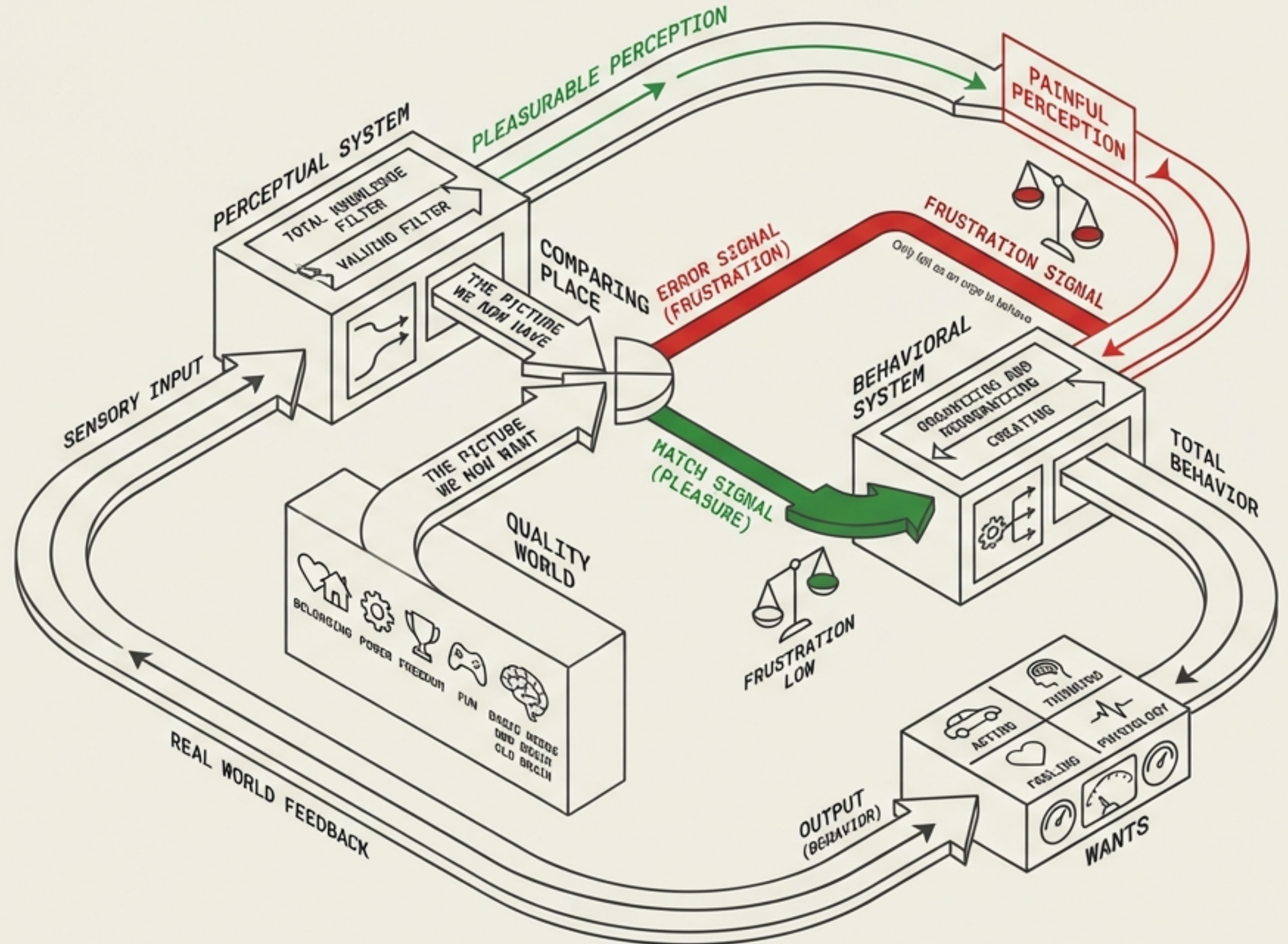


CHOICE THEORY

The Mechanics of the Internal Control System

Based on Dr. William Glasser's Choice Theory. Unlike machines controlled by external operators, humans are internally motivated. We function as sophisticated Control Systems designed to bridge the gap between what we have and what we want.

Key Concept: All we do is behave, and almost all behavior is chosen.



The Quest for Effective Control

Situation A

(Not now in effective control)

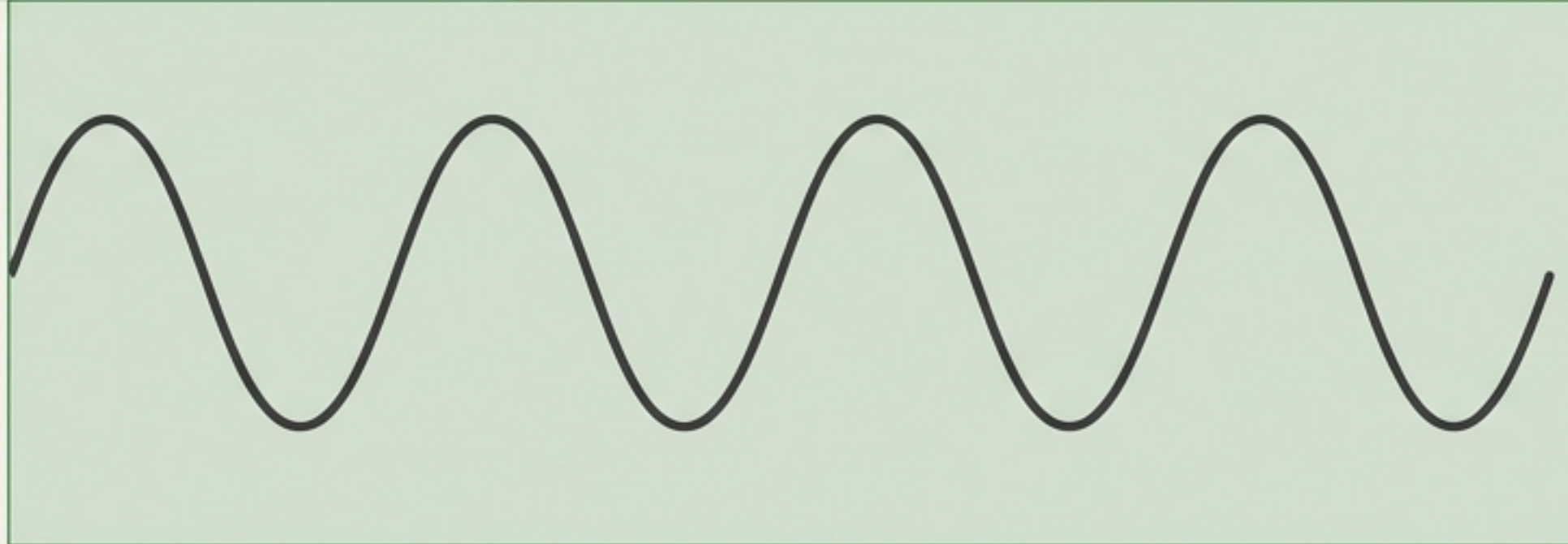
When our internal scales are unbalanced, we feel “out of control.” This is the state where most people seek counseling.

Bad Feelings = Losing Control. ←

SITUATION A



SITUATION B



Situation B

(Gaining more effective control)

The goal of understanding the brain.
When we feel good, we believe we are gaining effective control over our lives.

→ **Good Feelings = Gaining Control.**

Roboto Mono: **The Indicator:** Assuming no brain-altering drugs are involved, our feelings are our best indicator of our control status.

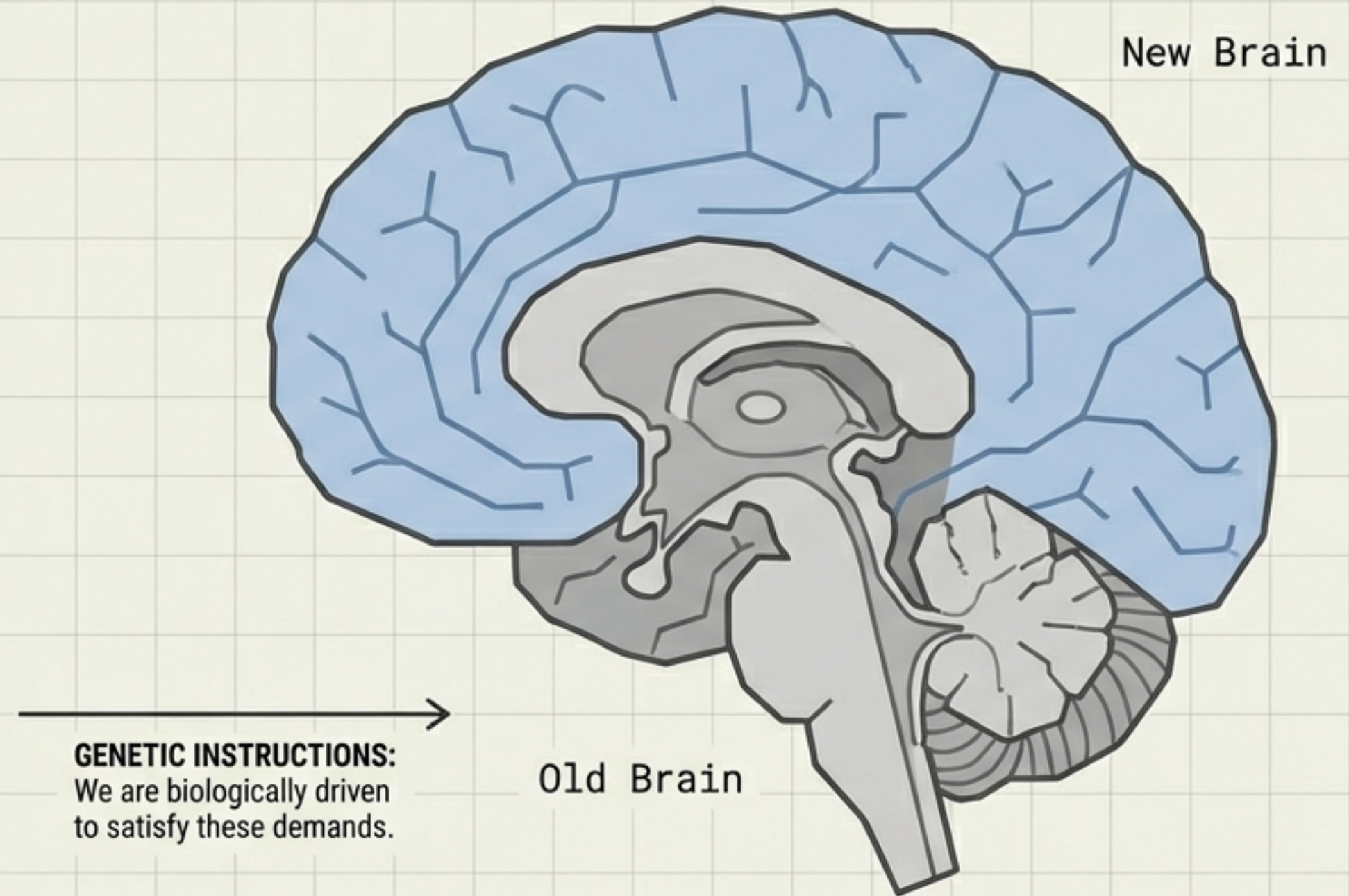
The Engine: Genetic Instructions & Needs

The Old Brain (Physiological)

- Survival (Reproducing)

The New Brain (Psychological)

1. Belonging: Loving, Cooperating
(The primary need)
2. Power: Competing, Achieving,
Gaining Importance
3. Freedom: Moving, Choosing
4. Fun: Learning, Playing



The Target: The Quality World

Definition: The Quality World consists of specific pictures associated with strong positive feelings.

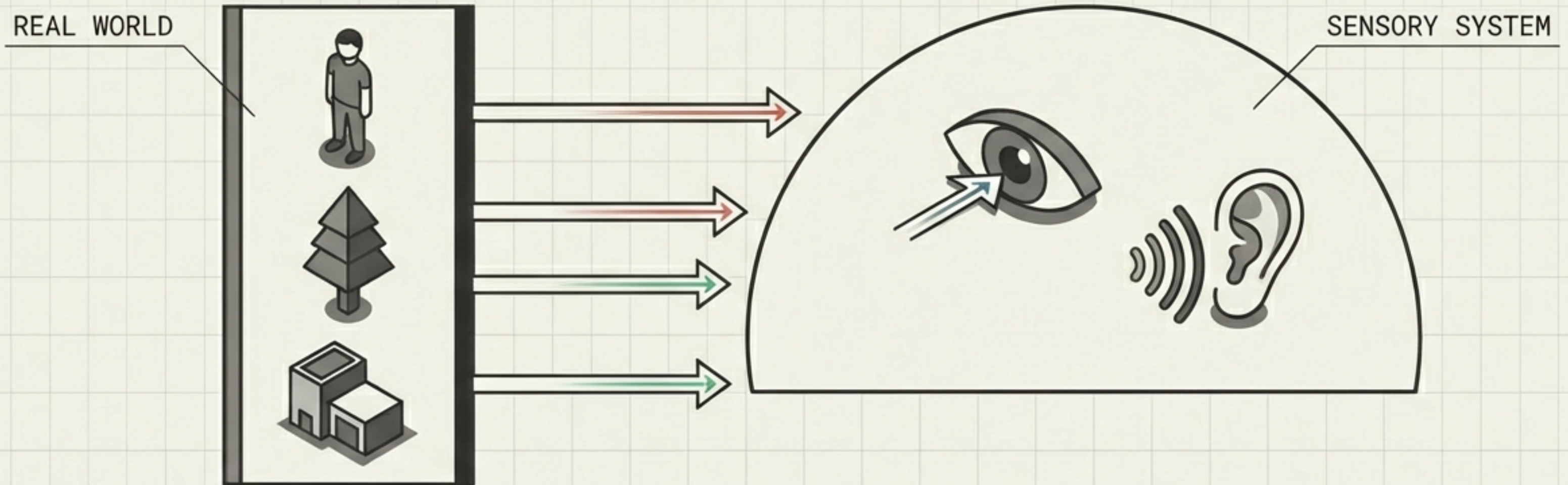
Function: It represents "What we want the most."



The Picture We Now Want: At any given moment, the brain selects one specific picture from this archive to satisfy a basic need.

This archive is the standard against which we measure our reality.

The Input: Real World vs. Sensory System

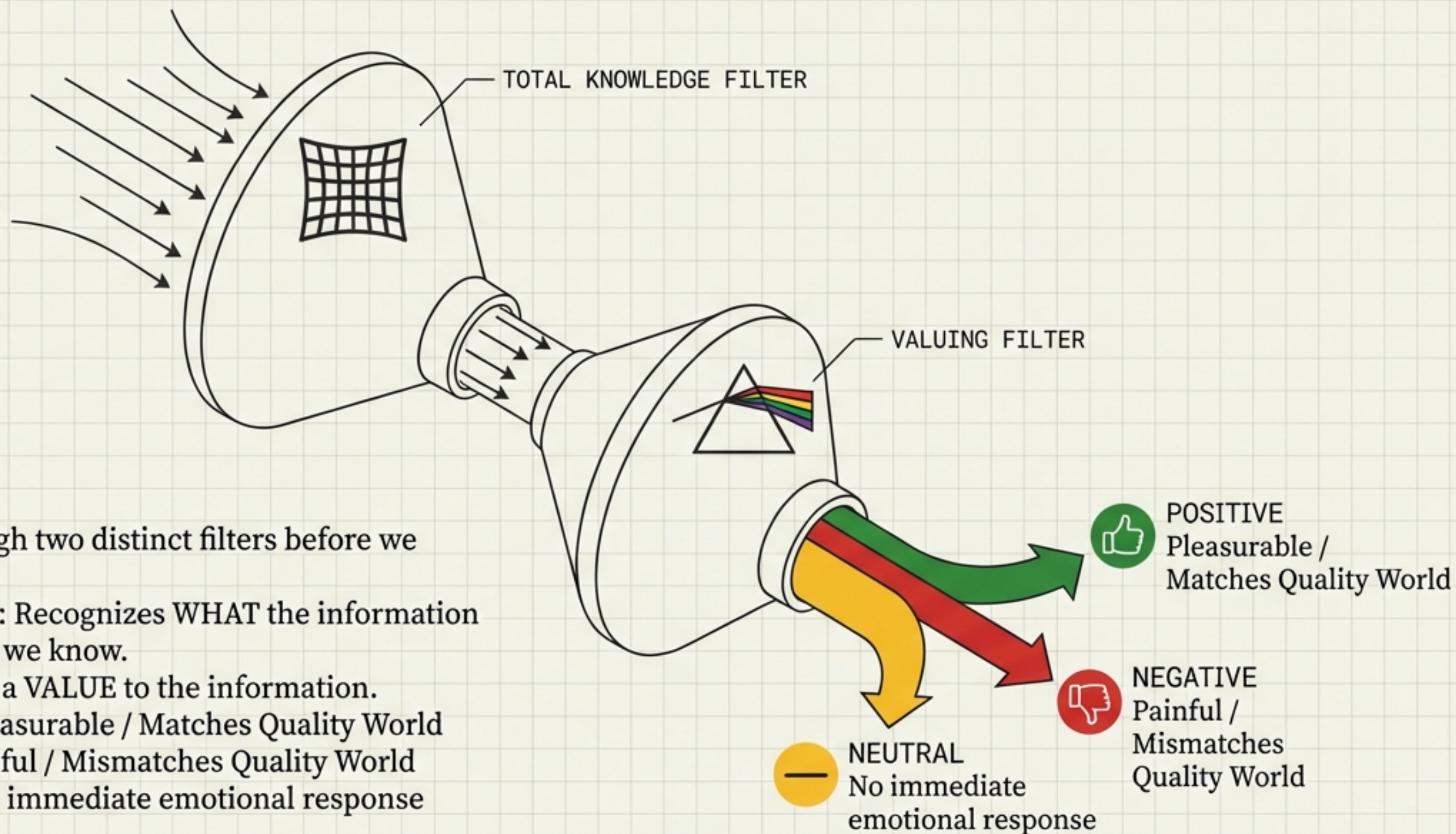


The Real World:
The people, situations, and things that actually exist.

The Sensory System:
Our eyes, ears, and senses pick up raw information.

Crucial Distinction:
We do not interact with the Real World directly; we interact with information passing through our nervous system.

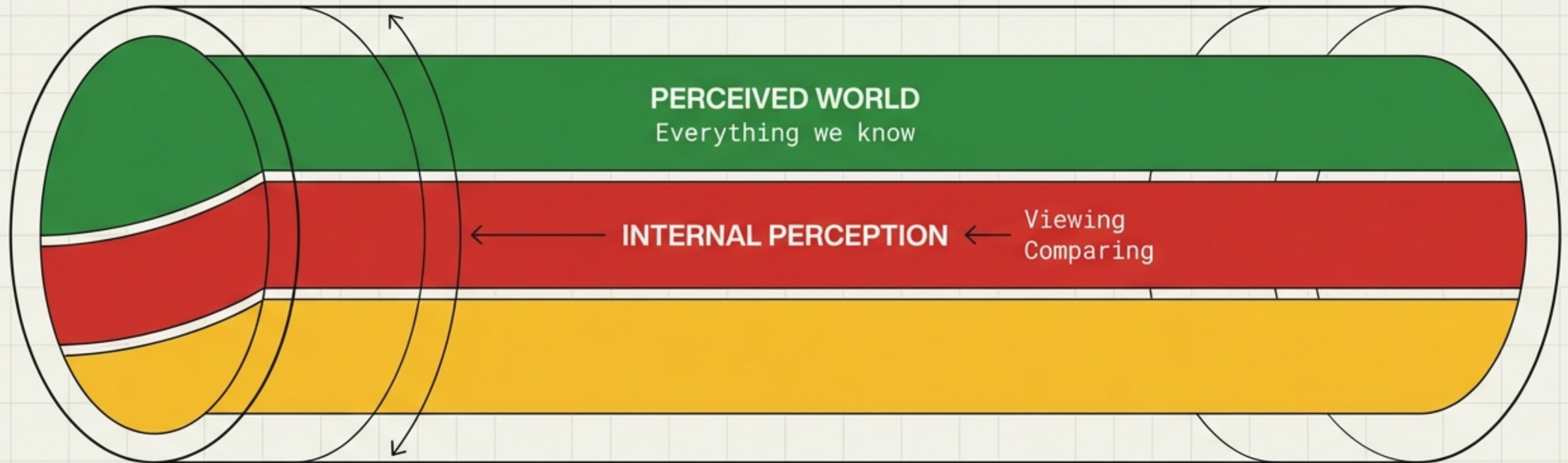
The Filters: How We Process Reality



Information passes through two distinct filters before we perceive it:

1. Total Knowledge Filter: Recognizes **WHAT** the information is based on everything we know.
2. Valuing Filter: Assigns a **VALUE** to the information.
 - Positive (Green): Pleasurable / Matches Quality World
 - Negative (Red): Painful / Mismatches Quality World
 - Neutral (Yellow): No immediate emotional response

The Result: The Perceived World



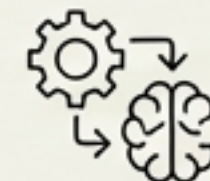
Definition:

“Everything we know” creates our Perceived World. It is the only reality we experience.



Internal Perception / Subjective Reality:

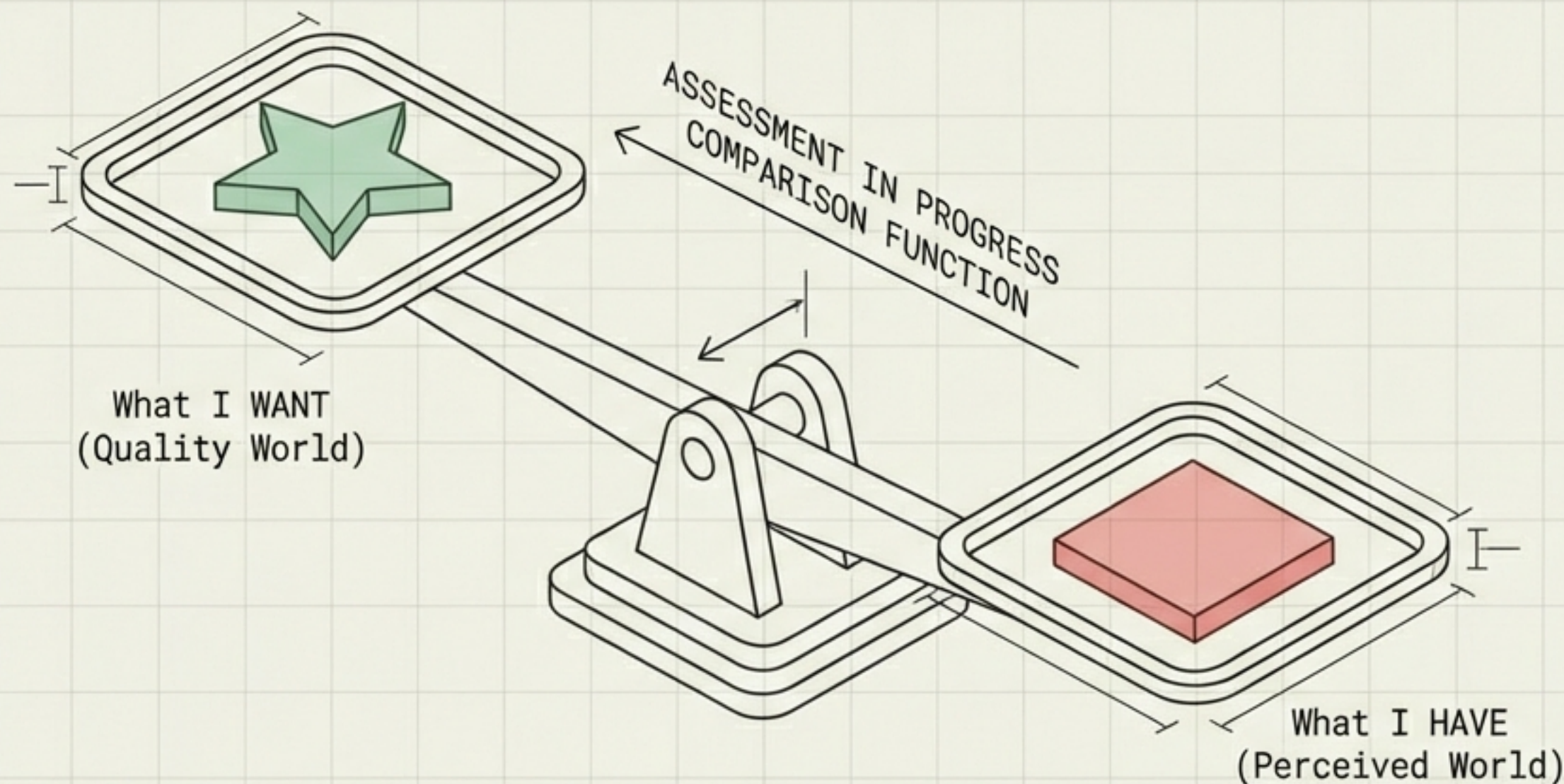
Because of our Valuing Filters, we may perceive a situation as “Painful” while another person perceives the exact same situation as “Pleasurable.”



Key Takeaway:

We do not operate on reality; we operate on our perception of reality.

The Comparator: The Comparing Place

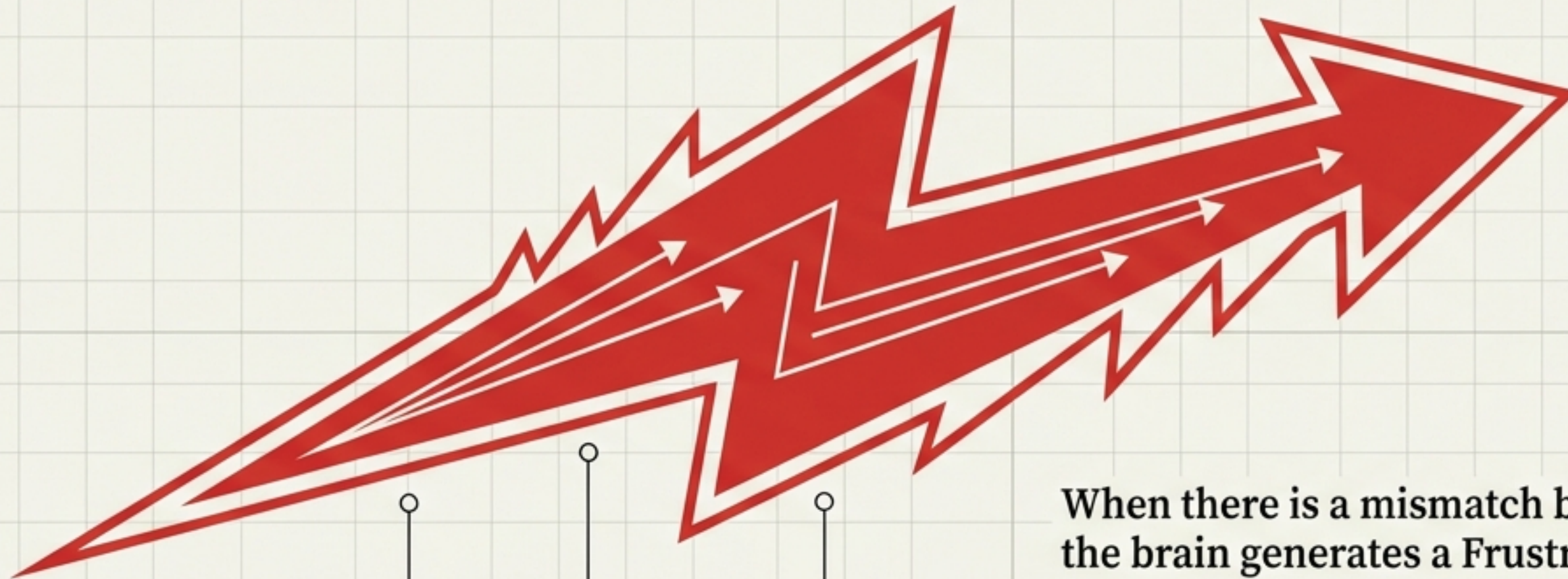


The brain constantly functions as a scale in the Comparing Place.

- Input A: The picture we want (from the Quality World).
- Input B: The perception of what we have (from the Perceived World).

The Goal: To balance the scales. When What We Want matches What We Have, we feel good.

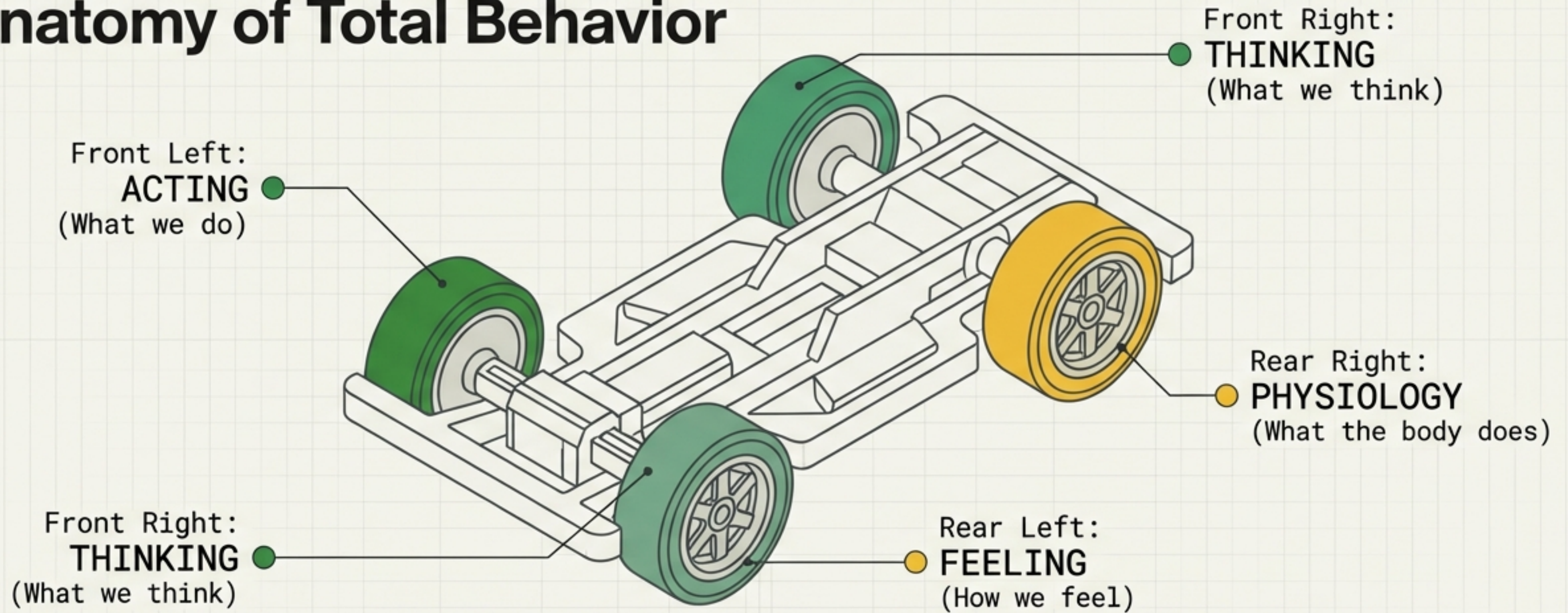
The Spark: The Frustration Signal



When there is a mismatch between Want and Have, the brain generates a Frustration Signal.

- Definition: This signal is felt only as an urge to behave.
- Function: It acts as energy. High frustration means a large gap between reality and desires.
- Process: The system is now primed to generate **Total Behavior** to fix the imbalance.

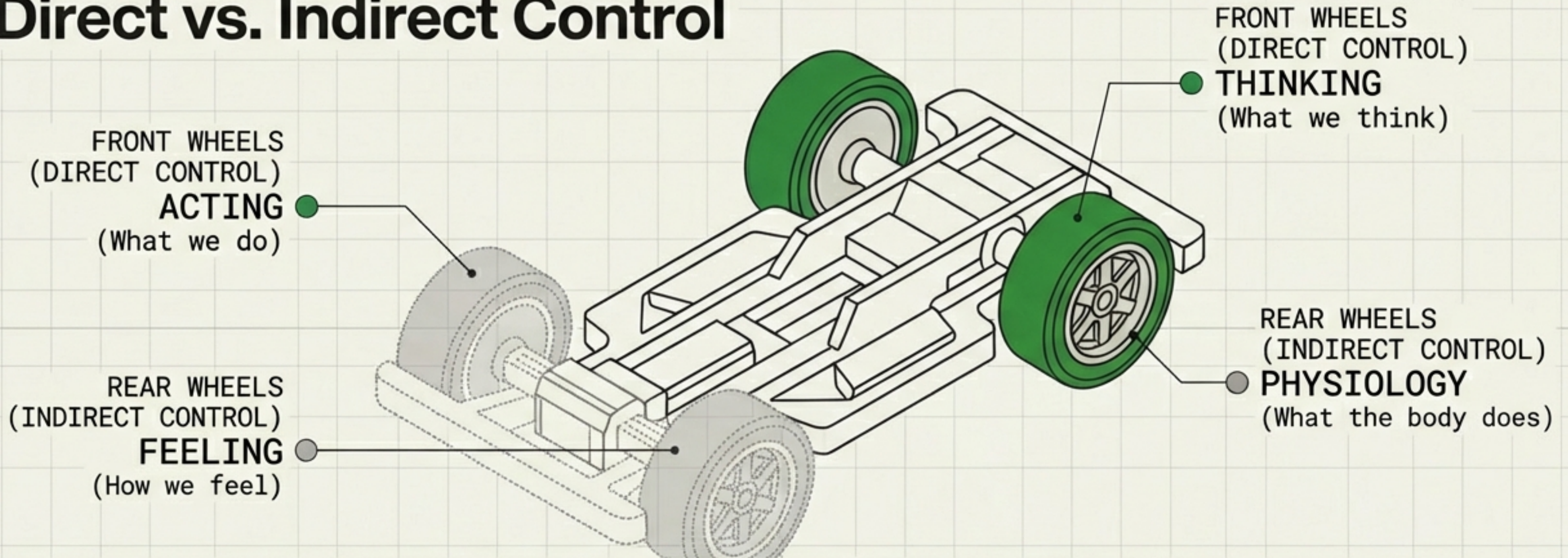
The Output: Anatomy of Total Behavior



All behavior is 'Total'—it is made of four inseparable components.
Every behavior is our best attempt at the time to get what we want.

Steering the System

Direct vs. Indirect Control

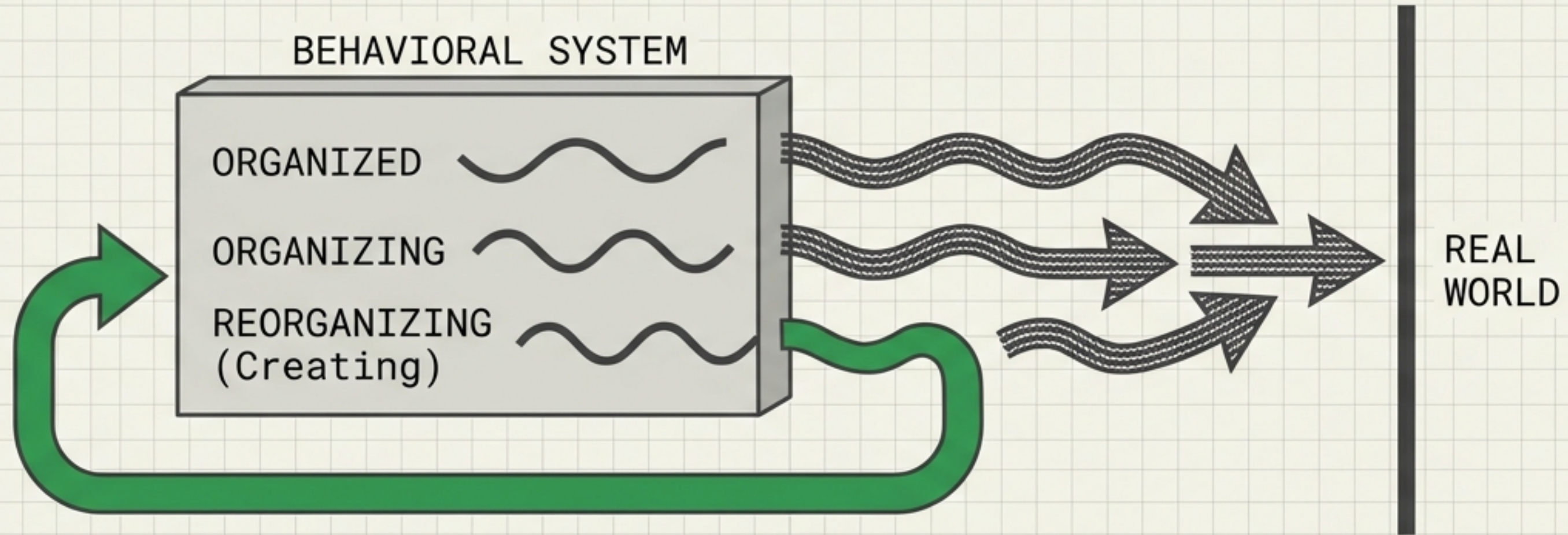


The Front Wheels (Direct Control): Acting and Thinking. We have direct agency over these.

The Rear Wheels (Indirect Control): Feeling and Physiology. These trail the front wheels.

The Strategy: If you want to change how you feel, you must change what you are doing or thinking. You cannot simply 'choose' to feel happy without changing the front wheels.

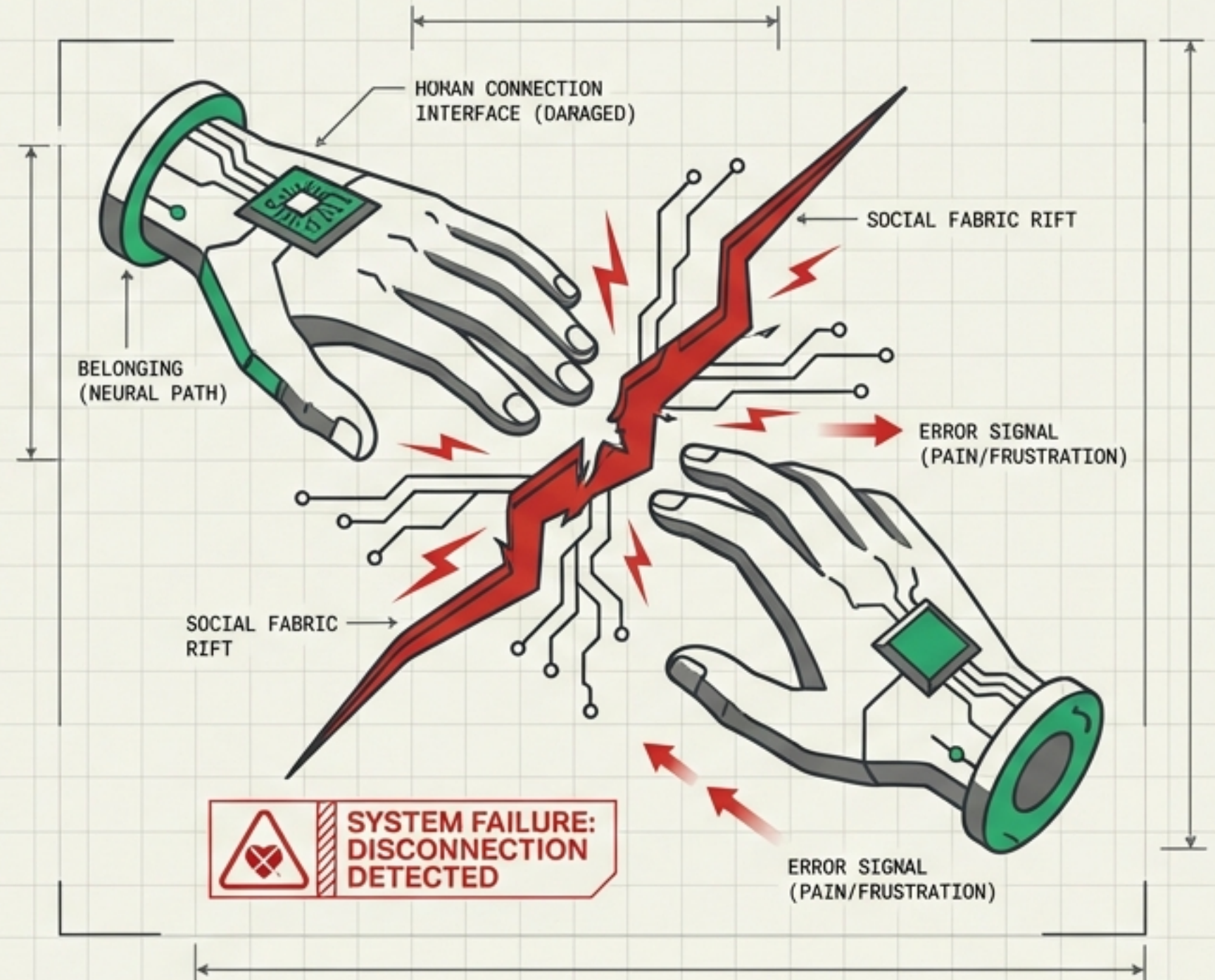
Closing the Loop: The Behavioral System



- Purposeful: All behavior is intended to impact the Real World to make it match our Quality World.
- Creative: If we don't have a behavior that works, the brain will 'Reorganize' or create new behaviors.
- Negative Feedback Loop: As we act on the world, our perception changes. If the new perception matches our want, the Frustration Signal diminishes.

System Failure: The Cost of Disconnection

- The most important basic need is Love and Belonging.
- **The Root Cause:** Disconnectedness is the source of almost all human problems (mental illness, addiction, violence, school failure).
- **External Control Psychology:** Trying to control others (criticizing, blaming, complaining) destroys relationships.
- **Involuntary Behaviors:** When disconnected, the system may generate painful symptoms to cope.



Gaining Effective Control

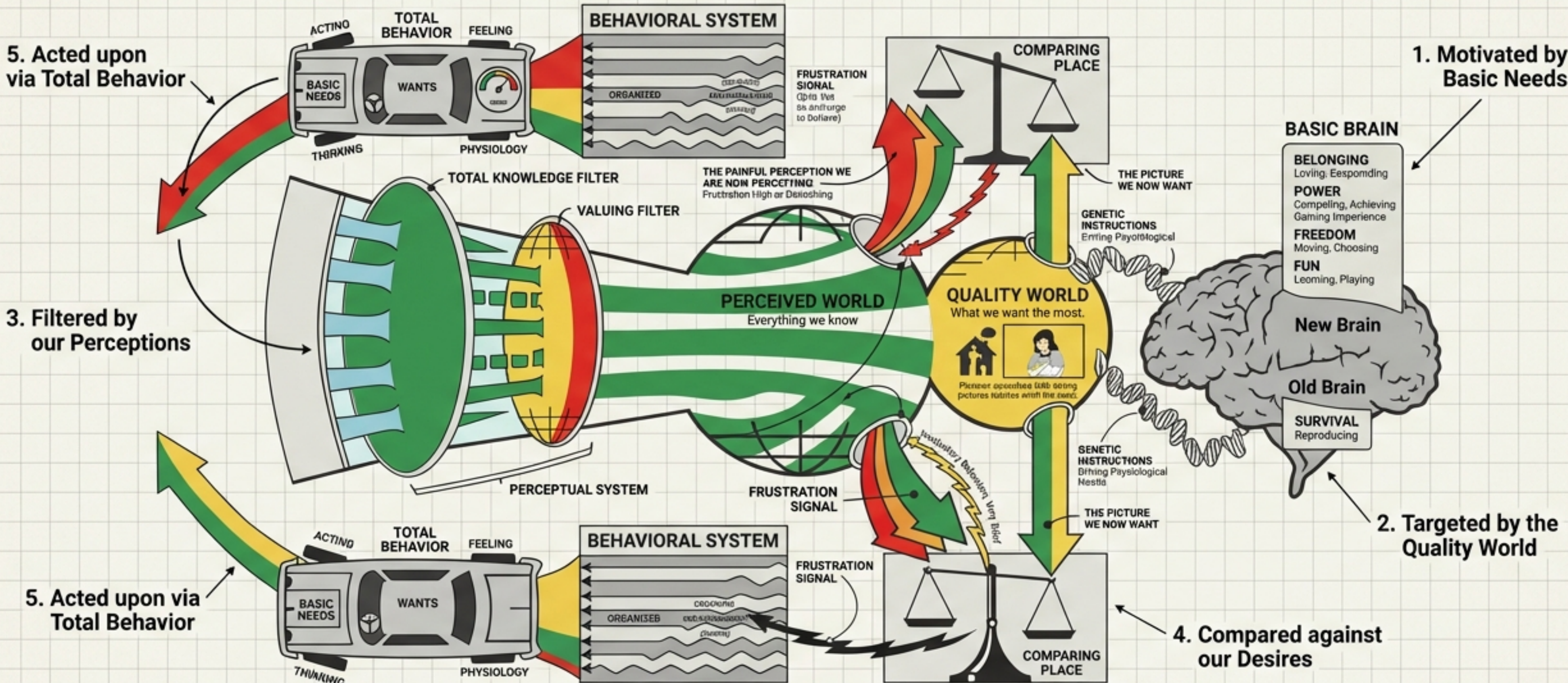
The diagram illustrates a feedback loop for gaining effective control. It features a central yellow-bordered box containing the question: "Is what I am doing getting me closer to the people I need?". An arrow labeled "DECISION POINT" points to the top right corner of this box. Another arrow labeled "BEHAVIORAL SYSTEM ADJUSTMENT" points from the bottom right corner of the box to the text "to choose a new behavior." in the list below. A third arrow labeled "DIRECT CONTROL MECHANISM" points from the text "to choose a new behavior." back to the central box, completing the loop.

“Is what I am doing getting me closer to the people I need?”

- To fix the system, we must move from External Control to Choice Theory.
- If the answer to the question is NO, use your direct control (Acting/Thinking) to choose a new behavior.

DIRECT CONTROL MECHANISM

The Complete Control System



We are the architects of our own choices.