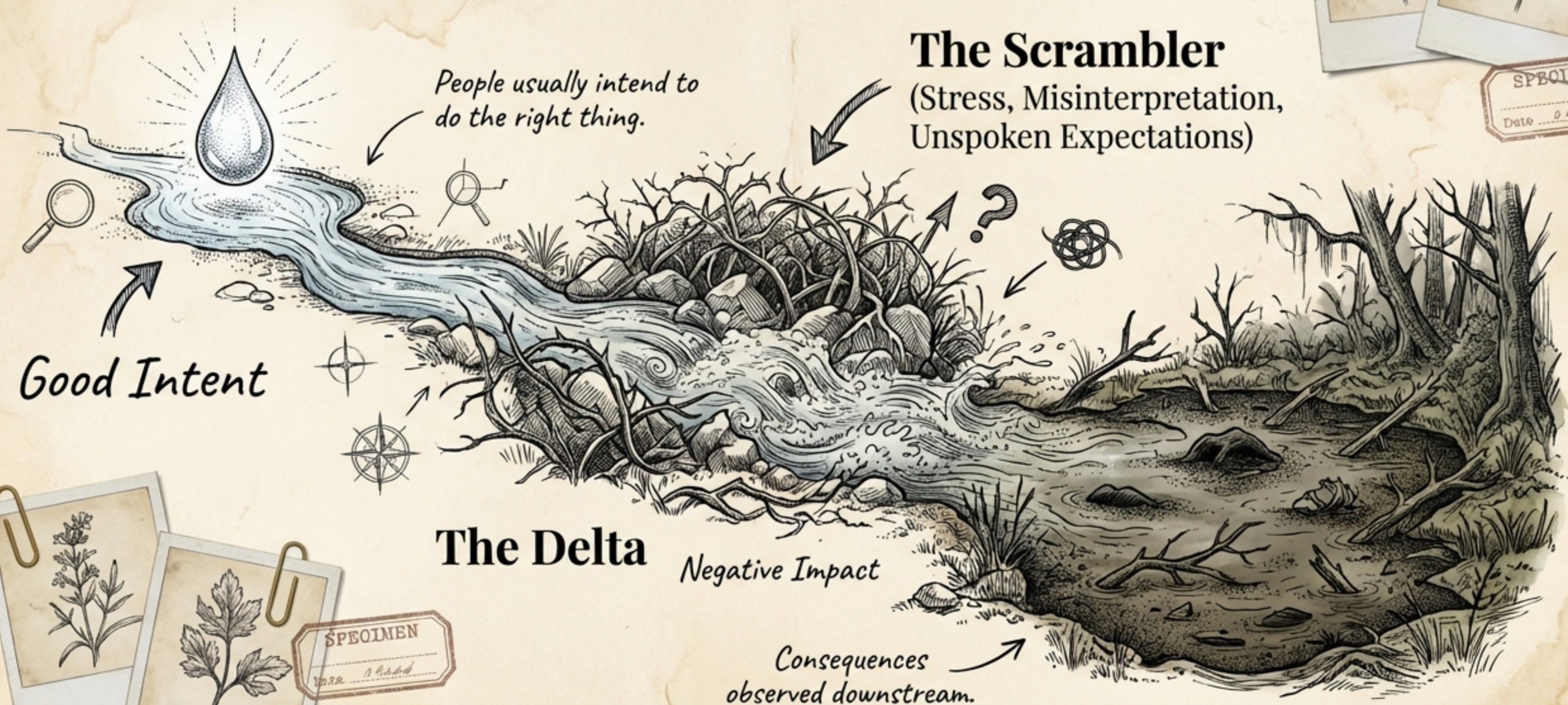


A Field Guide to the Workplace Jungle

Observing Behavior. Navigating Feedback.
Unearthing Intent.



The natural habitat of the modern worker is a tangle of misperceptions. We move through our days reacting to polluted downstream impacts while completely blind to the pure intentions upstream.



People usually intend to do the right thing.

The Scrambler
(Stress, Misinterpretation, Unspoken Expectations)

Good Intent

The Delta

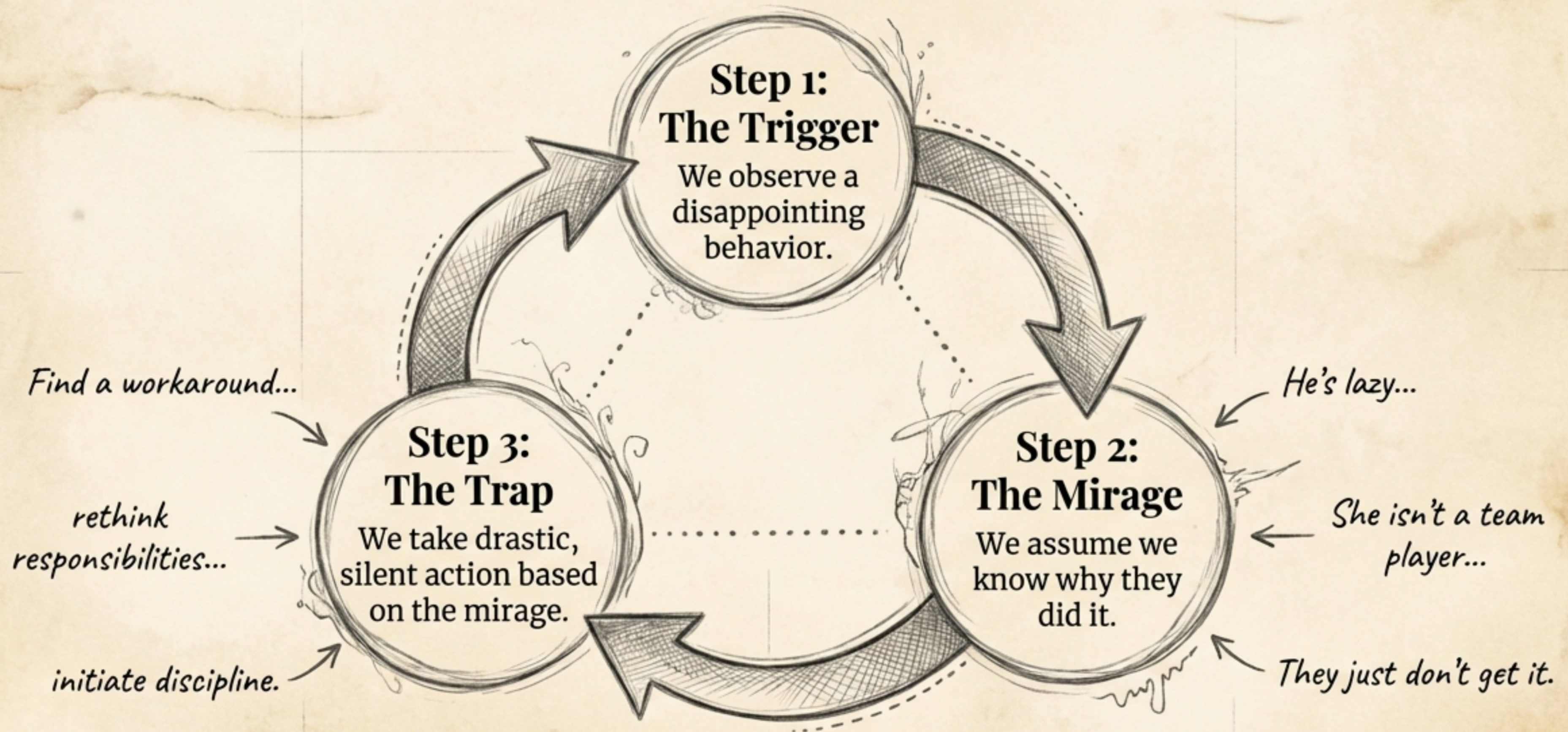
Negative Impact

Consequences observed downstream.



The Assumption Trap

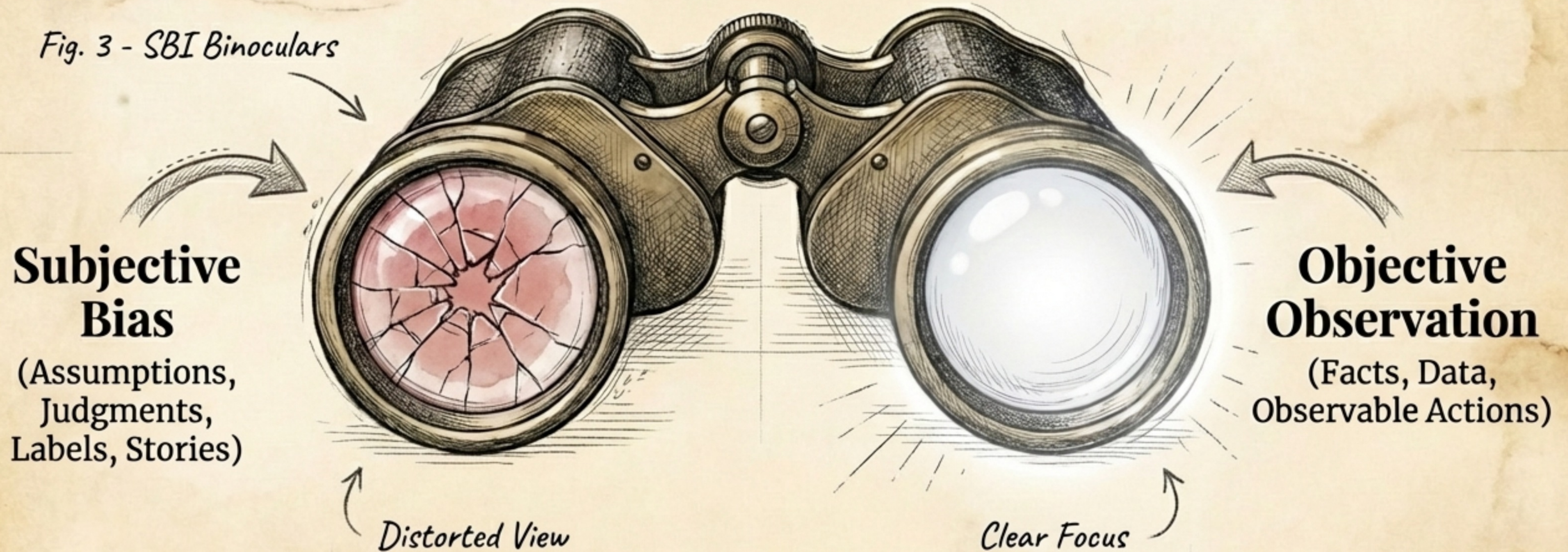
When a specimen disappoints us, we rarely ask questions. We invent stories.



The SBI Framework: Situation, Behavior, Impact

Looking through the clear lens of SBI removes the story from the feedback. Research shows this clinically reduces the recipient's defensiveness and the observer's anxiety.

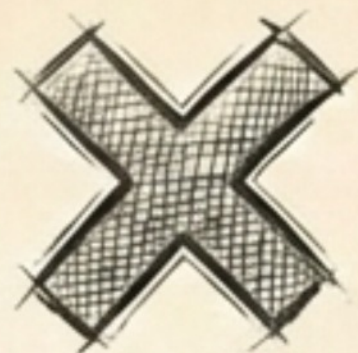
Fig. 3 - SBI Binoculars





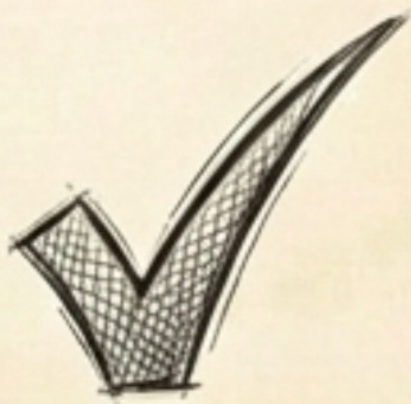
Situation (The Coordinates)

Describe the exact time and place the phenomenon occurred. Avoid vague generalities like “last week” or “lately,” which allow the specimen to evade observation.



Poor coordinate:

Example: At the meetings lately...



Precise coordinate:

Example: This morning at the 11 AM budget meeting...



Behavior (The Recording)

Describe only the actual, observable actions. Keep strictly to the facts. If a camera couldn't record it, it's an opinion.



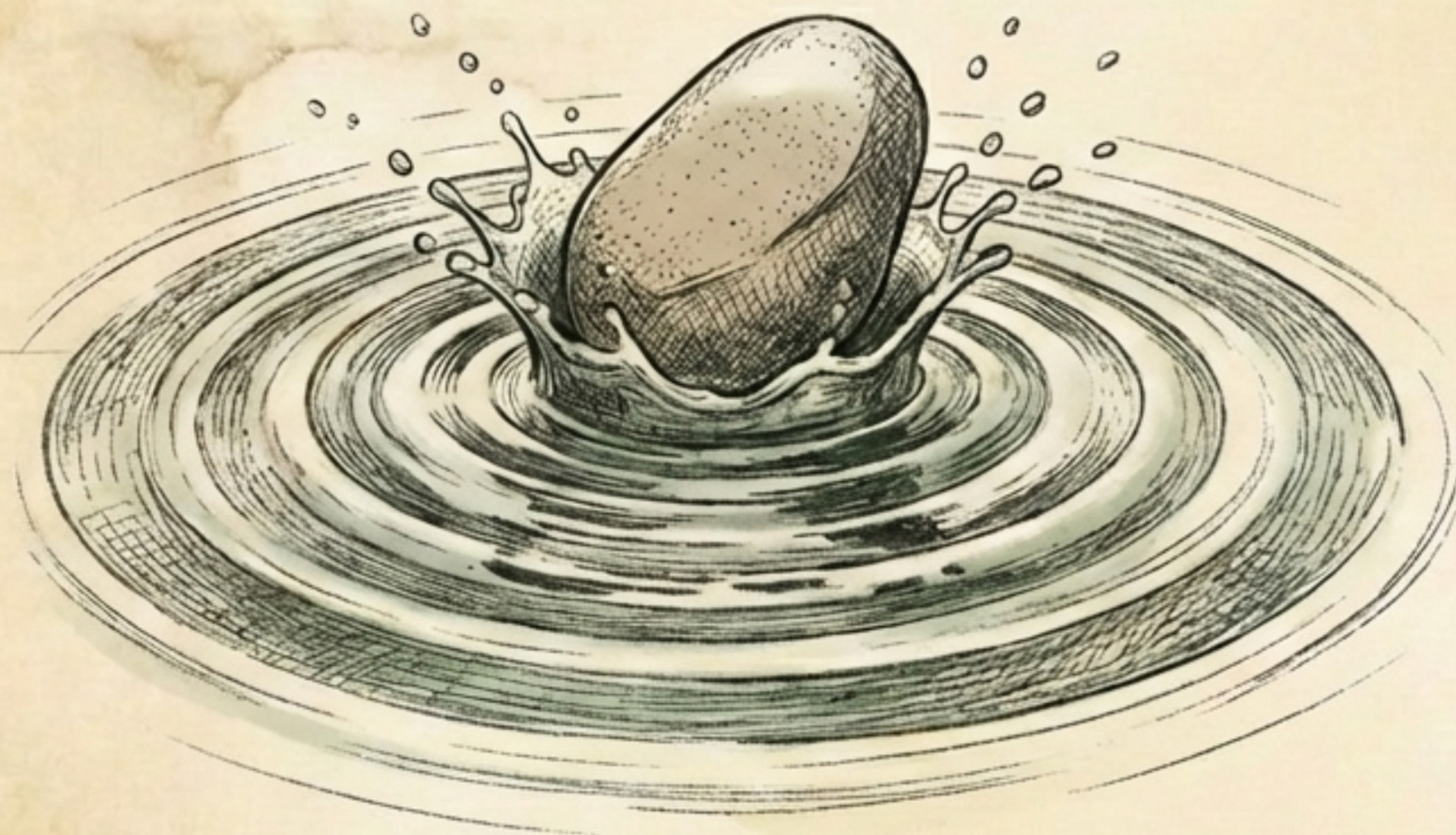
Subjective Judgment:

You were rude and dismissive.

Observable Fact:

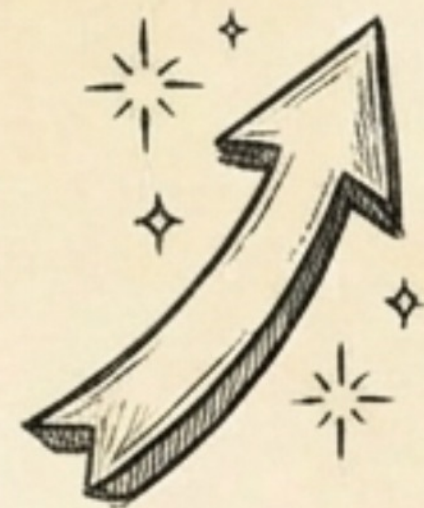


You interrupted me while I was presenting the monthly numbers.



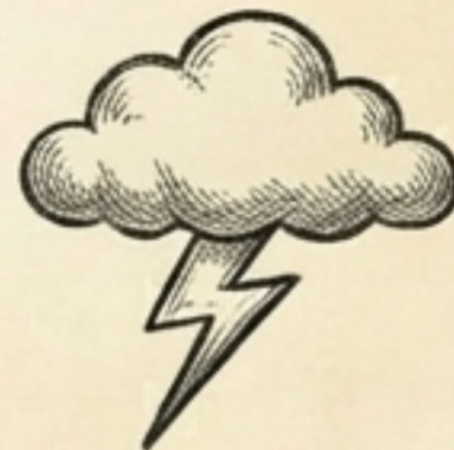
Impact (The Ripple Effect)

Describe the tangible result or your true feelings. This is not a judgment of them; it is a report of the ecosystem's reaction.



Positive Ripple:

I was impressed when you addressed that issue without being asked.



Corrective Ripple:

I felt frustrated because it broke my train of thought.

Anatomy of a Field Observation

At the 11 AM team meeting, you interrupted me while
I was telling the team about the budget, and I felt
frustrated because I lost my train of thought.

[S] Grounding
Context



[B] Observable
Fact



[I] Unarguable
Result



Field Identification Guide

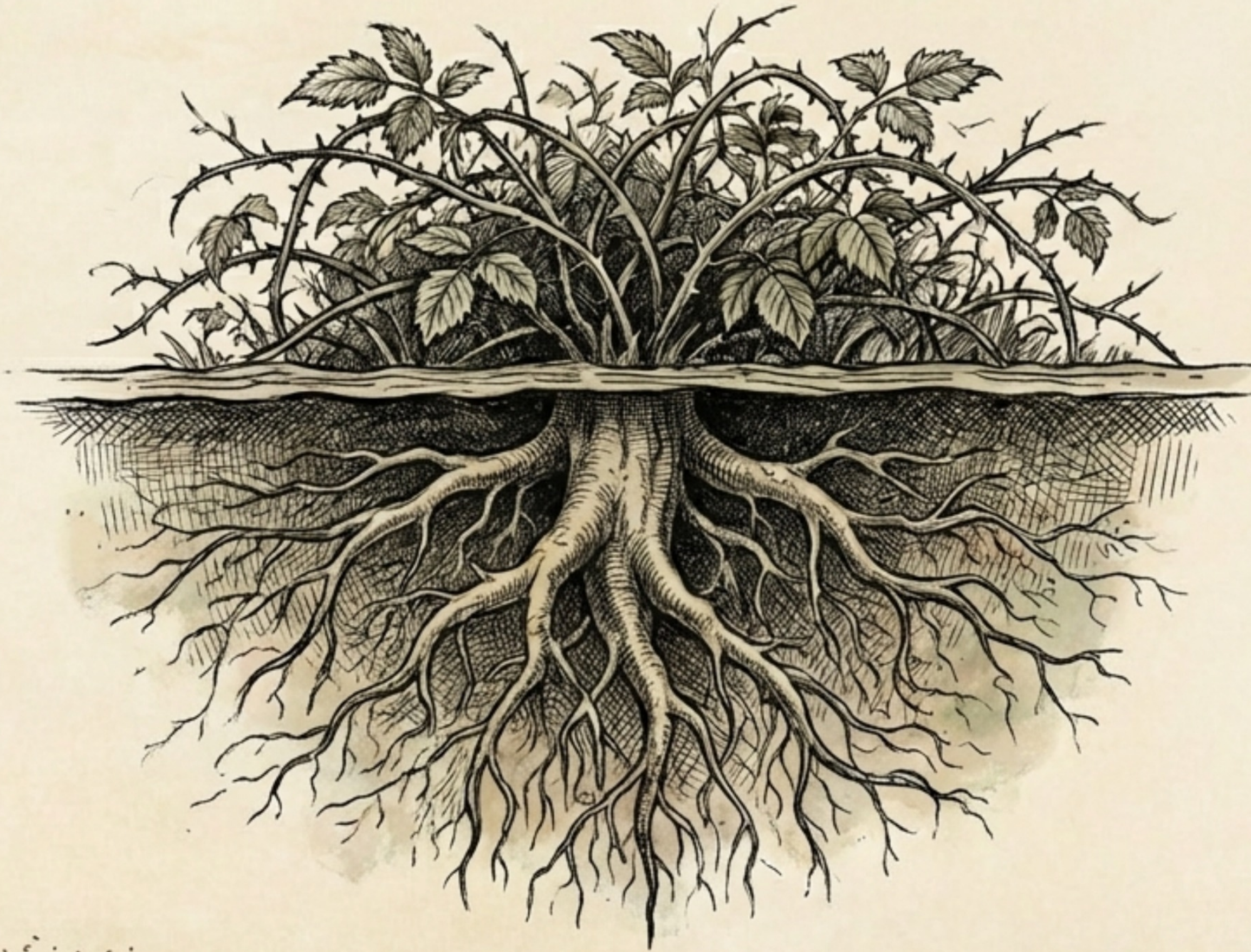
The Wild Phenomenon	The Novice Mistake (Bias)	The Expert Observation (SBI)	The Ecosystem Result
Employee misses a deadline.	You obviously don't care about this project.	Yesterday at 5 PM (<i>S</i>), you didn't submit the report (<i>B</i>), and I was worried we would lose the client (<i>I</i>).	<i>Defensiveness vs. Receptiveness.</i>
Peer takes over a task.	You're a control freak.	During the client call (<i>S</i>), you answered the questions directed at me (<i>B</i>), and I felt my authority was undermined (<i>I</i>).	<i>Conflict vs. Clarity.</i>

The Limitation of the Lens

SBI is a masterclass in delivering information. But telling a person their impact is only a one-way transmission. It identifies the damage, but it doesn't cure the root cause of the behavior.



You cannot judge a specimen solely by its leaves. To prevent faulty assumptions and discover the truth, we must unearth the roots.



Behavior & Impact
(What we see and feel)

Intent
(What we must dig
to find)

Intent (The Inquiry)

Extend SBI to SBII. Invite the specimen to share their experience. This bridges the gap between impact and intent.

The Trowel (Questions to dig with):

- What were you hoping to accomplish with that?
- What was going on for you in that moment?

Note: Asking about intent is where true coaching begins.



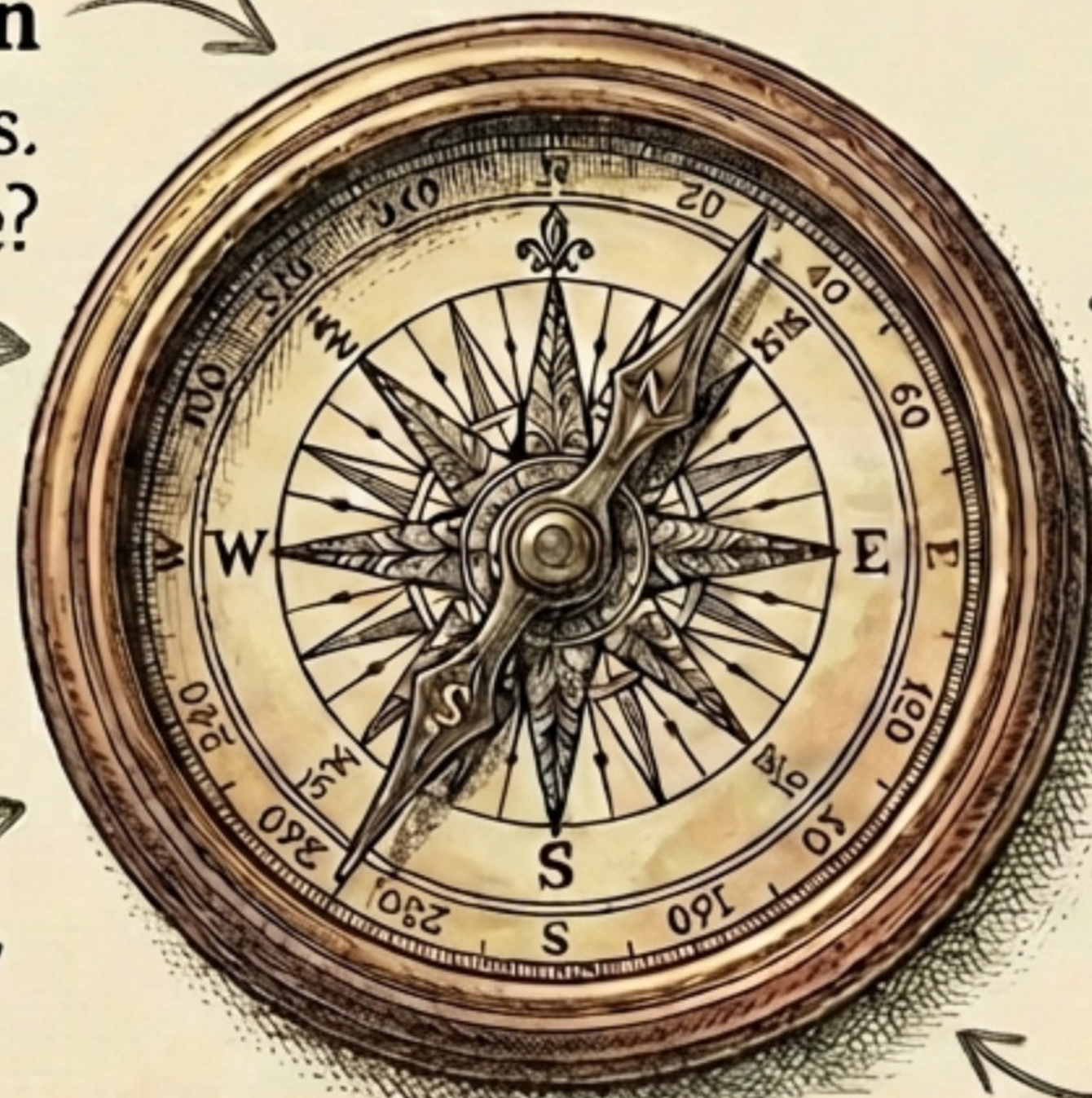
The S-B-I-I Compass

Navigate the full 360 degrees of a conversation. Using the full compass prevents you from veering off in the wrong direction based on faulty assumptions.

Situation
Specific facts.
Where are we?

Intent
Exploration. Where are
they coming from?

*Explore the depths beyond
surface observations.*



Behavior
Observation.
What do we see?

Impact
Ripple. How does it
affect the ecosystem?



Symbiosis Achieved.

- The only way to know intent is to ask.
- The only way to share impact is to tell.
- Replace assumptions with curiosity to build trust in the wild.