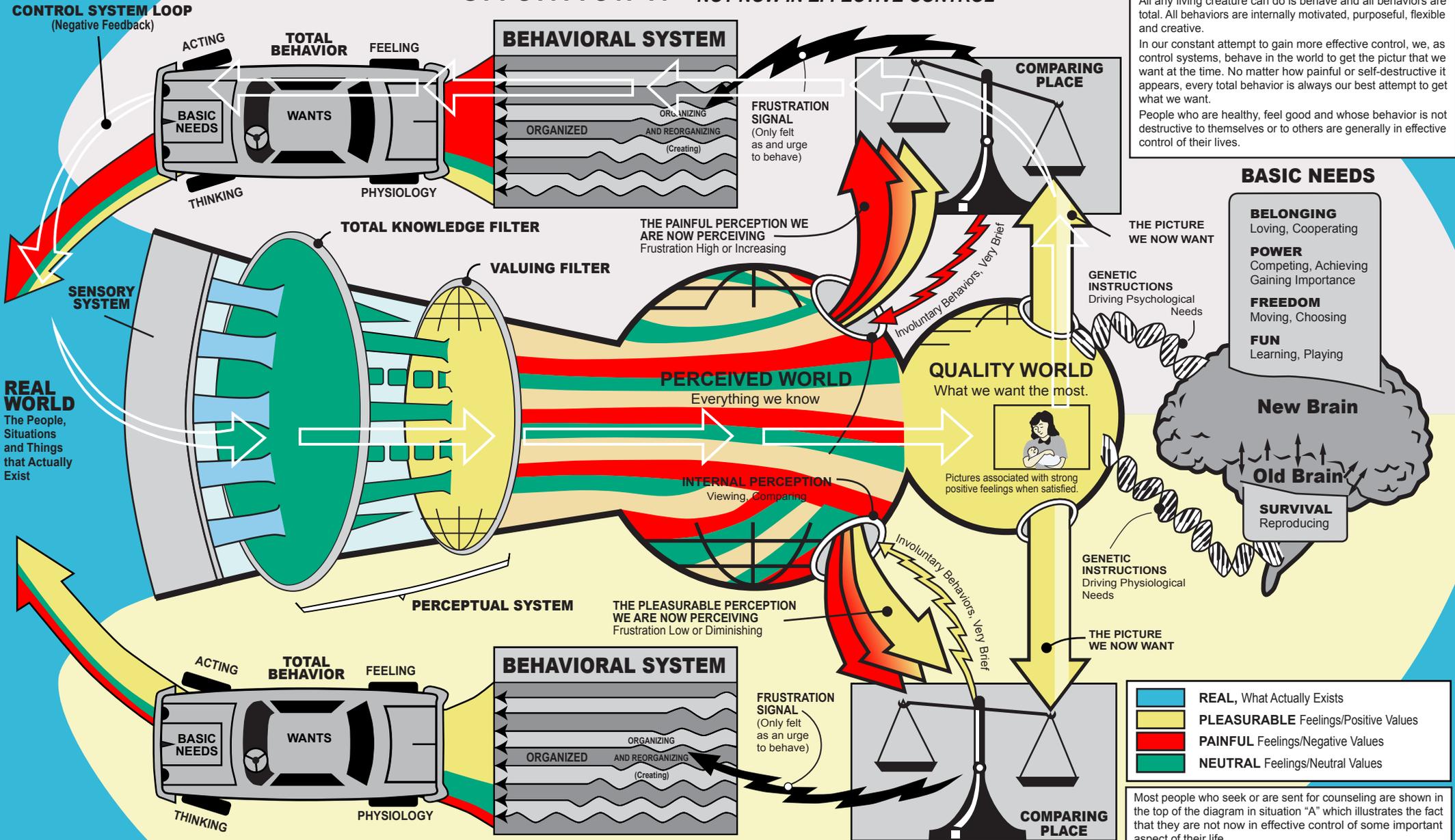


# HOW THE BRAIN WORKS

## SITUATION A NOT NOW IN EFFECTIVE CONTROL



All any living creature can do is behave and all behaviors are total. All behaviors are internally motivated, purposeful, flexible and creative.

In our constant attempt to gain more effective control, we, as control systems, behave in the world to get the picture that we want at the time. No matter how painful or self-destructive it appears, every total behavior is always our best attempt to get what we want.

People who are healthy, feel good and whose behavior is not destructive to themselves or to others are generally in effective control of their lives.

### BASIC NEEDS

- BELONGING**  
Loving, Cooperating
- POWER**  
Competing, Achieving  
Gaining Importance
- FREEDOM**  
Moving, Choosing
- FUN**  
Learning, Playing

### New Brain

### Old Brain

- SURVIVAL**  
Reproducing

	REAL, What Actually Exists
	PLEASURABLE Feelings/Positive Values
	PAINFUL Feelings/Negative Values
	NEUTRAL Feelings/Neutral Values

Most people who seek or are sent for counseling are shown in the top of the diagram in situation "A" which illustrates the fact that they are not now in effective control of some important aspect of their life.

The bottom of the diagram shows these people in situation "B" where they are gaining more effective control. Assuming no brain-altering drugs are in the system, how we feel is our best indicator of how effective our control is at any given time. When we feel good, we believe that we are either in or gaining effective control. When we feel bad, we believe we are not in effective control or that we are losing effective control.

## SITUATION B Gaining More EFFECTIVE CONTROL

# CHOICE THEORY® - WHY AND HOW WE BEHAVE

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**THE WILLIAM GLASSER INSTITUTE:** The Institute was founded in 1967 in Los Angeles by psychiatrist, lecturer and author, Dr. William Glasser. From the beginning, it has provided training in the practice of Reality Therapy, but as Dr. Glasser has continued to develop his ideas, Choice Theory has become the psychological base of all Institute programs. In addition, the teaching of lead-management concepts has been an important component in the training process. Intensive trainings are conducted throughout the United States, Canada and in several other countries throughout the world. These seminars are attended by a wide range of professionals from the fields of mental health, education, corrections and pastoral care. Upon request, The Institute can also arrange to send a trainer to an agency, school or business if there is a group of 10 or more interested persons. A list of Intensive Trainings is accessible through our Web site.

**CHOICE THEORY/REALITY THERAPY CERTIFICATION:** There are no educational prerequisites for attending the Basic Intensive Training or pursuing Choice Theory/Reality Therapy Certification. The course of study consists of a Basic Intensive Training, a Basic Practicum, an Advanced Intensive Training, an Advanced Practicum and the Certification Session, where participants demonstrate their knowledge and skills acquired in the process. These steps can be completed in 16-18 months. The Intensive Trainings (actually consisting of 3-4 days each) are taught by Institute Faculty in small groups, and consist of lectures, discussions, demonstrations and role-plays, with a strong emphasis on self-evaluation. Participants have a different Instructor for each of the Intensive Trainings and are recommended by their Practicum Supervisor(s) prior to ending the Advanced Training and the Certification Session.

**THE QUALITY SCHOOL TRAINING PROGRAM:** This program is based on the concepts first described in Dr. Glasser's book, *The Quality School*, and later in his 1998 book, *Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom*. The program is geared towards helping individual schools create the necessary systemic change that can lead to the creation of a Quality School. In this process, the role of the principal, utilizing lead-management principles, is crucial to the process. Once the staff is committed to the vision of creating such a school and has begun to facilitate change in the school structure, Intensive Training is provided.

**BOOKS AND MATERIALS:** Dr. Glasser's books as well as other resources such as DVD's, workbooks and other material to teach the chart, are available for purchase through the Web site, [wglasser.com](http://wglasser.com).

**CHOICE THEORY** is the basis for all programs taught by The Institute. It states that all we do is behave, that almost all behavior is chosen, and that we are driven by our genes to satisfy five basic needs – *survival, love and belonging, power, freedom and fun*. In practice, the most important need is love and belonging as closeness and connectedness with the people we care about is a requisite for satisfying all of the needs. Choice Theory is offered to replace *external control psychology*, the present psychology of almost all the people in the world. Unfortunately, this forcing, punishing psychology is destructive to relationships. When used in a relationship

it will always destroy the ability of one or both to find satisfaction in that relationship and will result in people becoming disconnected from those with whom they want to be connected. Disconnectedness is the source of almost all human problems, such as what is called mental illness, drug addiction, violence, crime, school failure, spousal and child abuse, to mention a few. The 1998 book, *Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom*, is the primary text for all that is taught by The Institute.

**REALITY THERAPY** is the method of counseling that Dr. Glasser has been teaching since 1965. It is the art of creating a meaningful relationship, and through that relationship, helping clients make more effective choices. As discussed in Dr. Glasser's book, *Counseling with Choice Theory: The New Reality Therapy*, it is now firmly based on Choice Theory, and its successful application is dependent on the counselor's knowledge of that theory. In fact, teaching Choice Theory to counsees (whether clients or students) is now part of Reality Therapy. Since unsatisfactory or nonexistent connections with people we need are the source of almost all human problems, the goal of Reality Therapy is to help people reconnect. This reconnection almost always starts with the counselor/teacher first connecting with the individual and then using this connection as a model for how the disconnected person can begin to connect with the people he or she needs.

### **To create the relationship, the counselor will:**

- Focus on the present and avoid discussing the past because all human problems are caused by unsatisfying present relationships.
- Avoid discussing symptoms and complaints as much as possible since these are the ways that counsees choose to deal with unsatisfying relationships.
- Understand the concept of total behavior, which means focus on what counsees can do directly - act and think. Spend less time on what they cannot do directly, that is, change their feelings and physiology. Feelings and physiology can be changed, but only if there is a change in the acting and thinking.
- Avoid criticizing, blaming and/or complaining and help counsees to do the same, thus avoiding those extremely harmful external control behaviors that destroy relationships.
- Remain non-judgmental and non-coercive, but encourage people to judge all they are doing by the Choice Theory axiom: *Is what I am doing getting me closer to the people I need?* If the choice of behaviors is not getting people closer, then the counselor works to help them find new behaviors that lead to a better connection.
- Teach counsees that legitimate or not, excuses stand directly in the way of their making needed connections.
- Focus on specifics. Find out as soon as possible who counsees are disconnected from and work to help them choose reconnecting behaviors. If they are completely disconnected, focus on helping them find a new connection .
- Help them make specific, workable plans to reconnect with the people they need, and then follow through on what was planned by helping them evaluate their progress. Based on their experience, counselors may suggest plans, but should not give the message that there is only one plan. A plan is always open to revision or rejection by the counselee.
- Be patient and supportive but keep focusing on the source of the problem, disconnectedness. Help them to understand, through teaching them Choice Theory, that whatever their complaint, reconnecting is the best possible solution to their problem.