

# Adult Neuropsychological Assessment

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# What is a Neuropsychologist?

- Origins of the field
- A neuropsychologist is...
  - Independent doctoral level psychologist
  - Provides assessment and/or intervention services related to cognitive, behavioral, and emotional functioning
  - Based in scientific principles underlying brain-behavior relationships

# What is a Neuropsychologist?

- Typical Training Path



# What is a Neuropsychologist?

- Core knowledge areas
  - Basic neuroscience
  - Functional Neuroanatomy
  - Neuropathology
  - Clinical Neurology
  - Psychological testing, assessment, psychometrics
  - Clinical neuropsychological testing and assessment
  - Psychopathology
  - Psychological intervention
  - Life span development

# What does a neuropsychological assessment involve?

- Approaches to assessment
  - Fixed vs flexible battery
- Time: Few hours to multiple days
- Types of assessments
  - Clinical
    - Diagnosis/Treatment/Rehabilitation
    - Administrative/disability/accommodations
  - Medicolegal/forensic
  - Independent Medical Evaluation (IME)
  - Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE)
  - Fitness for Duty Evaluation

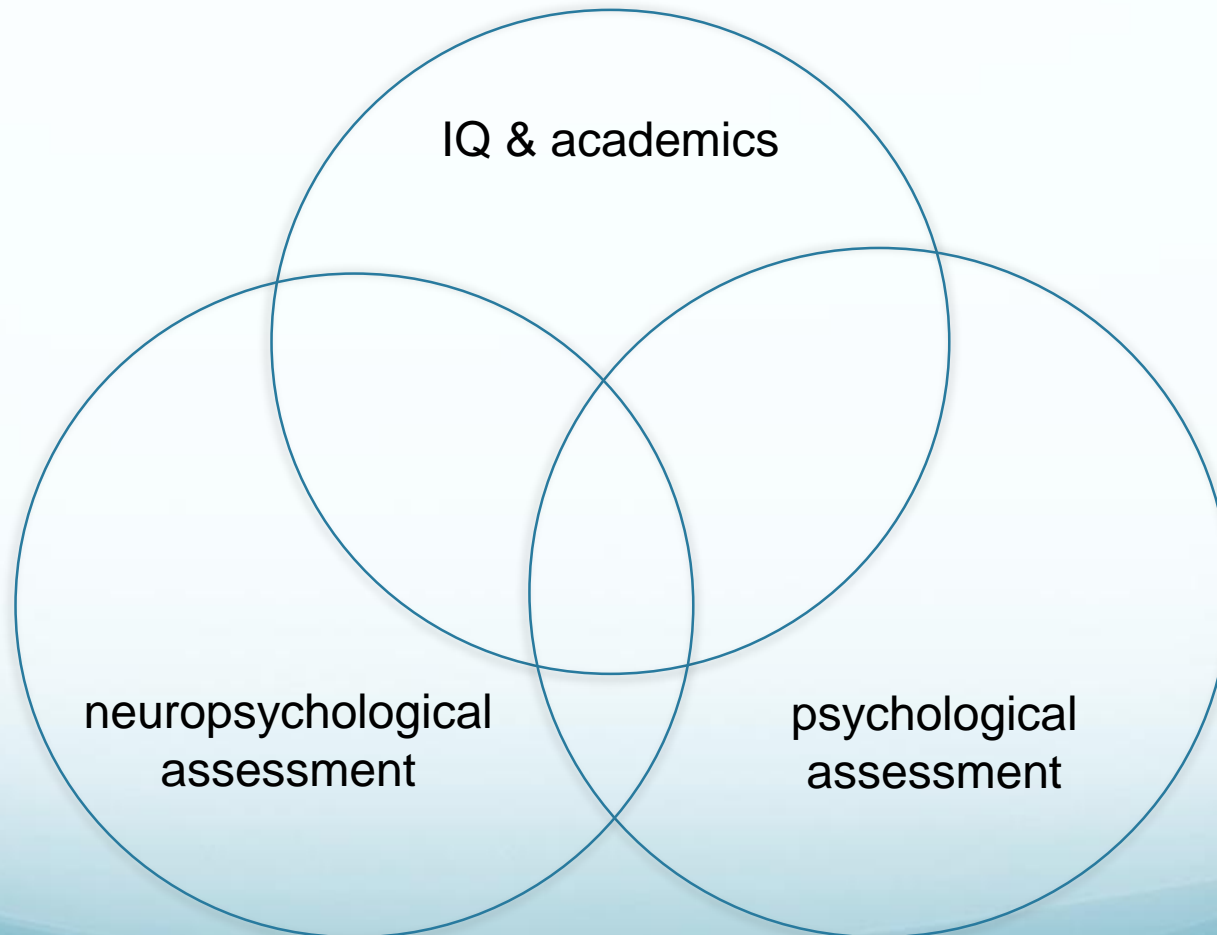
# What does a neuropsychological assessment involve?

- Typical components:
  - Motor-sensory function
  - Mental status
  - Attention/concentration
  - Processing speed
  - Language
  - Visuospatial/visuomotor abilities
  - Memory
  - Executive function (planning, organizing, sequencing, reasoning, problem solving)
  - Emotional/behavioral status
- Depending on referral question:
  - Full IQ testing
  - Academic achievement testing
  - Psychological testing (MMPI, etc)

# What does a neuropsychological assessment involve?

- The assessment itself...
  - Review of records
  - Clinical interview with patient
  - Collateral informant interview(s)
  - Administration of primary neuropsychological tests
  - Patient/collateral inventories/questionnaires
  - Scoring and interpretation
  - Feedback (varies by context)
  - Generation of report

# How does a neuropsychological assessment differ from other assessments?

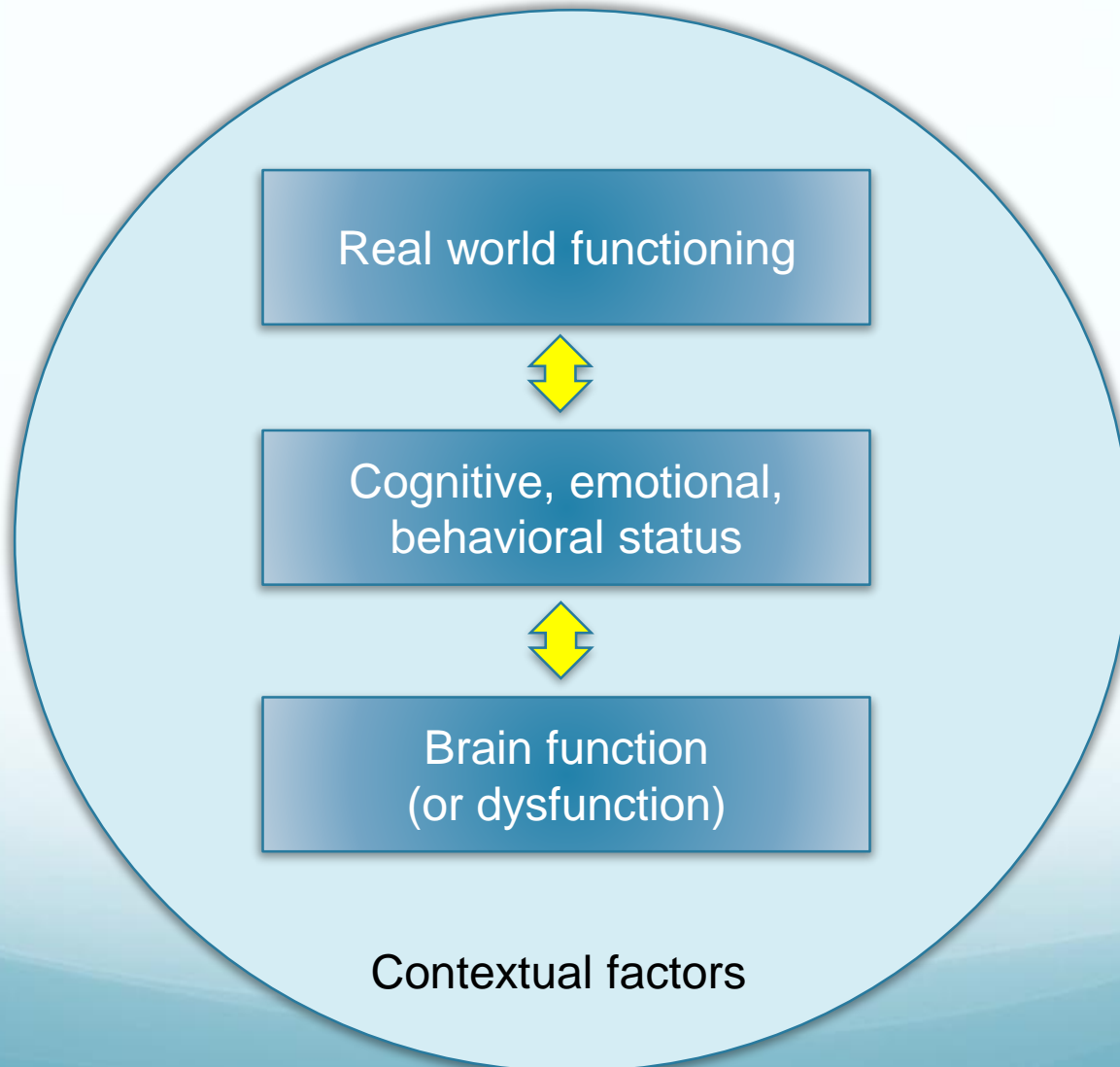




# What can be addressed with a neuropsychological assessment?

- The myth of “organicity”
- Diagnosis – within certain boundaries

# What can be addressed with a neuropsychological assessment?



# What can be addressed with a neuropsychological assessment?

- Contextual factors:
  - Lifespan development (“phase of life”)
  - Family/psychosocial background
  - Educational/occupational history
  - Psychiatric comorbidities
  - Medical comorbidities
  - Substance use/abuse history
  - Family medical and psychiatric history

# Issues in Adult Neuropsychological Assessment

- Long history is a blessing and a curse
  - Temporal changes sometimes clearer
  - Longer history can mean more accumulated complexity
  - “Snowball effect” of increasing complexity
- Unique “systems”
  - Employment, community, higher education, family, health care
- History and records can be difficult to obtain
  - Old medical records and assessments
  - Collateral informants not always available
- Historical changes...
  - Educational systems, early intervention
  - Health care systems medical advancement
- Generational issues and attitudes toward assessment
- Availability of adult services
  - Brain injury, mental health, substance abuse