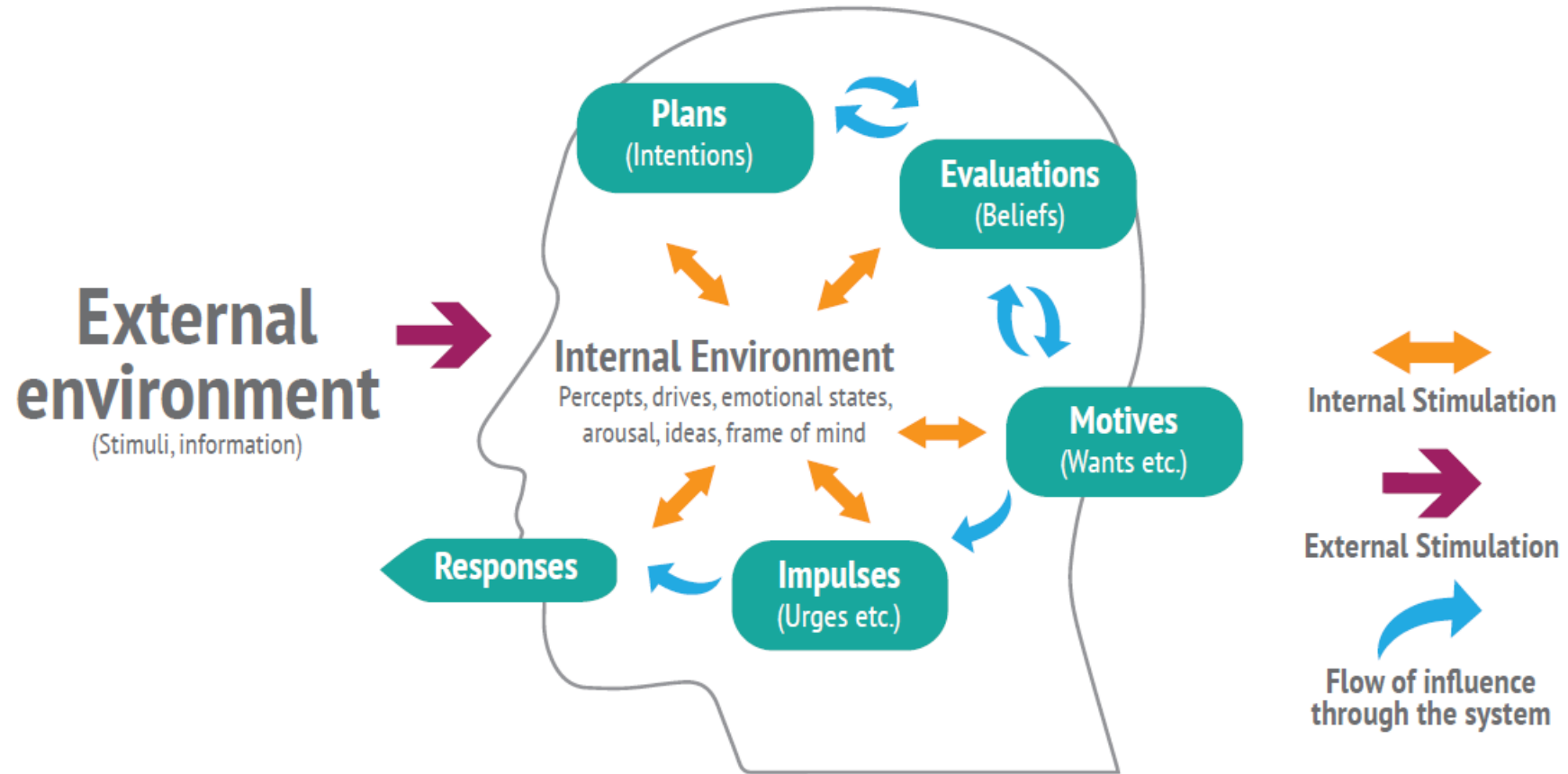
Behaviour is part of a dynamic interacting system involving **capability**, **opportunity** and **motivation**

At a given moment a behaviour occurs when an individual has the opportunity and capability, and is more motivated to perform the behaviour than other competing behaviours

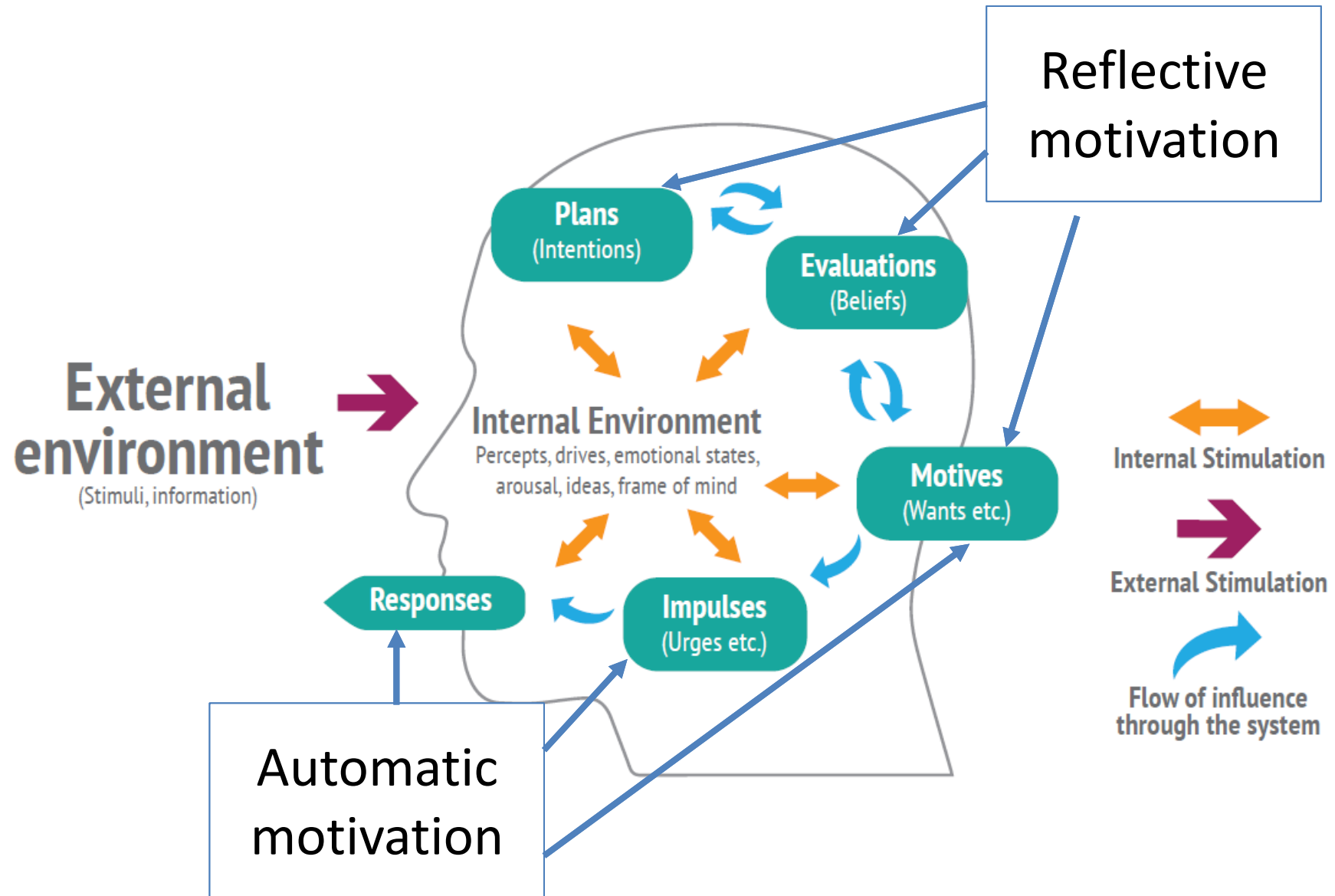
The COM-B model of behaviour



PRIME Theory of motivation



PRIME Theory of motivation



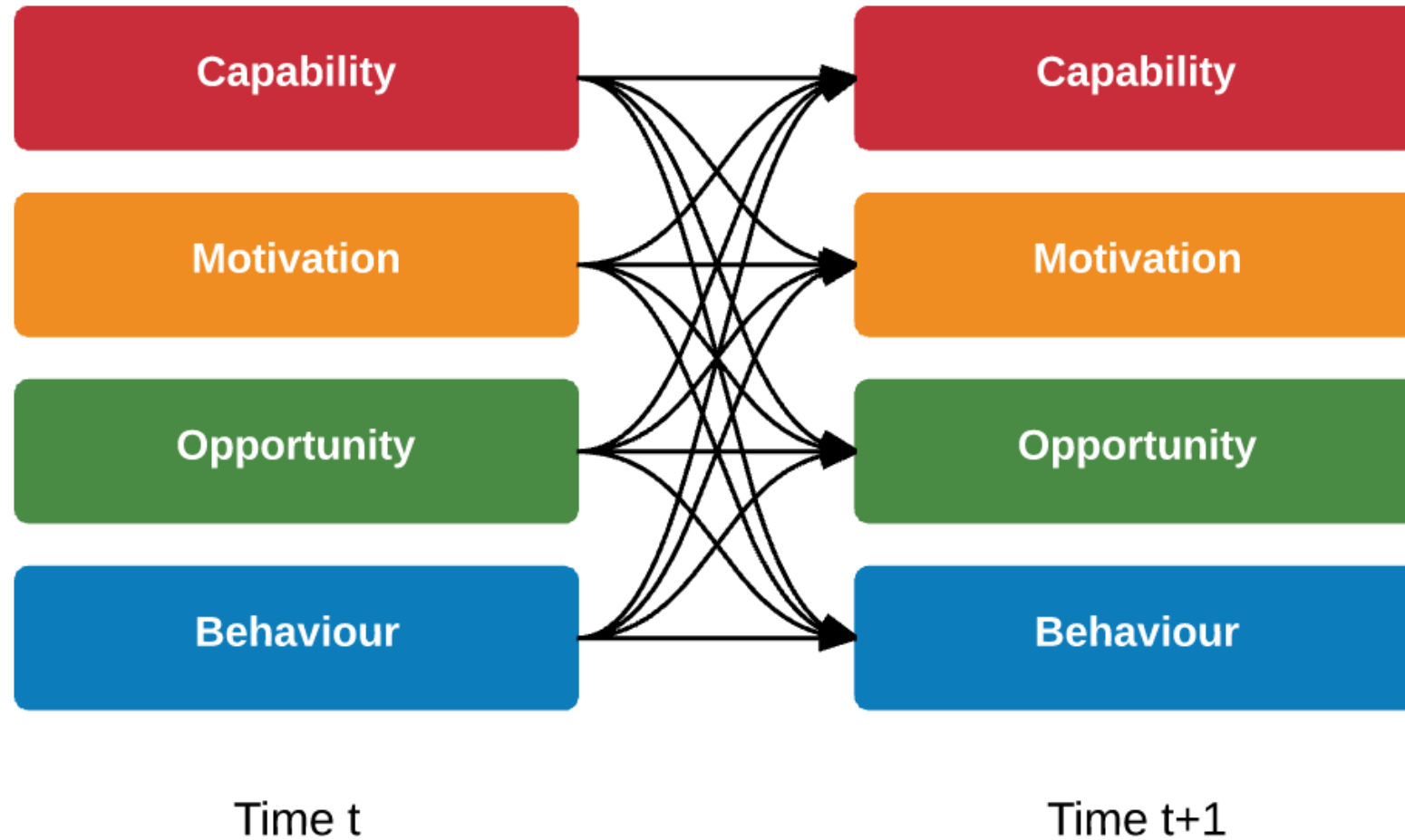
Psychological processes

Change the way the system functions: the influences between its components from one time to another (dispositions)



Learning
Forgetting
Habituation
Sensitisation
Maturation
Imitation
Inference
Dissonance reduction

A dynamic COM-B system



Psychology and addiction

- Addiction
 - **develops** when psychological processes (learning, forgetting etc) combine with opportunities to lead to dispositions to experience strong automatic and reflective motivation to engage in behaviours despite harmful consequences
 - **is maintained** by similar processes and opportunities
 - **resolves when** psychological processes and/or opportunities lead to a reduction in these addictive dispositions

Factors promoting addiction

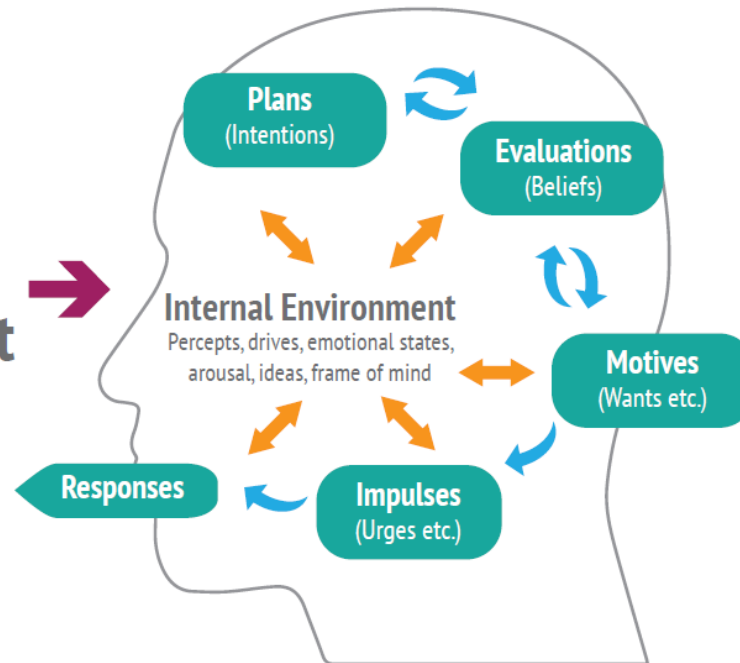
Opportunity:

- Easy access
- Positive norms
- Lack of alternatives
- Stressors

Reflective motivation:

- Weak plans
- Low concern about harms
- 'Addict' identity
- Low self-worth

External environment
(Stimuli, information)



Automatic motivation:

- High impulsivity
- High reward sensitivity
- Low punishment sensitivity
- Physiological reactivity

Capability:

- Low self-regulation
- Low understanding of harms
- Low social skills
- Low coping skills

Combating addiction

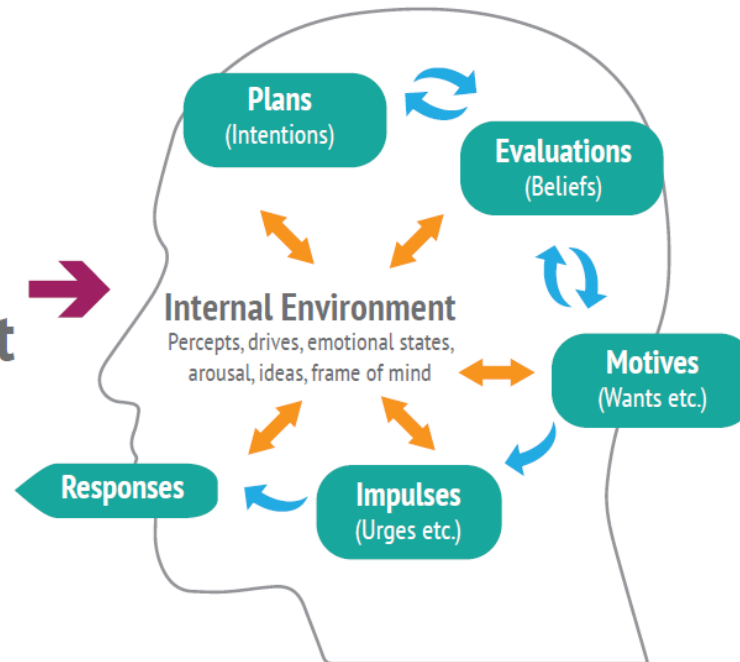
Opportunity:

- ↓ access
- ↓ normalness
- ↑ alternatives
- ↓ stressors

Reflective motivation:

- ↑ plans
- ↑ concern
- ↑ competing identity
- ↑ self-worth

External environment
(Stimuli, information)



Automatic motivation:

- ↓ impulsivity
- ↓ reward learning
- ↑ punishment learning
- ↓ physiological reactivity

Capability:

- ↑ self-regulation
- ↑ understanding of harms
- ↑ social skills
- ↑ coping skills

Improving the science of Addiction

- Create controlled vocabularies using namespaces
- Make models explicit using a common language (eg. OWL)
- Create and maintain a database of measures + properties
- Create and maintain a database of methods + properties
- Create and update a database of findings in a standard form
- Establish and apply principles for model/theory revision

The Human Behaviour-Change Project

Participating
organisations



www.humanbehaviourchange.org

 @HBCProject

A Collaborative
Award funded
by the

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