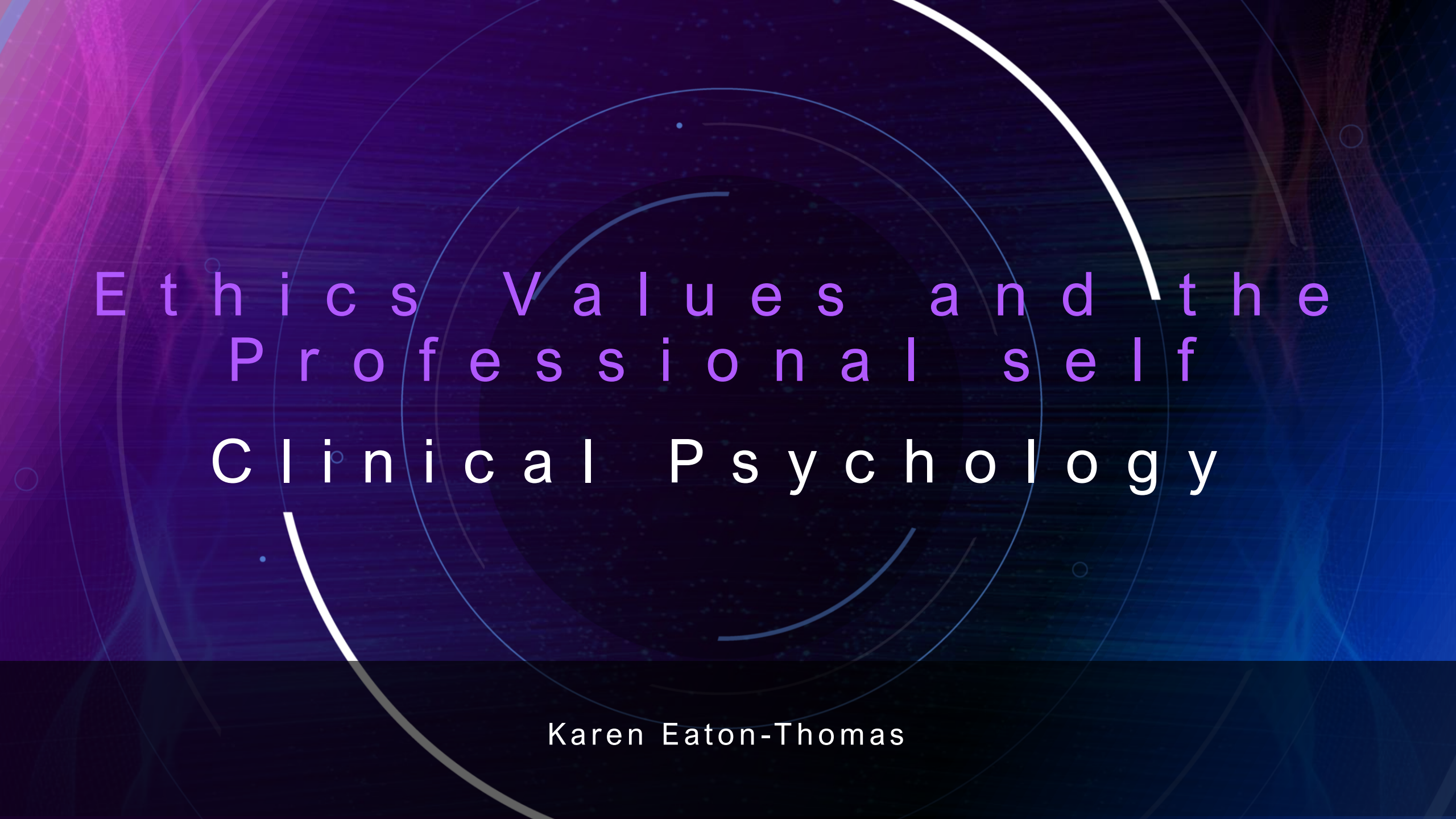




Ethics Values and the Professional self Clinical Psychology

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Aims of the lecture:

- Consider the role of BPS Ethical codes of conduct and the BPS practice guidelines when working within the field of Clinical Psychology.
- Apply ethical principles to real-world settings within clinical practice.
- Evaluate the importance of respect, responsibility, integrity and competence within professional clinical practice.
- Demonstrate ethical reasoning and decision making in complex and challenging situations. ○

Part 1: BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct

Respect

Integrity

Responsibility

Competence

BPS Practice Guidelines (2017)

(Currently under review).

To benefit the
members

To benefit the
public

To strengthen the
identity of
psychologists

To define good
psychological
practice for all
psychologists

To provide
guidance on legal
and regulatory
issues

Overview of the practice guidelines

How
psychologists
work, who they
work with and
where

Safeguarding,
making and
maintaining
agreements and
managing
informed consent

Managing data
and
confidentiality
and what to do
when things go
wrong

How clinical psychologists work

Health and
Care
Professions
Council (HCPC)
Registration

Professional
competency –
HPCP
*standards of
proficiency &
BPS code of
ethics and
conduct*

*Equality Act
(2010) nine
protected
characteristics.
Data
Protection Act
(1998).*

*Mental
Capacity Act
(2005). Mental
Health Act
(1983;2007).*

Cycle of
Professional
Practice

Cycle of Professional Practice

The professional practice of psychologists is underpinned by four key ethical values – Respect, Competence, Responsibility and Integrity – and five core skills:

assessment and establishment of agreements with the client;

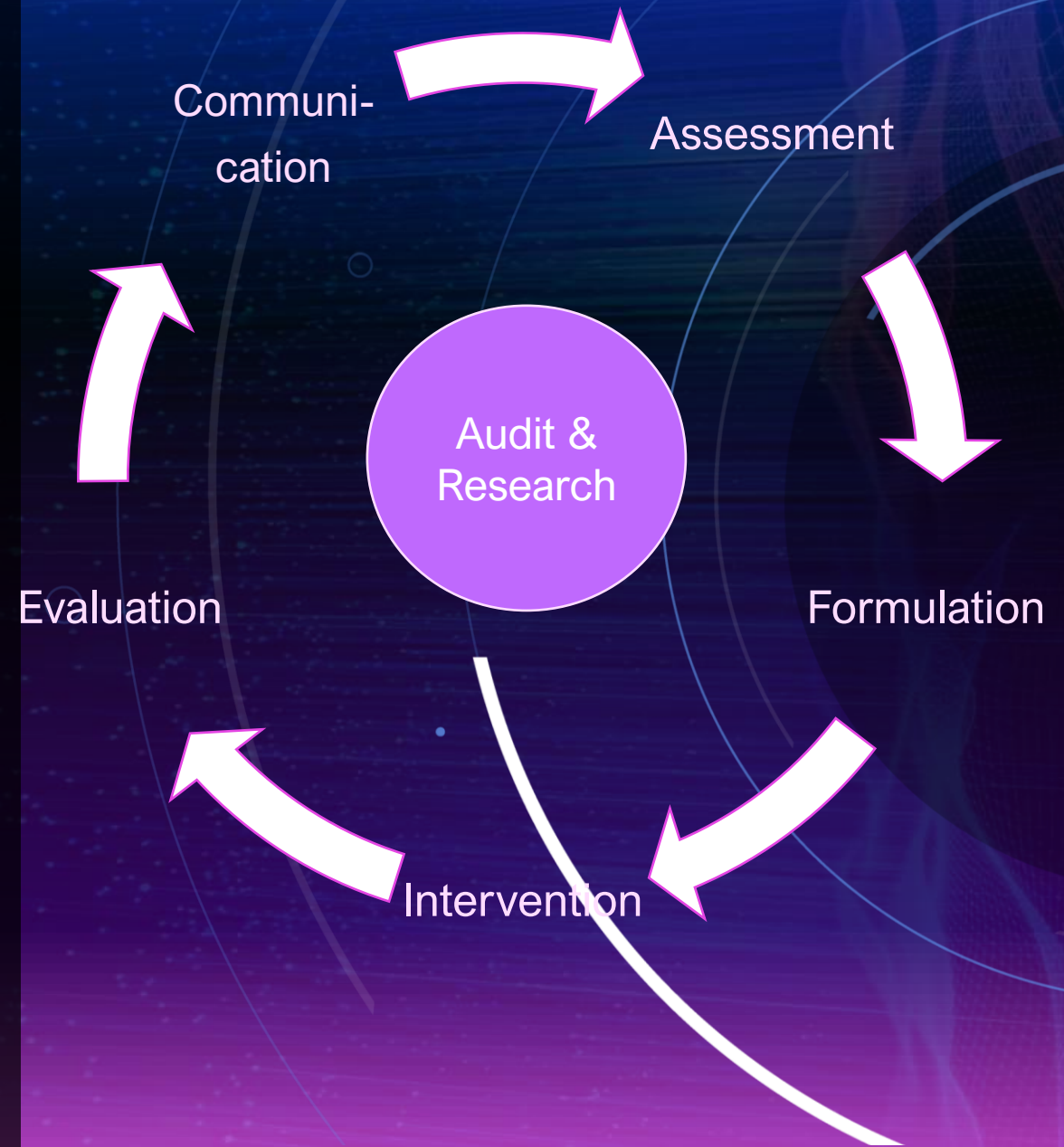
formulation of client needs and problems;

intervention or implementation of solutions;

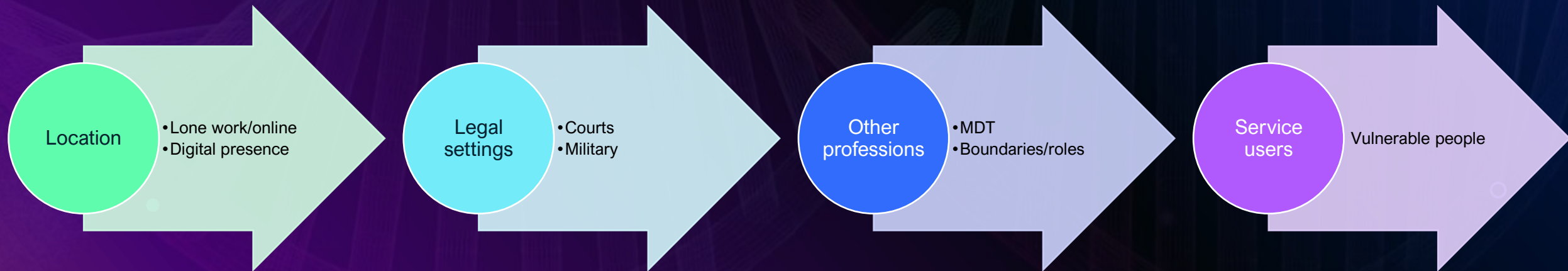
evaluation of outcomes; and

communication through reporting and reflecting on outcomes.

These core competencies flow and inform each other as illustrated opposite



Where clinical psychologists work and with who



Working with vulnerable people

For
example:

Children/young people `Gillick competent`

Intellectual disabilities/impaired cognitive abilities

Detained Individuals/immigrants/under the Mental health Act

Cultural differences/religion/spirituality

Sexual/gender minorities/ethically or sexually diverse individuals

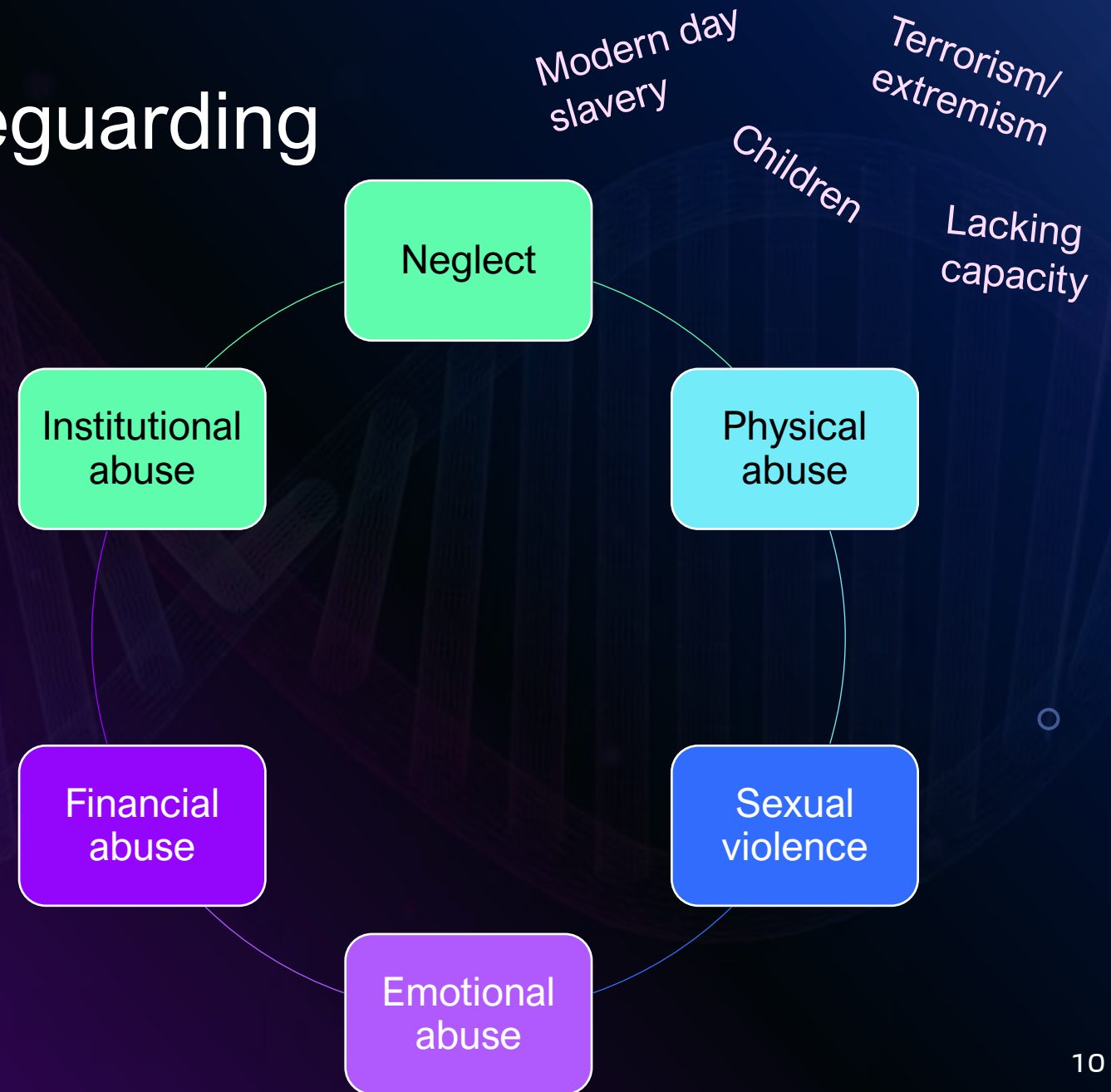
And essentially anyone else who may be socially excluded

Safeguarding

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

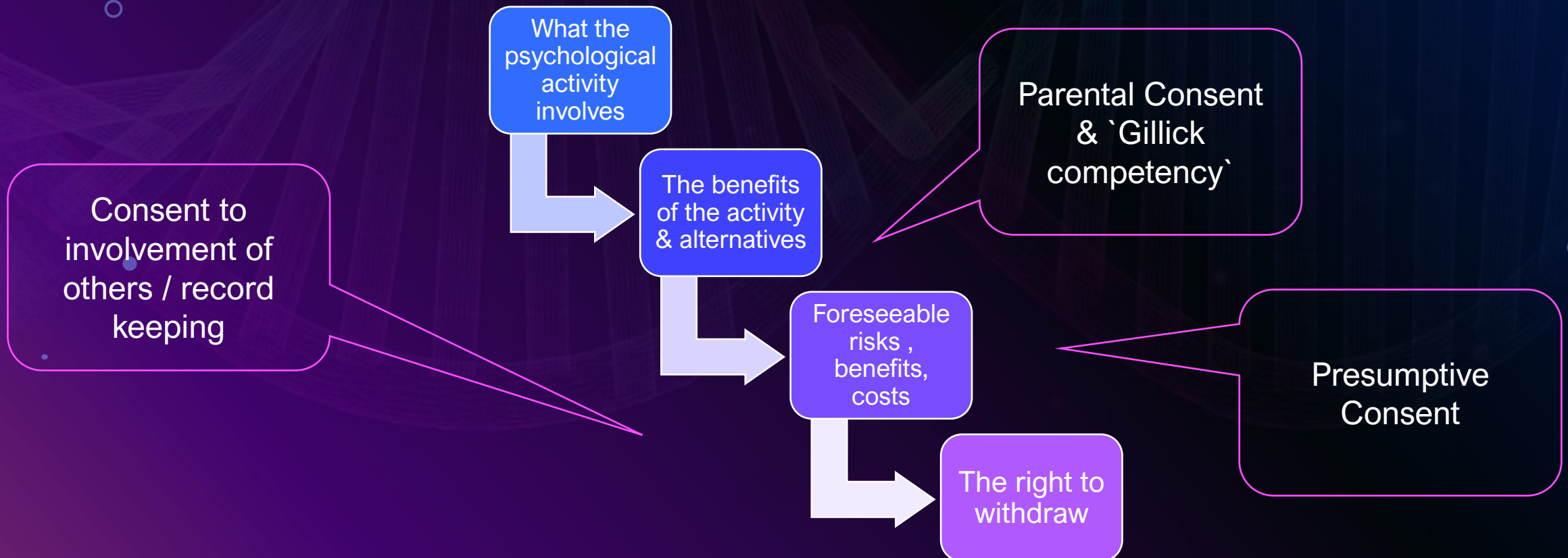
- Abuse takes many forms and cuts through various domains of life.

- Abuse can be found across all sections of society, irrelevant of gender, age, ability, religion, race, ethnicity, personal circumstances, financial background or sexual orientation.



Informed consent

In order to ensure that the client has all the information necessary to make an informed decision about whether to take part or not in a psychological activity, they must be provided with relevant information in a format that is designed to meet their specific needs. The psychologist should consider providing information about the following:



People who lack capacity

It is likely that psychologists at some stage will be working with people who lack capacity to consent to assessment or treatment. This could be because of a wide range of difficulties such as intellectual disability, brain injury, dementia, severe mental health difficulties, and neurological conditions. As a result, it will be necessary to make a judgment about a client's ability to give informed consent. This should include whether the person is able to:

- Understand the information relevant to the decision (e.g. psychological treatment);
- Retain that information;
- Use or weigh that information as part of the process of making the decision; and
- Communicate their decision (whether by talking, using sign language or any other means.)

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 contains 5 key principles which are important to understand:

- A presumption of capacity;
- Individuals being supported to make their own decisions;
- Individuals have the right to make 'unwise' decisions;
- Anything done on behalf of a person with a mental capacity issue should be in their best interests; and
- An intervention should be based upon the 'less restrictive option' weighed up in the circumstances of the case.

* When working with detained individuals, treatment can be given without consent under the MHA

Retention and destruction of health records, both paper and electronic, is covered in the NHS code. Generally, retention is until age 26 for people seen as children; 20 years for adults, and 8 years after death if the death occurred while the person was in care. There are specific requirements for mental health services depending on the nature of the contact.

Information Governance

Psychologists should follow local and national guidance and statutory responsibilities regarding management of data.

Psychologists should make, keep and disclose information in records only in accordance with national policy and legislation, and the policies and procedures of the organisation(s) they are employed by/working in collaboration with.

Records kept should be:

Systematic and appropriately detailed;

In clear language/format;

Accurate;

Up to date;

Relevant to professional work and to the purpose for which they were collected.

Confidentiality and disclosure of information

Psychologists have a duty to inform involved parties of their confidentiality standards and practice at the point of first contact.

Clients should be informed of the limits of confidentiality where information about them may be shared and confidentiality breached, for example for safeguarding, requirements of the law, and public protection.

If disclosure of information is deemed necessary, psychologists should obtain specific informed consent from their clients, making the consequences of disclosure as clear and unbiased as possible.

Disclosure to others

Disclosure after death

Disclosure to the courts

Disclosure with children

What to do when things go wrong

If any conflict or issue as referred to in this section cannot be resolved, it may be appropriate to advise a client or other individual that they have a right to raise any concerns about a psychologist with the Health and Care Professions Council, further details of which can be found at www.hcpc-uk.org

If the client remains unhappy

Supporting a colleague when a complaint has been made

Working in multi-professional or multi-agency contexts

Managing conflict in team settings

Transparency and duty of candour

Managing conflict with a client

Fitness to practise, conflicting ideals, disengaging from the team

Positive ethics – recap:

- Beyond minimal compliance: striving for moral excellence. Rooted in deeply held values or philosophical systems.
- It calls psychologists to do more, to behave not just “legally adequate” but “ethically excellent.”
- It involves integrity, virtues, beneficence, collaboration, respecting spirit not just letter.
- It is a **PROACTIVE** approach – not reactive

So... to recap -

BPS core ethical principles

Respect

Integrity

Responsibility

Competence

A decision-making model

Knapp's model

Identify the problem

Identify the issues involved

Review guidelines/law

Consult with colleagues

Review options

Evaluate

Implement and document

Part 2: the dilemmas

Dilemma 1:

A client tells you during therapy that they are planning to seriously harm a co-worker. They refuse to give details or agree to safety planning.



Respect



Integrity



Responsibility



Competence



What is the dilemma? What would you do?

Knapp's
model

Identify the problem

Identify the issues involved

Review guidelines/law

Consult with colleagues

Review options

Evaluate

Implement and document

Recognize there's an ethical issue and clarify what it is.

Identify all ethical, legal, and professional concerns, and who might be affected.

Review professional ethical codes and legal duties that apply.

Seek supervision or consult with a colleague

Brainstorm different options

Assess risks and benefits for all parties involved

Choose the most ethical course, carry it out, and record your reasoning

Dilemma 2:

A psychologist in a rural area is providing therapy to a client who later becomes their child's high school teacher. Avoiding all contact would be nearly impossible.



Respect



Integrity



Responsibility



Competence



Dilemma 3:

A client requests falsification of dates or diagnoses so insurance will cover therapy.



Respect



Integrity



Responsibility



Competence



Dilemma 4:

A therapist begins to feel emotionally attached to a client or frustrated by their behaviour.



Respect



Integrity



Responsibility



Competence



Dilemma 5:

A client with cognitive impairment or a minor child gives assent to therapy, but the legal guardian disagrees.



Respect



Integrity



Responsibility



Competence



Dilemma 6:

A clinician is asked to treat a client with a condition (e.g., severe eating disorder or schizophrenia) outside their area of training.



Respect



Integrity



Responsibility



Competence



Dilemma 7:

A psychologist provides online therapy to a client who joins sessions from public or unsafe locations.



Respect



Integrity



Responsibility



Competence



Dilemma 8:

During family therapy, one member reveals a secret (e.g., infidelity, abuse, or substance use) and asks the psychologist not to tell the others.



Respect



Integrity



Responsibility



Competence



Dilemma 9:

A psychologist conducting a court-ordered evaluation uncovers information that could harm the client's case.



Respect



Integrity



Responsibility



Competence



Dilemma 10:

A therapist realizes their cultural assumptions or implicit biases are affecting their interpretation of a client's experiences.



Respect



Integrity



Responsibility



Competence



Take away messages:

- Adopt a positive proactive approach
- Refer to a decision-making framework/model
- Consult with colleagues
- Keep up to date with ethical guidelines and the law
- Be aware of own competencies and potential biases

Keep up to date
with all legal and
ethical policies

Consult with
colleagues and
supervisors

Establish clear
boundaries

Put client well-
being as top
priority

Be aware of own
biases and
remain impartial