

## MarteMeo and systemic couple therapy



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Systemic Couple Therapy: concepts and approaches

Systemic Therapy: a basic model

How does Marte Meo fit in?

Similarities; combination, integration, confluence

Good ideas from neurobiology

Differential indications

Languages of love



Systemic Therapy looks at the context of problems:

Life cycle and developmental tasks



Living environment:

job, friends, neighborhood, community

Jellouschek:

## 4 dimensions of couple therapy

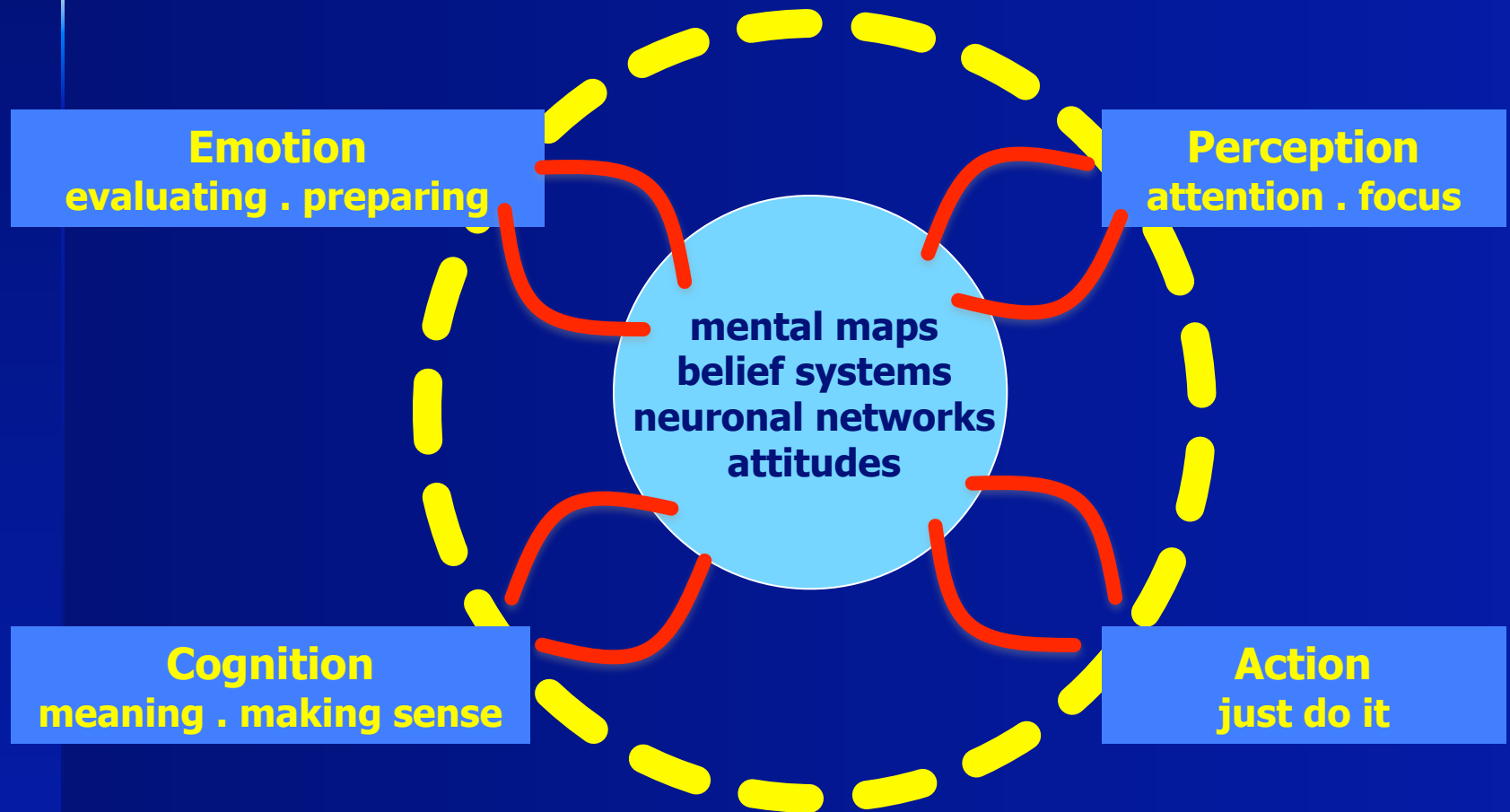
### 1. Interaction

- Balance in relationship
  - autonomy – attachment
  - leading - following
  - giving - taking
- Issues of couple's history
  - crises
  - Traumas and injuries
  - Unbalanced accounts
- Issues of families of origin
  - re-enactment of biographical constellations



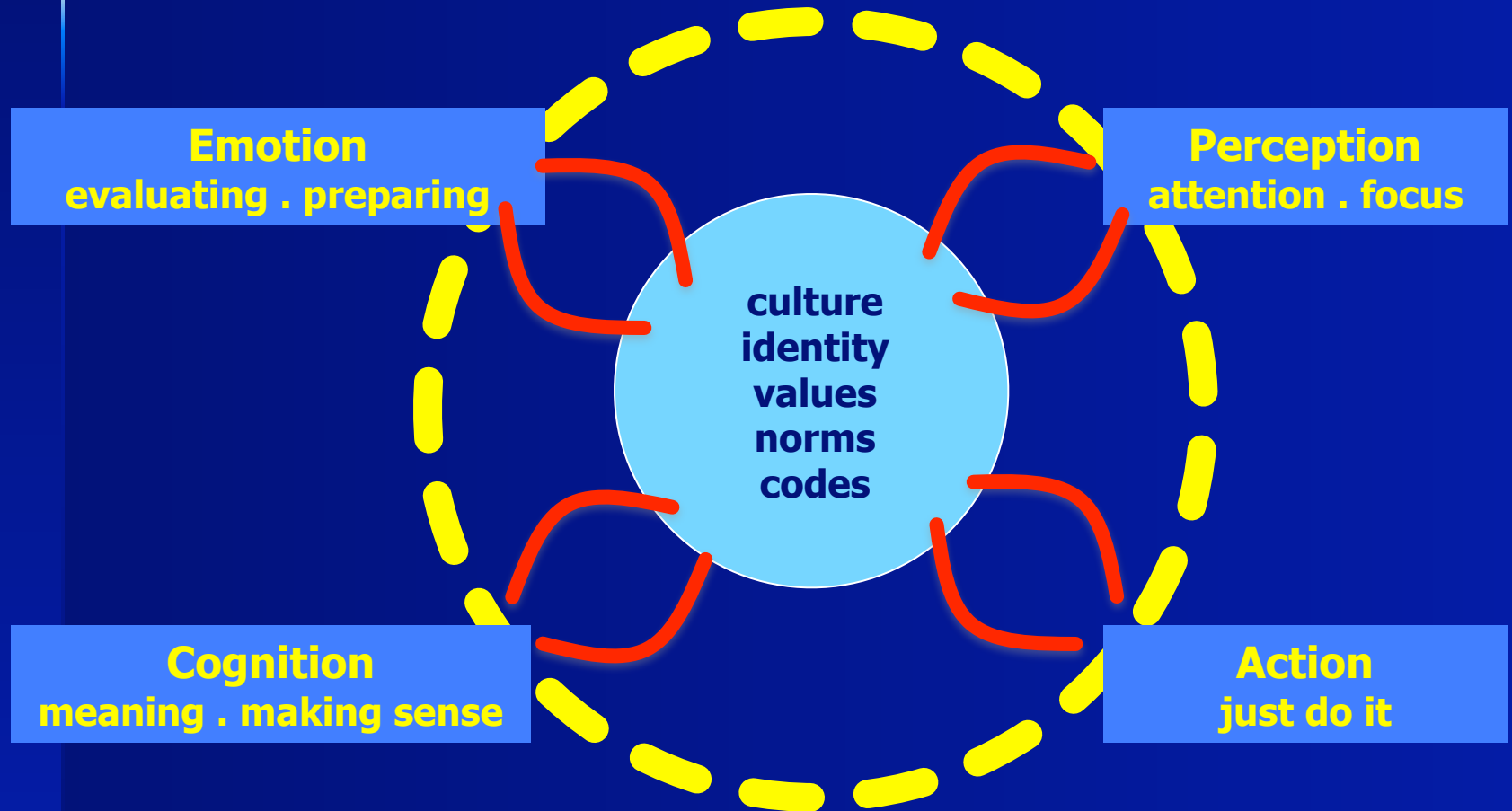
**Individuals learn**

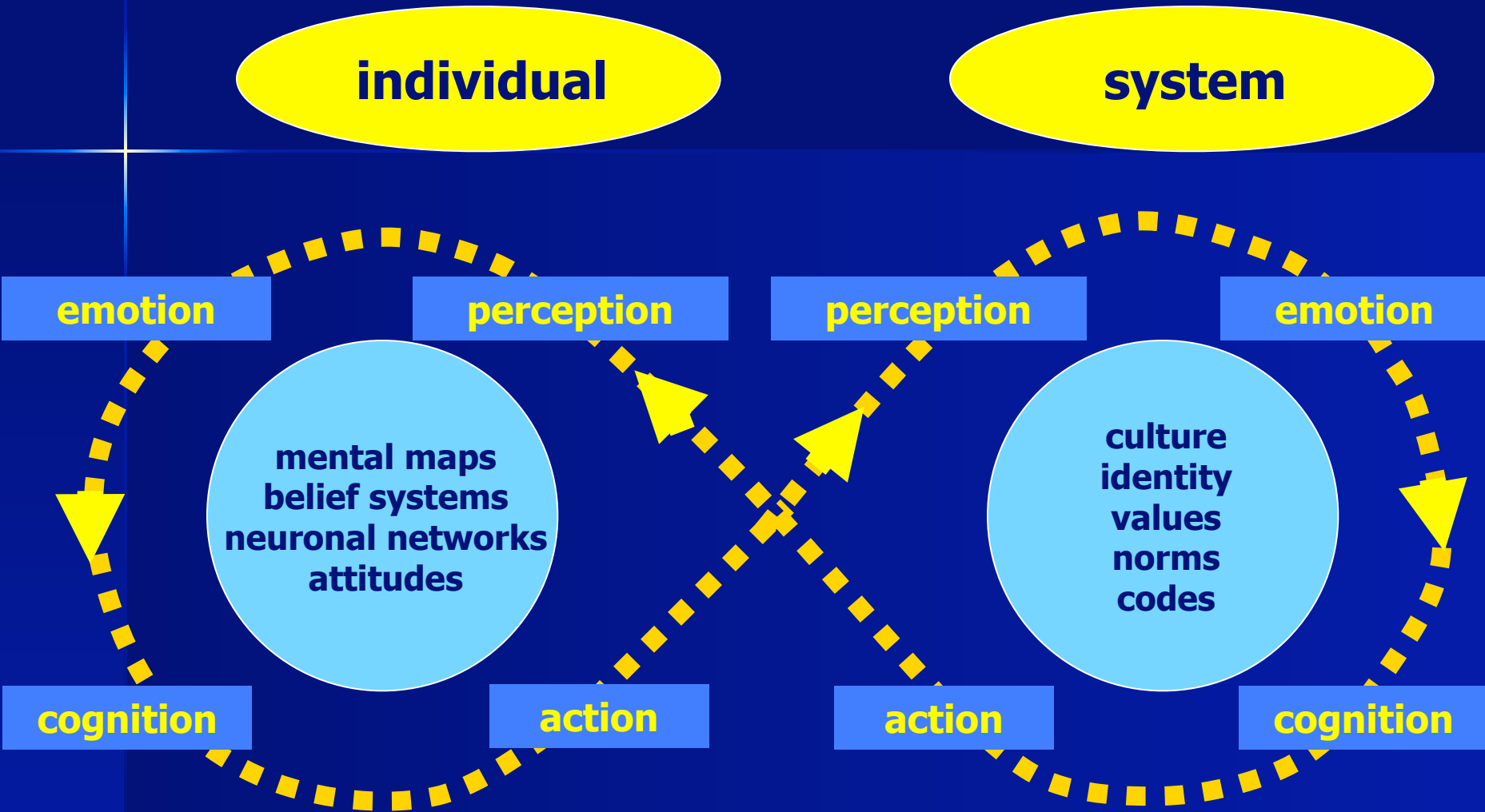
**constructivism**



**Systems learn**

**Social  
constructivism**





### combination, integration, confluence

1. Use Marte Meo in therapy, videos and reviewing
  - a) coffee, cookies and the dog
  - b) Videos of therapy conversations
- Work with Marte Meo Checklist in Therapy: onsite change of couple interaction
- Use principles and stance of Marte Meo in therapeutic setting: e.g. mainly work with small successes and small steps
- confluence  
systemic couple therapy and Marte Meo learn vice versa and will develop both to the better  
e.g. by integrating life cycle models

## How to predict divorce (John Gottmann 1999/2005)

### 1. Harsh startup

### 2. The four horsemen (apocalypse)

1. Personal criticism (instead complaint about a behavior)
2. Contempt (sarcasm, cynicism)
3. defensiveness
4. Stonewalling, withdrawal

- **Flooding**

- **Strong physiological reaction, stress symptoms**  
lacking self soothing capability

- **Failed repair attempts**

- **Bad memories, destructive narratives**

## 7 principles for making marriages work (John Gottmann 1999/2005)

1. Enhance your Love Maps
2. Nurture fondness and admiration
3. Turn toward each other instead of away
4. Let your partner influence you
5. Solve your solvable problems
6. Overcome gridlock (perpetual problems)
7. Create shared meaning

## 7 principles for making marriages work (John Gottmann 1999/2005)

solvable and perpetual problems:

What's the difference

### A) Solvable Problems

specific, situational, differences in opinion, handling, wishes  
household issues, spending time, use of a special amount of  
money, activity-preferences

- **Perpetual problems**

couples keep fighting about them, they will be part of their lives  
core differences in wishes (e.g. intimacy, closeness-autonomy),  
values, emotional styles, meaning (e.g. money in general....)

## 7 principles for making marriages work (John Gottmann 1999/2005)

### Principle 5: solve solvable problems

#### A) Constructive startup

describing . my reaction and feelings . my wish

- Make and receive (recognize!) repair attempts

I feel . sorry . Get to yes . Stop action . I appreciate

#### A) Soothe yourself and each other

#### B) Find common ground and compromise

#### C) Be tolerant of each other's faults

## 7 principles for making marriages work (John Gottmann 1999/2005)

### Principle 6: overcome gridlock (perpetual problems)

#### A) Dreams: detect, exchange, understand, validate

freedom, adventure, spirituality, order, esthetics, quietness oder hustele and bustle, baroque or empty rooms, building something important or having time with friends,.....

- Soothing oneself and each other
- Find or develop a way
  - stop: either I or the other has to change
  - Define core areas that you cannot yield on
  - Define areas of flexibility
  - Devise compromises that honor both of your dreams

## 5 love languages (Gary Chapman 1992-2010)

❖ Words of Affirmation

❖ Quality Time

❖ Receiving Gifts

❖ Acts of Service

❖ Physical Touch

## 5 love languages (Gary Chapman 1992-2010)

### ❖ Words of Affirmation

a compliment a day  
will keep the counselor away



the words, "I love you" are important .... tell the reason why

What do you like or admire about her? Tell her!

Reasons to be grateful? Tell him!

Compliment in the presence of parents or friends or children!

Write a letter, choose a poem .....

## 5 love languages (Gary Chapman 1992-2010)

### ❖ Quality Time

time every day to share the events

Take a walk

Think (or ask) about the favourite pastimes

Take time to brush up your love map

Plan small getaways



## 5 love languages (Gary Chapman 1992-2010)

### ❖ Receiving Gifts

Keep a gift idea note book

A flower a day will keep the counselor away

Small things, when you are away: I was thinking about you



## 5 love languages (Gary Chapman 1992-2010)

### ❖ Acts of Service

Can be a gift also

Make a list of all the requests:  
select one a week

Watch out for the little things  
that make a difference



## 5 love languages (Gary Chapman 1992-2010)

### ❖ Physical Touch

Reach out and hold her hand

Let your knees meet

Give him a massage

Tell by touch: I see you, I appreciate you.

