

How and Why Practitioners Use Career Development Theories in Practice

Dr Julia Yates

Associate Professor, City, University of London

NICEC Fellow

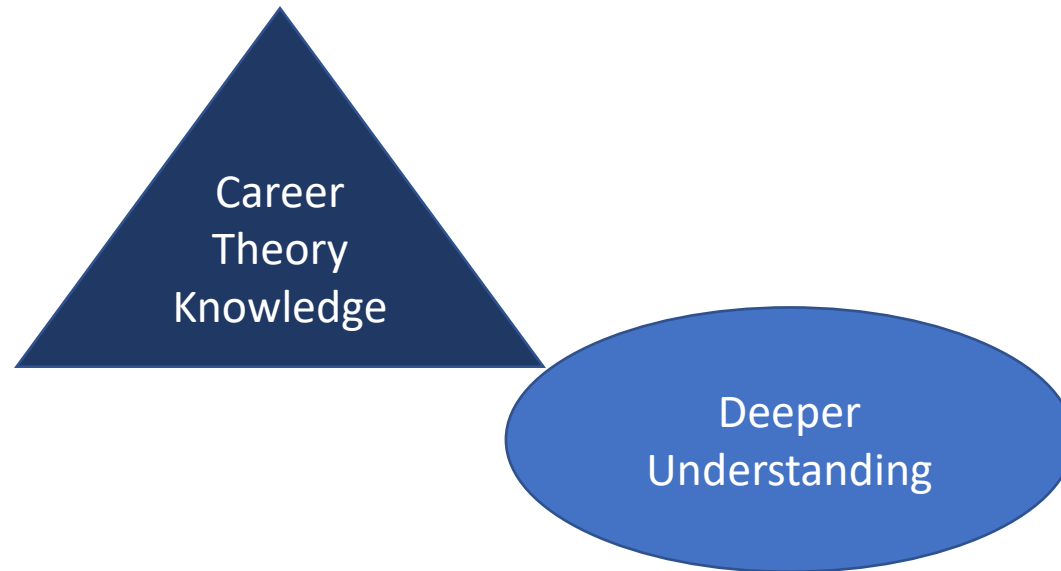
What is a theory?

- Developing theories is the way we make sense of the world
- They aim to simplify complexity and highlight relationships
- Theories explain, predict and delight (Weick, 1989)
- The more complex the field, the more we need theories

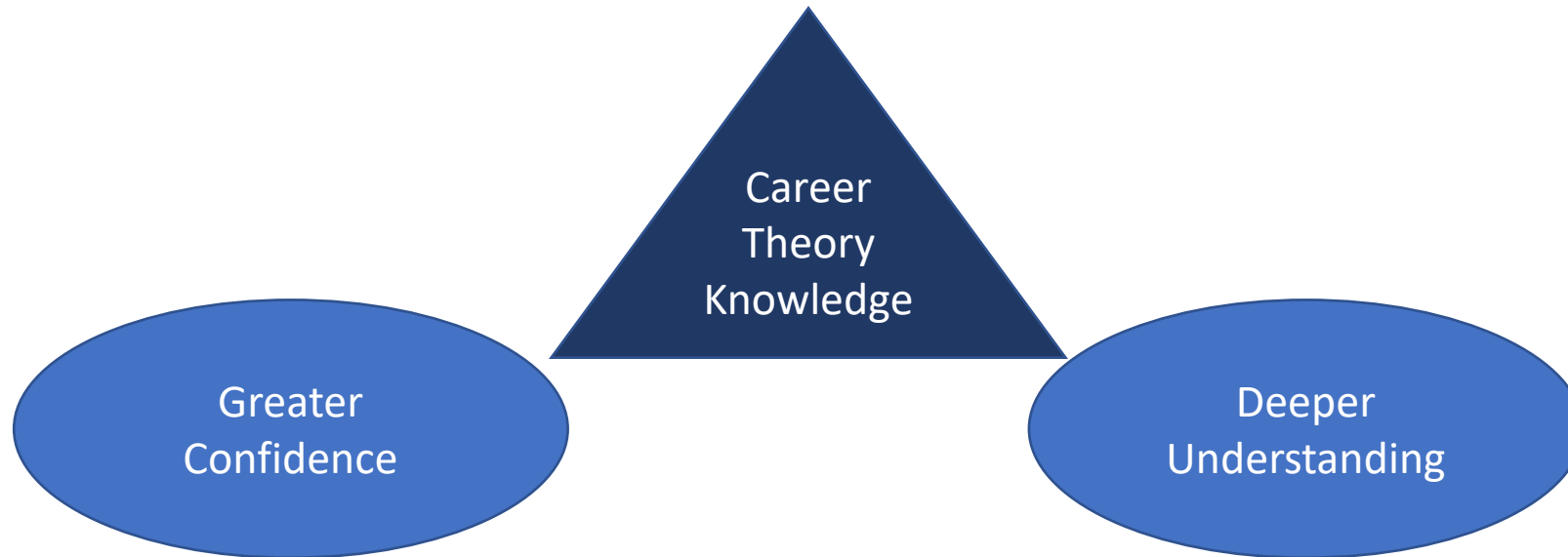
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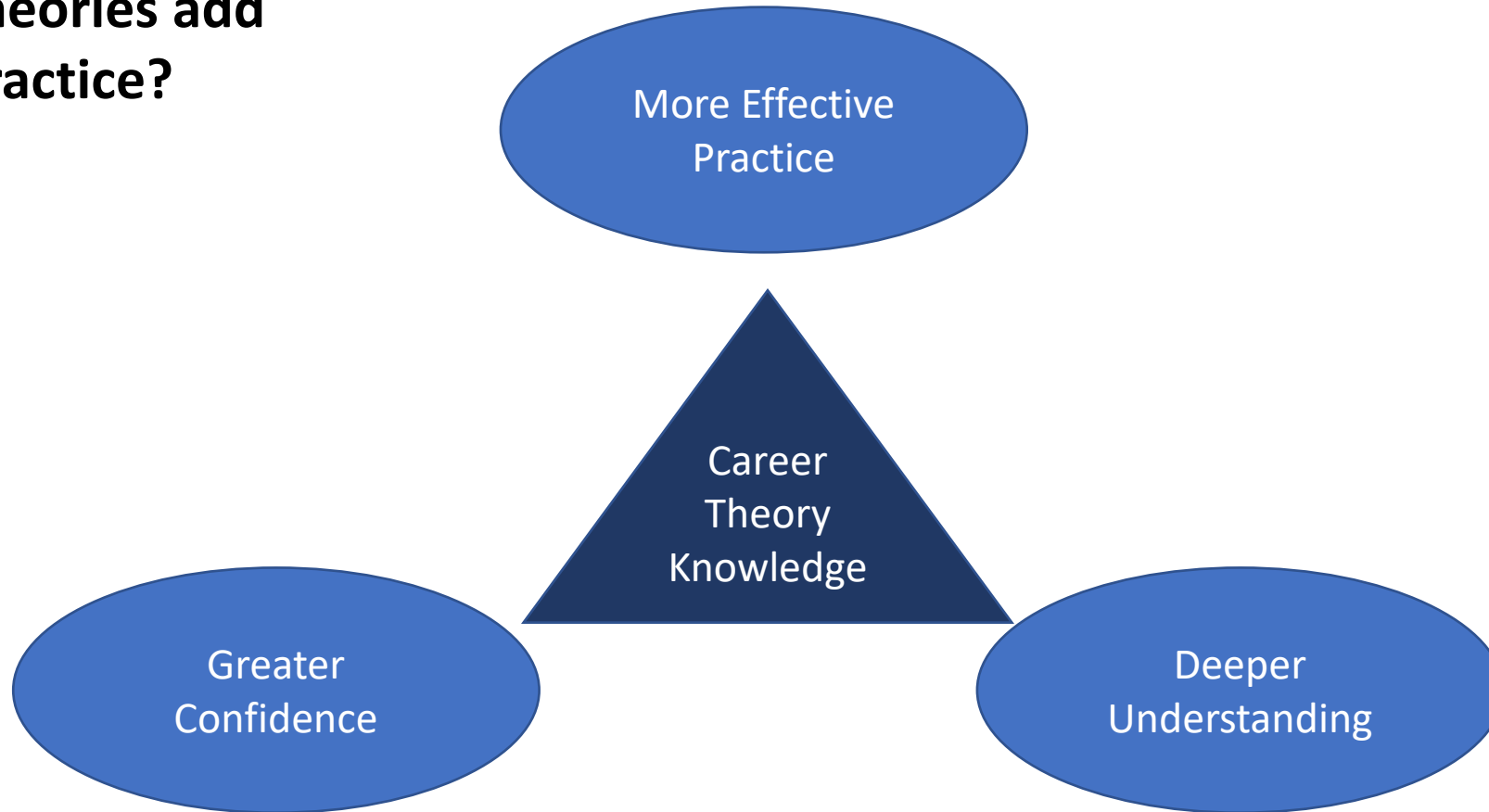
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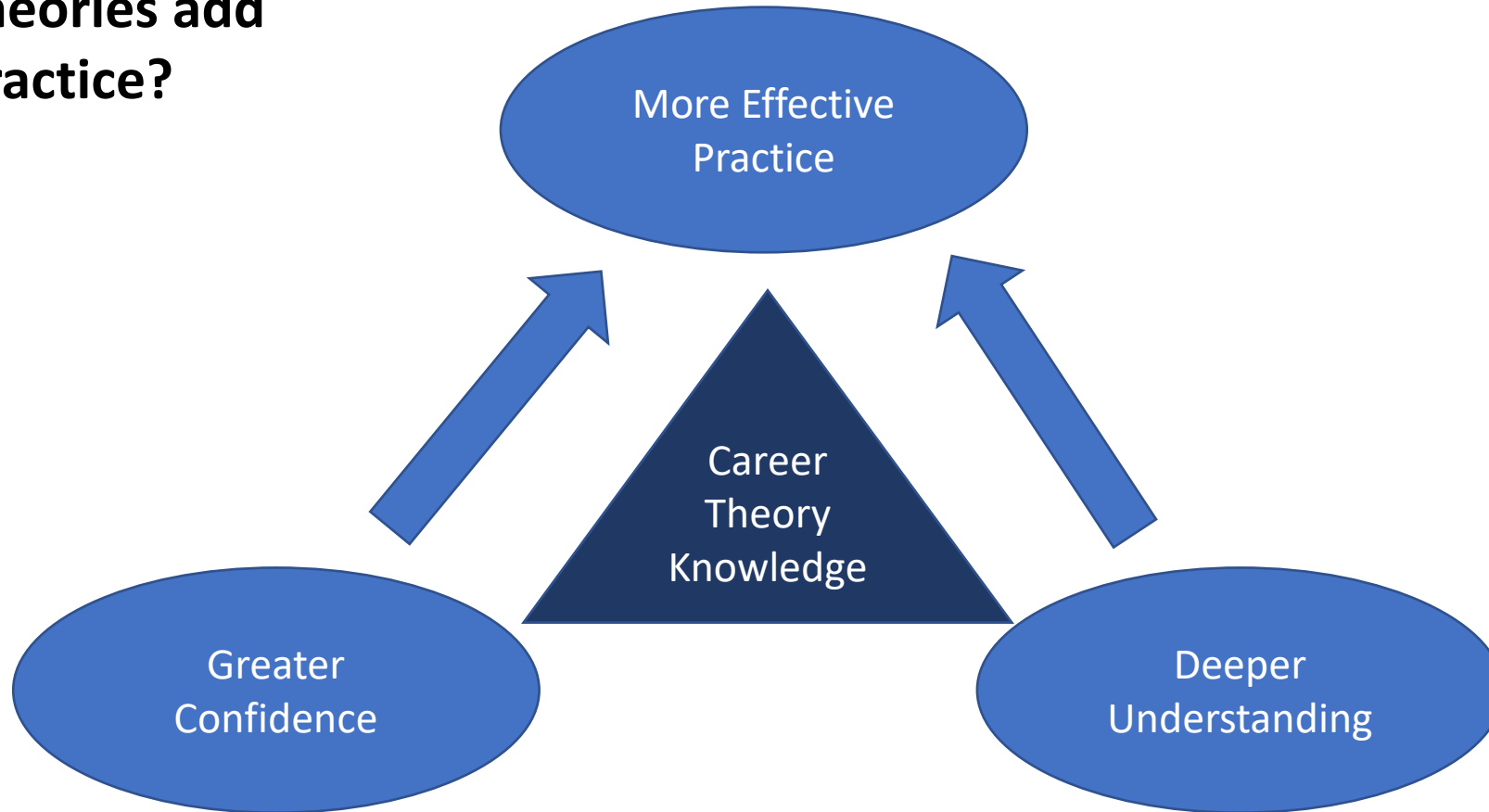
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Challenges of using theories in practice

How to find out about new theories

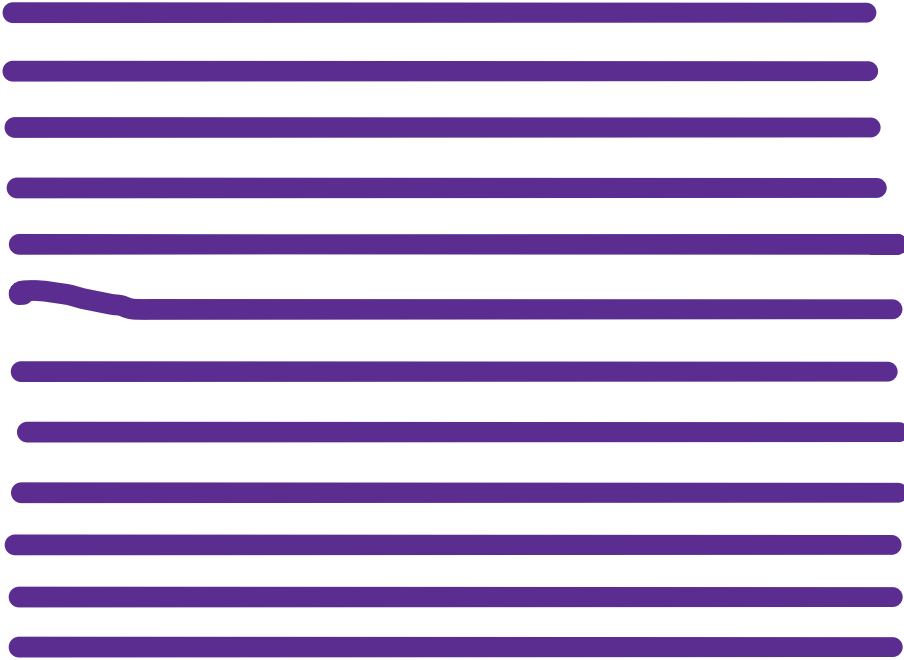
Initial training is generally good but there could be more CPD

The language used

Working out how to use them

Training focuses on the theories themselves, not how to use them in practice

Theories in Theory



Theories in Practice



Using theories in your career practice

1. To understand and empathise
2. To direct the conversation
3. To plan activities



1. To understand and empathise

- The theories allow you to build up a 'working hypothesis'
- They allow you to see your clients' situation more quickly
- They help you to be more non-judgmental

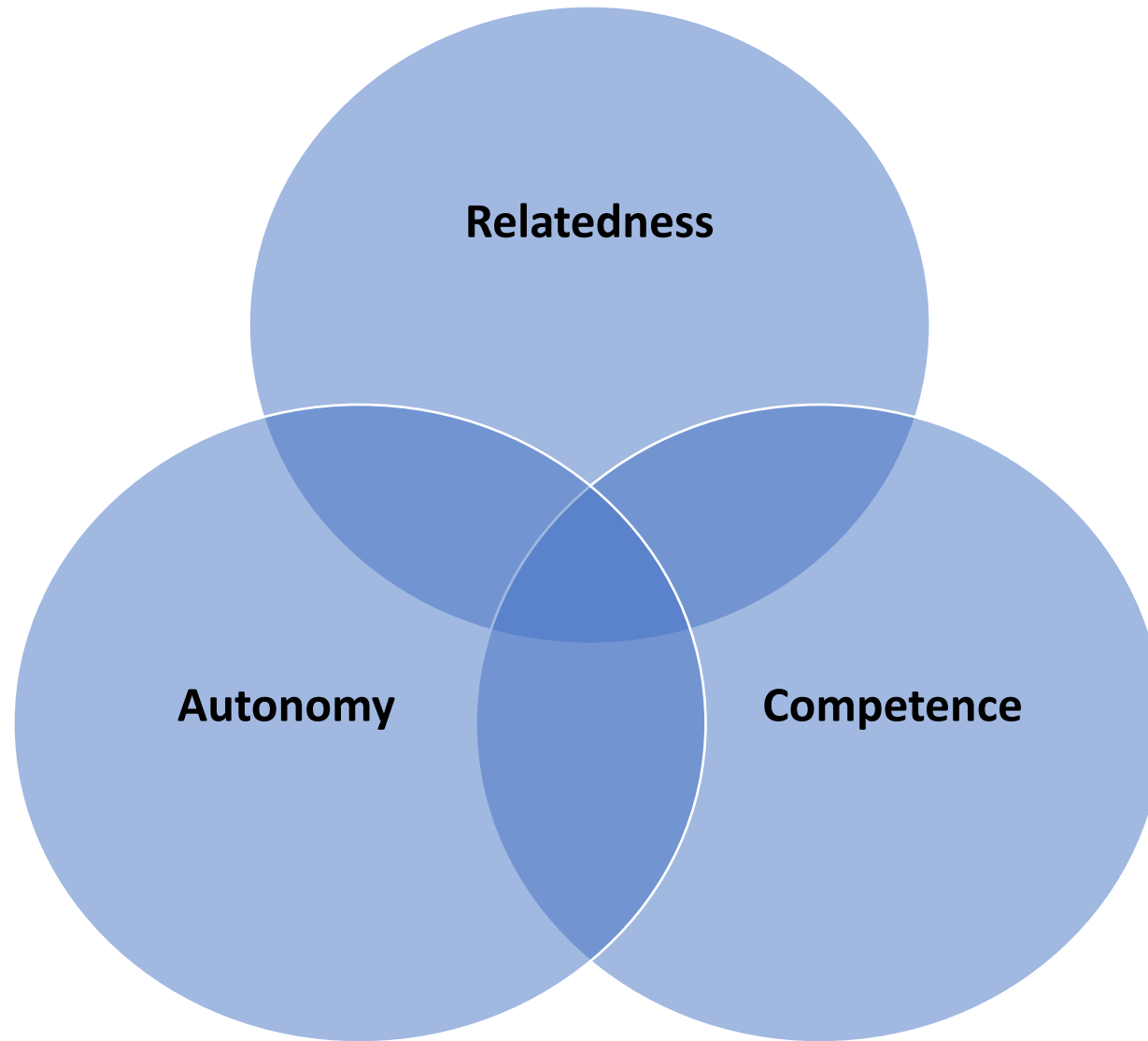


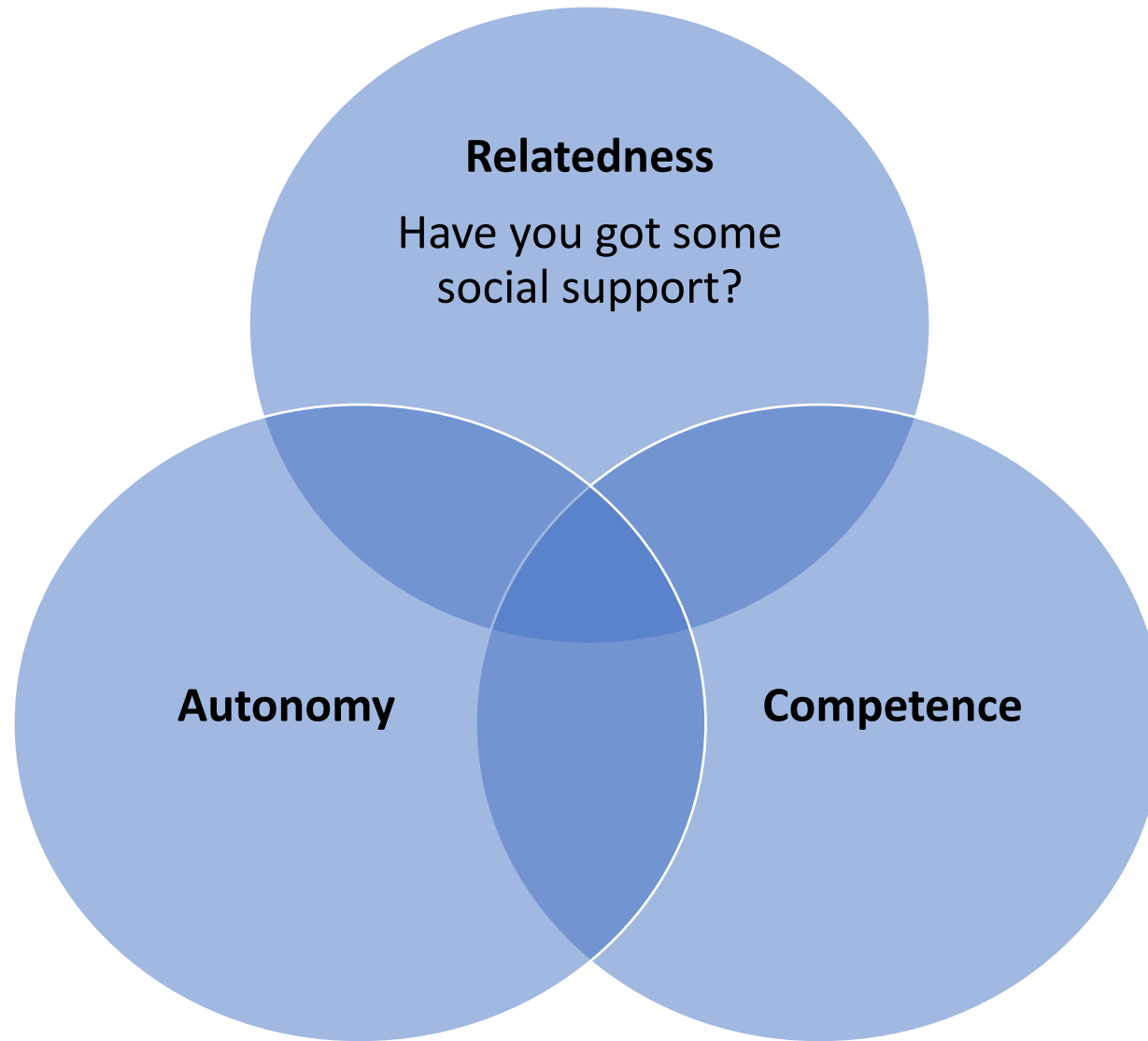


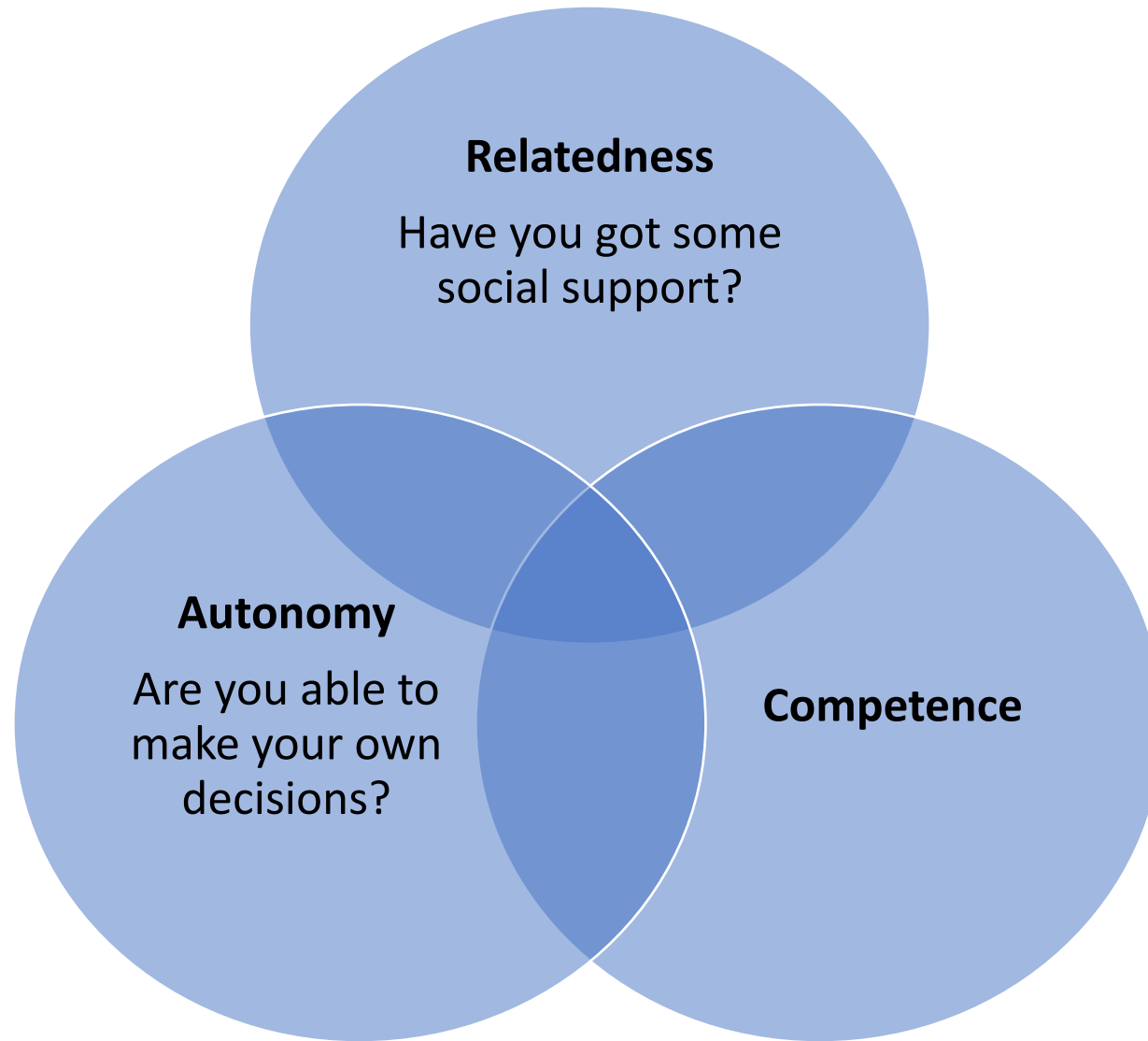
Helping to understand and empathise with our clients:

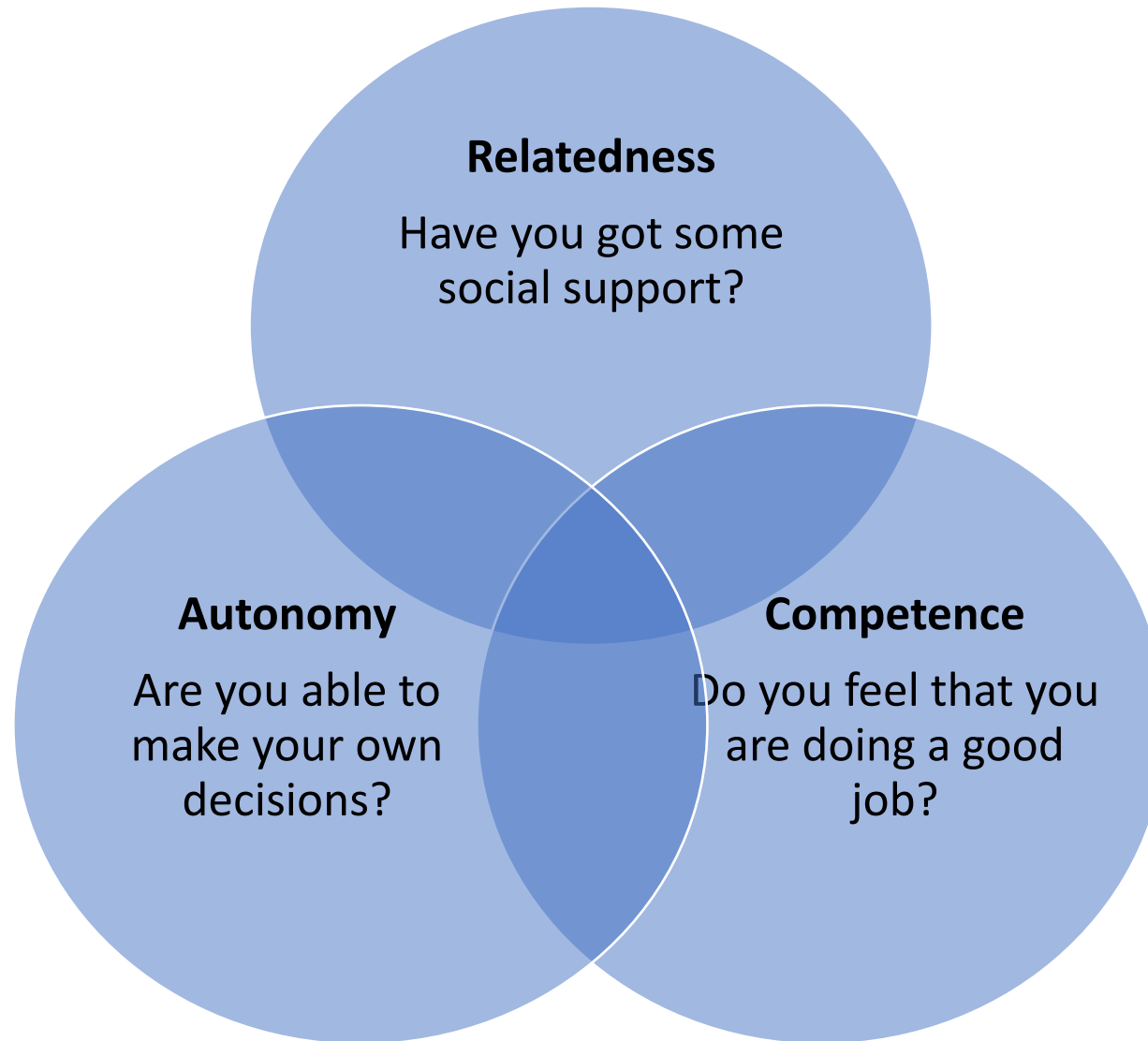
Self-Determination Theory

Ryan & Deci, 1985









2. To guide the conversation

- The theories suggest useful questions or exercises





Helping to guide the conversation:

Career Inaction Theory

De Vos & Verbruggen, 2021

Inertia-enhancing mechanisms

Fear and anxiety

Career choices almost always have an uncertain outcome

Short term-ism

Career choices generally entail giving up something safe and familiar

Cognitive overload

Career choices are extraordinarily complex



What can help?

Fear and anxiety

Role models

Short term-ism

A crystal clear desired future

Cognitive overload

Step by step approach



3. To plan activities

- The theories allow you to plan a career education programme or session





Helping to plan activities:

Career AdaptAbilities

Porfeli & Savickas, 2012

Coping with modern work: Savickas and Porfeli's model of Career AdaptAbilities

Career curiosity

Being open to ideas
and looking for
opportunities

Career control

Taking ownership of
your career

Career concern

Looking ahead and
planning for the
future

Career confidence

Having the self-belief
to make choices and
pursue goals

The Career AdaptAbilities Model

- 1) Ask your clients to reflect on their current levels of each of the four Cs. There is a questionnaire (<http://www.vocopher.com/ms/caas/CAAS%20master.pdf>) that can help.
- 1) **Career concern:** visualisation exercises (eg possible selves) that focus on clients' future identities
- 2) **Career curiosity:** using stories to pique clients' interest in finding out more about different opportunities
- 3) **Career confidence:** offering opportunities for clients to practice and to get positive feedback on (eg) interview skills
- 4) **Career control:** boosting self-awareness and giving clients tools for dealing with anxiety

Resources

- Arthur, N., Neault, R., & McMahon, M. (2019). *Career Theories and Models at Work: ideas for practice*. Toronto: Ceric
- MARCR Career Professionals Website: <https://marcr.net/marcr-for-career-professionals/career-theory/career-theories-and-theorists/>
- Swanson, J. & Fouad, N. (2019). *Career Theory and practice: learning through case studies*. Washington: Sage
- Yates, J. (2022). *The Career Coaching Handbook (2nd edition)*. Hove: Routledge