

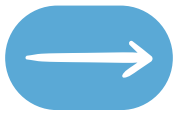


A new series on Cognitive Biases



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What is a cognitive bias?

Our brain's operating system is riddled with bugs. These cognitive biases, like **malware** infecting our neural network, **distort our perception, hijack our logic**, and screw with our **decision-making**.



Scary part? We're often **blissfully unaware** of these **trojan horses** that operate in the **shadows**, pulling your strings like a puppet master.

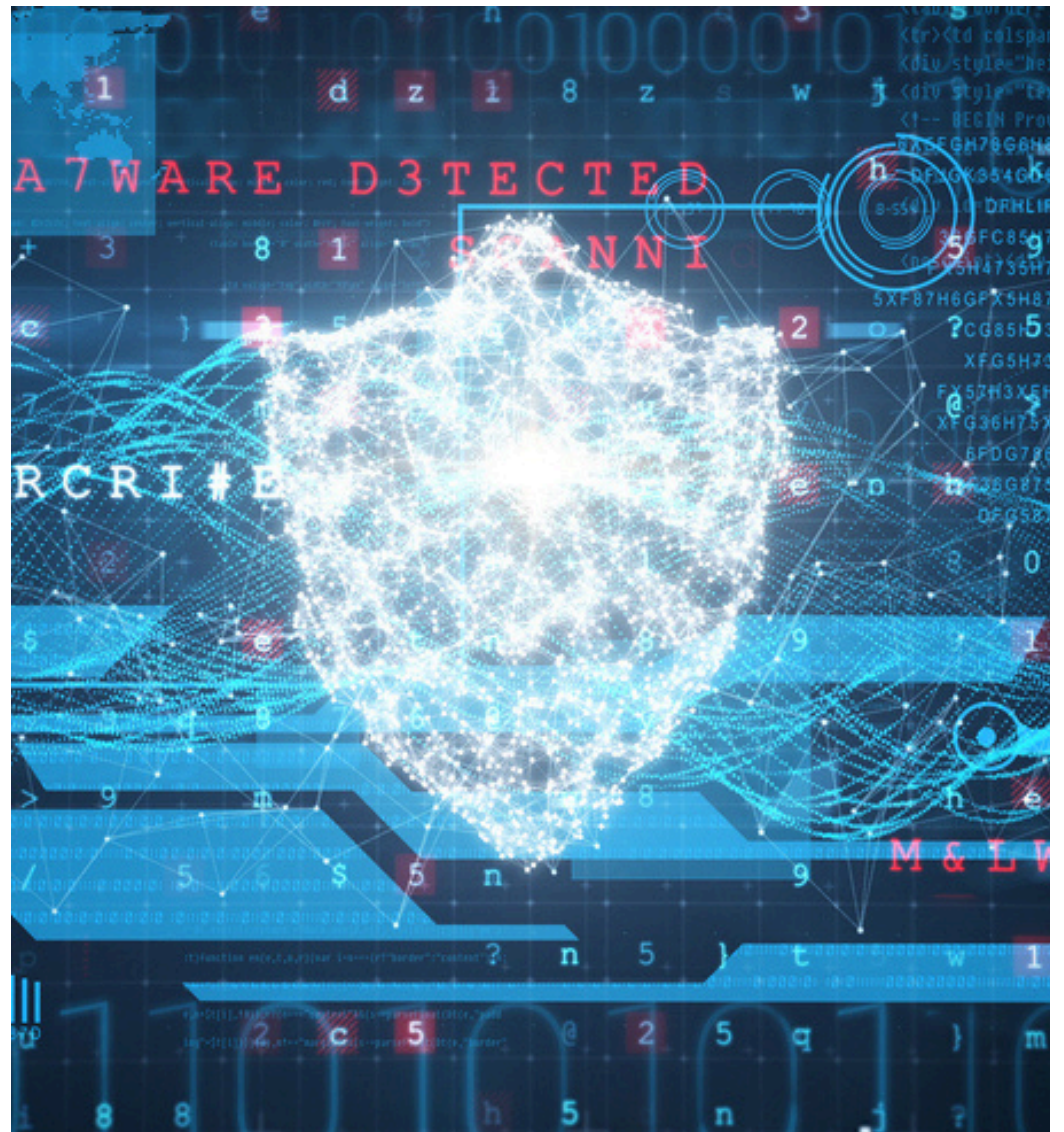
BIASES

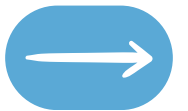


The **good news**? Once we shine the light of **awareness** on these biases, we can develop our own **mental antivirus**.

And **don't get discouraged** if you slip back into old patterns, simply remind yourself of the **importance** of these lessons and **keep trying**.

Overcoming confirmation bias is a **lifelong process**.



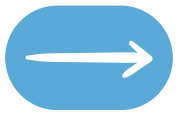


Time to upgrade our thinking.

Over the next few weeks, I'm going to **summarize** some of the important and interesting **biases** on these pages.

In addition to the focus on both awareness and long term progress, for each bias we will review a few **specific takeaways** that are actionable as of.... **today!**

Today we start with the **King of Biases**, the **Confirmation Bias**



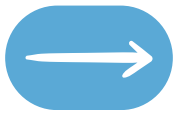
What is a **confirmation** bias?

We subconsciously magnet ourselves towards information that **validates our existing beliefs**, while relegating contradictory evidence to the **mental dustbin**.

Welcome to the world of confirmation bias.

This isn't deliberate manipulation; it's a built-in **mental** shortcut gone **rogue**.

But why do we do this? Two main **reasons**:

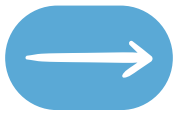


1. Ego Armor

Our self-esteem craves **affirmation**. Opinions that mirror ours feel like cozy, self-affirming **blankets**. Conversely, challenges feel like threats, potentially triggering uncomfortable **self-questioning**.

This is especially true for **strongly held beliefs**, like political or religious convictions. Think of it like an attack on your "*team*" becoming an attack on you personally.

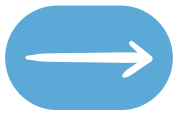
So, to **shield our egos**, we unconsciously **dismiss** opposing views.



2. Mental Efficiency

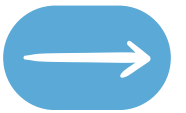
Brains are lazy geniuses, constantly seeking **shortcuts**. Processing new information, especially if it clashes with established views, requires **effort**. Confirmation bias acts like a mental spam filter, **conserving mental resources** by filtering out potentially disruptive ideas.

As Lisa Feldman-Barret puts it, our brains have "*body budgets*", allocating energy based on perceived need. **Processing** complex, **contradictory information** can be **metabolically expensive**, so the brain takes the easy route by sticking to the **familiar**.



A few specific takeaways

- 1. Actively seek diverse perspectives**
- 2. Embrace critical thinking**
- 3. Acknowledge the limitations of your own knowledge**
- 4. Consider the potential consequences of decision-making**
- 5. Promote open and respectful dialogue**



Dissenting opinions and beliefs don't equate to personal attacks.

We can disagree respectfully, acknowledging that good people can both hold different views and sometimes be mistaken.



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