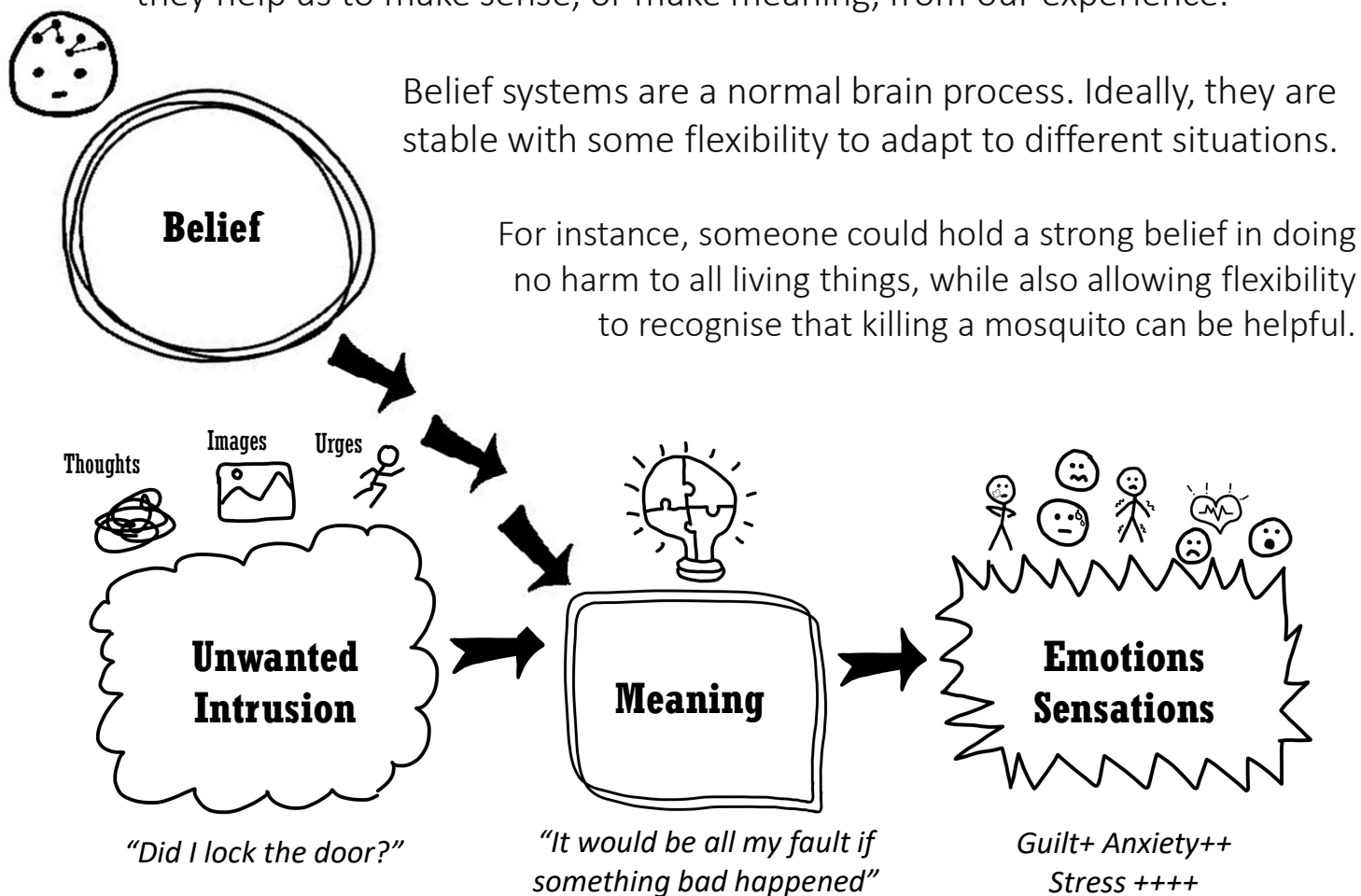


Belief Systems in OCD

How is it that different people can attribute different meaning to their unwanted intrusions? Our underlying belief systems play a big part. A belief system is a network of ideas that help our brain to interpret the world, ourselves and others: they help us to make sense, or make meaning, from our experience.



An overly rigid belief system is not helpful as the rules are applied to situations where it is not warranted. The beliefs below have been associated with OCD:

- **Intolerance of uncertainty** e.g., "I need to know that everything is ok"
- **Perfectionism** e.g., "I need to balance out the bad with good until just right"
- **Thoughts are important**, e.g., "this thought means something!"
- **Heightened responsibility** e.g., "It's all on me to stop this from happening"
- **Overestimation of threat** e.g., "I won't be able to cope"
- **Thoughts must be controlled**, e.g., "I need to stop thinking this"
- **"Bad" thoughts are as bad as "bad" actions**, e.g., "I'm bad for even thinking this"
- **Having a "bad" thoughts makes that "bad" thing more likely to happen**, e.g., "this is a sign that something bad is going to happen if I don't do something"