The Dead Horse Theory: A Change Management Survival Guide for Data & AI Professionals

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Thank you, partners 💖

















































The Dead Horse Theory: A Change Management Survival Guide for Data & AI Professionals

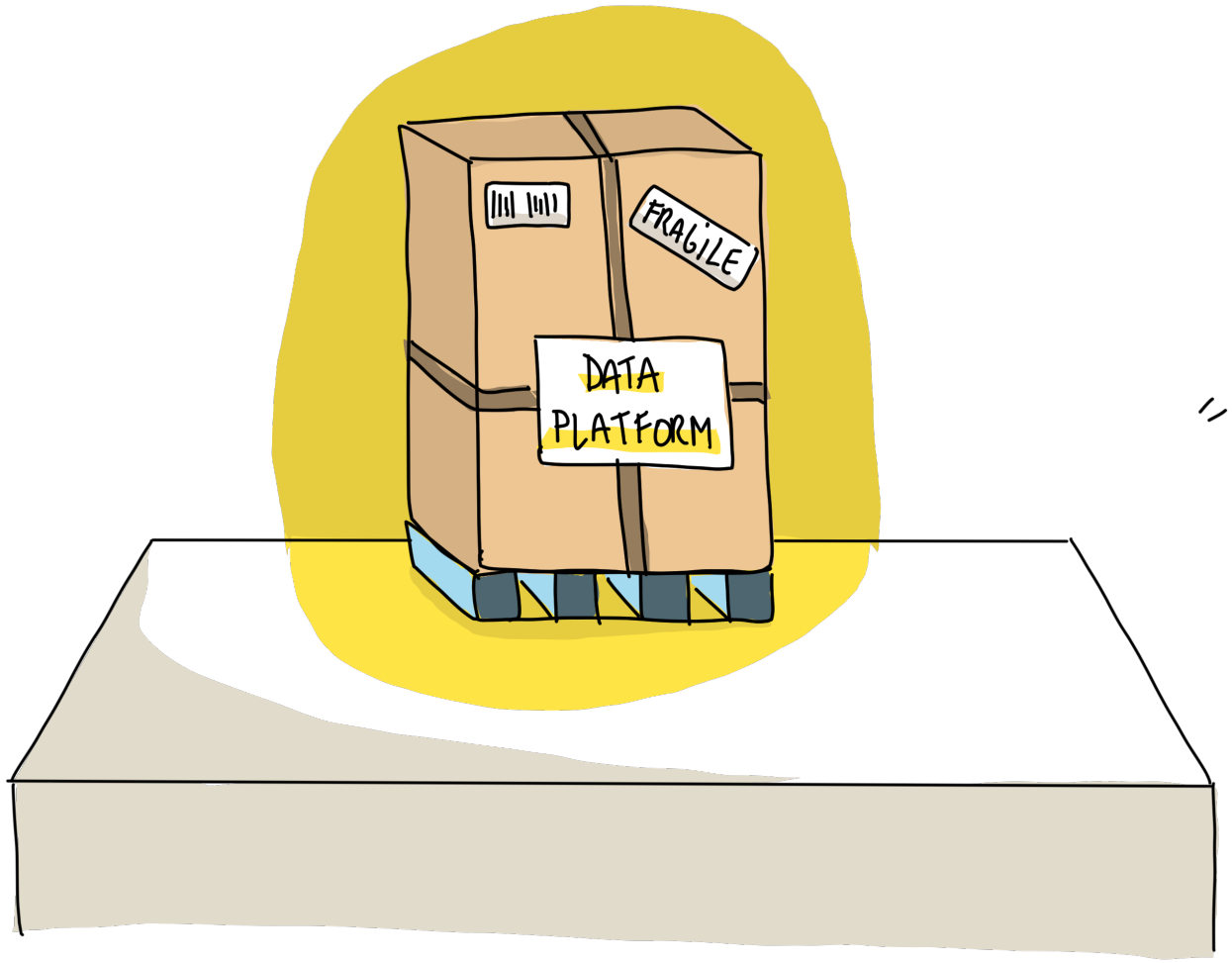


PART I

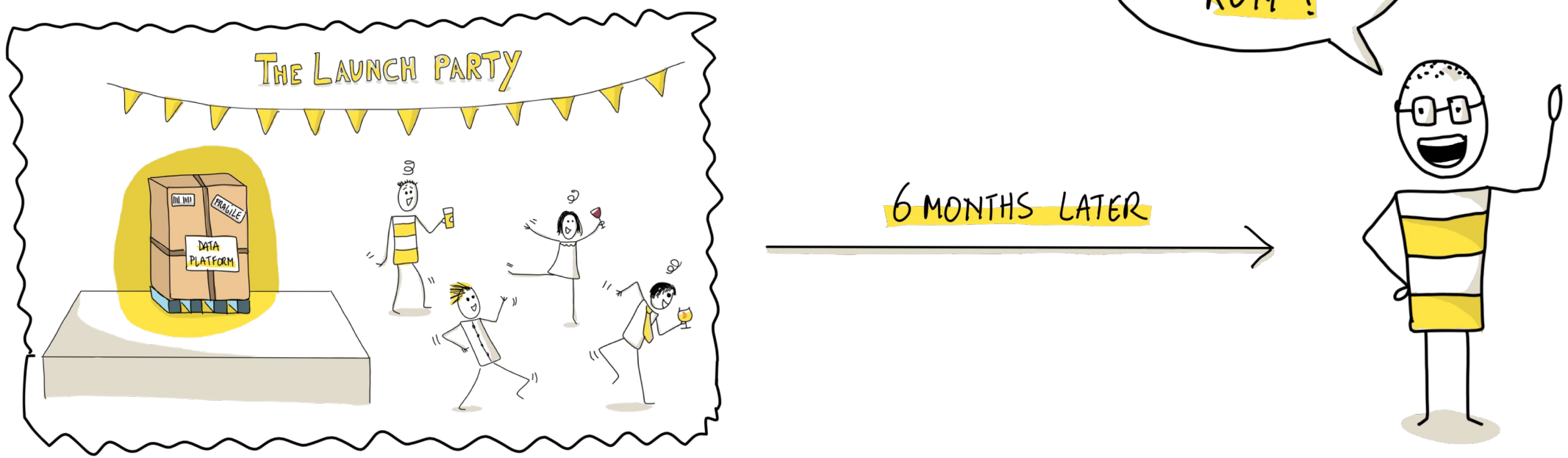
The Launch Party



The Launch Party





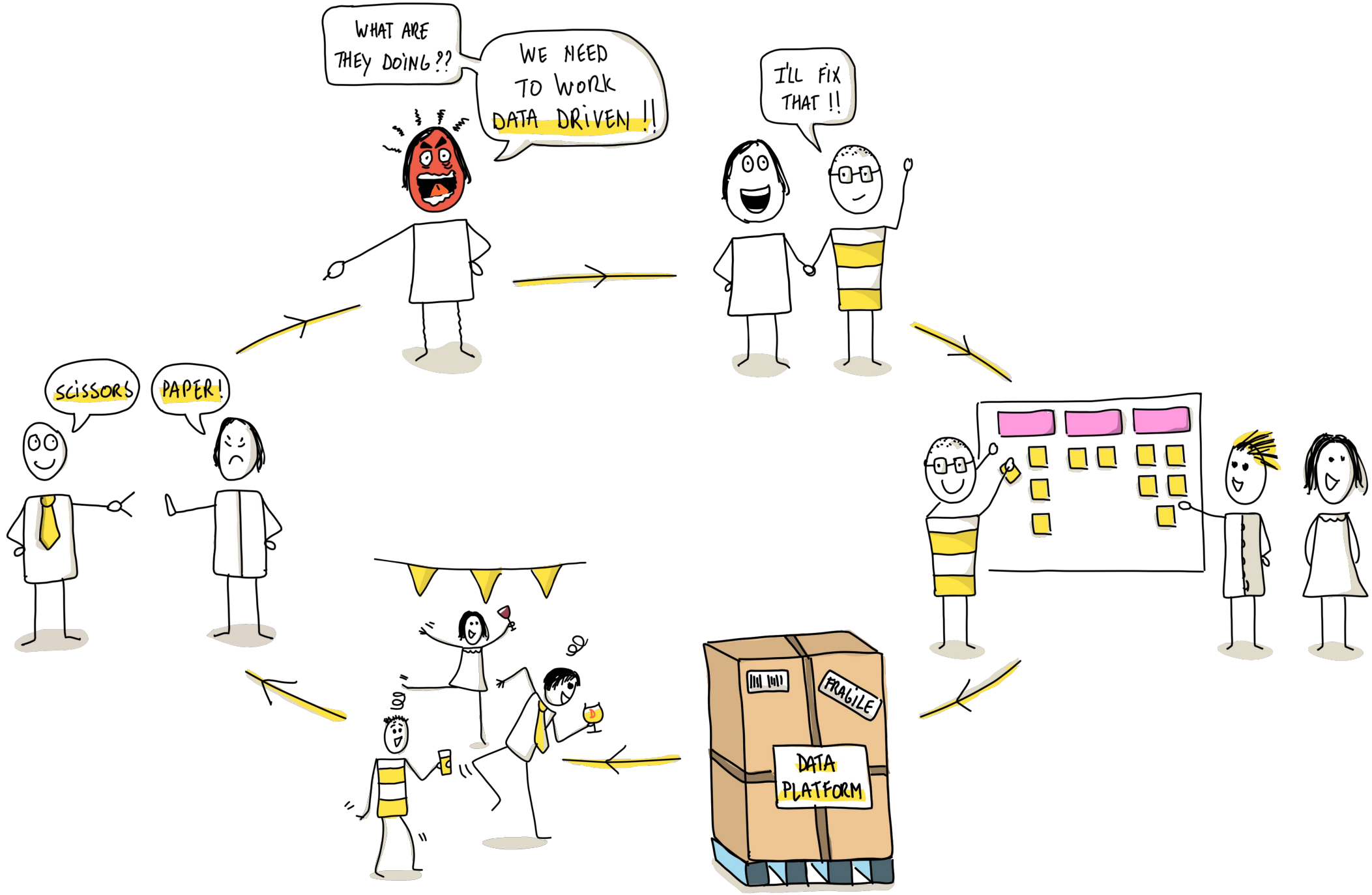

THE LAUNCH PARTY
FRAGILE
DATA PLATFORM
6 MONTHS LATER
HOW WOULD THE PLATFORM RUN ?

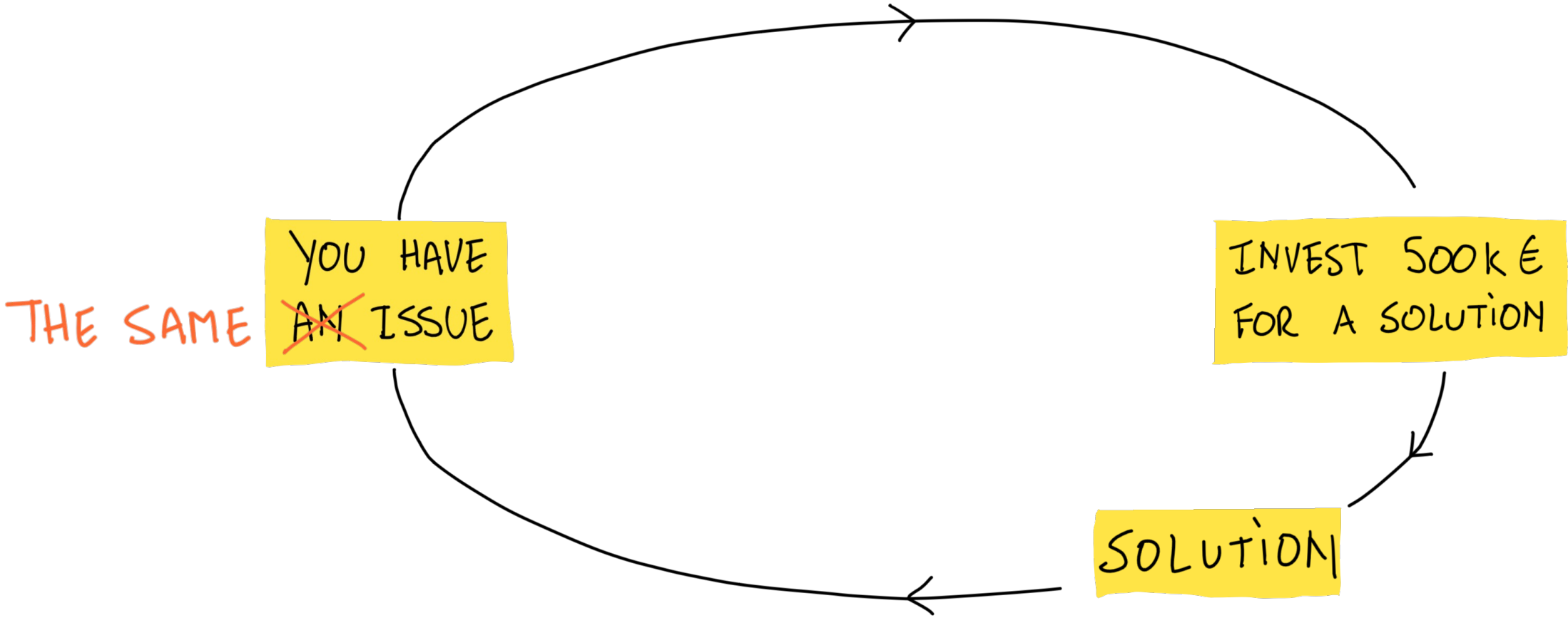

DO WE INVEST
IN THE NEW PLANT ?
FRAGILE
DATA
SCISSORS
PAPER!



2 YEAR EARLIER




WHAT ARE THEY DOING??
WE NEED TO WORK DATA DRIVEN !!
I'LL FIX THAT !!
SCISSORS
PAPER!
FRAGILE
DATA PLATFORM

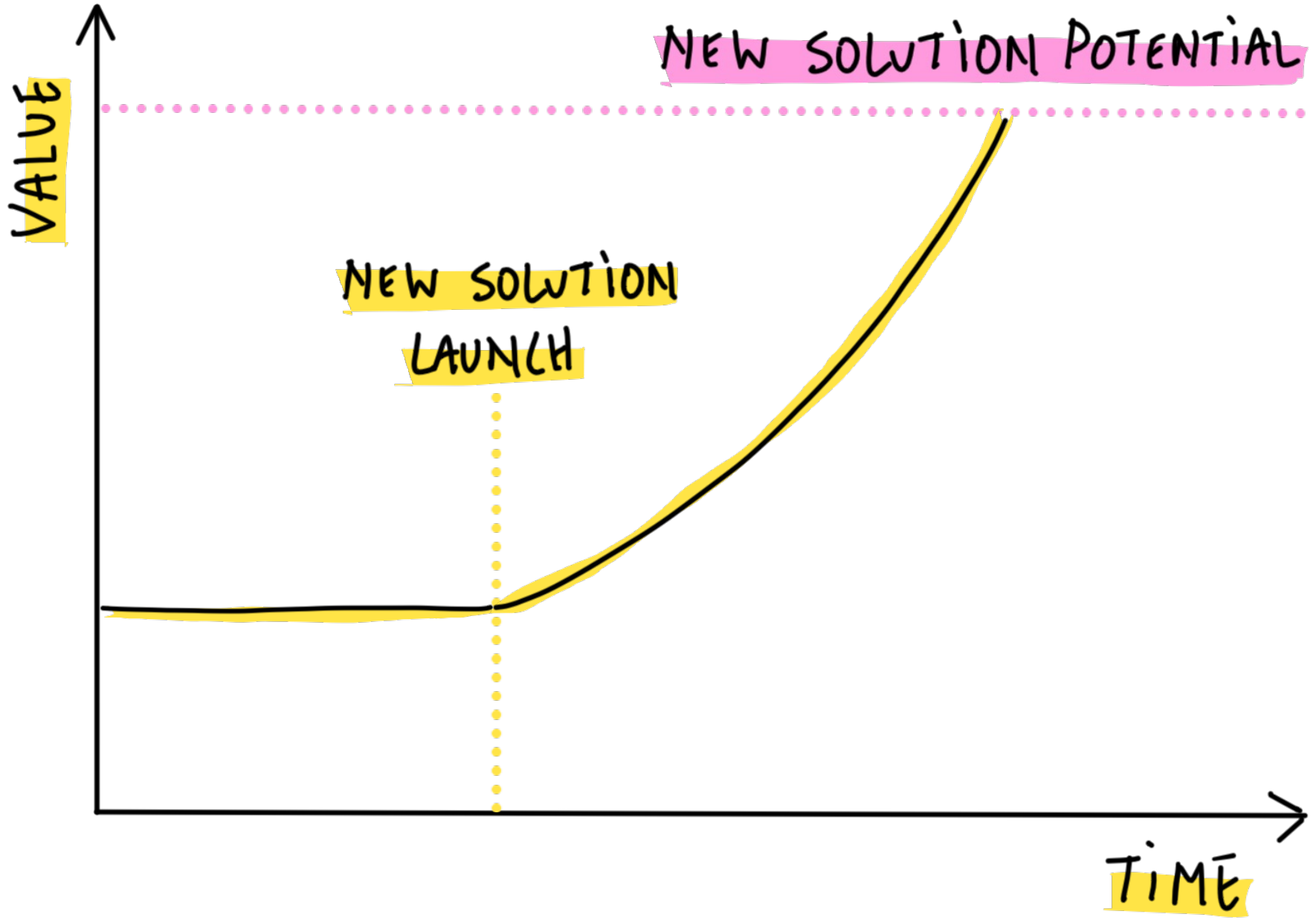

THE SAME
YOU HAVE
~~AN~~ ISSUE
INVEST 500k€
FOR A SOLUTION
SOLUTION

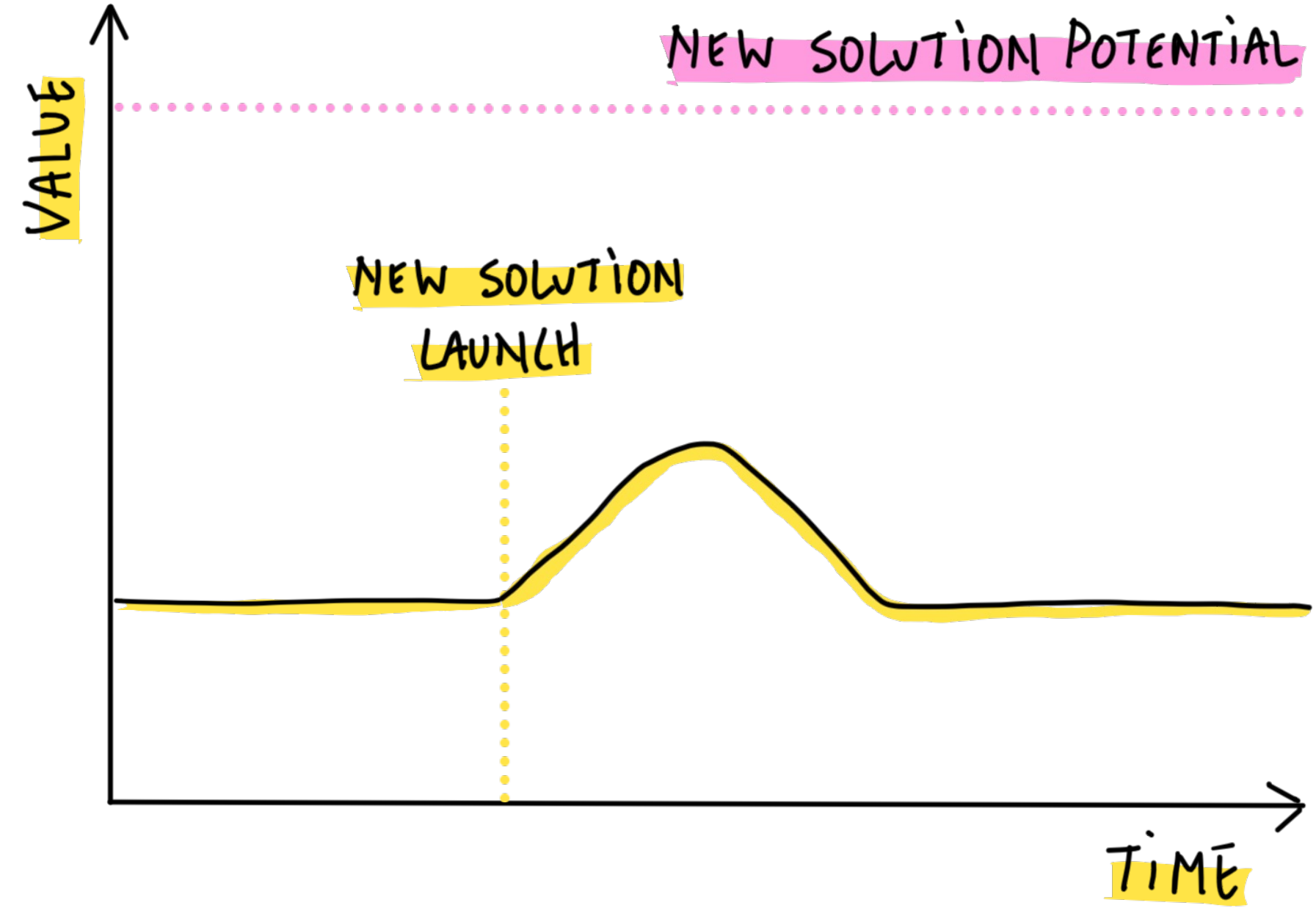
OLD SYSTEM

CHANGE

NEW SYSTEM



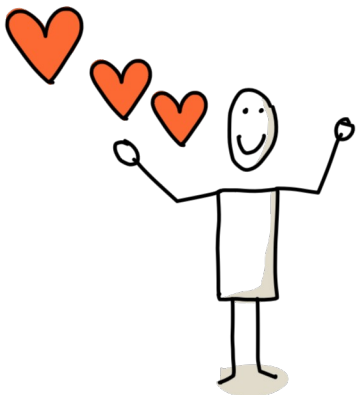

NEW SOLUTION POTENTIAL
VALUE
NEW SOLUTION LAUNCH
TIME


NEW SOLUTION POTENTIAL
VALUE
NEW SOLUTION LAUNCH
TIME

OLD SYSTEM

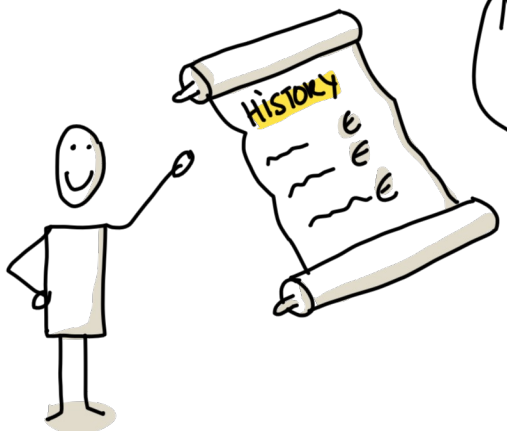
CHANGE

NEW SYSTEM



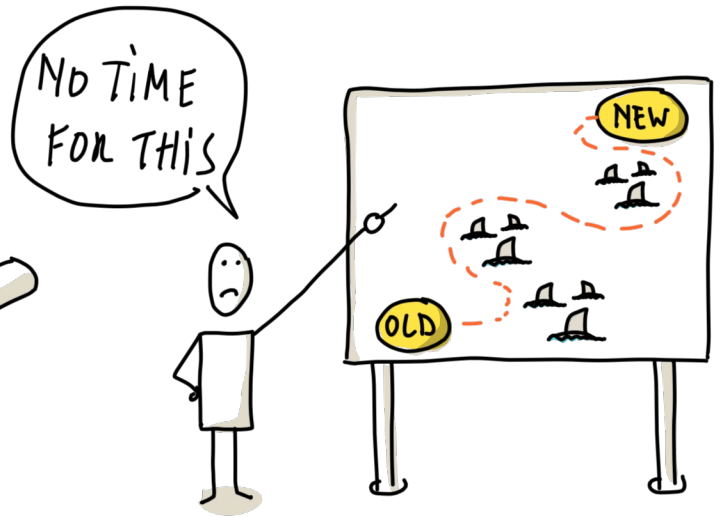
1

INERTIA



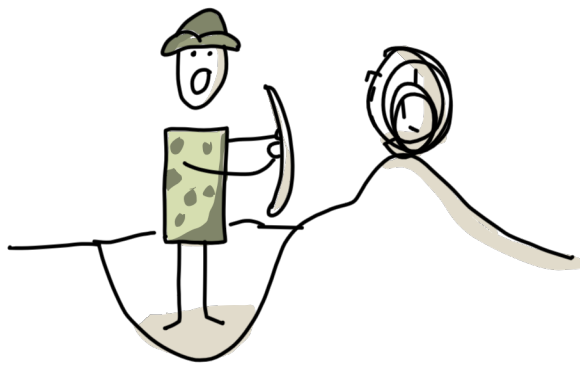
2

SUNK COST



3

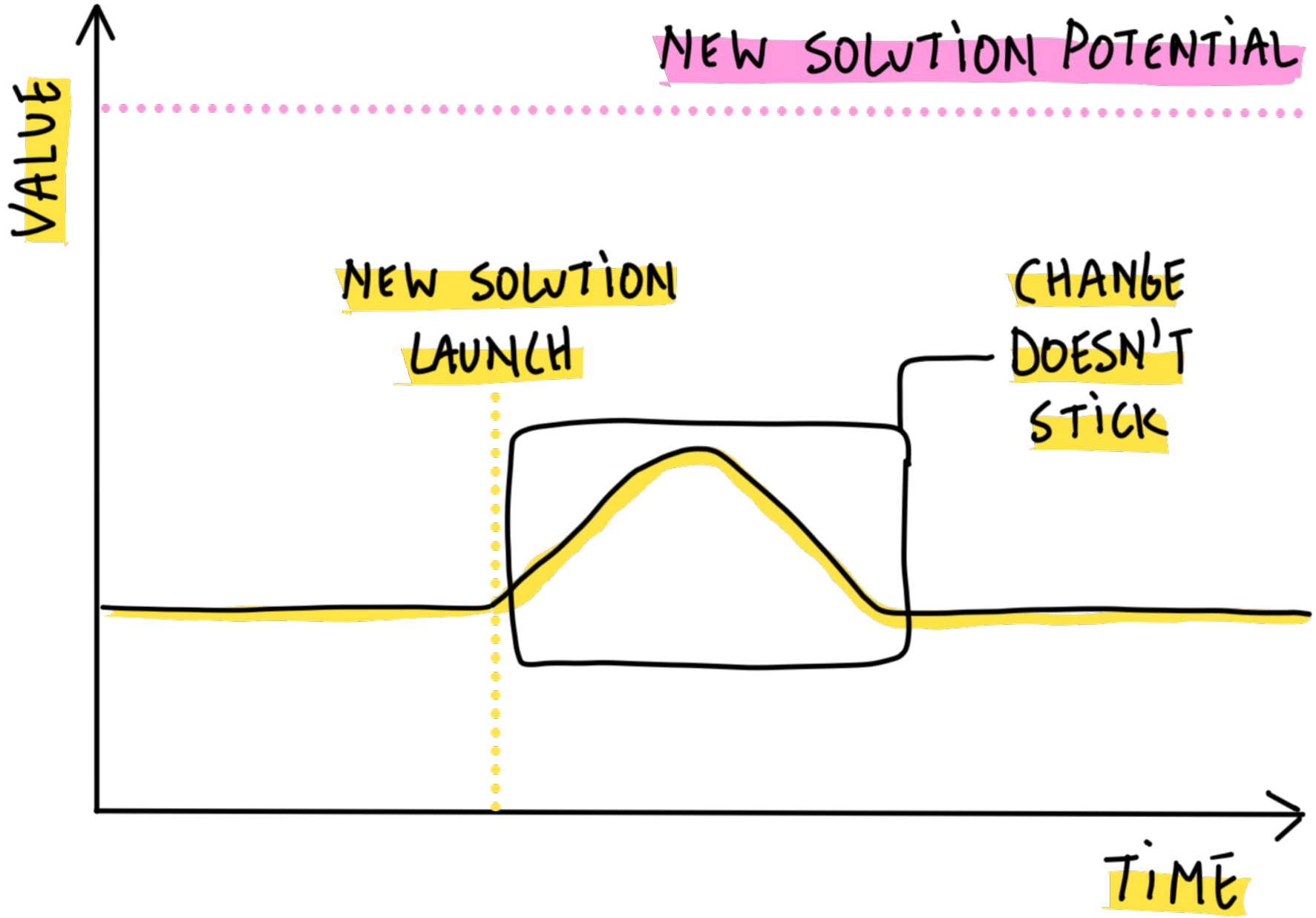
SWITCHING COST



4

INCUMBENT SYSTEM HABIT

Shackled to the Status Quo, Polites and Karahanna, 2012, MIS Quarterly

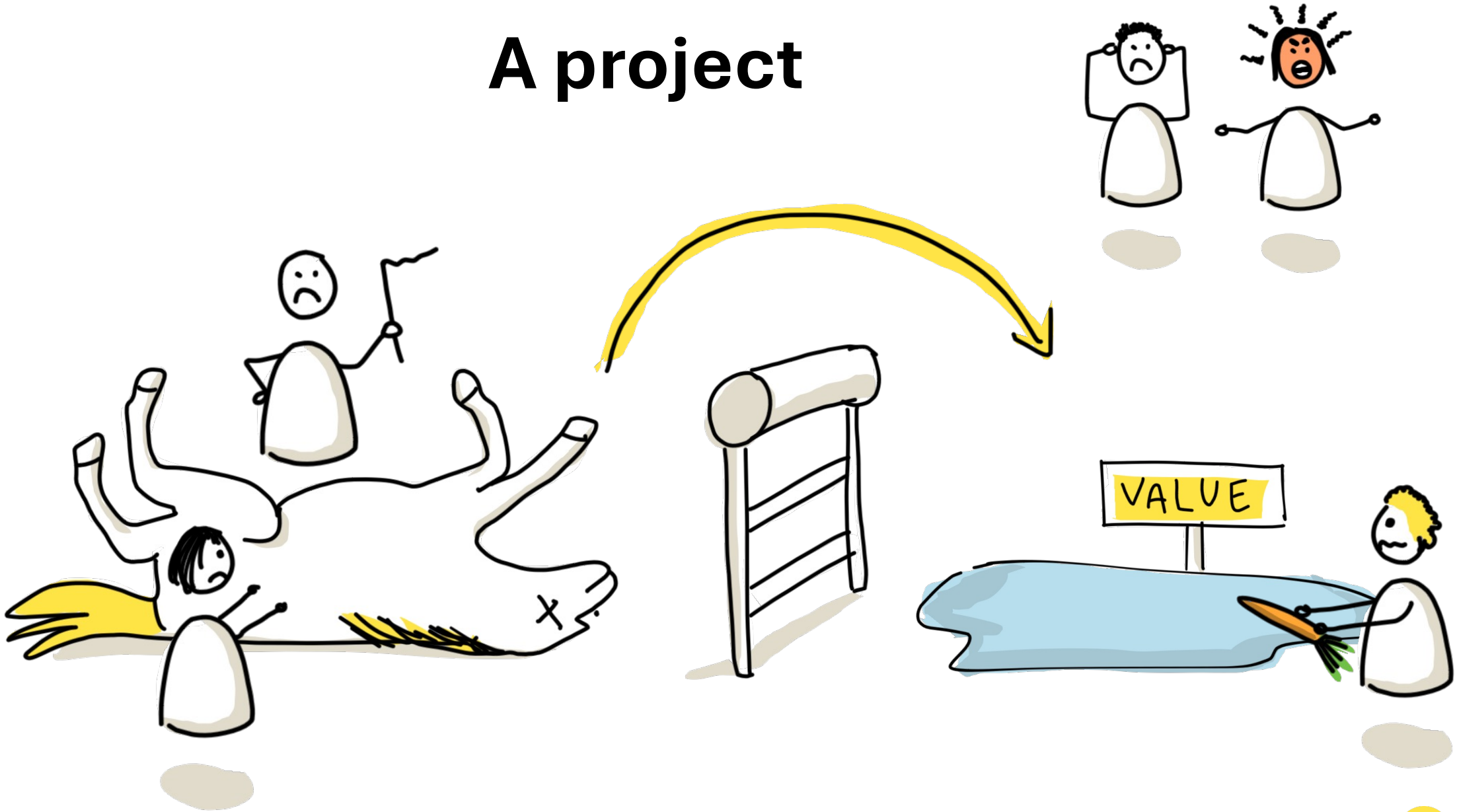

NEW SOLUTION POTENTIAL
VALUE
NEW SOLUTION LAUNCH
CHANGE DOESN'T STICK
TIME

PART II

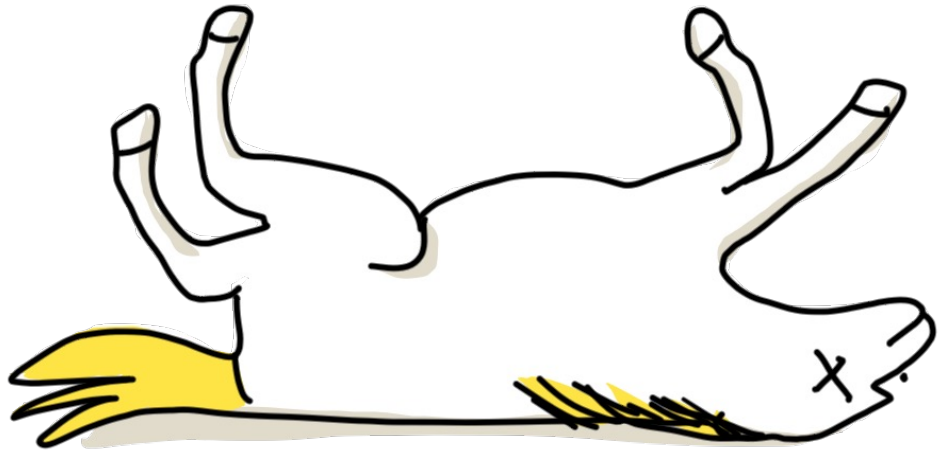
Change Doesn't Stick



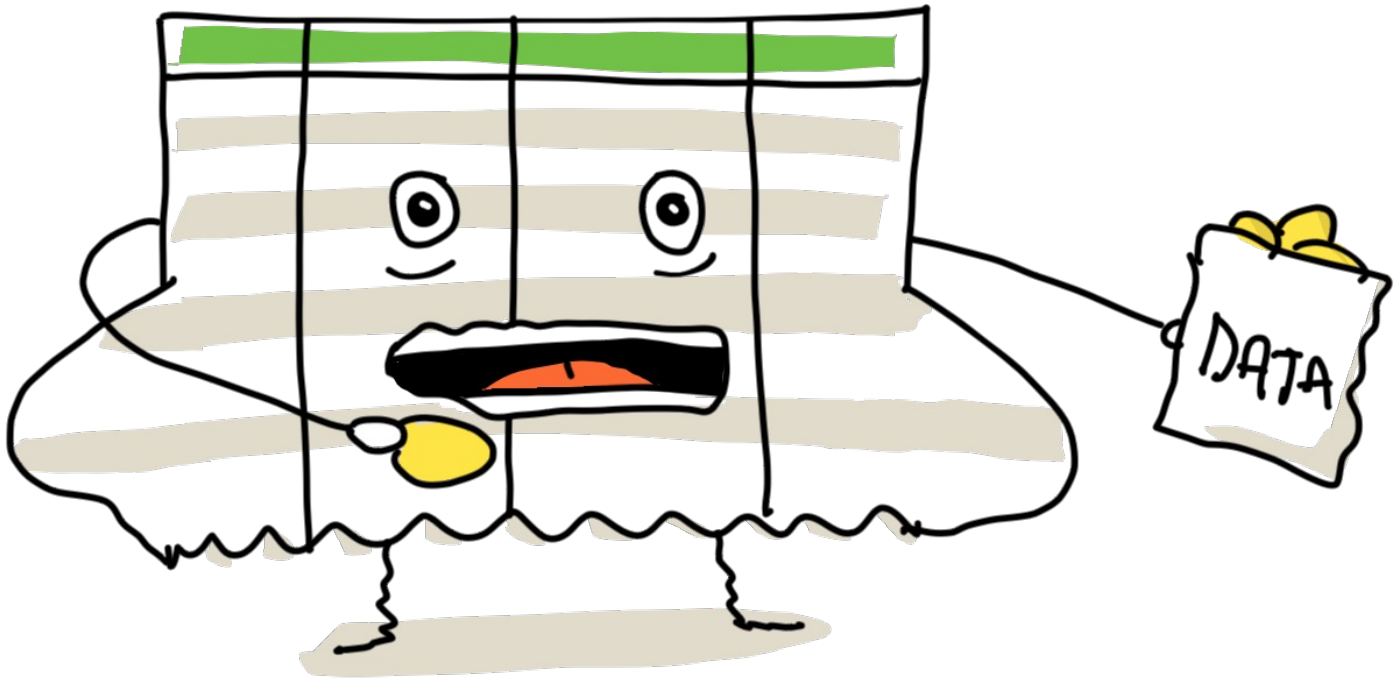
A project



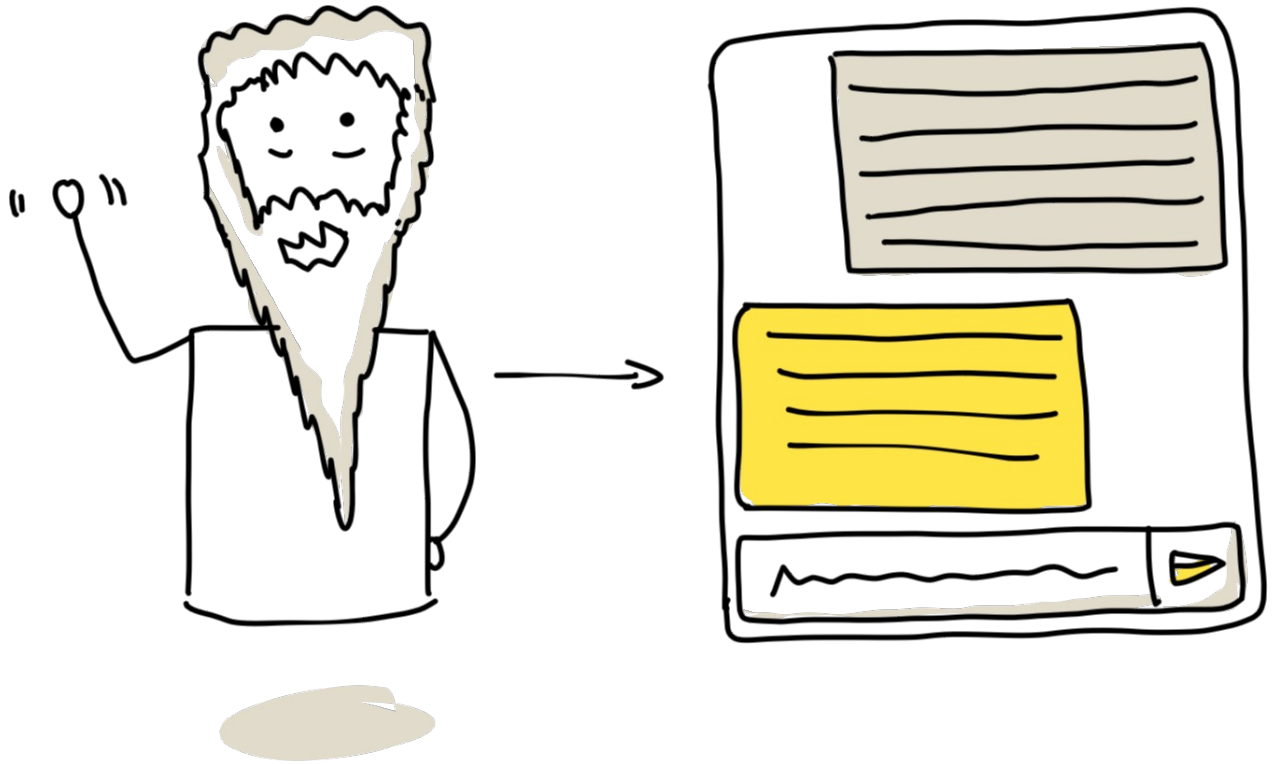
Some dead horse examples



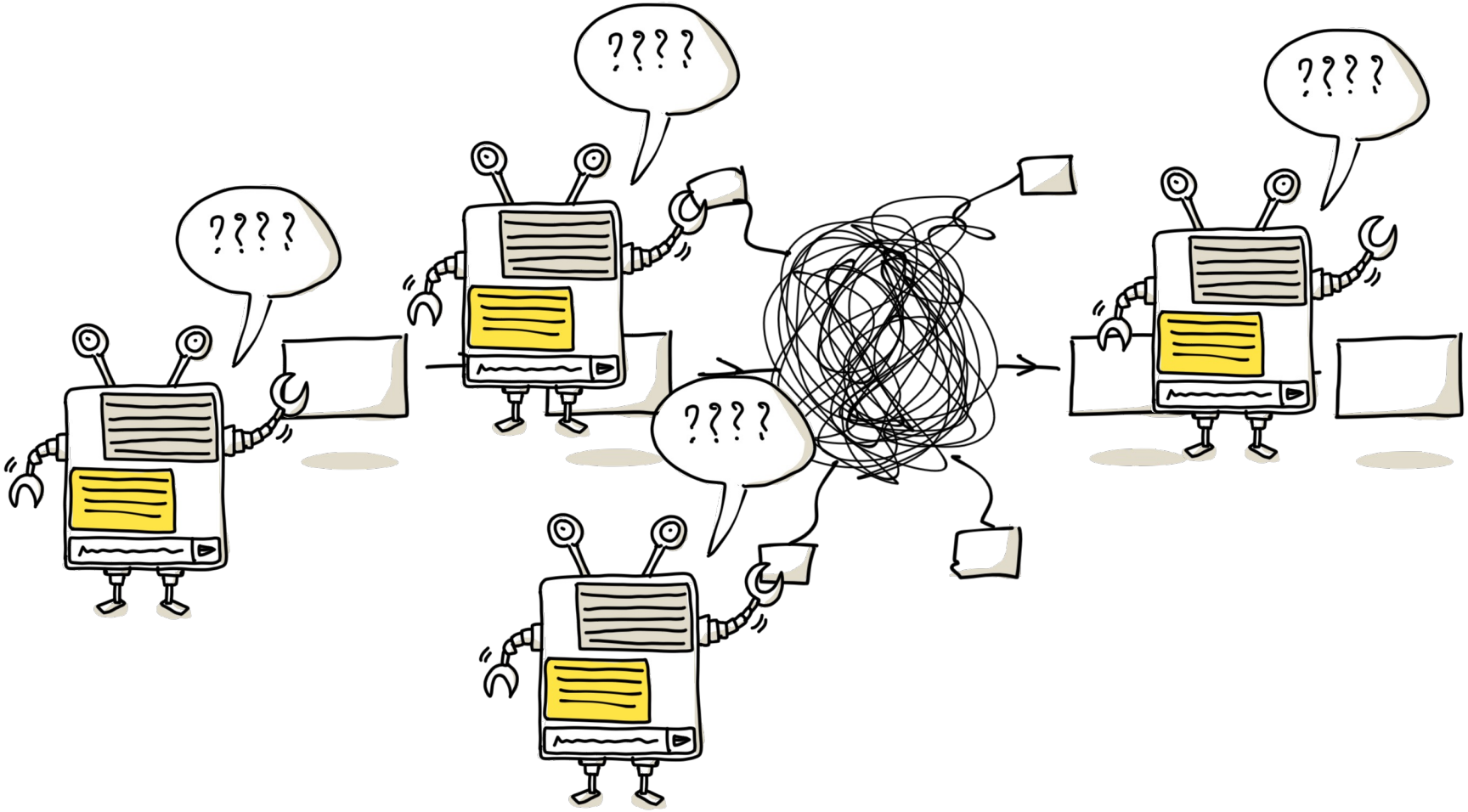
“Automate this fat spreadsheet”



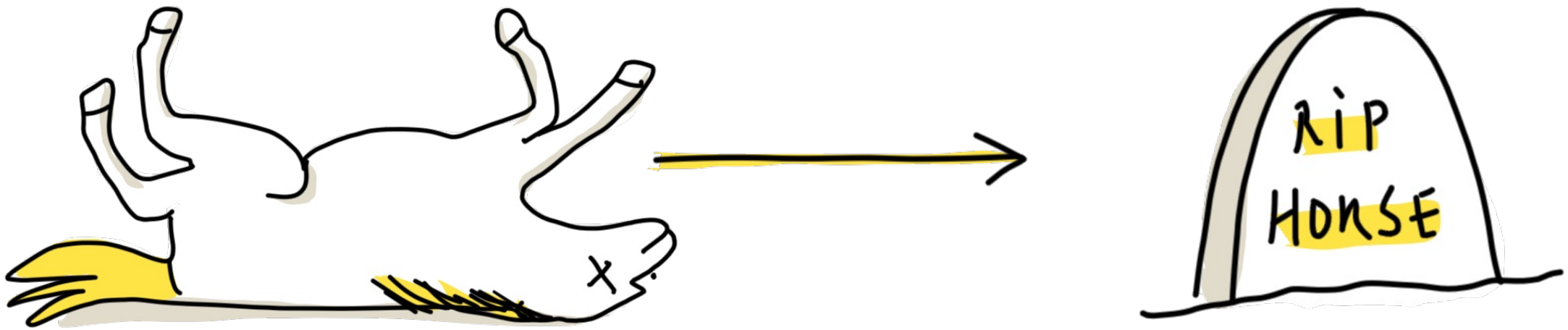
“Turn Paul into a chatbot”



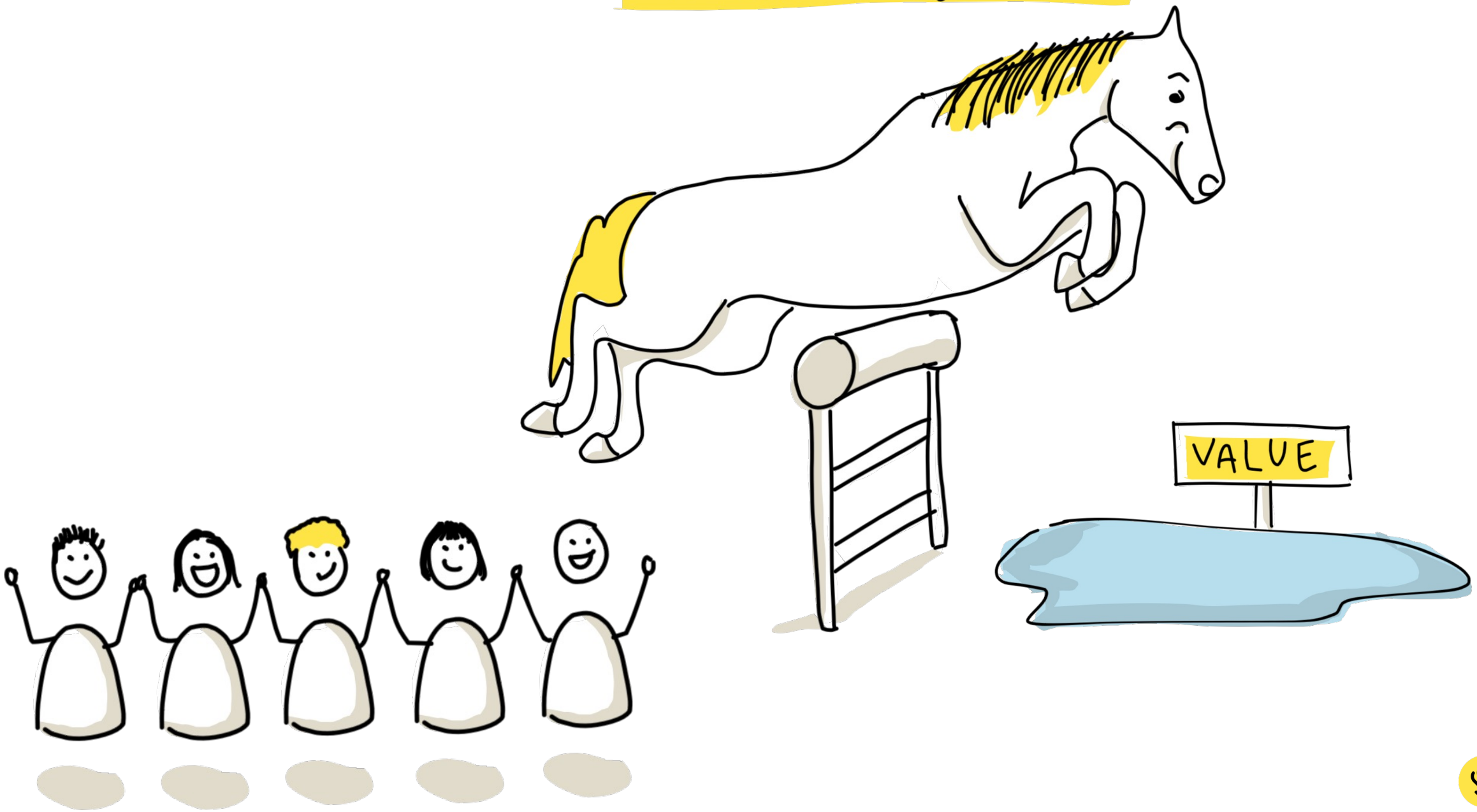
“Let a multi-agent system run broken process X”



DISMOUNT



THE BEST HORSE EVER

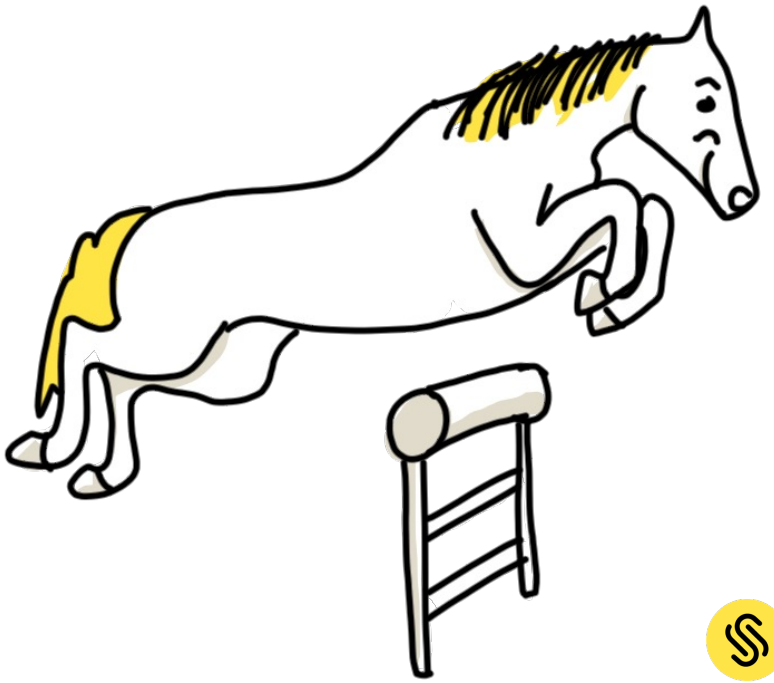


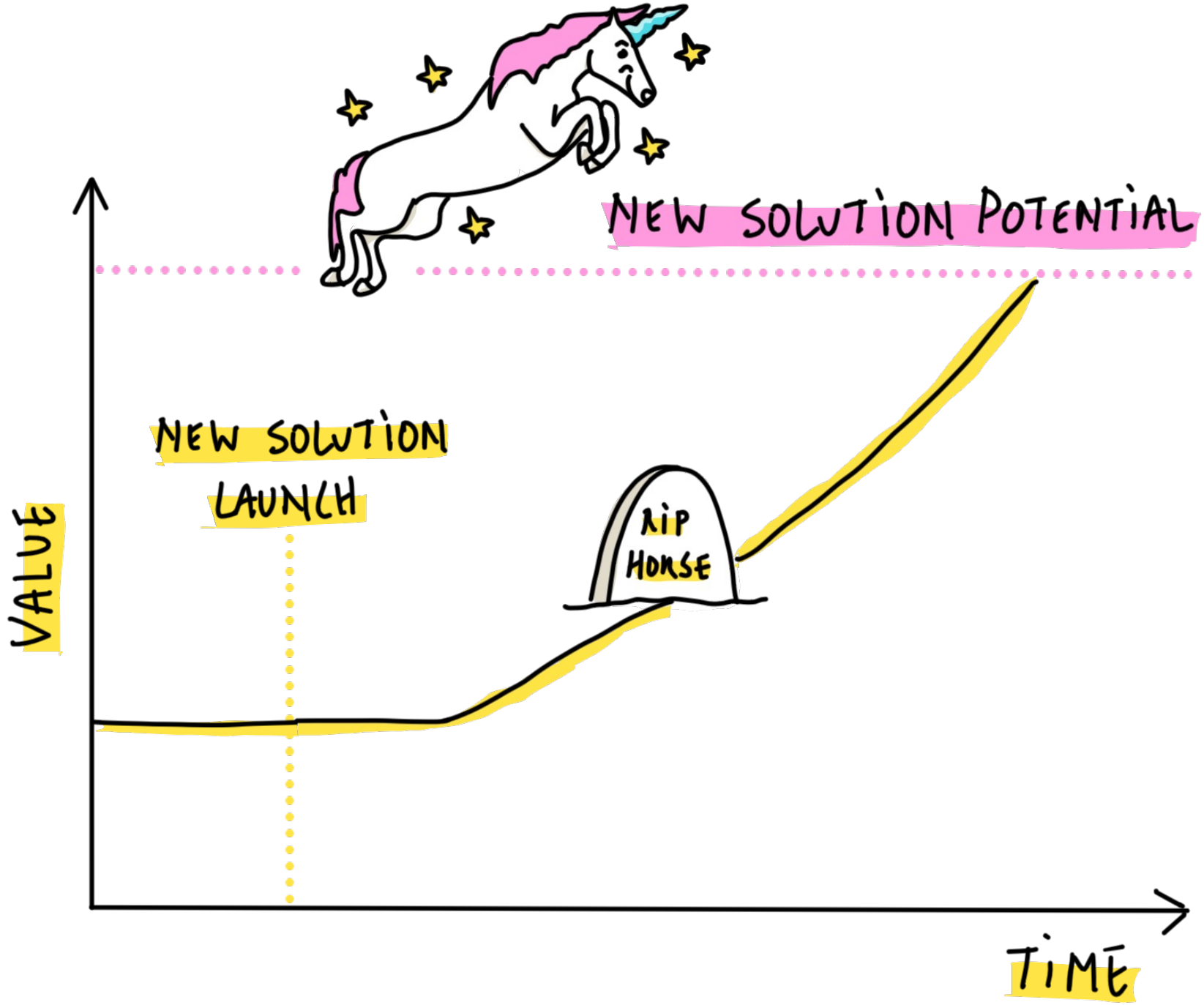
The Dead Horse Theory

1) IDENTIFY THE DEAD HORSE → 2) DISMOUNT → 3) INVEST IN THE BEST HORSE EVER








NEW SOLUTION POTENTIAL
NEW SOLUTION LAUNCH
RIP HORSE
VALUE
TIME

The DEAD HORSE party



PART III

~~Party~~

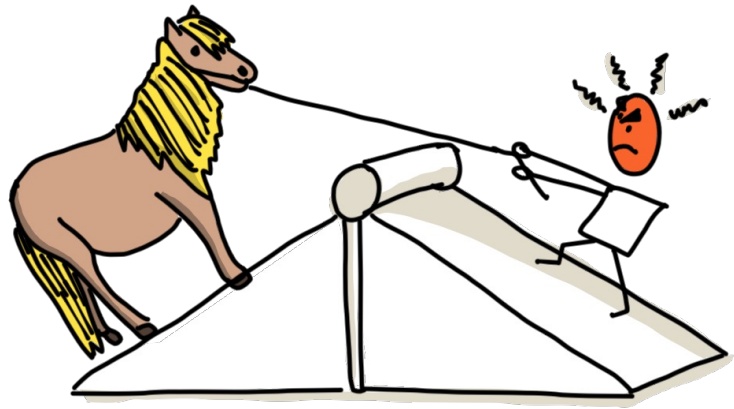
Reality

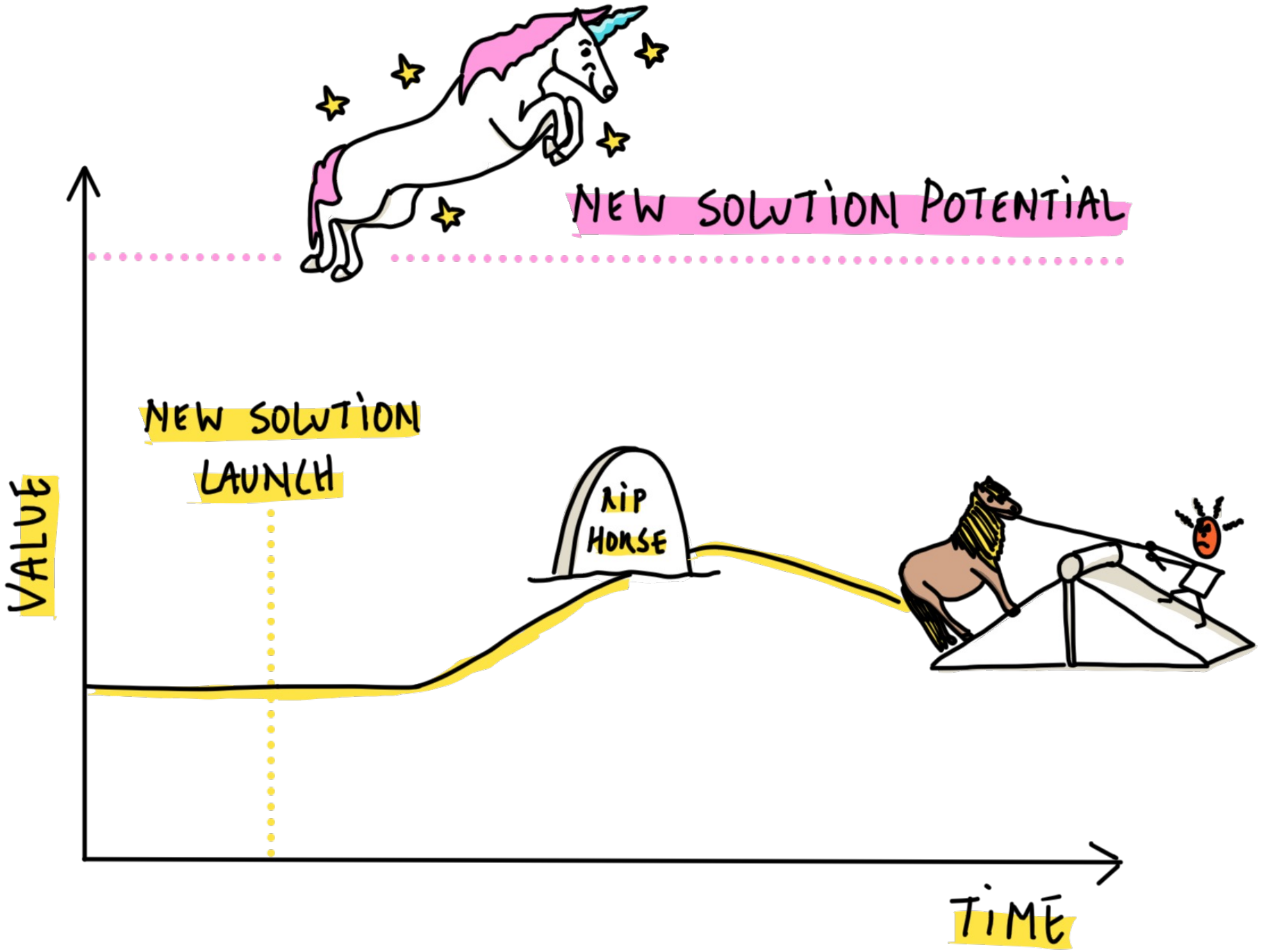


1) IDENTIFY THE DEAD HORSE → 2) DISMOUNT → 3) INVEST IN ~~THE BEST HORSE EVER~~ ANOTHER HORSE

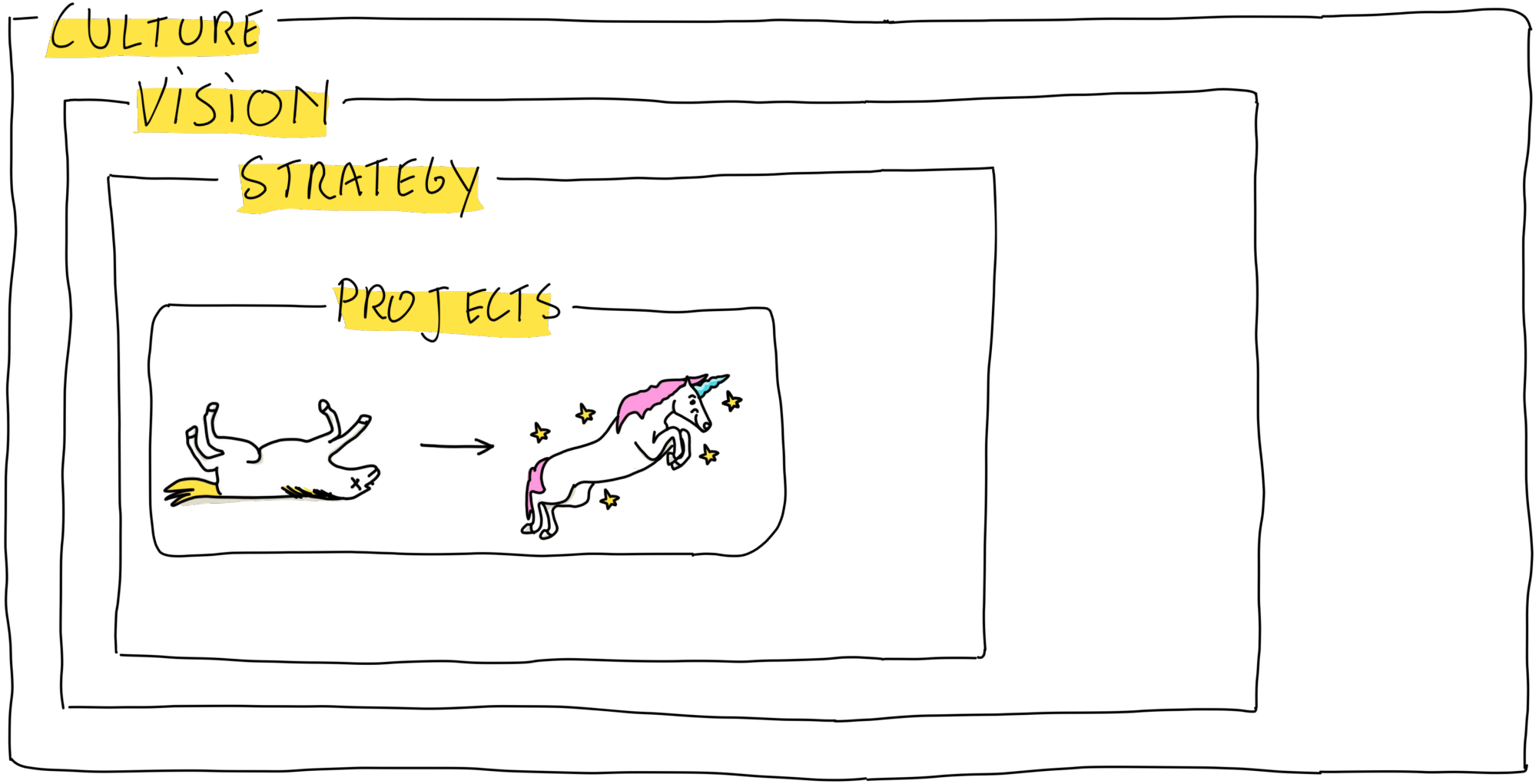




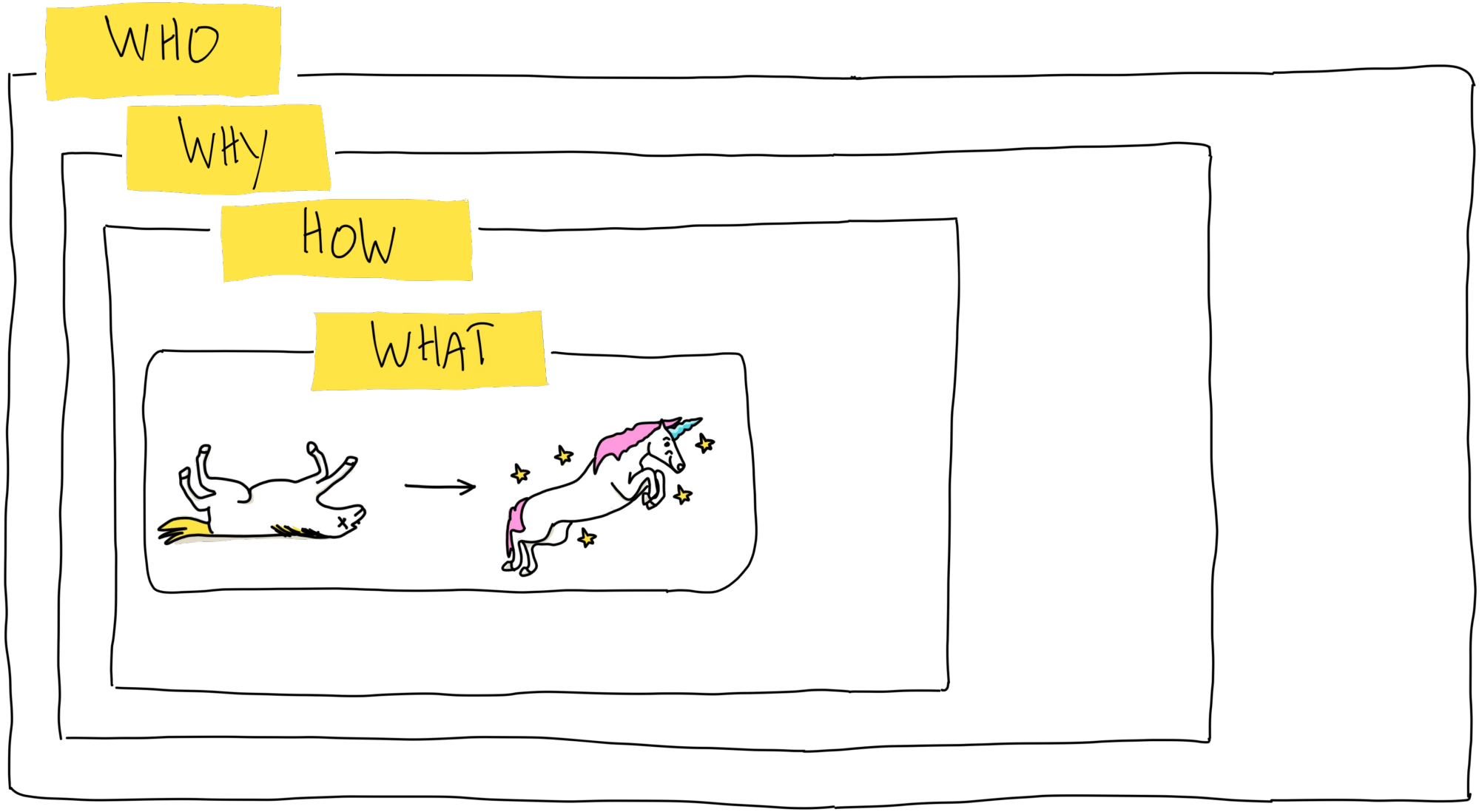



NEW SOLUTION POTENTIAL
NEW SOLUTION LAUNCH
RIP HORSE
VALUE
TIME

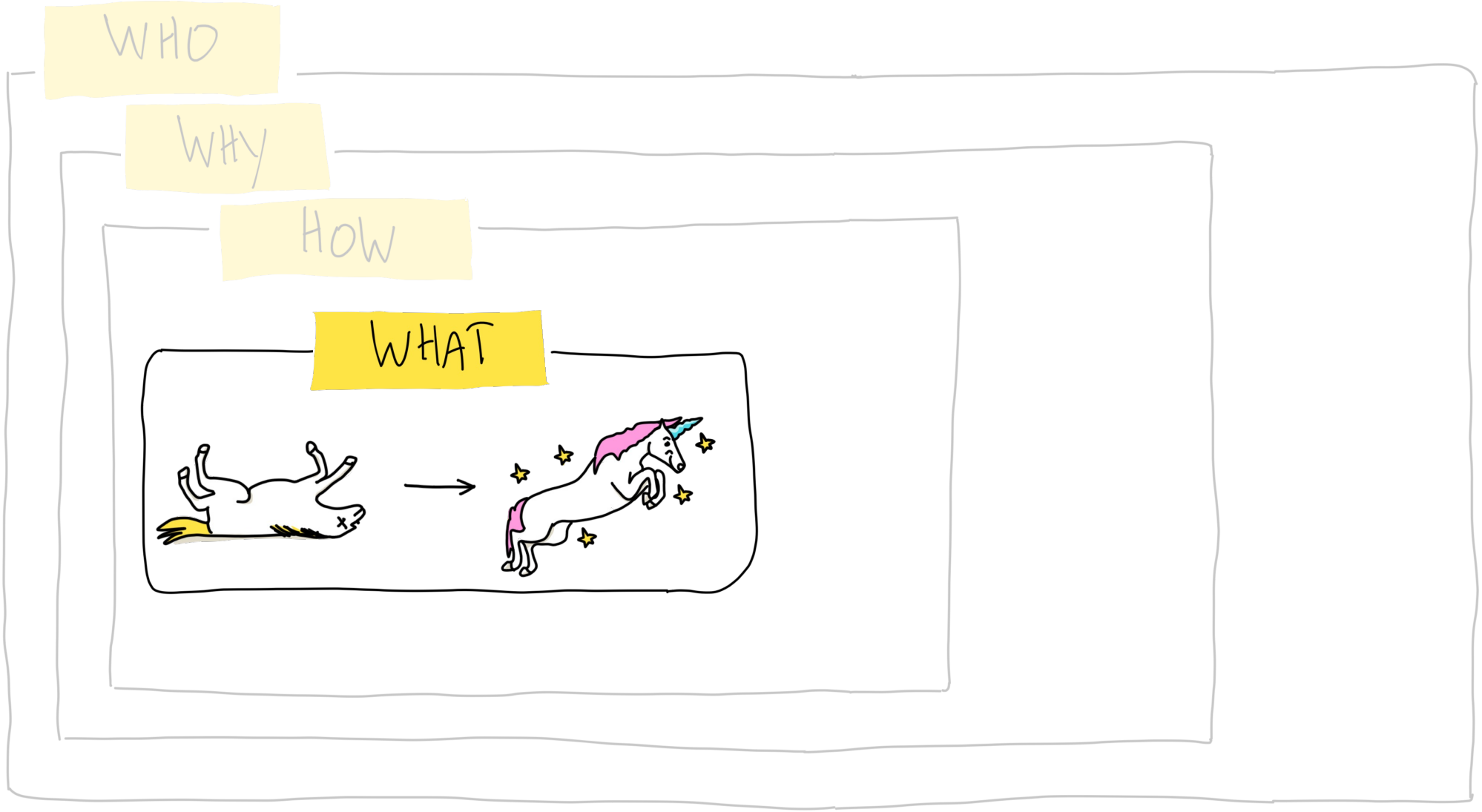
The Bigger Picture

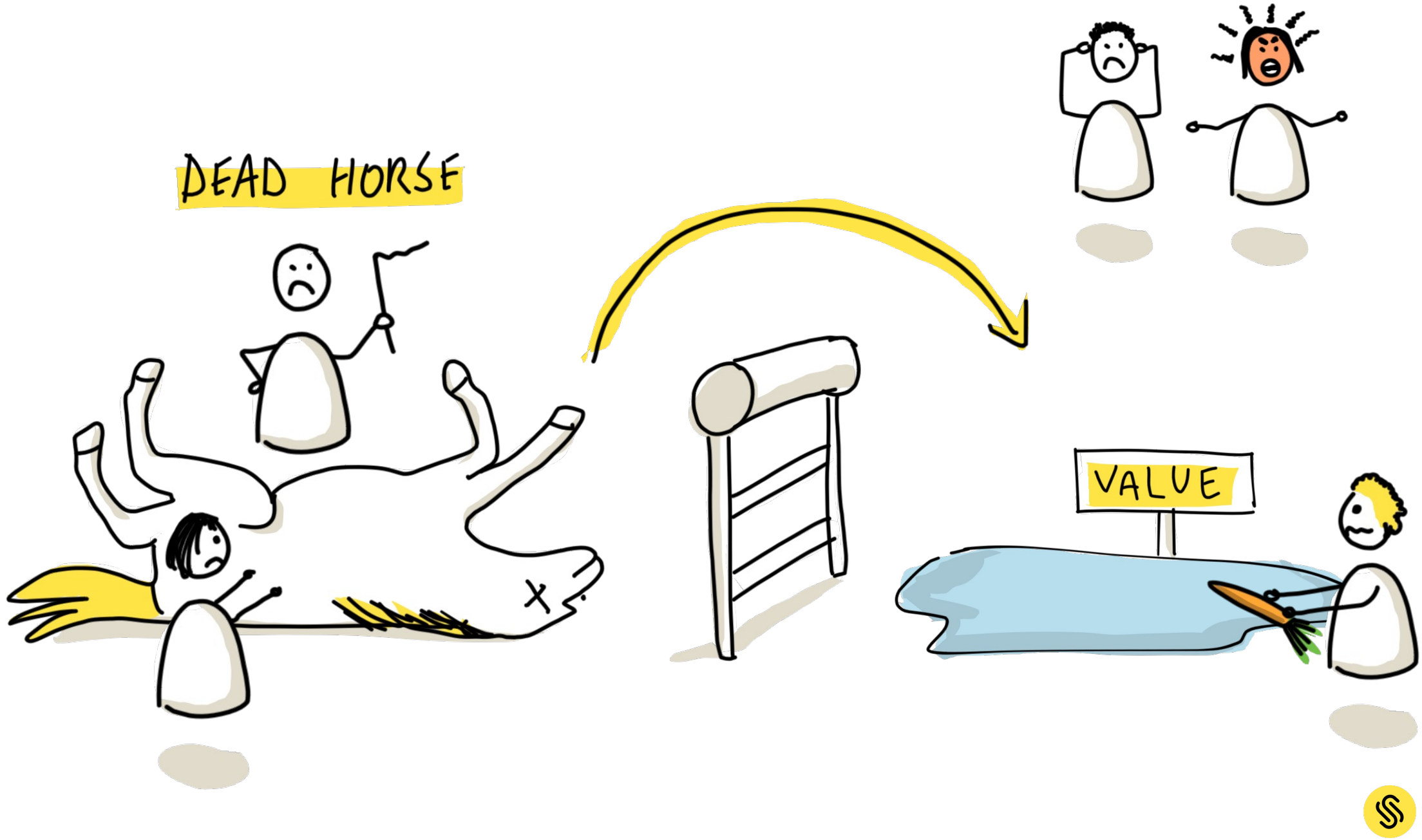


The Bigger Picture

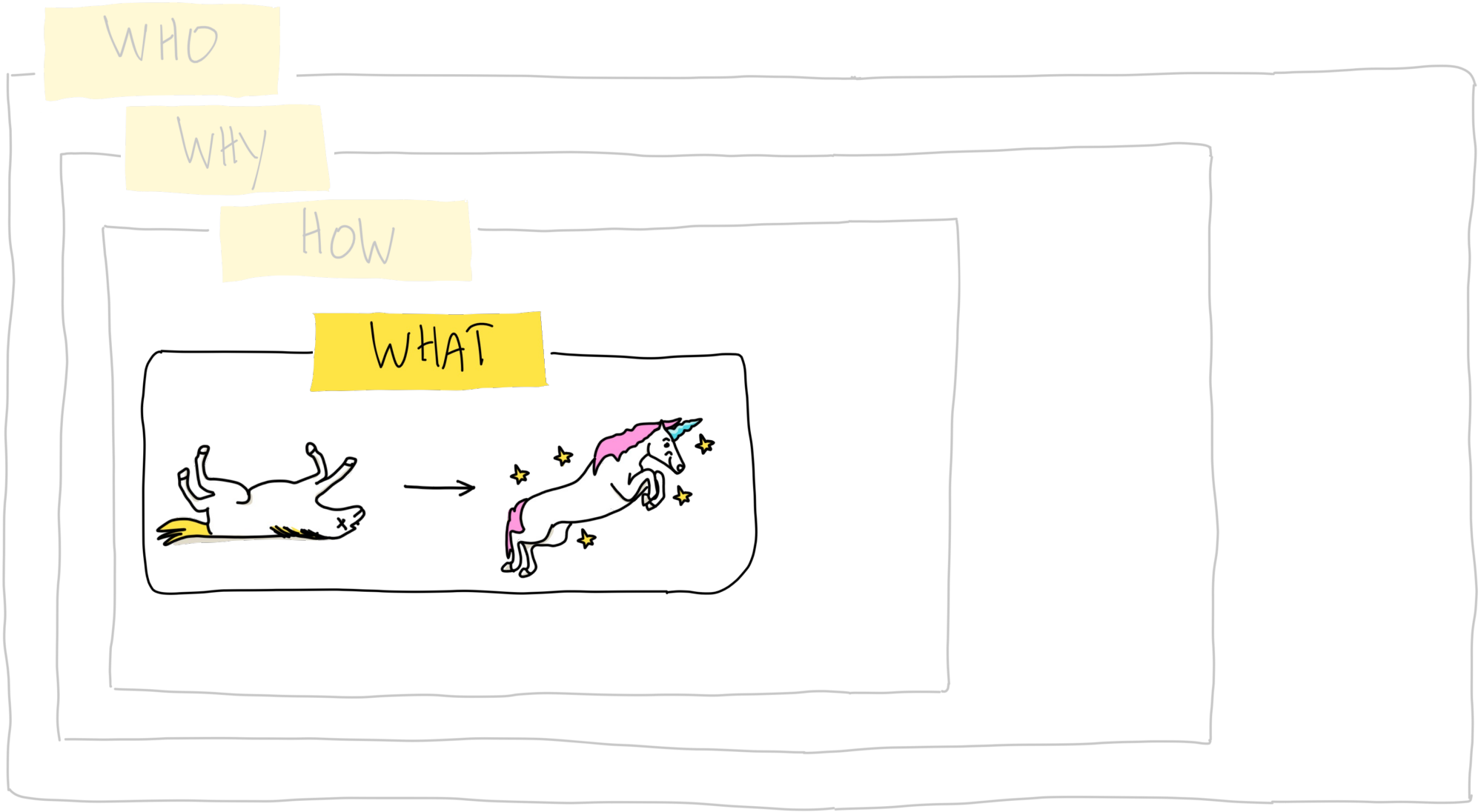


We keep pushing the dead horse

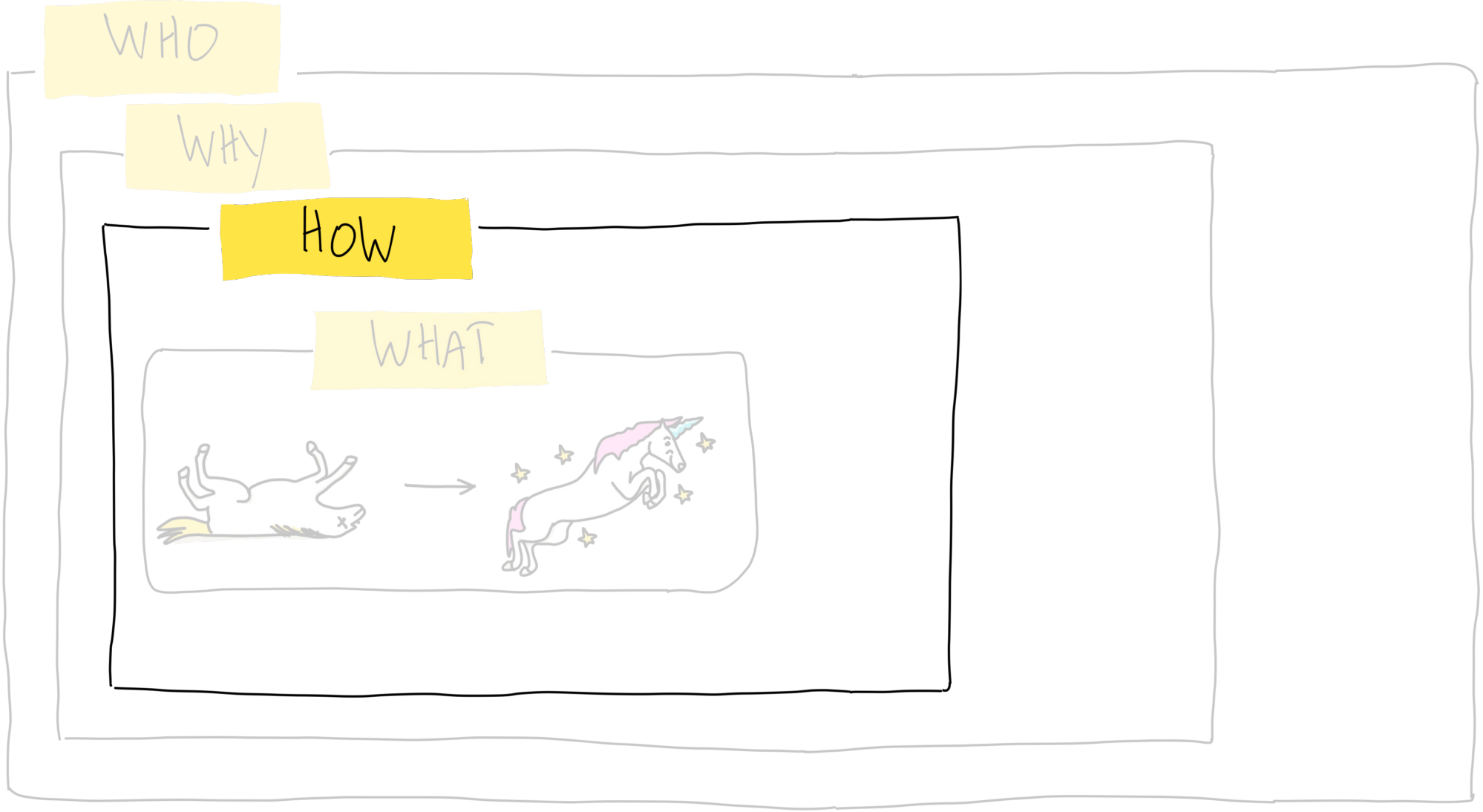



DEAD HORSE
VALUE

The dead horse stays forever



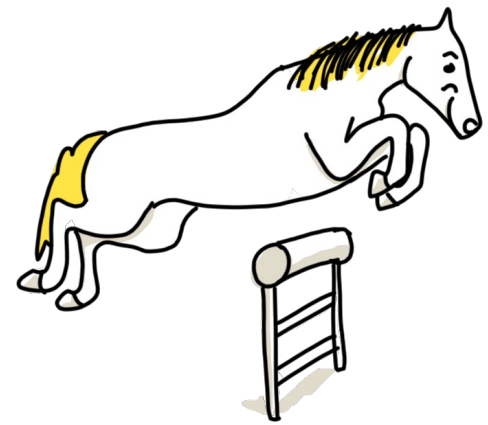
The strategy lacks foundations

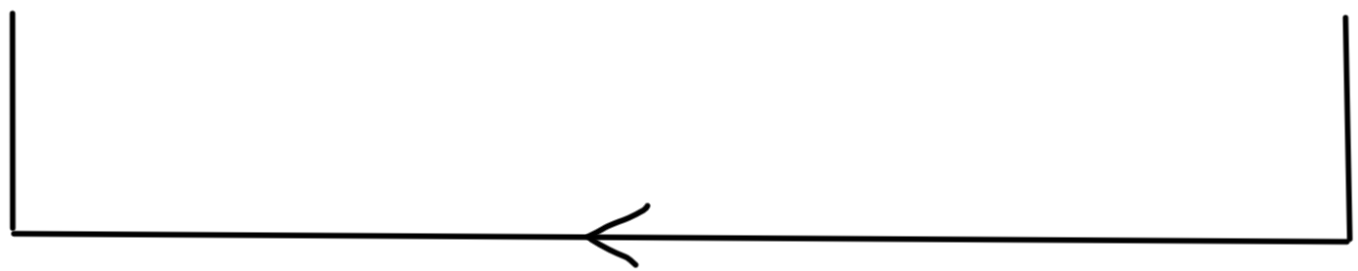


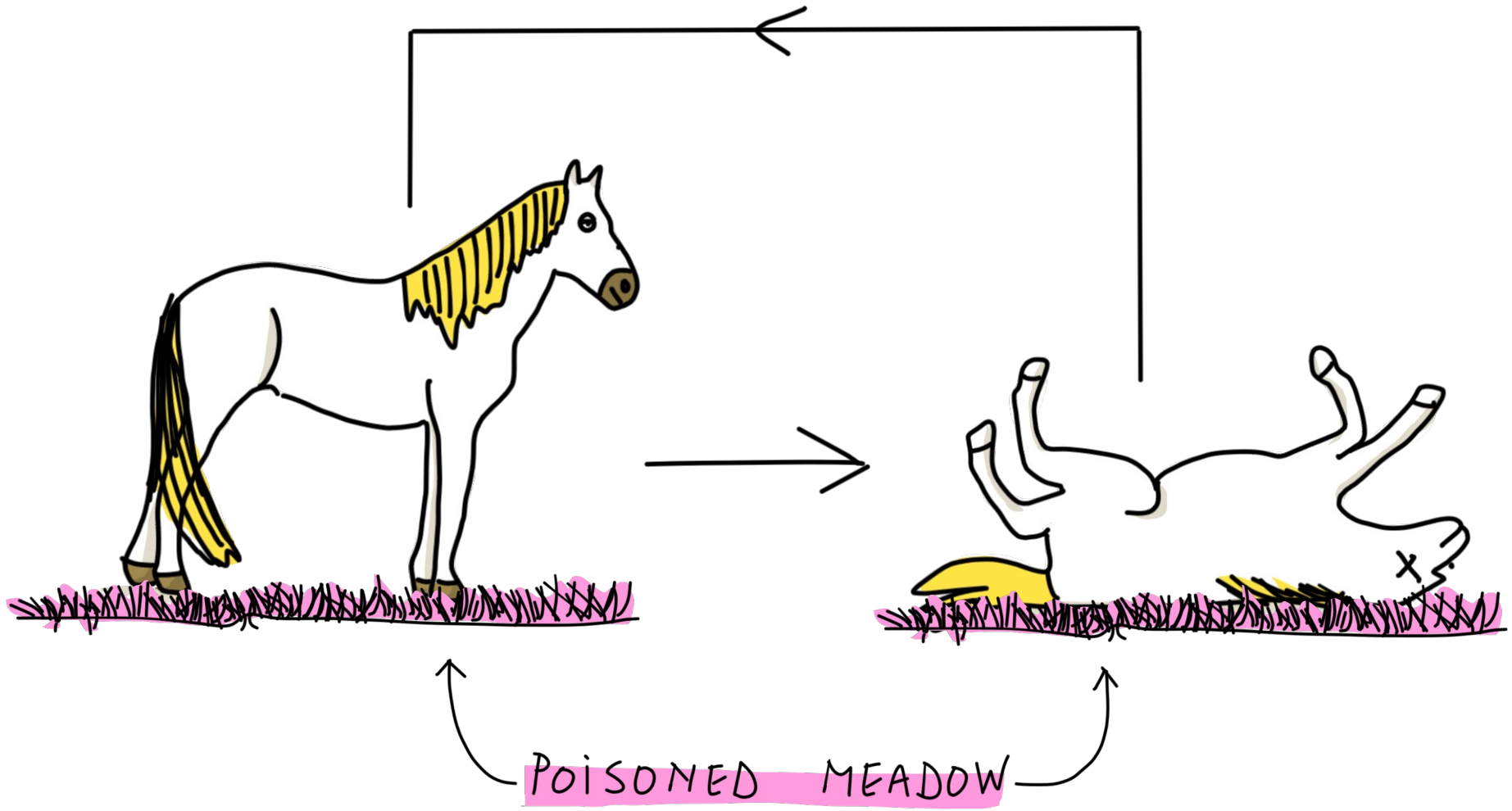
DEAD HORSE → DISMOUNT → NEW HORSE



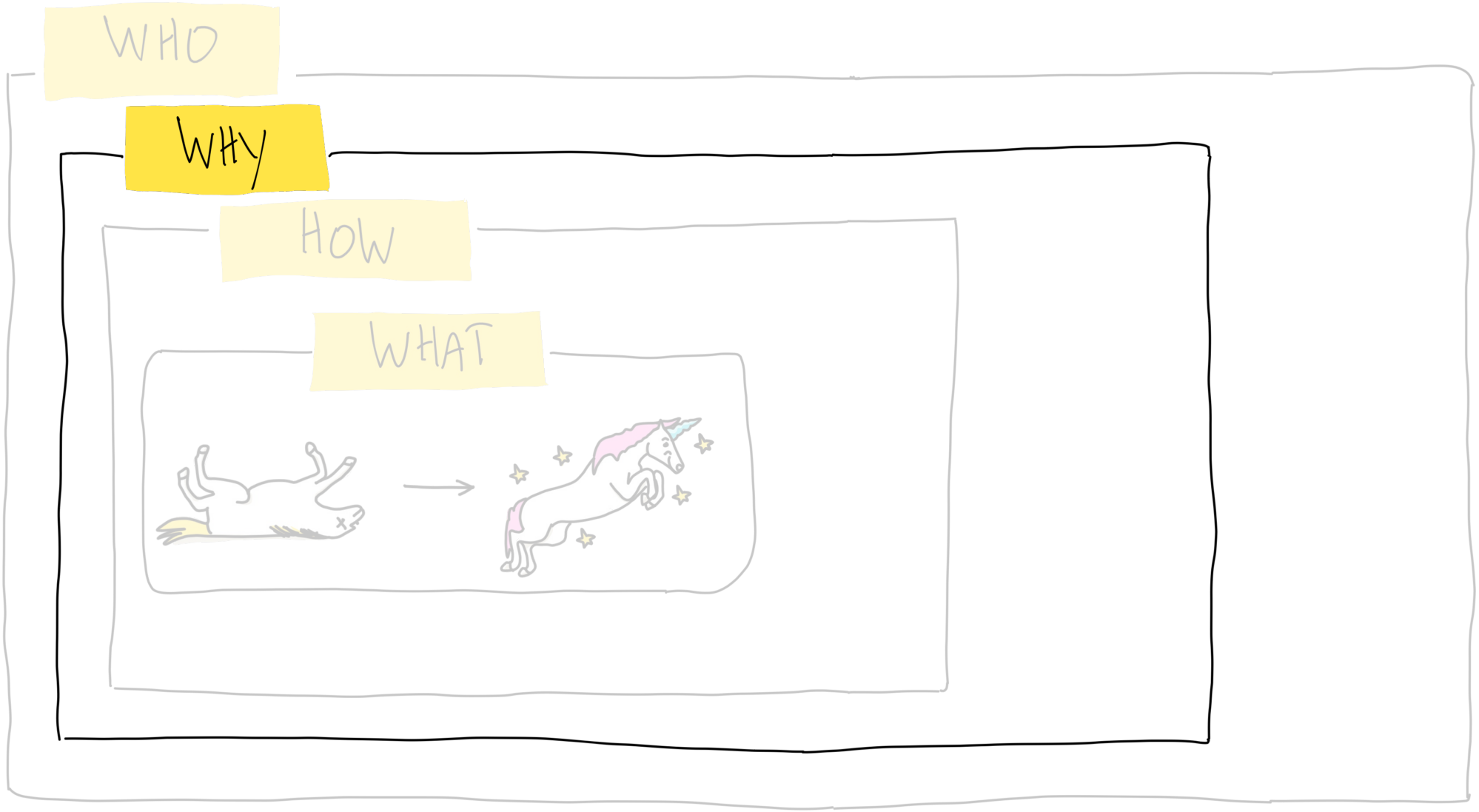




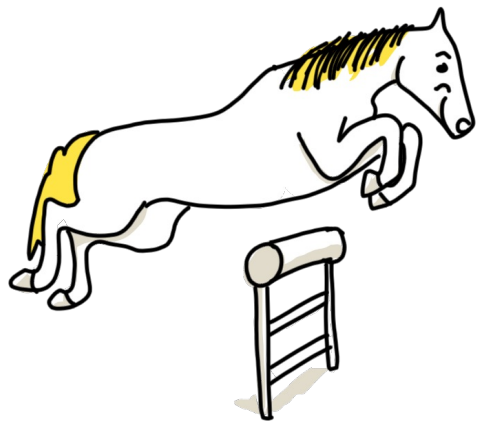



POISONED MEADOW

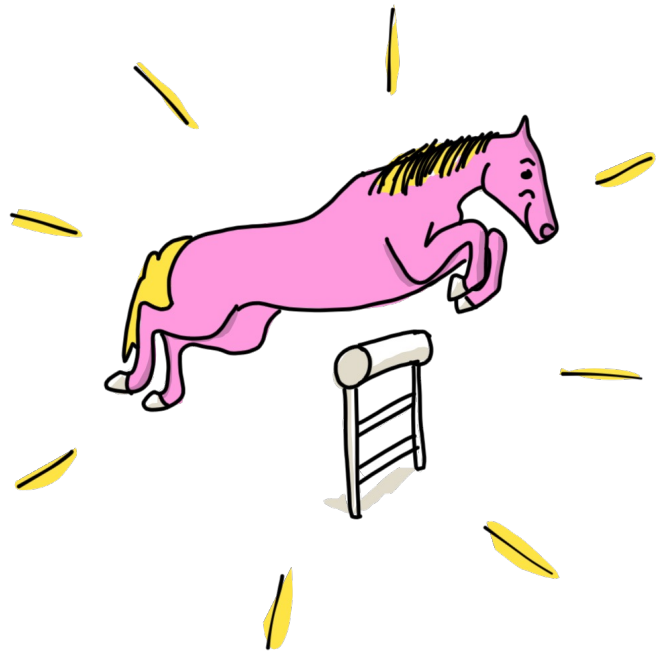
New horse tunnel vision



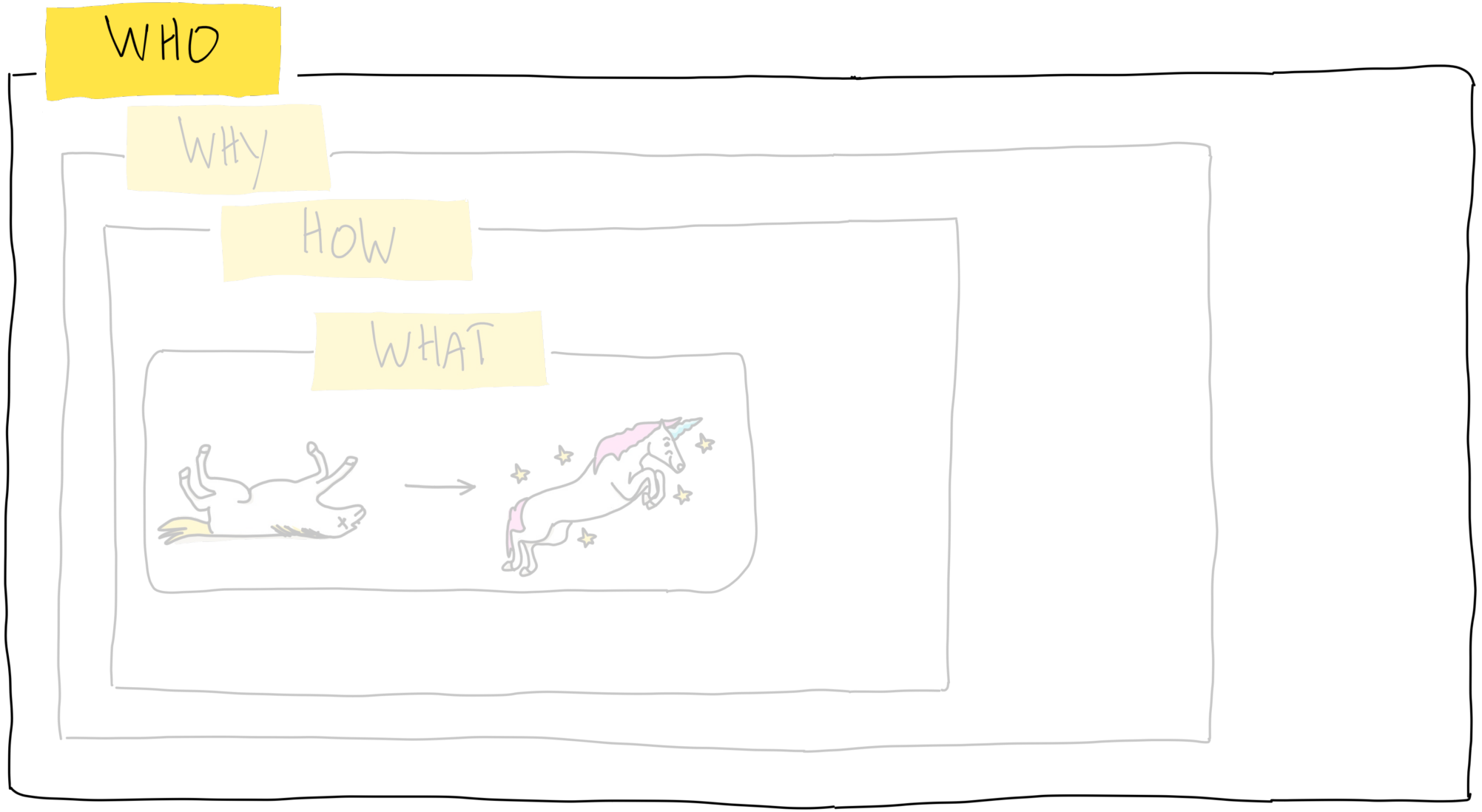
DEAD HORSE → DISMOUNT → NEW HORSE

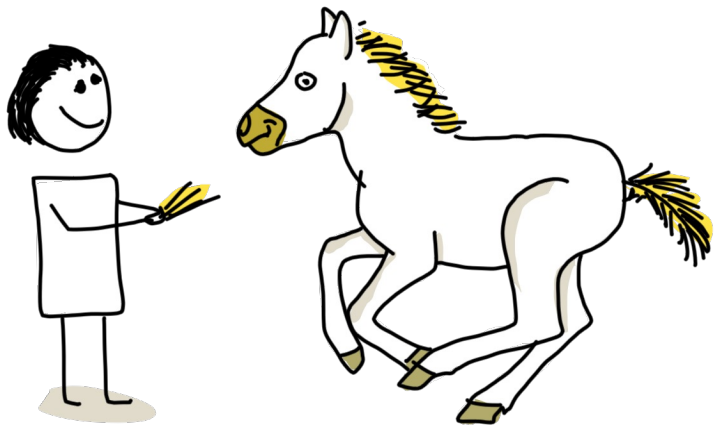






People ❤️ Dead Horses

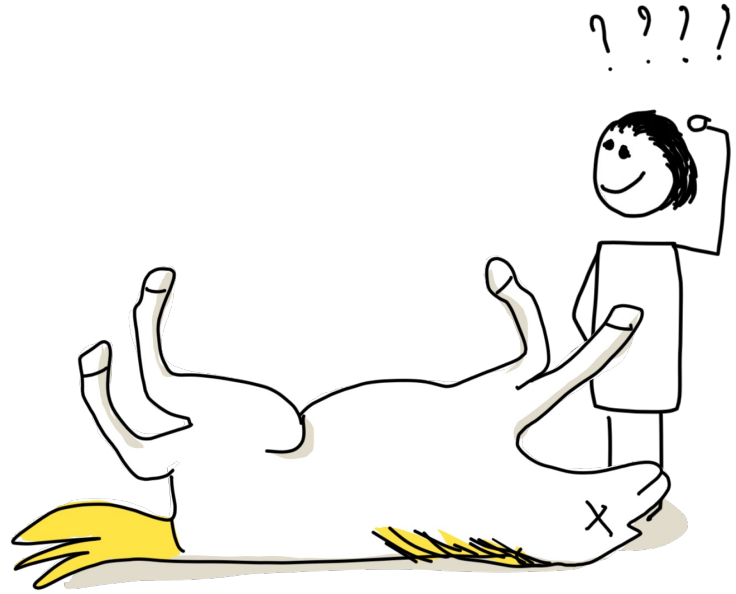




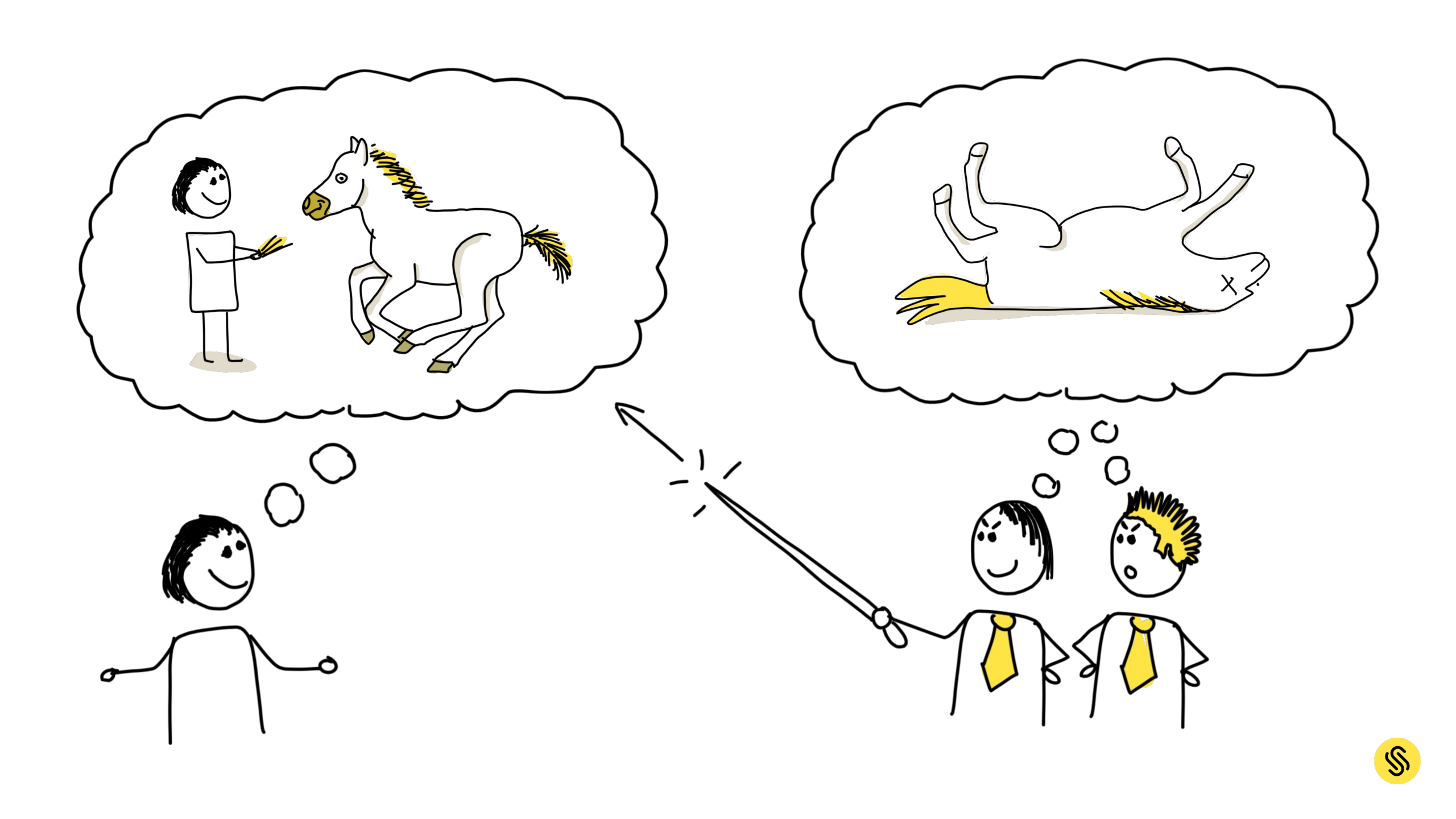
A VERY CUTE BABY HORSE



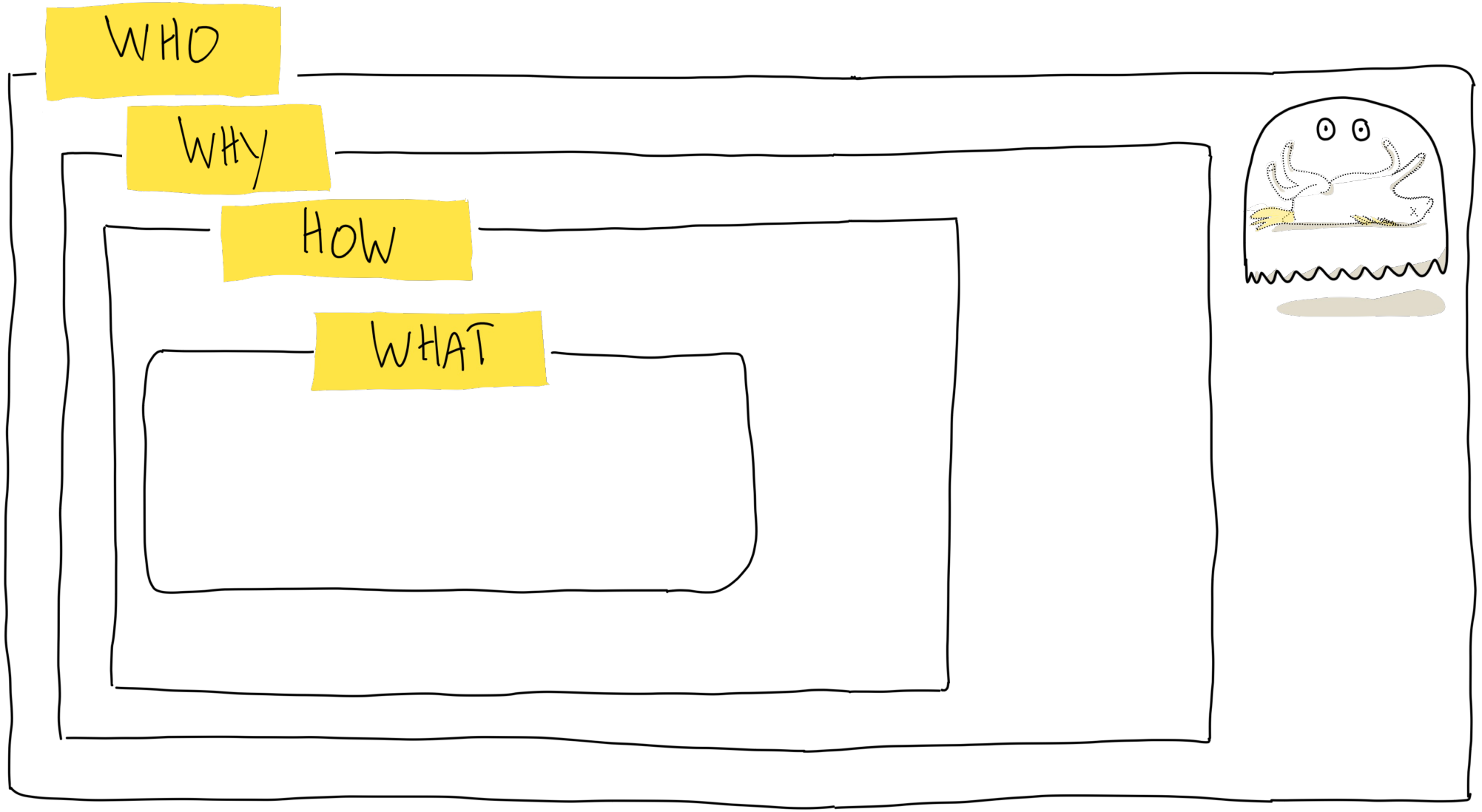
THEY WORKED TOGETHER FOR YEARS...



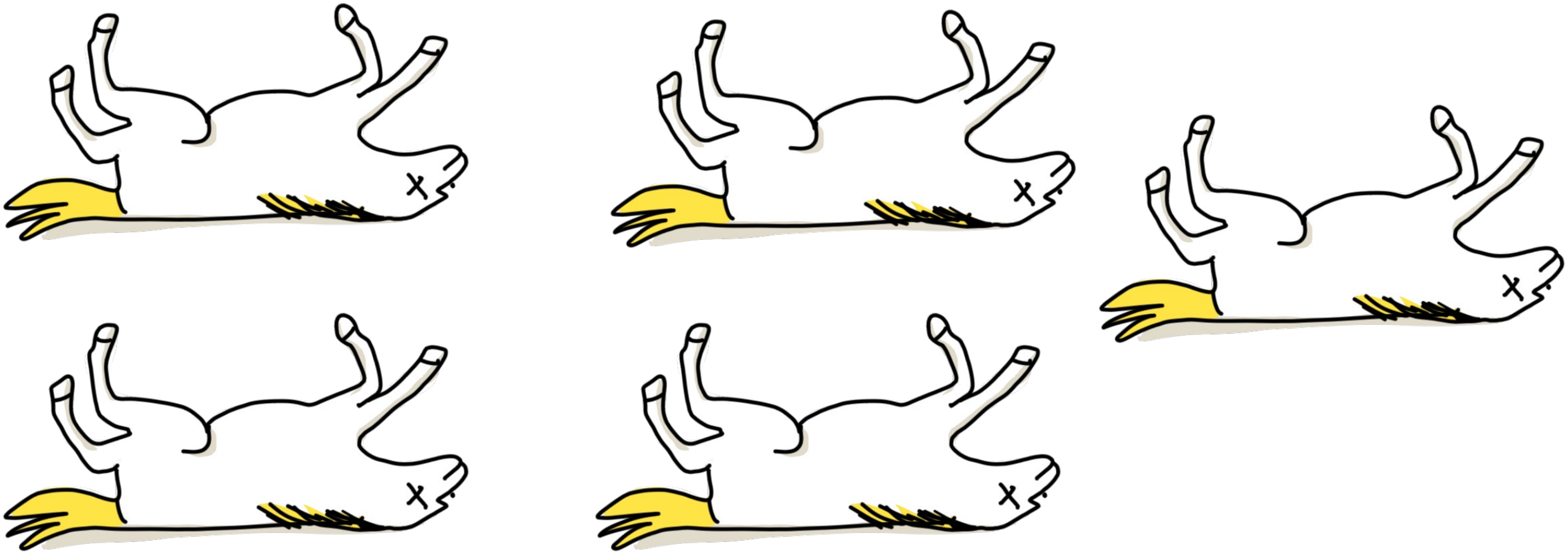
AND NOW THEY SAY THIS HORSE IS DEAD ?!?

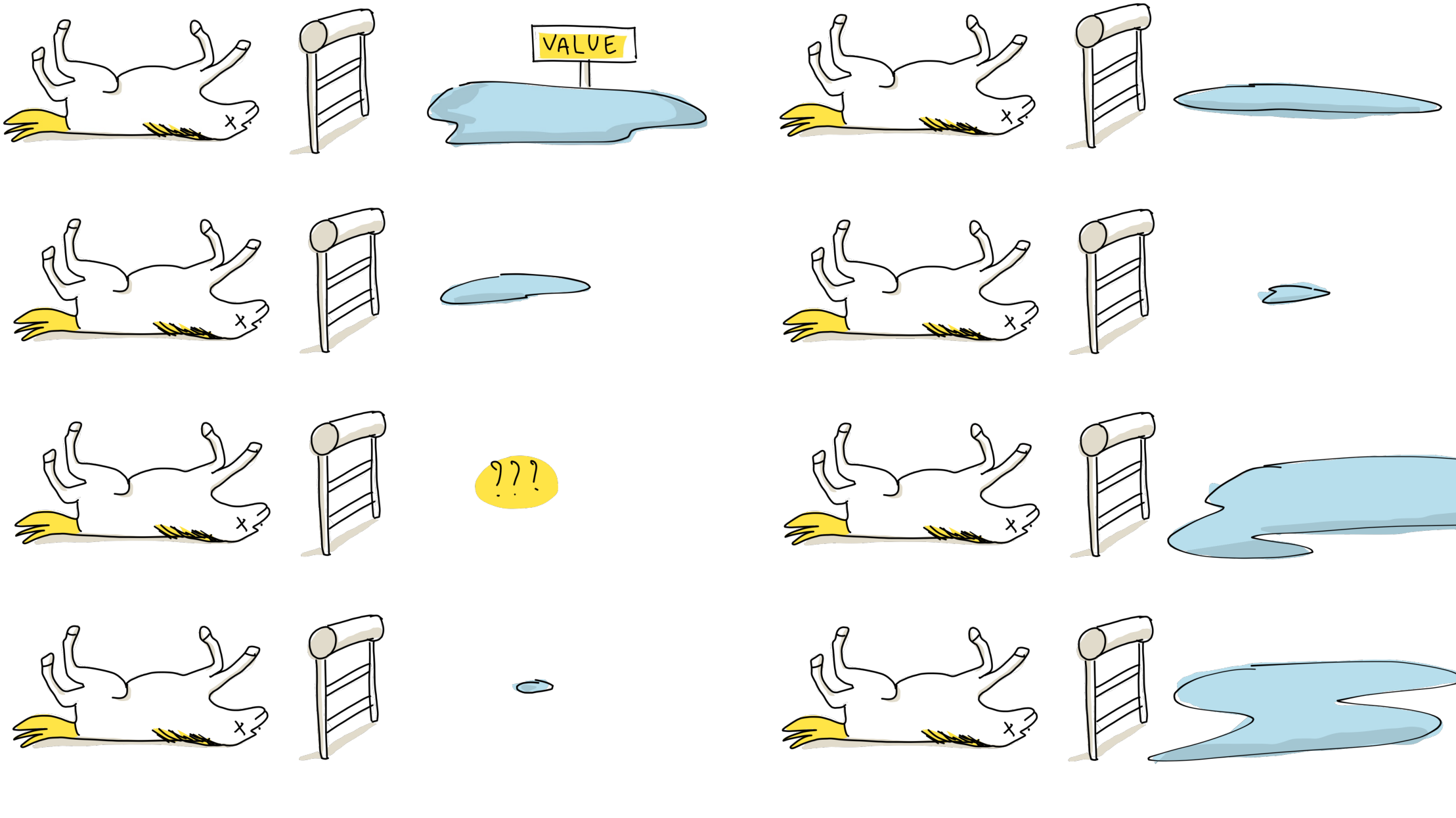


The dead horse stays invisible

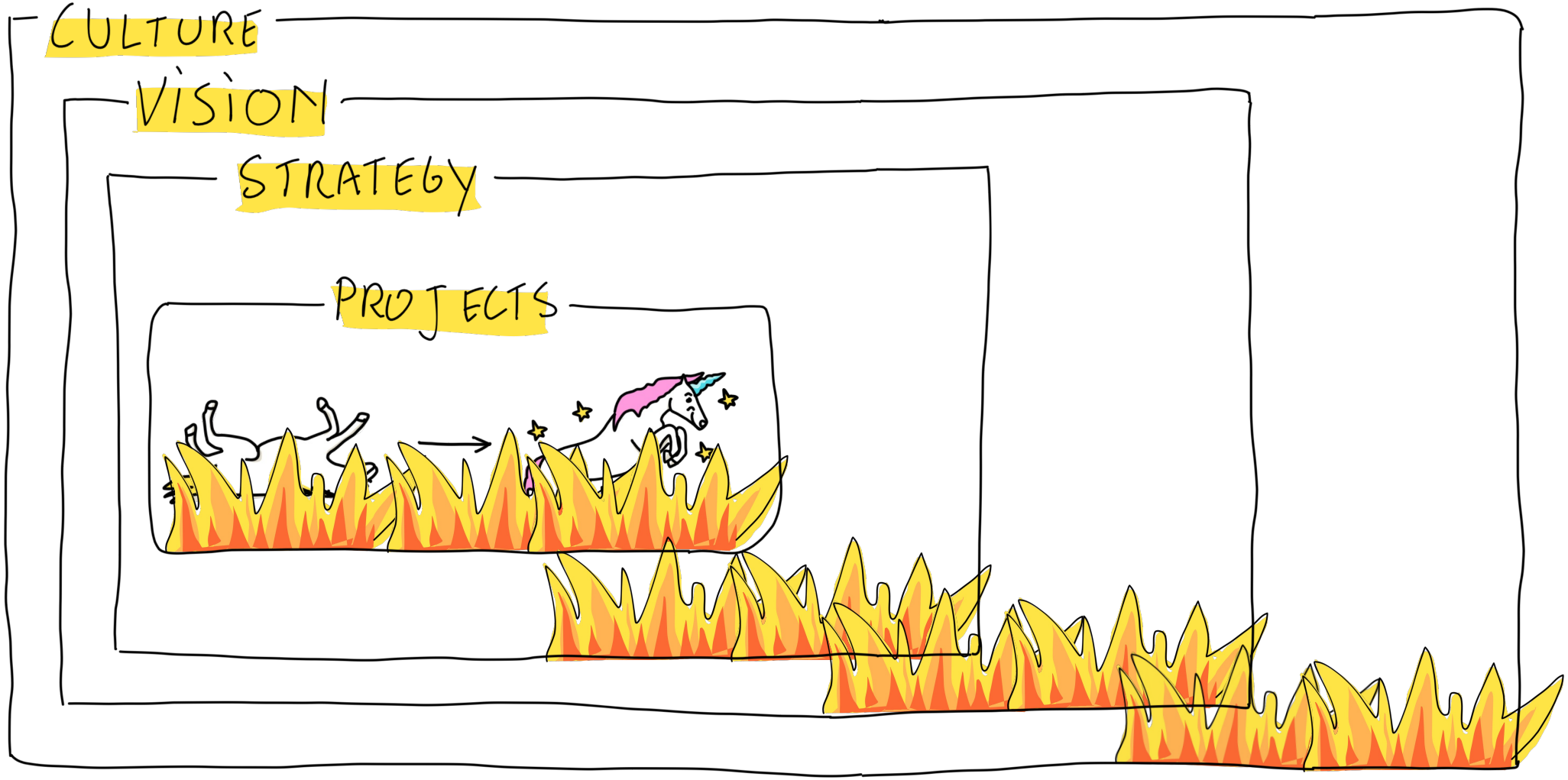


Focus on the Wrong Dead Horse




VALUE
???

The Bigger Picture

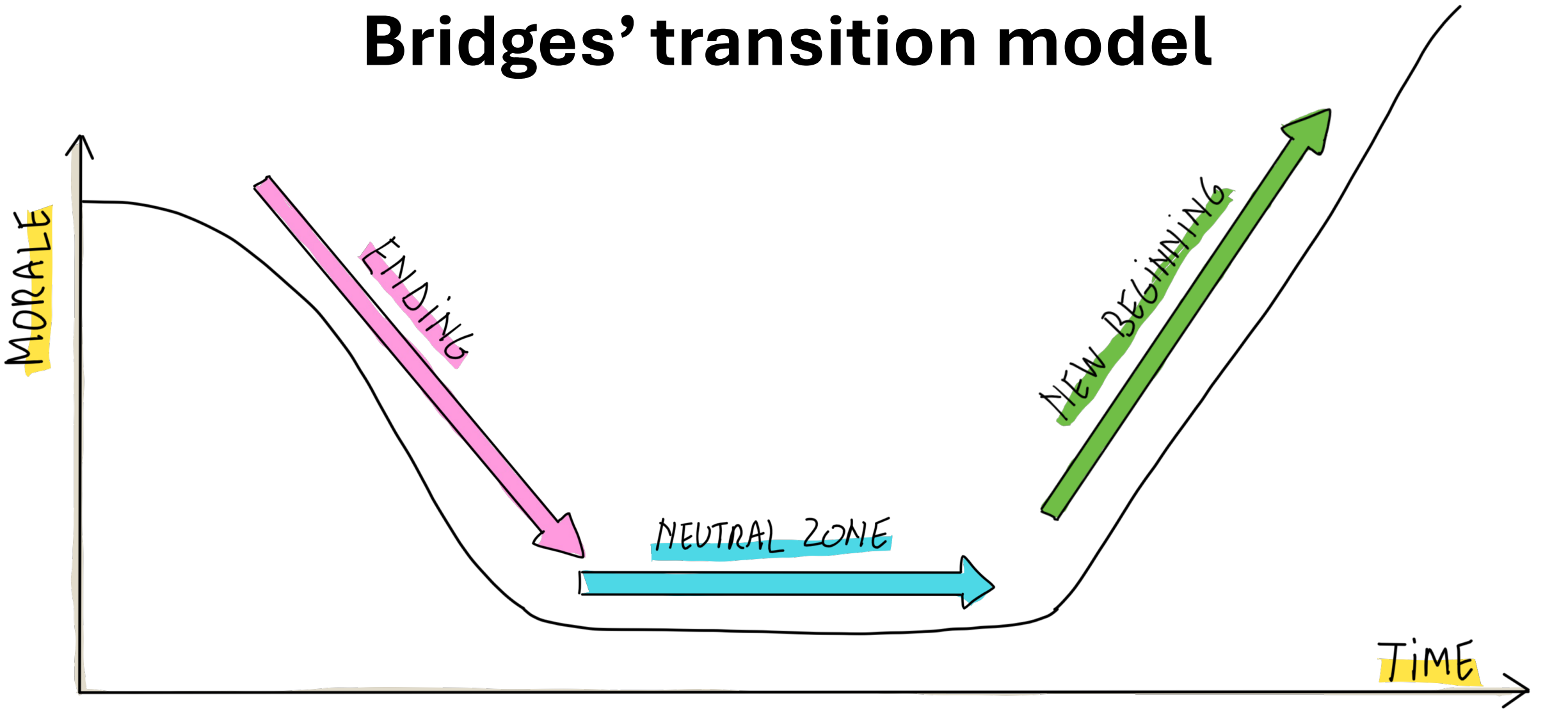


PART IV

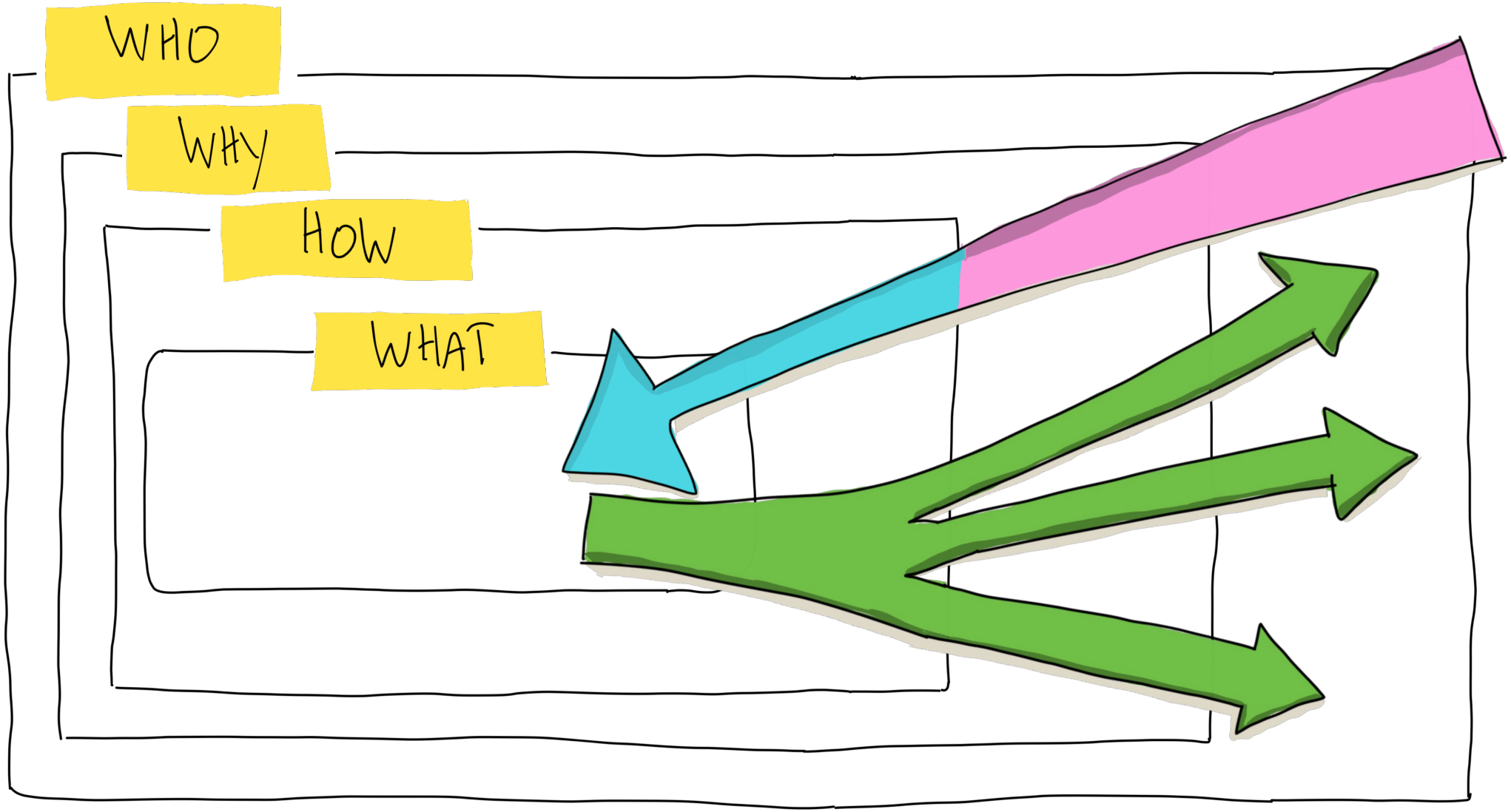
How to make change stick?



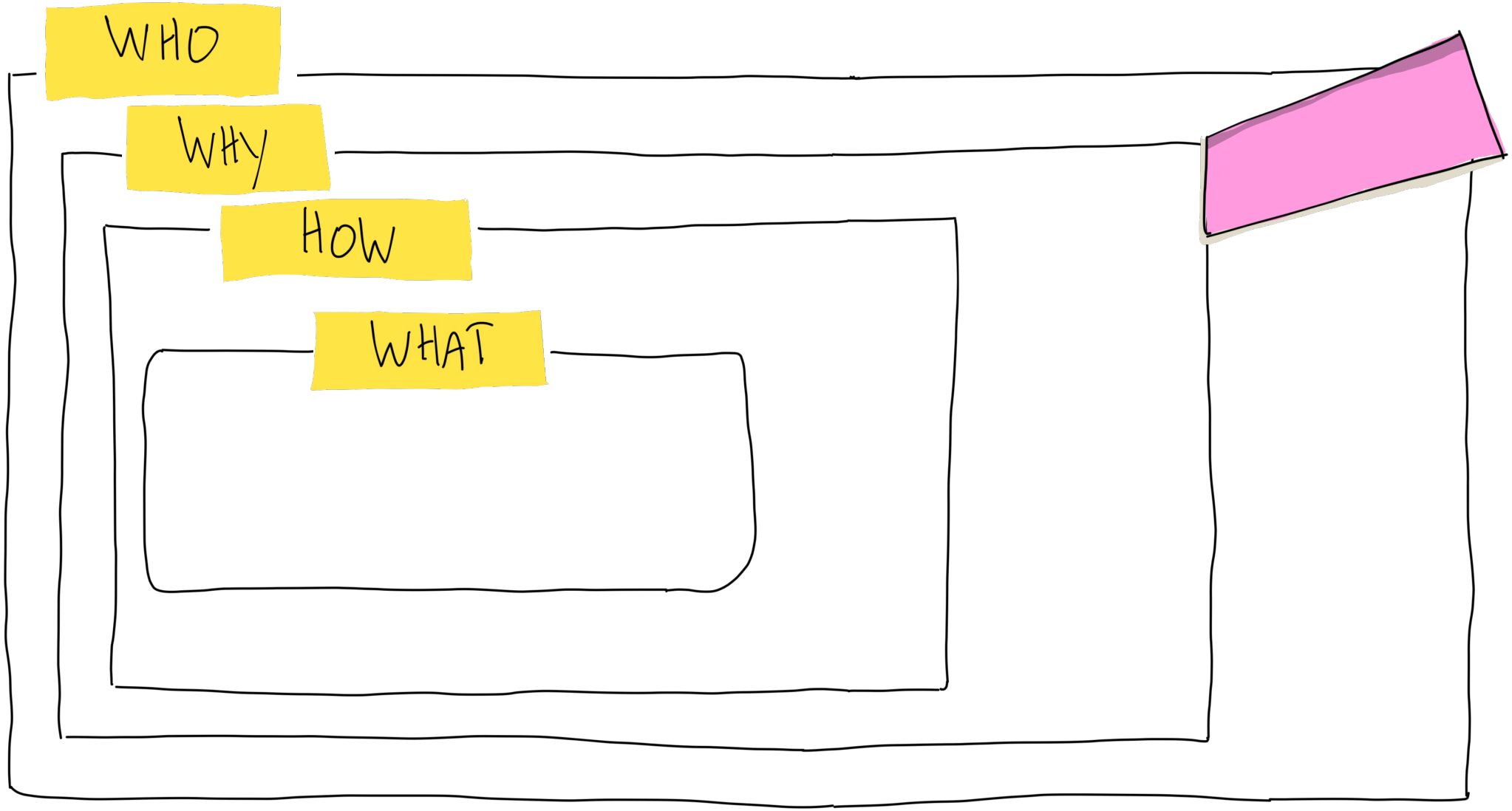
Bridges' transition model

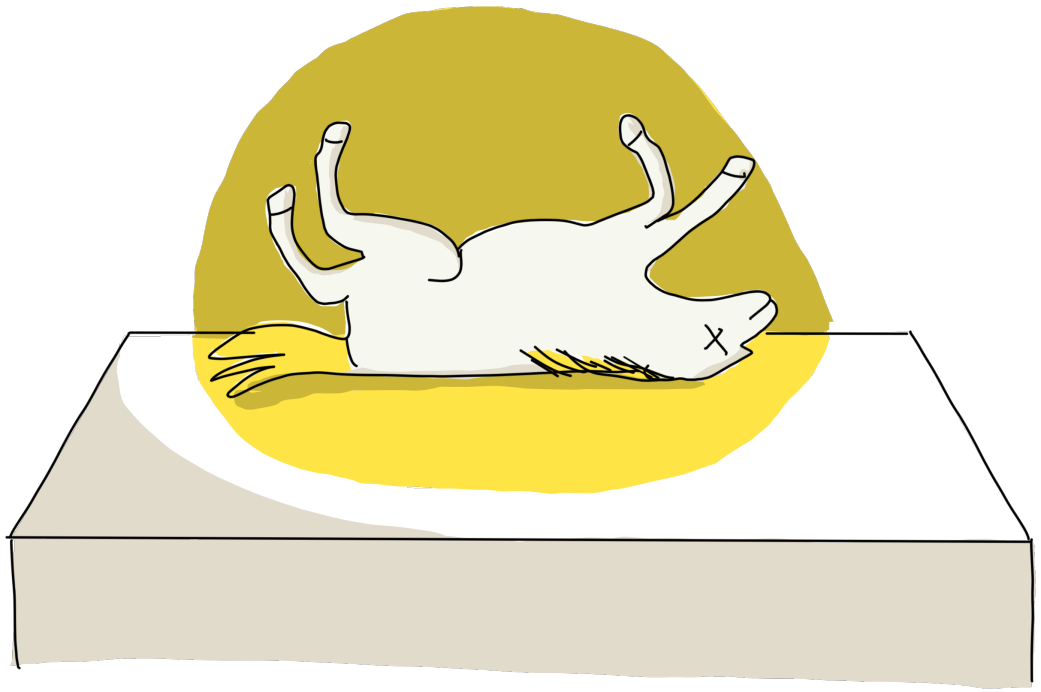


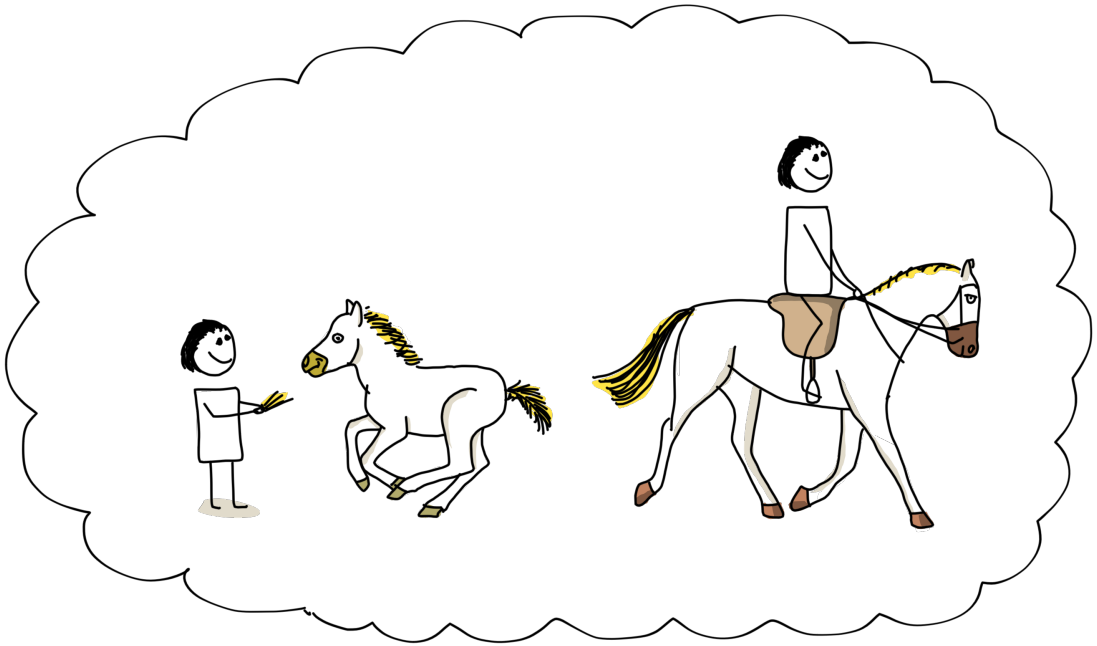
Bridges meets outside-in



#1 – Respect the old horse

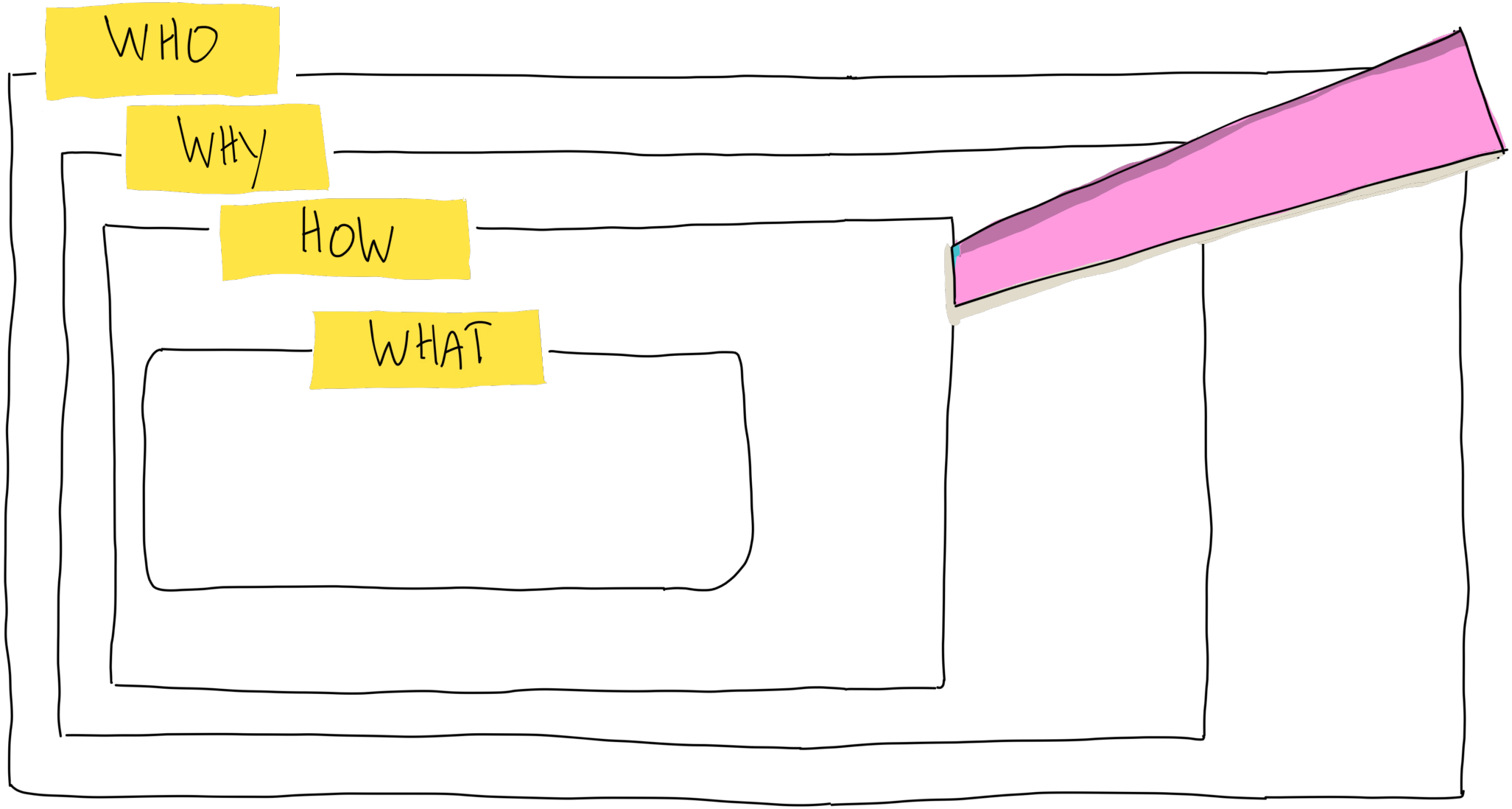




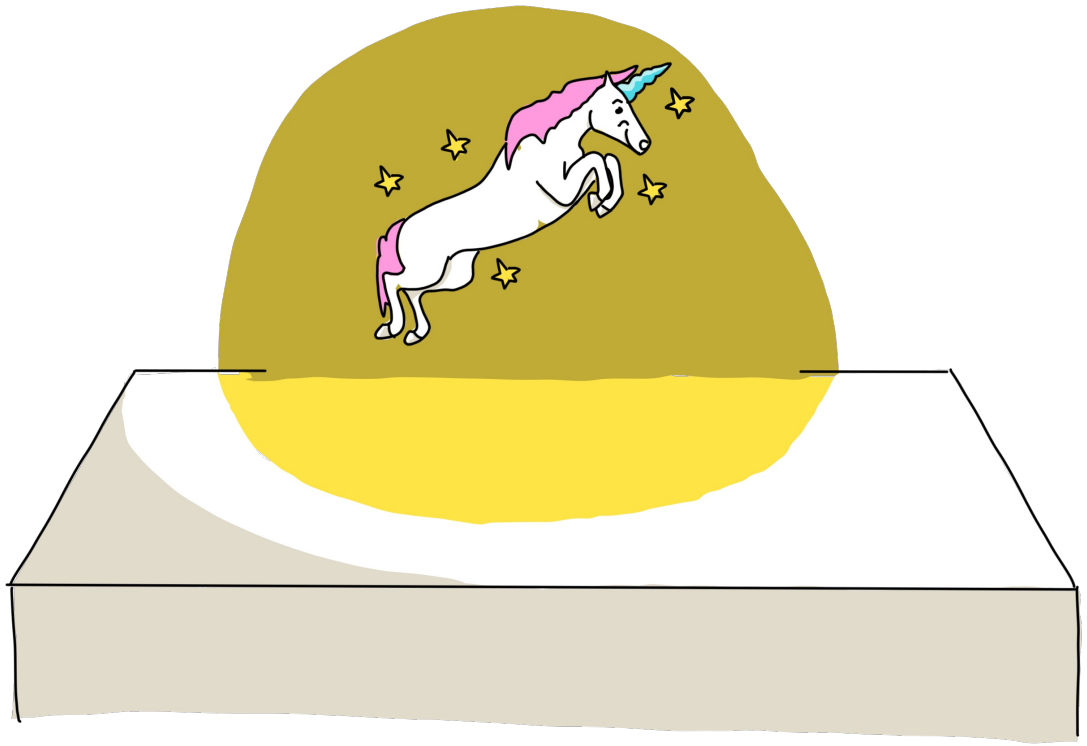


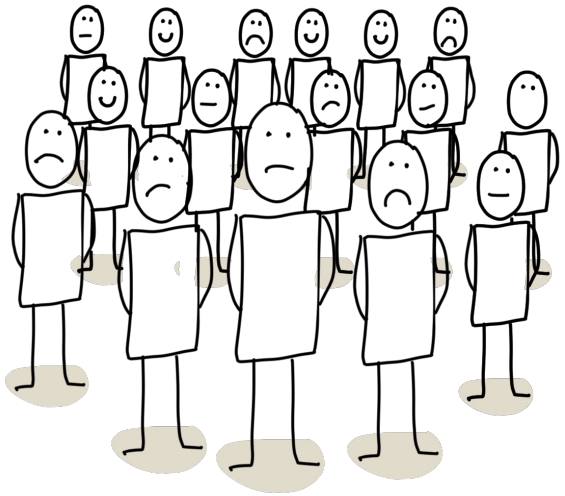


#2 – The symbolic funeral

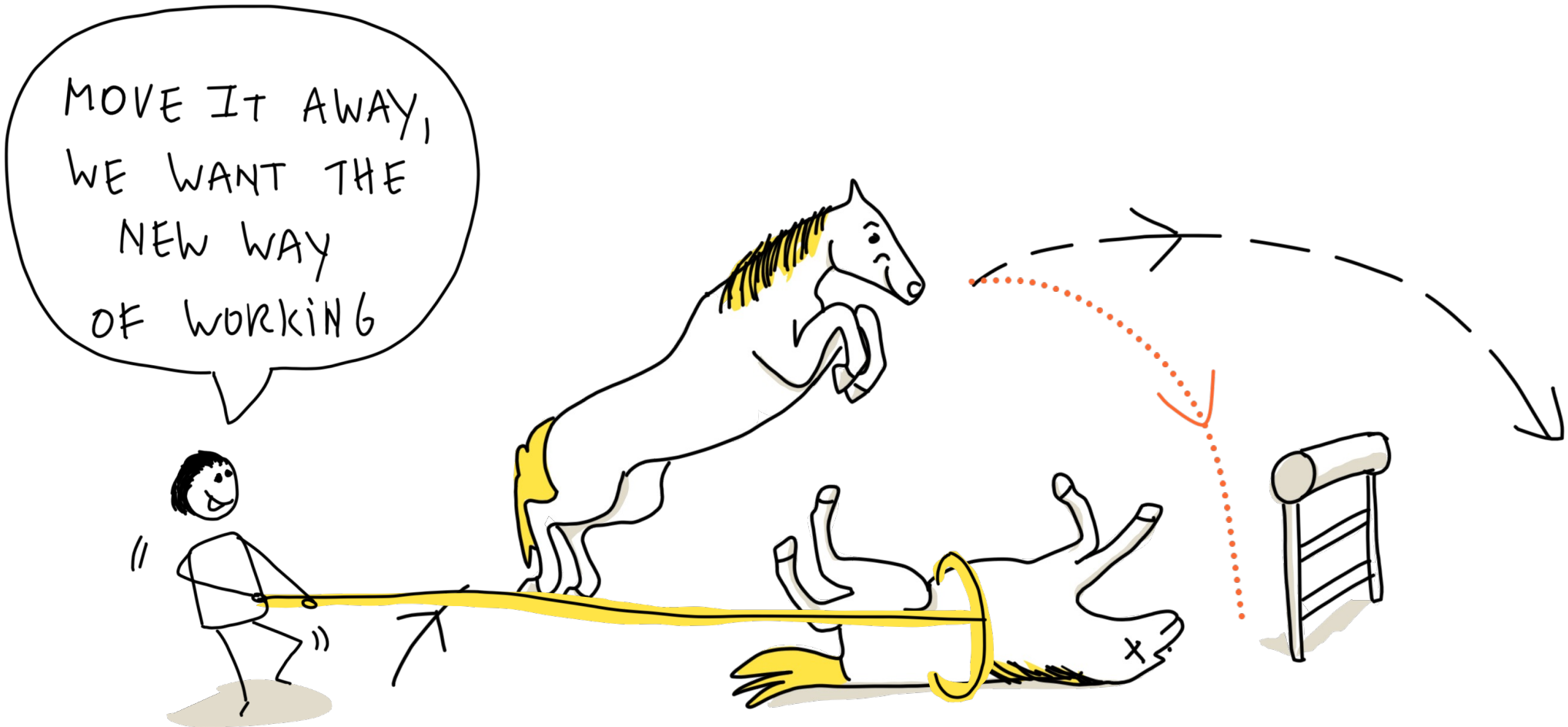


THE DREAM

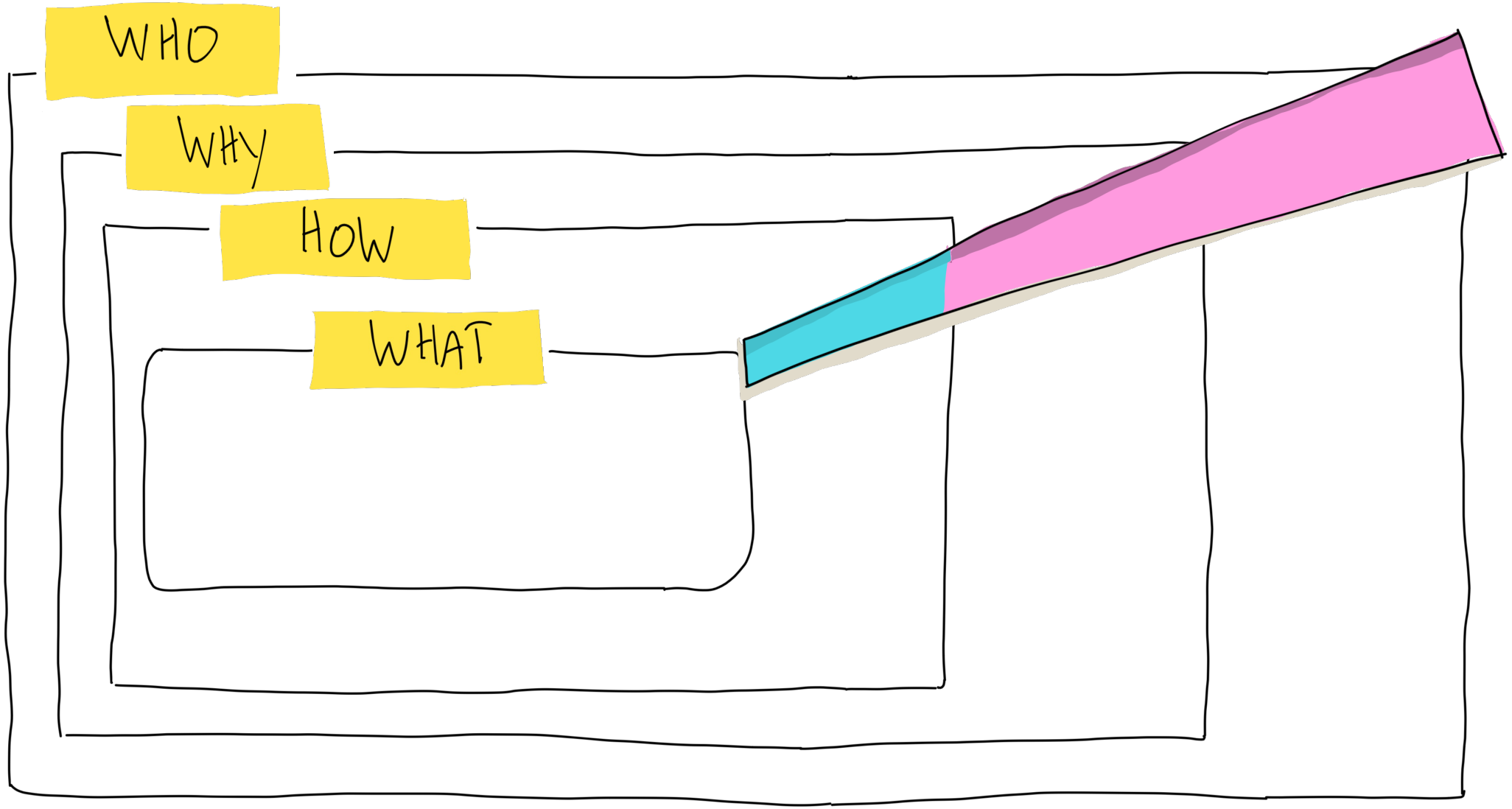




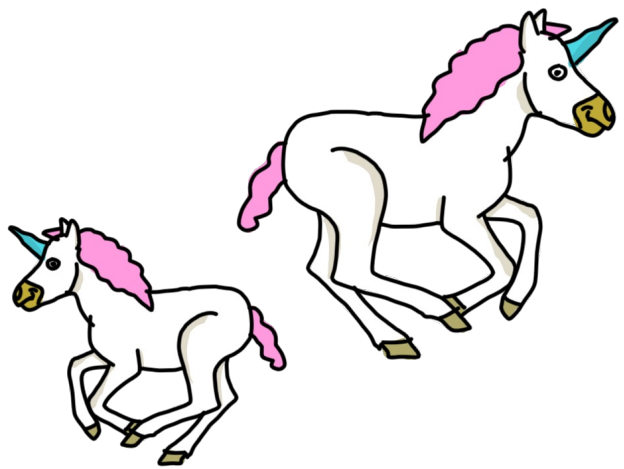



MOVE IT AWAY, WE WANT THE NEW WAY OF WORKING

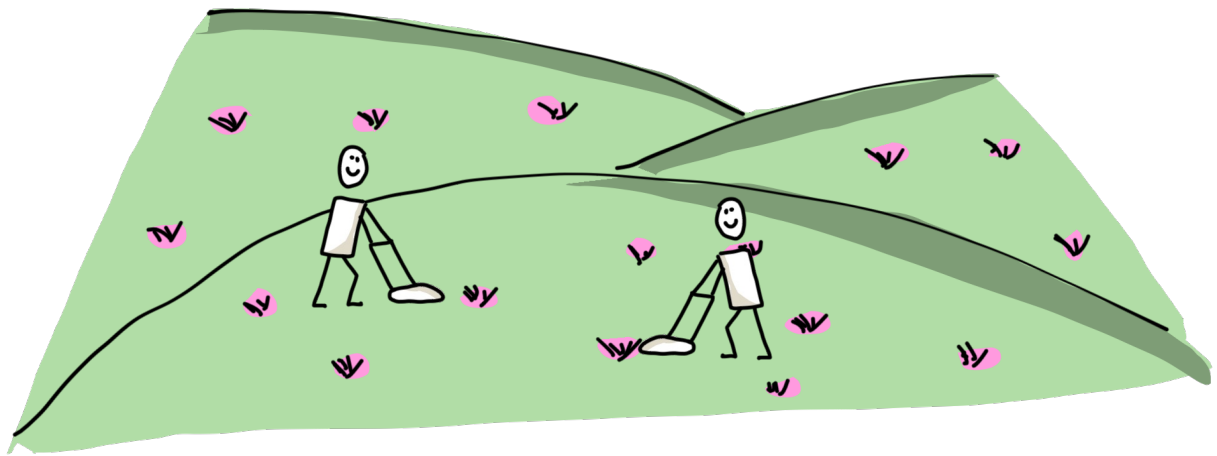
#3 – The plan



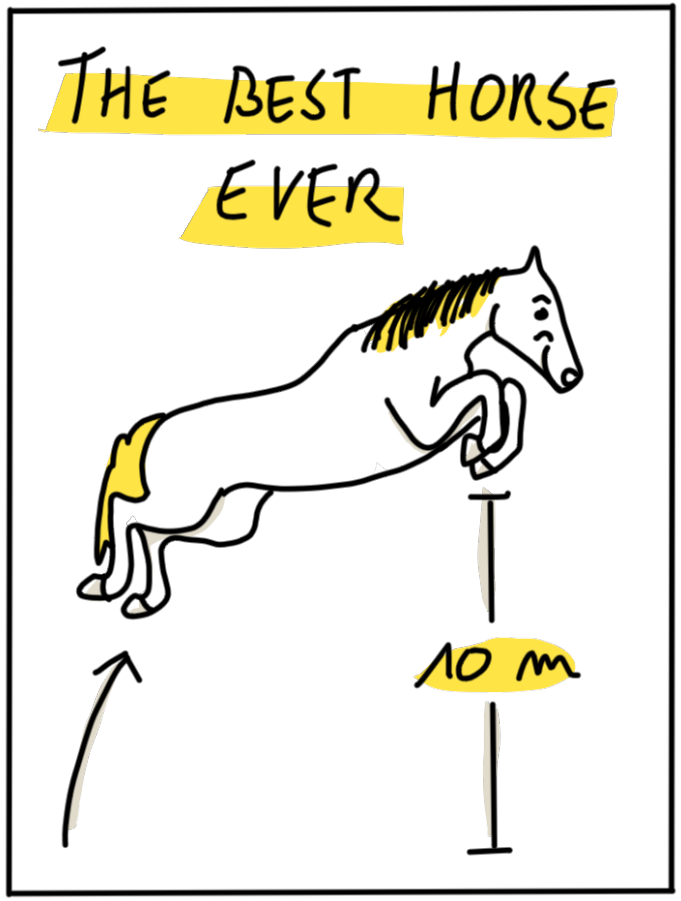
GROWING HORSES



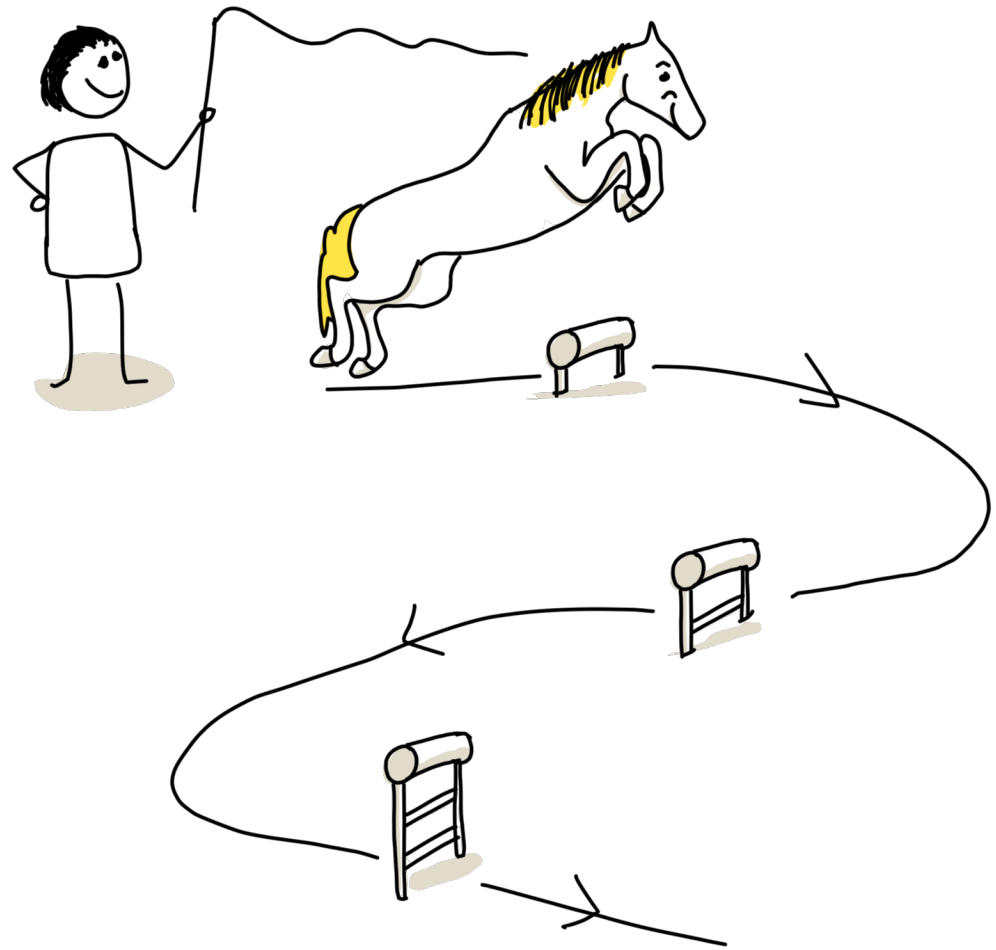
FOUNDATIONS



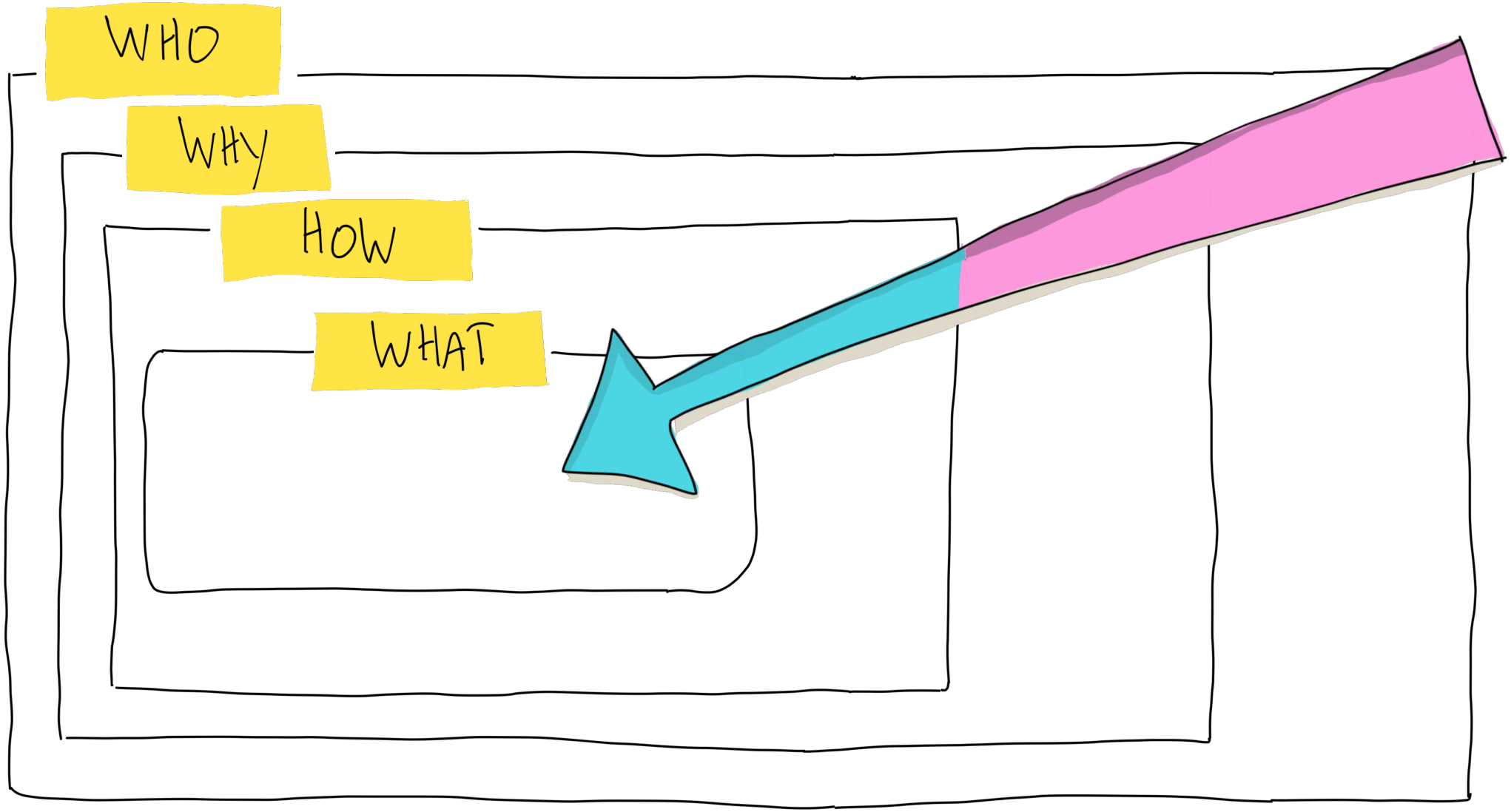
THE COMMERCIAL



REALITY



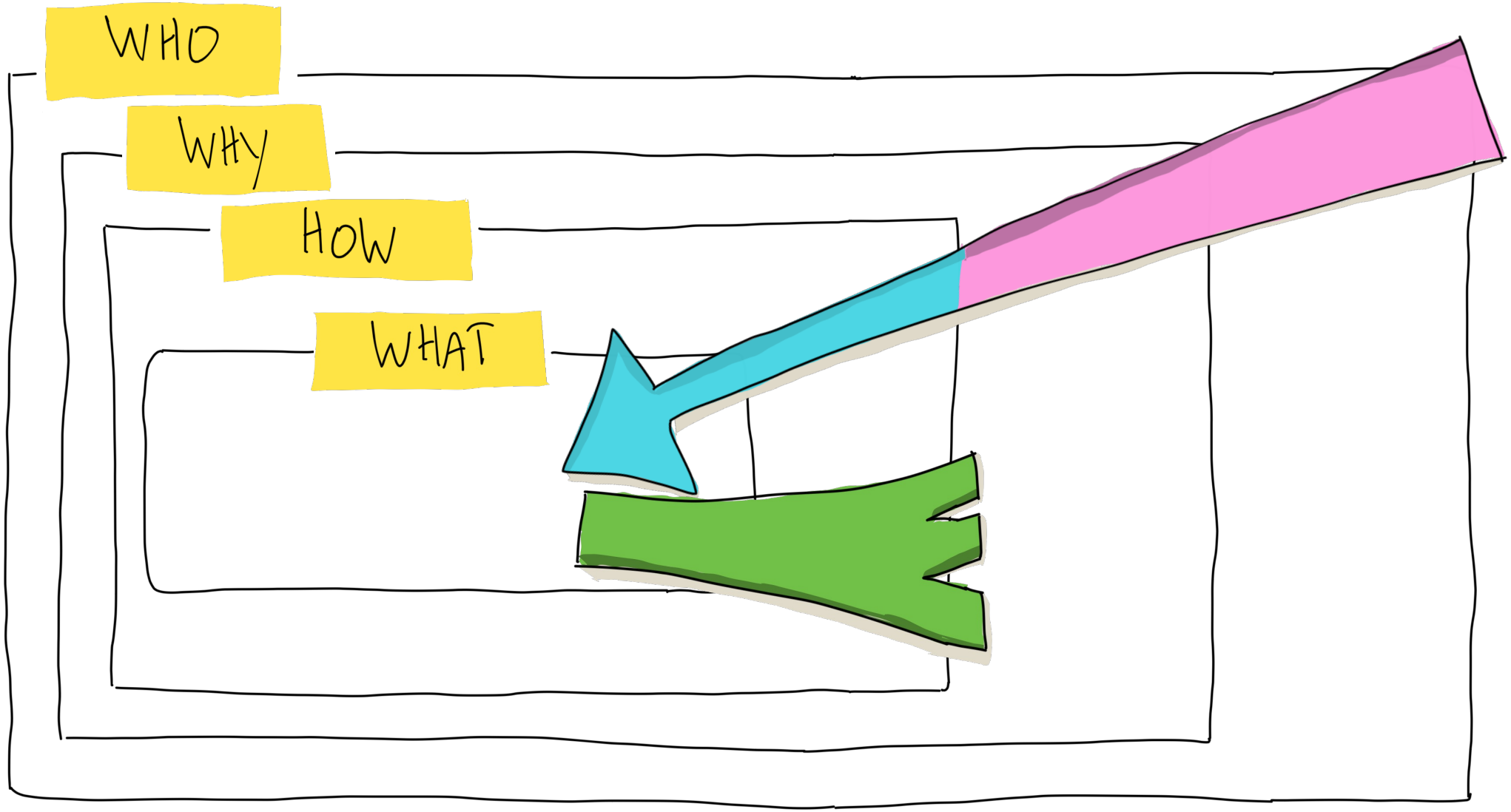
#4 – Grow the new horse

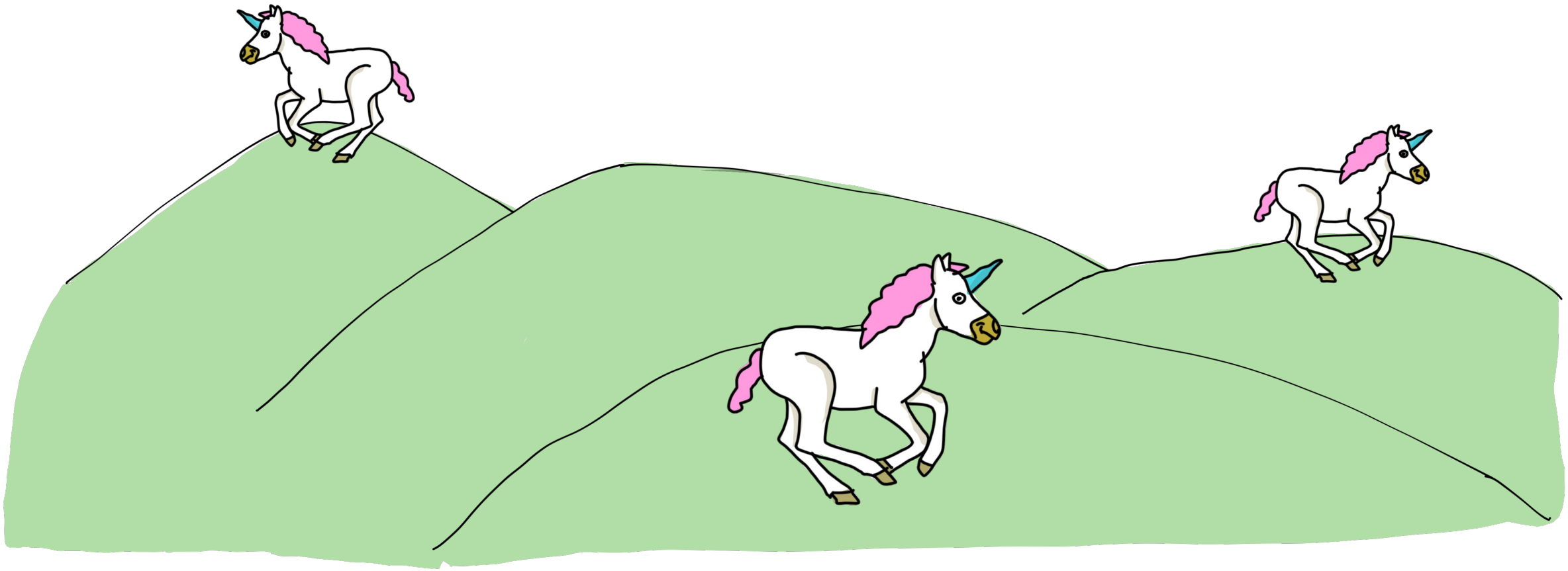




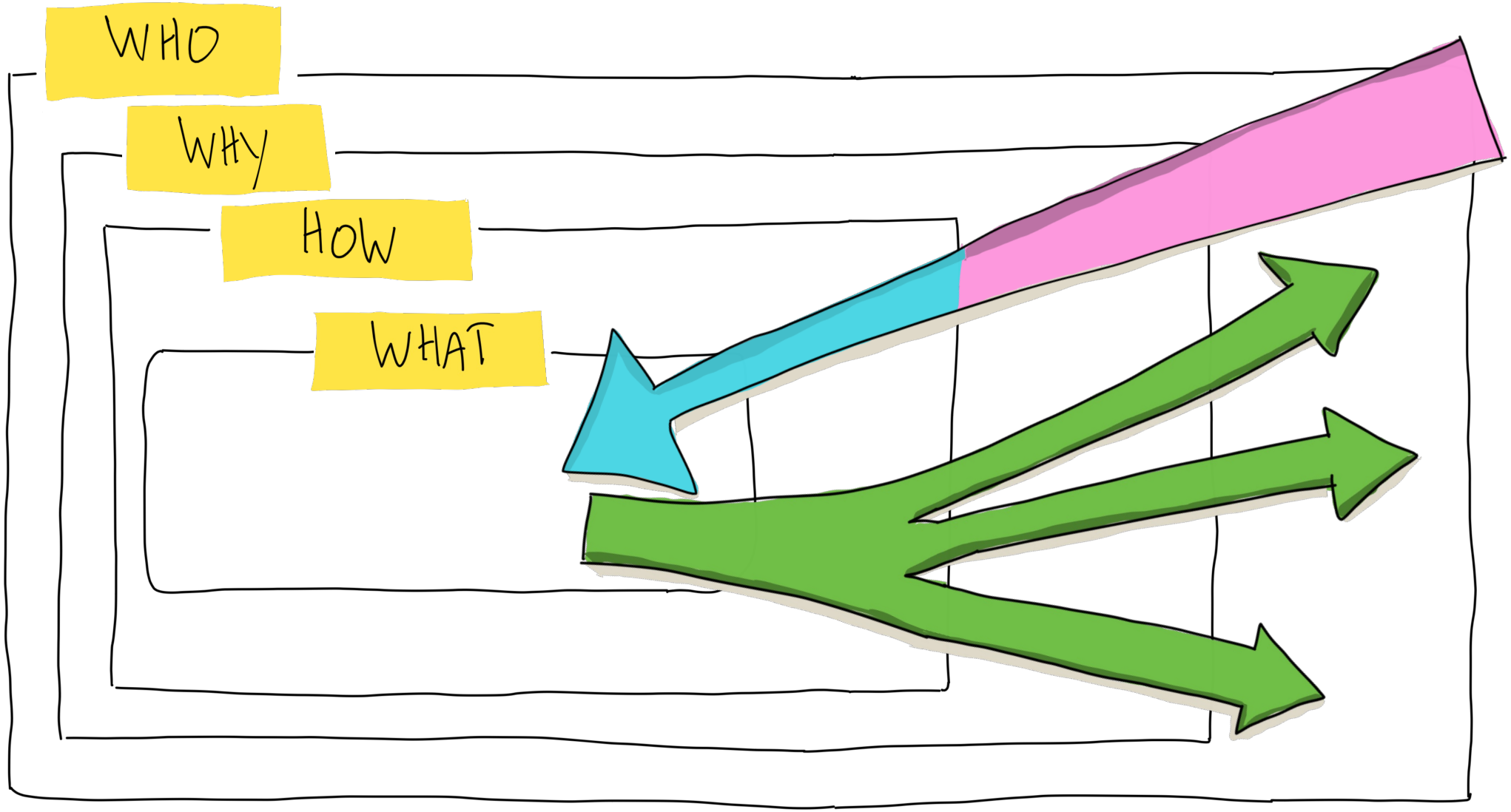


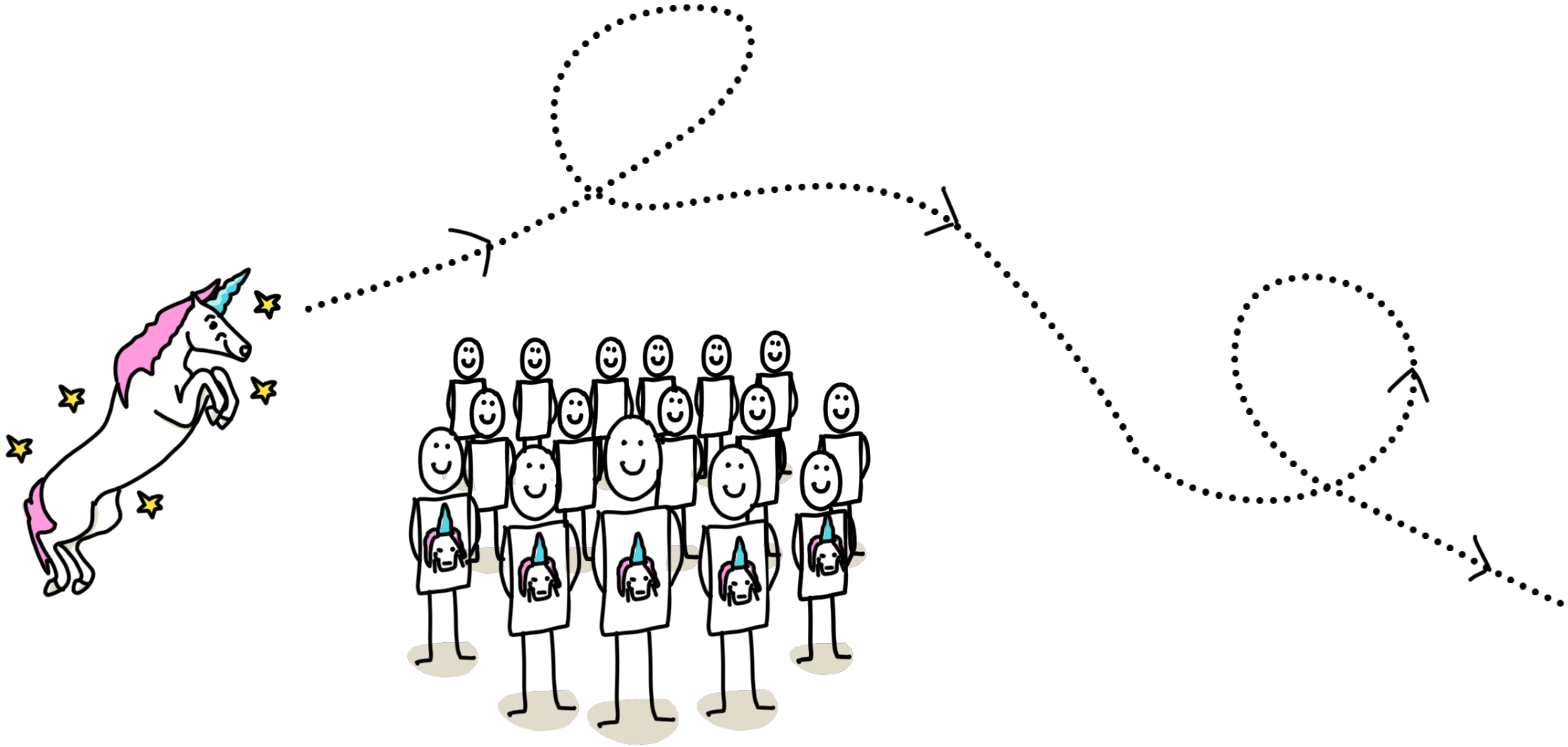
#5 – The first wins





#6 – Stories spread

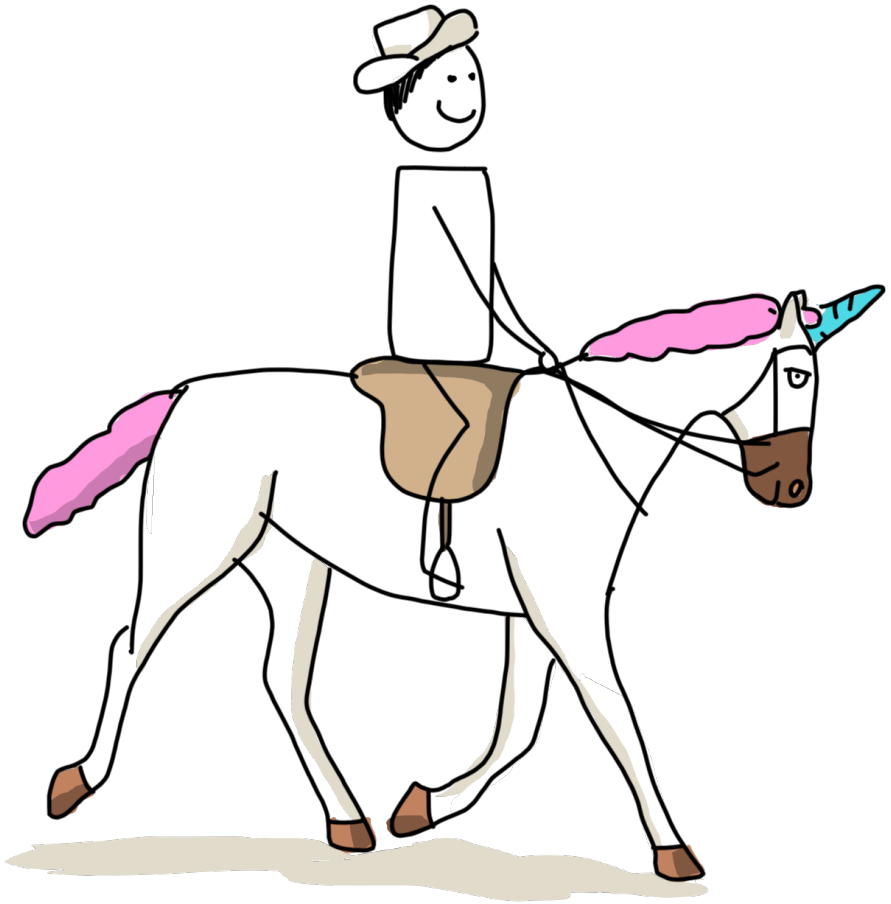


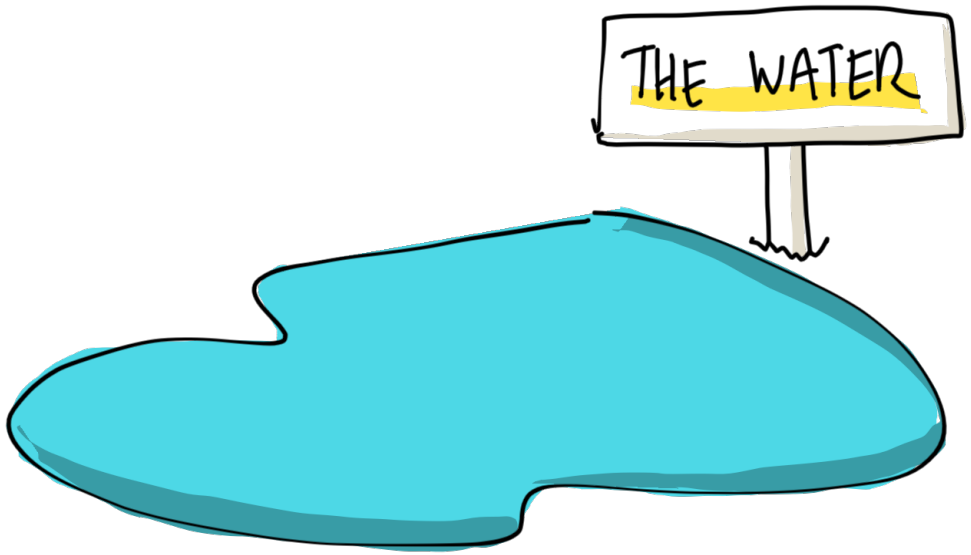


Conclusions

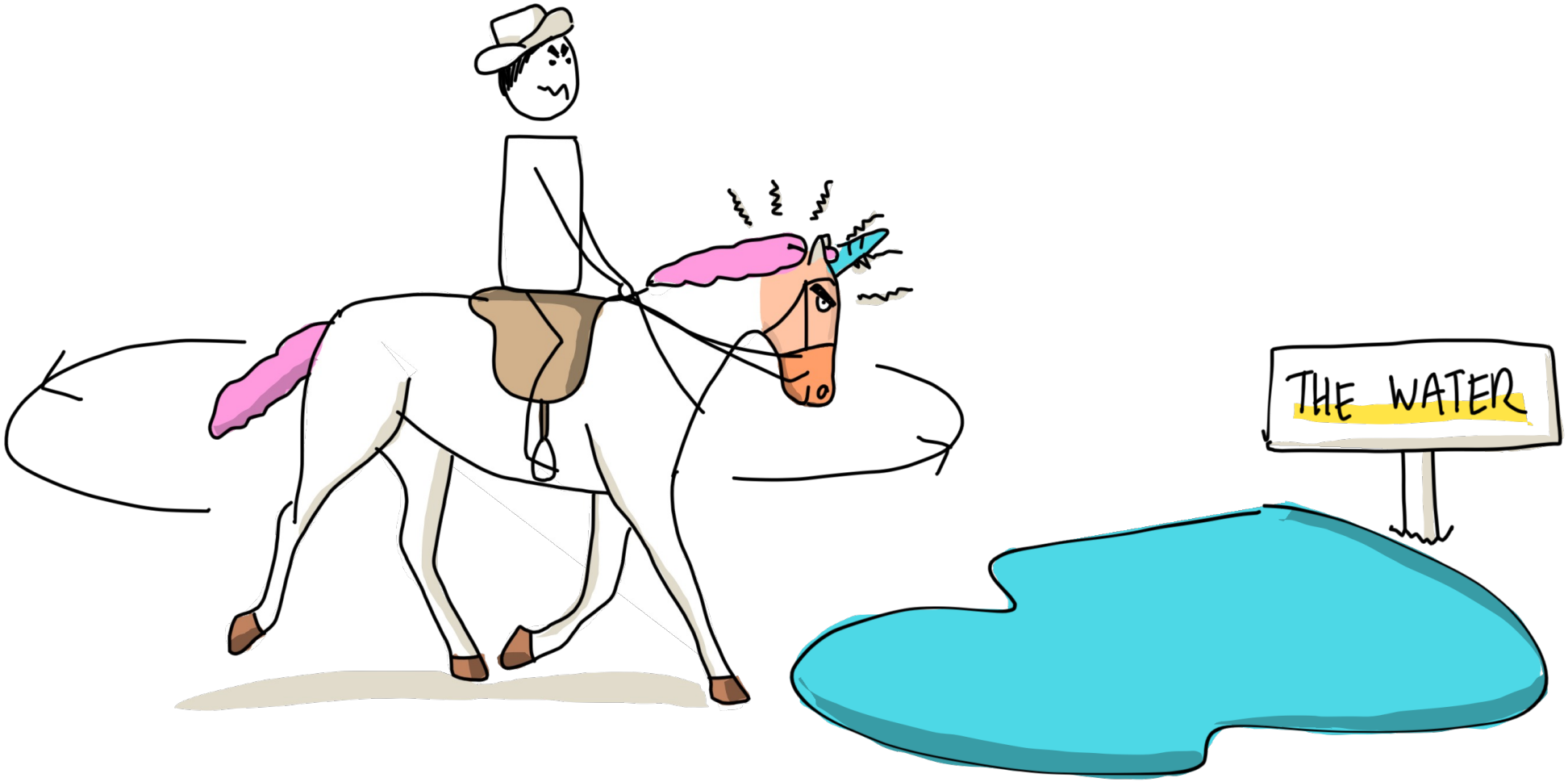


You can lead a horse to the water...

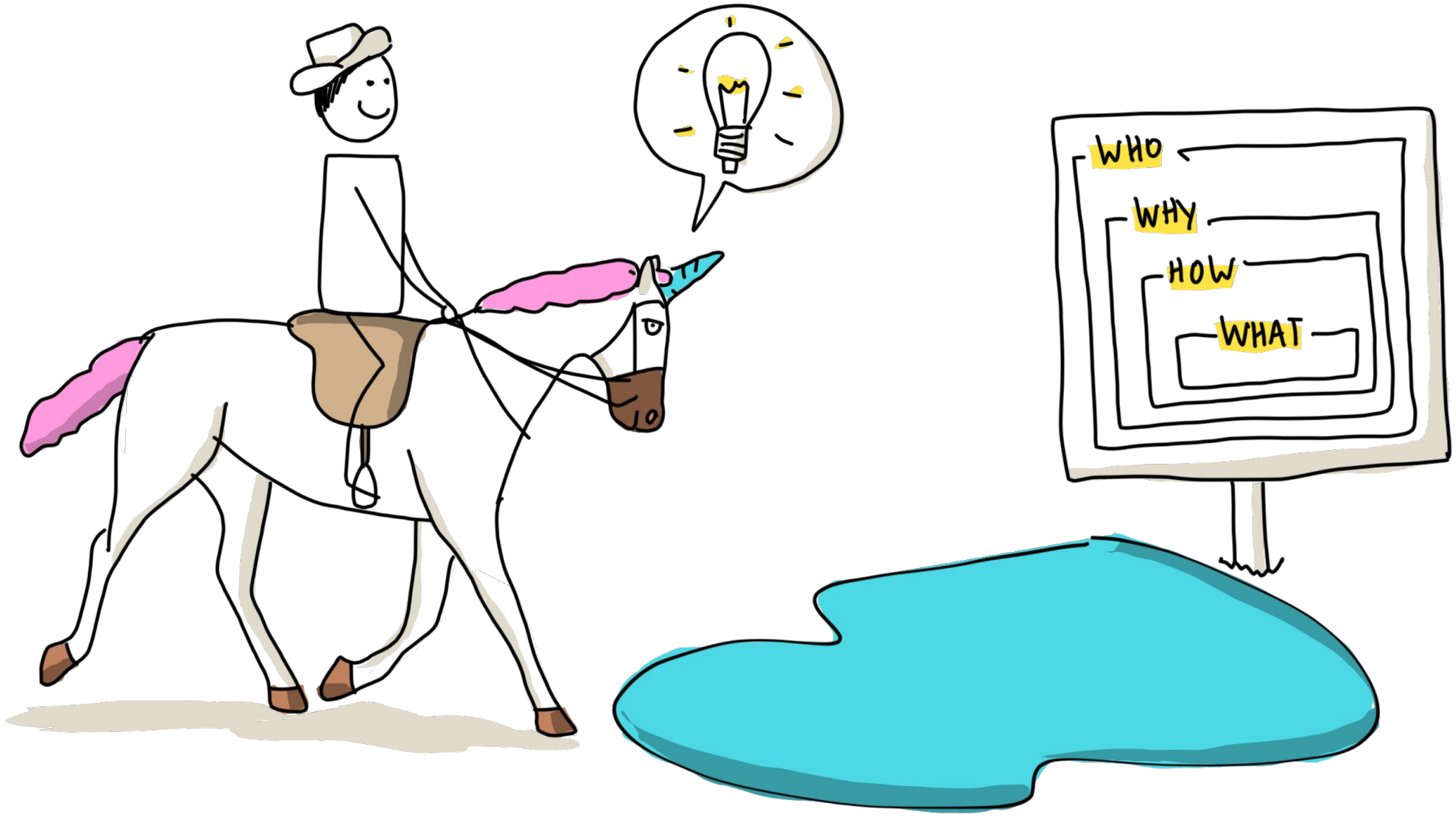




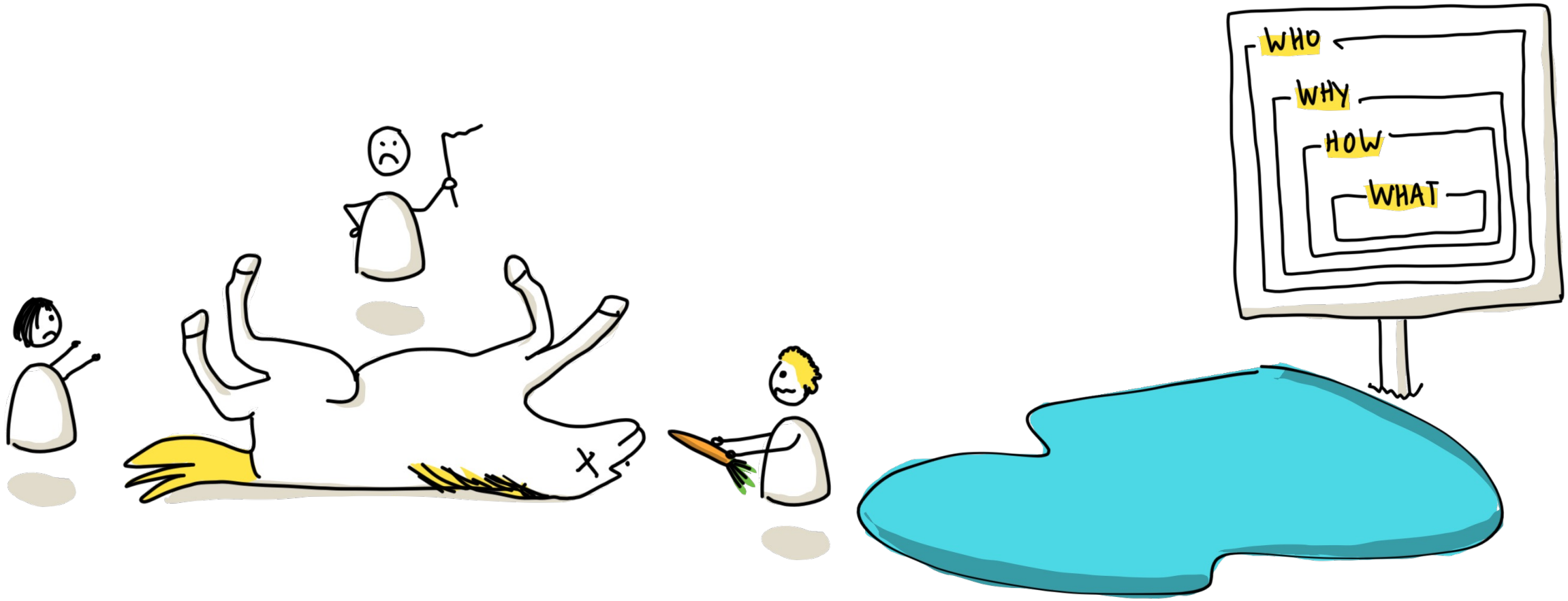
... But you can't make it drink



You need change management!



But mind the dead horse...



THE NEW HORSE PARTY



One more thing



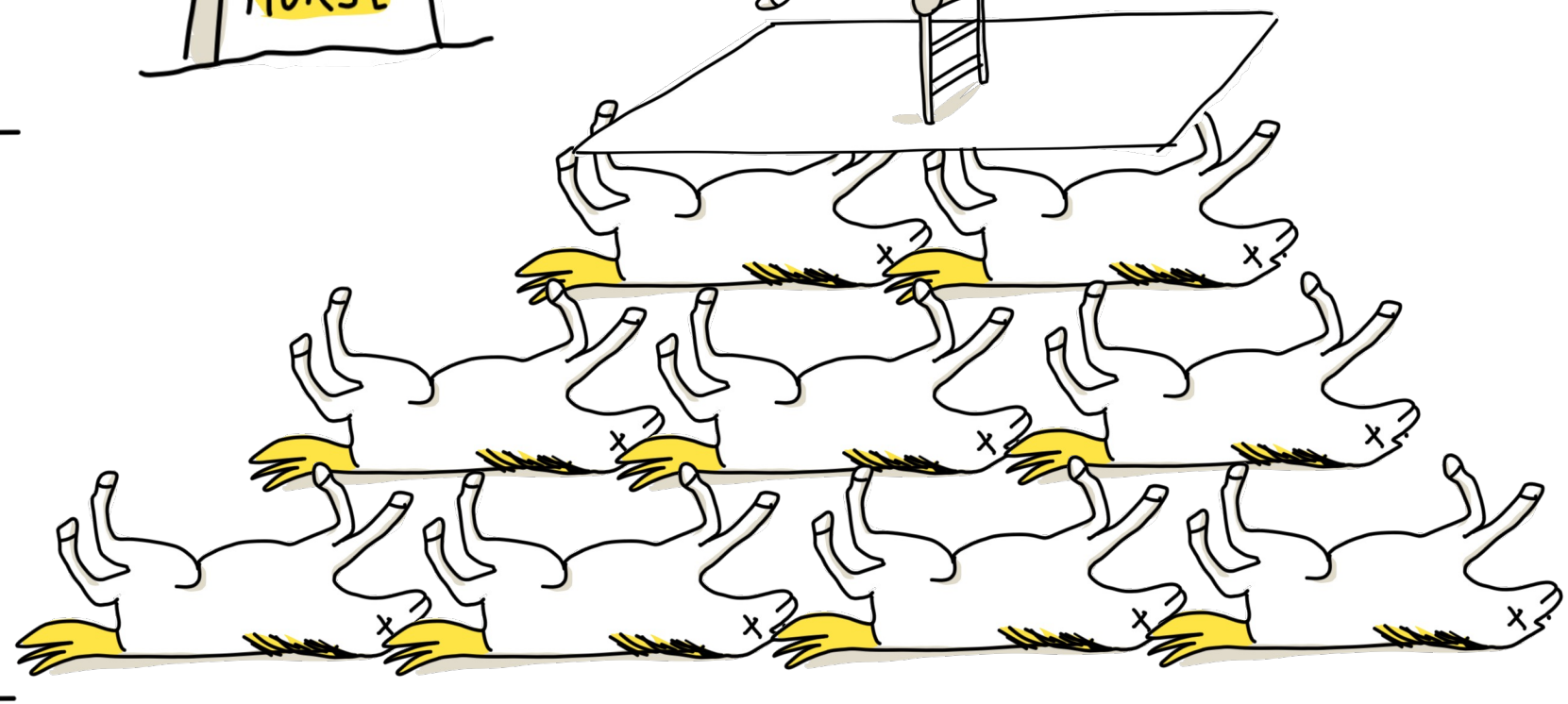
DEAD HORSE → DISMOUNT → NEW HORSE







DEAD HORSES PREVENTING THE NEW HORSE TO SHINE



DEAD HORSE → DISMOUNT → NEW HORSE





FOUNDATIONS ARE CRUCIAL

Thank You!

Jan Meskens

Data & AI Strategist
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