

Epistemology & Beyond (2)

Exploring Epistemology

A. Ka Tat Tsang

Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work
University of Toronto

Sunday, August 16, 2009

Survey of Epistemological Positions

Your personal view on

- Positivism
- Post-Positivism
- Critical Theory
- Constructionism

What Knowledge do you need for your practice and research?

What You Do	Knowledge Needed

How Helpful Is This Dichotomy?

- Naturwissenschaften
(Natural Sciences)
- Erklärung (Explanation)
- Science
- Objective, neutral
- Positivist-Empiricist
- Experiment
- Procedures/manuals
- Quantitative
- Paradigmatic
- Measurement
- Geisteswissenschaften
(Spiritual/Mental Sciences)
- Verstehen (Understanding)
- Art
- Hermeneutic, positioned
- Interpretive
- Dialectic
- Process, practice wisdom
- Qualitative
- Narrative
- Sense-making

Knowledge: Certainty & Contingency

- Knowledge and certainty
- Skepticism: Error, uncertainty, probability and doubt
- Forcing and foundational criteria – Justification
 - *a priori*: independent of experience, analytic, logic
 - *a posteriori* : empirical
- Certainty and contingency
 - What is contingent versus what is certain and/or fixed
 - The level of certainty you need
 - The contingent nature of everyday life
 - Professional action and multiple contingencies

Epistemological Pluralism

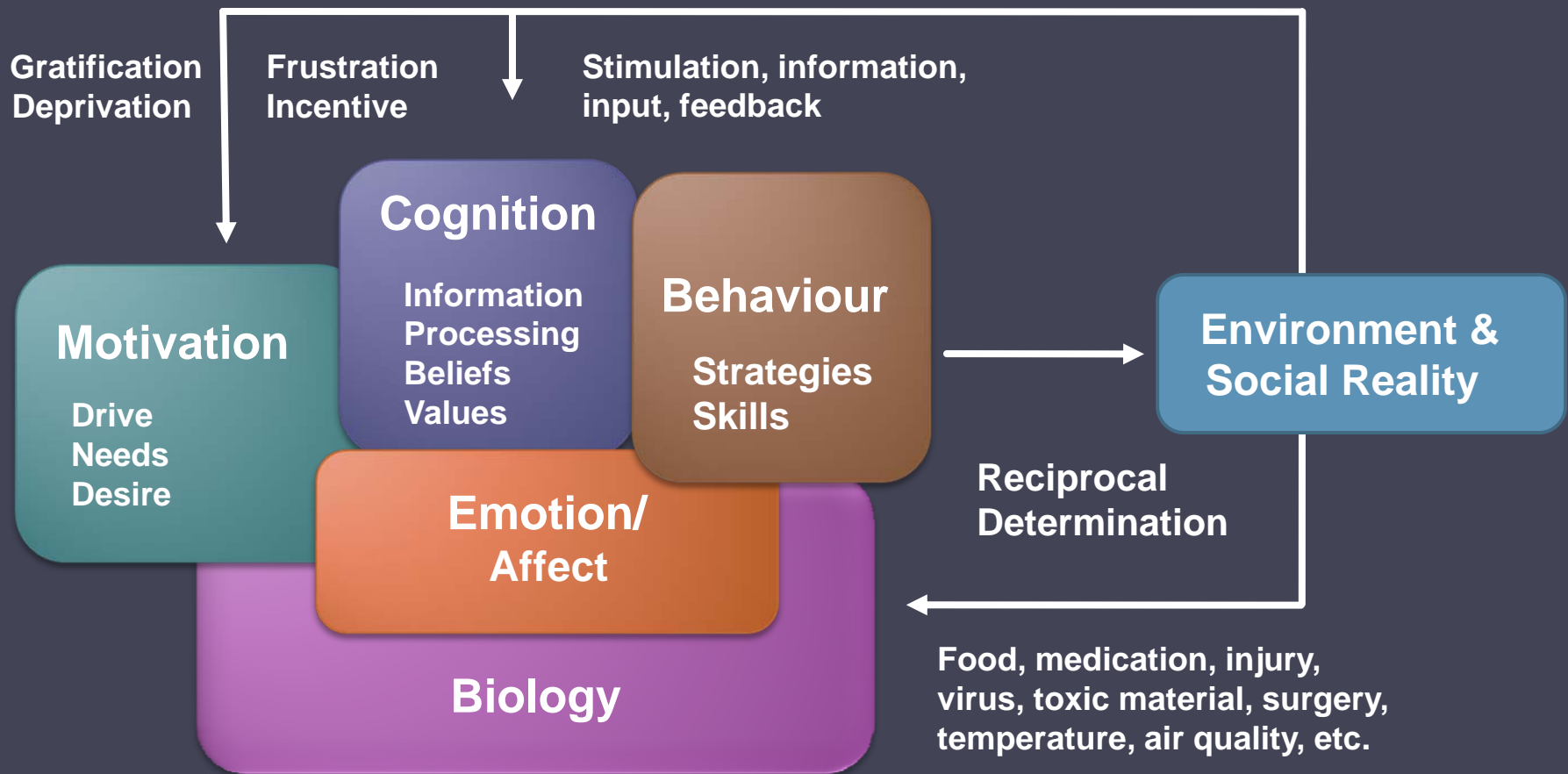
- Singular epistemology and everyday life
- Neo-pragmatism and epistemological pluralism
- Knowledge as contingent
- Multiple contingencies and the Life-world
- Psychic economy: Motivation, capacity, efficiency
- Pragmatism

- Knowledge, belief, desire, and faith: *Believe* is cognate with the German *belieben*, and the Latin *libido*
- Knowledge and desire/motivation: Needs, drives, interests: Marxist and psychological perspectives

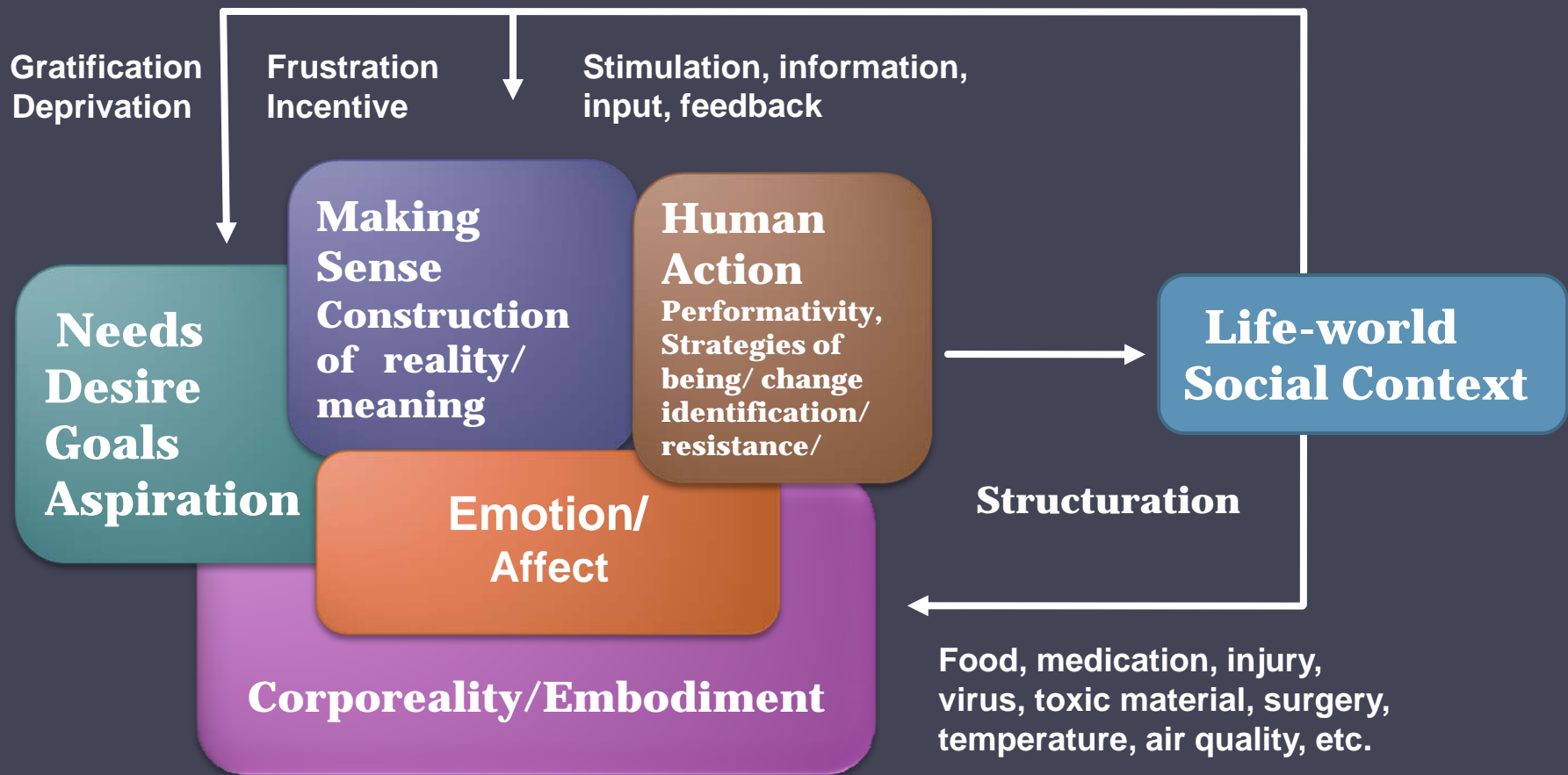
Language, Discourse, Paradigms and Frames

- Perception and information processing: Reciprocal conditioning between frame and object
- Construction and structure
- Rules of transformation, processing and production
- Language: Representation, sense-making, articulation, engagement, communication, and transformation

Human Behaviour and the Environment



Agentive Beings and Their Life-world



Email

k.tsang@utoronto.ca

Websites

<http://kttsang.com>

<http://www.socialwork.utoronto.ca/faculty/bios/tsang.htm>

A. Ka Tat Tsang

Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work

University of Toronto

246 Bloor Street West

Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1A1

Phone: +1-416-978-5817