MAKING ROOM FOR MODEST CONCEPTUAL FUNCTIONALISM

Jackson Kernion

ARE PHENOMENAL CONCEPTS FUNCTIONAL CONCEPTS?

ARE PHENOMENAL CONCEPTS FUNCTIONAL CONCEPTS?

YES →

Conceptual Functionalism

NO →

Conceptual Dualism

"**Phenomenal concepts are conceptually irreducible** in this sense: they neither a priori imply, nor are implied by, physical-functional concepts. …

"**Phenomenal concepts are conceptually independent** of physical-functional descriptions…"

— Loar, "Phenomenal States"

MODEST CONCEPTUAL FUNCTIONALISM

Phenomenal concepts
→ **Not *merely* functional**
→ **Still have functional content**

PHENOMENAL

Subjective, Qualitative

FUNCTIONAL

Abstract Causal Structure

PHENOMENAL

FUNCTIONAL

P_1

F_1

P_2

F_2

P_3

F_3

$\vdots$

$\vdots$

P_n

F_n

PHENOMENAL   **FUNCTIONAL**

P_1 $\leftarrow$ $\rightarrow$ F_1

P_2 $\leftarrow$ $\rightarrow$ F_2

P_3 $\leftarrow$ $\rightarrow$ F_3

$\vdots$ $\vdots$

P_n $\leftarrow$ $\rightarrow$ F_n

Q→
PHENOMENAL/FUNCTIONAL CONCEPTUAL RELATIONSHIP?

A→
PATTERN OF ENTAILMENTS

PHENOMENAL   # FUNCTIONAL

P_1 ←   → F_1

P_2 → F_2

P_3 ← F_3

⋮   ⋮

P_n ← F_n

PHENOMENAL   FUNCTIONAL

P_1 → F_1

P_2 → F_2

P_3 → F_3

$\vdots$ → $\vdots$

P_n → F_n

PHENOMENAL **FUNCTIONAL**

P_1 ← F_1

P_2 ← → F_2

P_3 → F_3

⋮   ⋮

P_n → F_n

PHENOMENAL

FUNCTIONAL

P_1 ← F_1

P_2 ← F_2

P_3 ← F_3

⋮ ⋮

P_n ← F_n

PHENOMENAL   **FUNCTIONAL**

P_1 ←   → F_1

P_2 ←   → F_2

P_3 ←   → F_3

⋮   ⋮

P_n ←   → F_n

PHENOMENAL

FUNCTIONAL

P_1 → F_1

P_2 ← F_2

P_3 → F_3

⋮ ⋮

P_n ← F_n

PHENOMENAL   FUNCTIONAL

P_1 ←   → F_1

P_2 F_2

P_3 F_3

$\vdots$ $\vdots$

P_n F_n

PHENOMENAL

FUNCTIONAL

P_1

F_1

P_2

F_2

P_3

F_3

$\vdots$

$\vdots$

P_n

F_n

PHENOMENAL

FUNCTIONAL

P_1

F_1

P_2 ← → F_2

P_3 ← → F_3

⋮ ⋮

P_n F_n

IMMODEST CONCEPTUAL FUNCTIONALISM

Every phenomenal description has a matching functional description

$$P_1 \quad \leftarrow \quad \rightarrow \quad F_1$$

$$P_2 \quad \leftarrow \quad \rightarrow \quad F_2$$

$$P_3 \quad \leftarrow \quad \rightarrow \quad F_3$$

$$\vdots \qquad\qquad\qquad \vdots$$

$$P_n \quad \leftarrow \quad \rightarrow \quad F_n$$
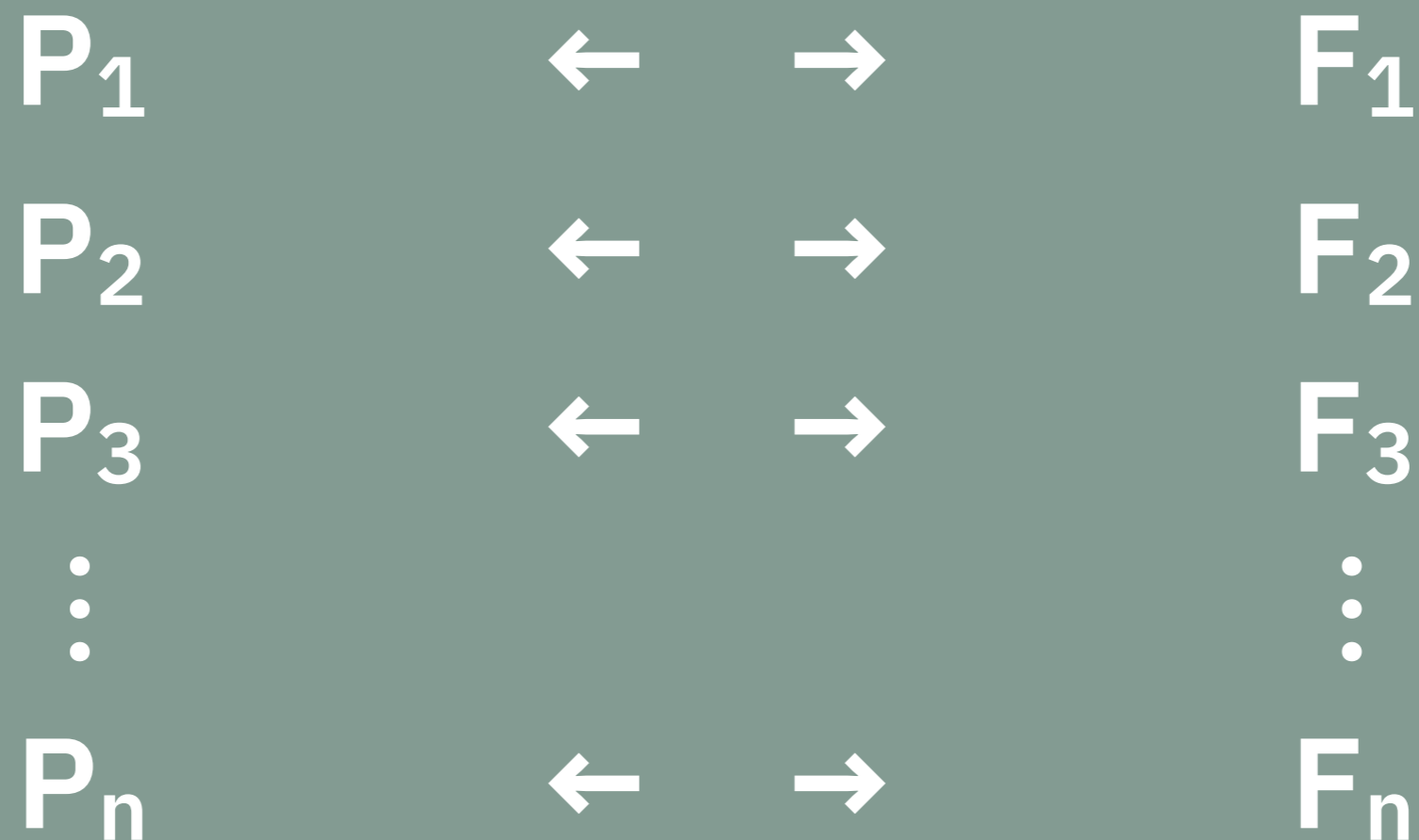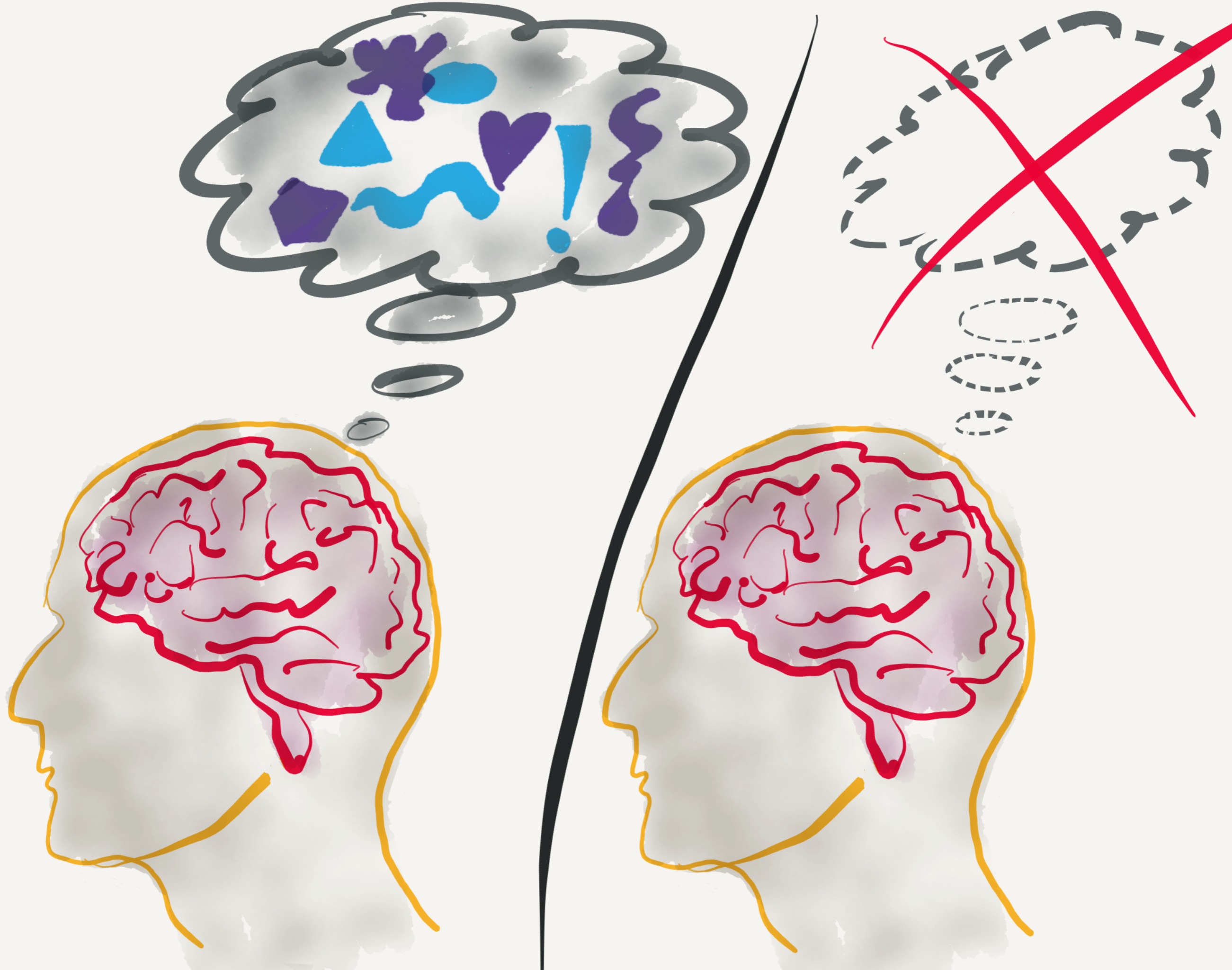
ABSENT QUALIA

"x is p-conscious" $\longleftarrow$ "*x* is a-conscious"
?

ABSENT QUALIA
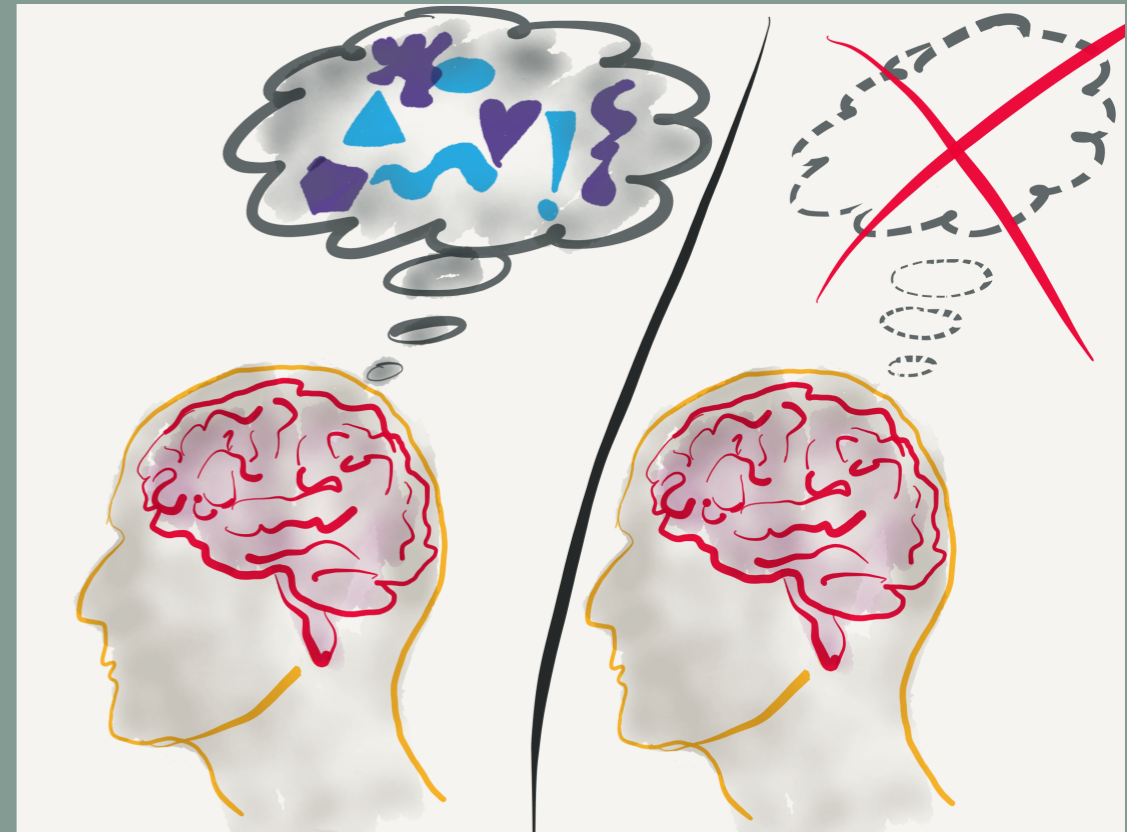
"*x* is p-conscious" ← ✗ "*x* is a-conscious"

UPSHOT →

No functional description entails p-consciousness

INVERTED QUALIA

"*x* is a red experience" ✗← "*x* is *F*"

INVERTED QUALIA

"*x* is a red experience" ✗ ← "*x* is *F*"

For *some* phenomenal types, functional descriptions do not entail fully determinate phenomenal descriptions
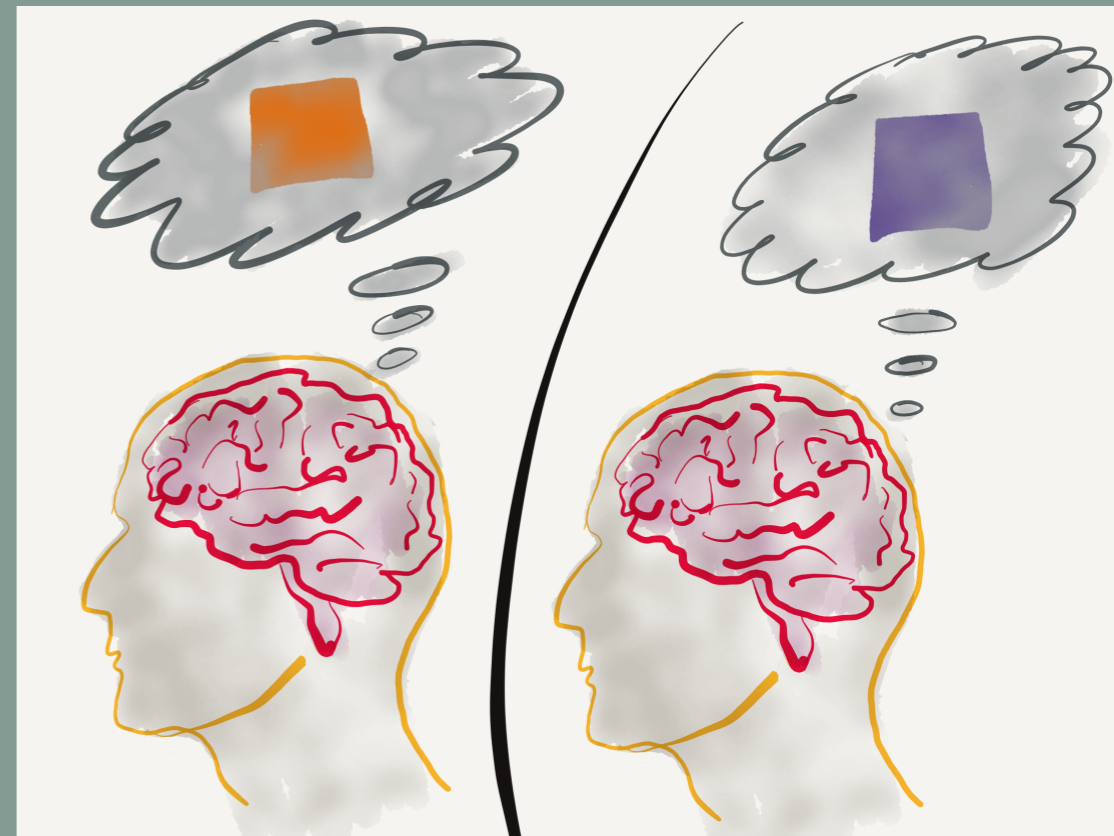
IMMODEST CONCEPTUAL FUNCTIONALISM

P ←——→ F

MODEST CONCEPTUAL FUNCTIONALISM

P → F

CONCEPTUAL DUALISM

P / F

MODEST CONCEPTUAL FUNCTIONALISM

Phenomenal concepts
→ **Not *merely* functional**
→ **Still have functional content**

ANALOGY
→ Color concepts are spatial concepts

TWO PATHS TO FUNCTIONAL CONSTRAINTS
1. Structure of Phenomenal Subject
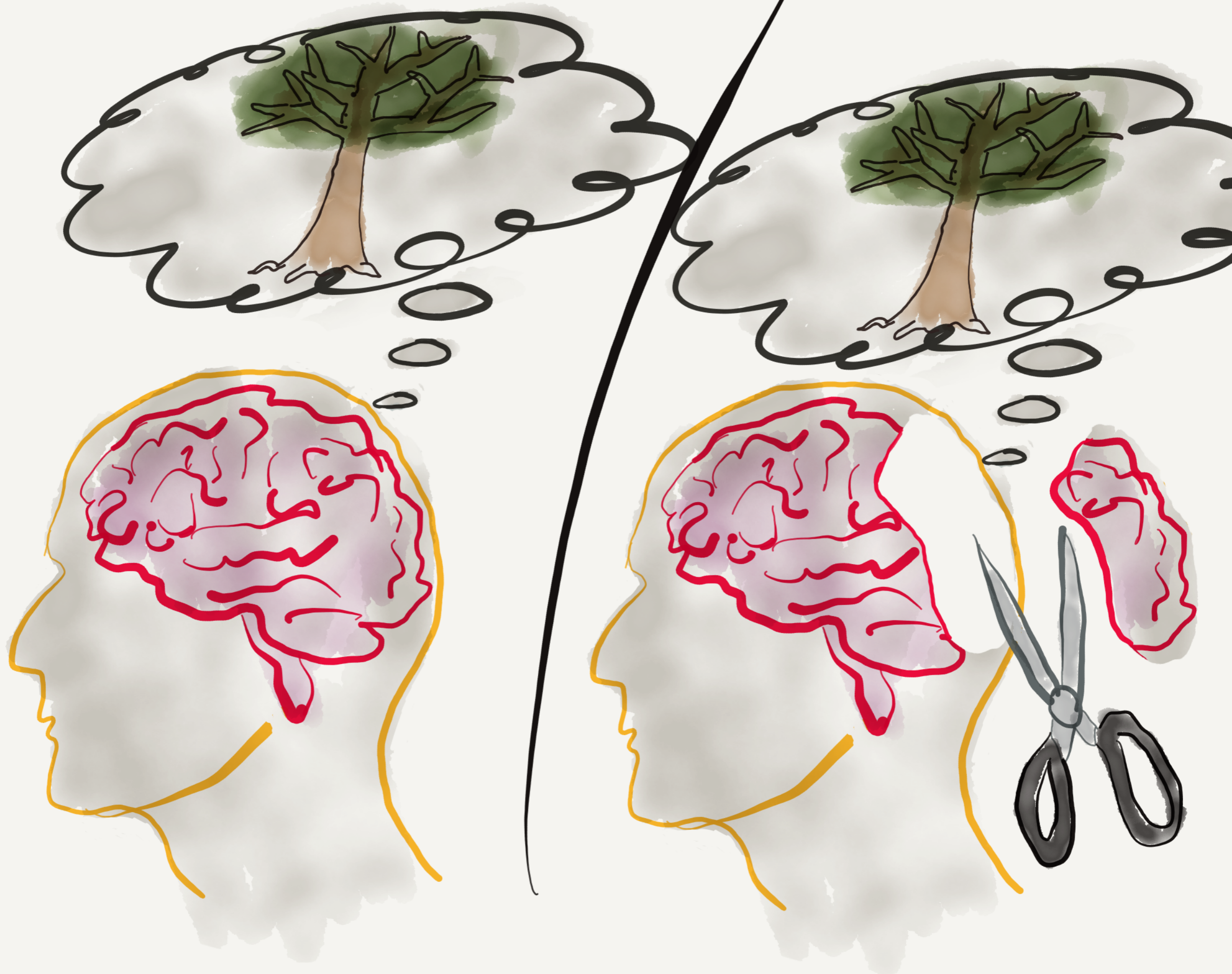2. Structure of Quality Space

SUBJECT-BASED CONSTRAINT

Functional constraints embedded in concept of phenomenal subject

Likely: unity, integration, access...

CONCEIVABILITY TEST→
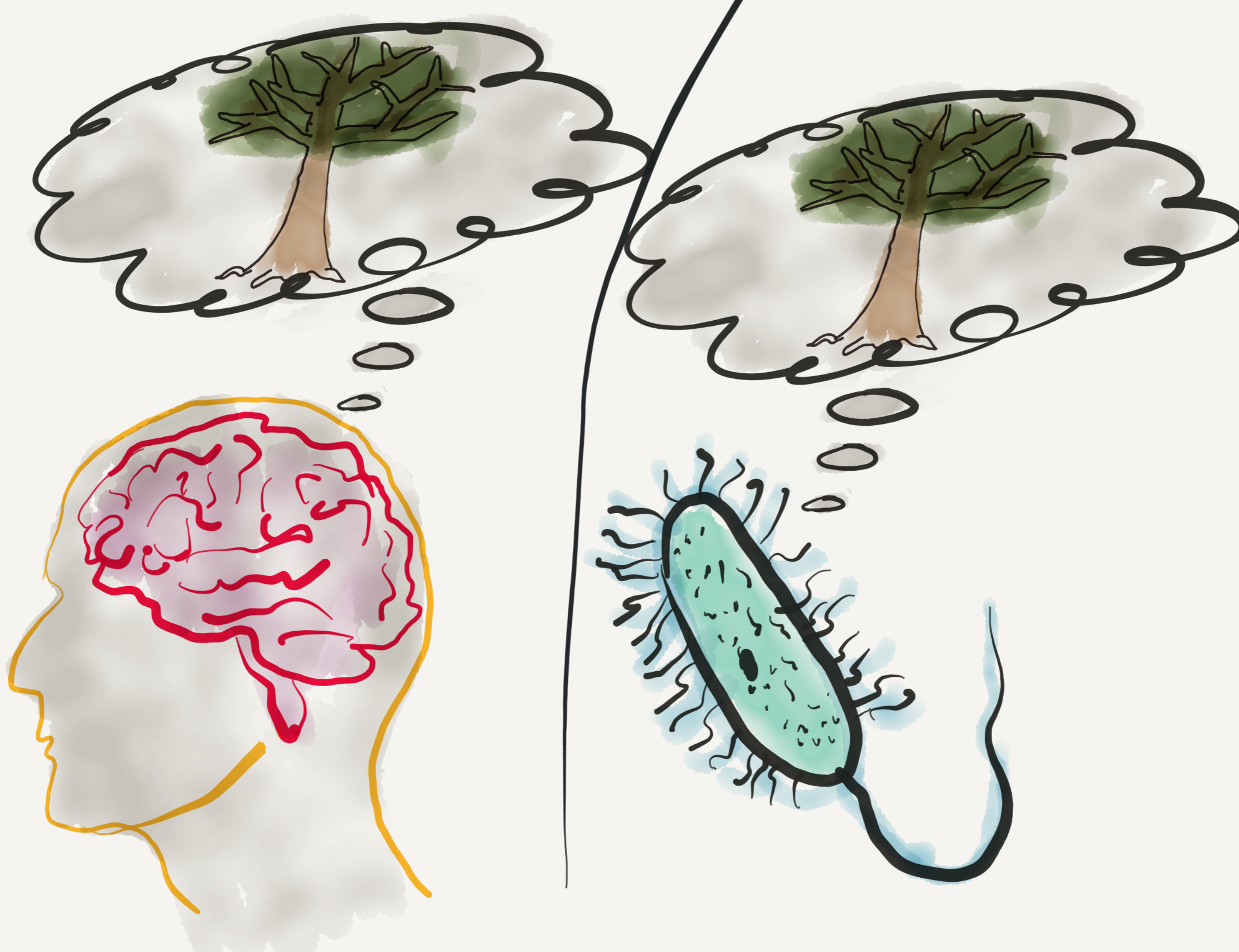Keep phenomenal fixed, subtract functional

QUALITY-SPACE-BASED CONSTRAINTS

Functional constraints embedded in concepts of specific sensory modalities, phenomenal types.

QUALITY SPACE→
1. Dimensions of variability
2. Structure of variation

CONCEIVABILITY TEST→
Keep phenomenal type fixed, switch up functional structure

MODEST CONCEPTUAL FUNCTIONALISM

SUBJECT CONSTRAINT

"x is p-conscious" → "x is a-conscious"

QUALITY-SPACE CONSTRAINTS

"x is p-kind K_1" → "x is F_1"

"x is p-kind K_2" → "x is F_2"

⋮

CONSEQUENCES

1. Provides a criterion for consciousness.

2. The right theory of consciousness will be *a priori*.

NOT A CONSEQUENCE→
No rationality requirement for subjects

IMMODEST CONCEPTUAL FUNCTIONALISM

$$P \longleftrightarrow F$$

MODEST CONCEPTUAL FUNCTIONALISM

$$P \rightarrow F$$

CONCEPTUAL DUALISM

$$P \mathbin{/} F$$