

COGNITIVE BIASES AND THE RECOVERY JOURNEY

The Road Hazards Along the Way

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WHO IS ART?

13-Year Software Developer

1-Year Public Speaker

Mental Health Consumer

- (ADHD and Generalized Anxiety Disorder)

Psychology and Neuroscience
Enthusiast

NOT A PROVIDER



WHERE WE'RE GOING

What is Recovery?

What's a Cognitive Bias?

The Big 3 Biases

The Recovery Journey

- Defining Recovery For Ourselves
 - Recognizing Our Strengths
 - Setting a Course
 - Setting Ourselves in Motion
- Coping with Struggles and Maintaining Yourself

General Strategies

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WHAT IS RECOVERY?

IT DEPENDS!

Personal

Unique

About your life

An

Ongoing, Self-directed, Strengths-based

process with the goal of

Improving your total wellness

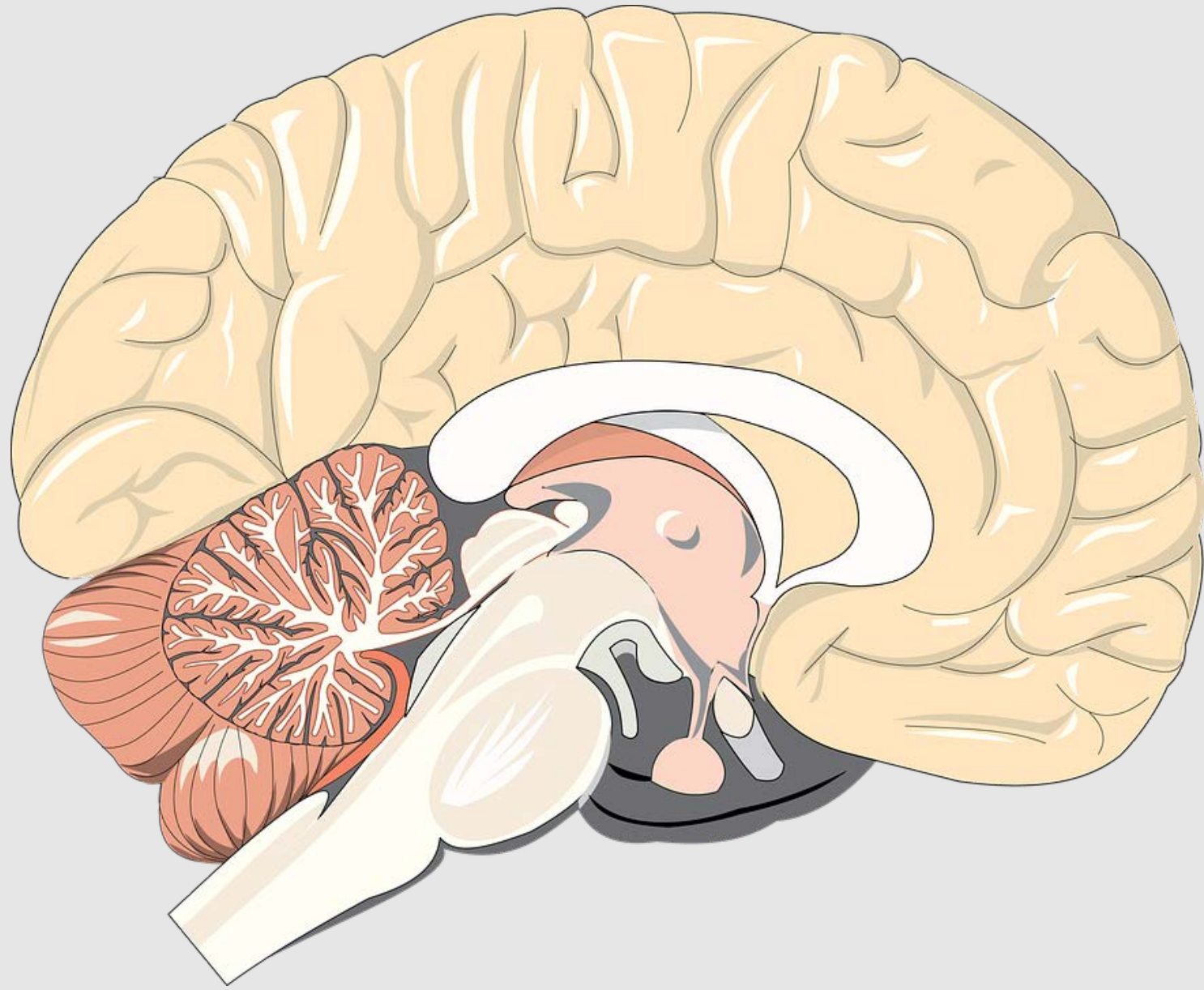
and

Fulfilling your potential

THE PROCESS OF BECOMING THE BEST YOU
THAT YOU CAN BE

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WHAT'S A COGNITIVE BIAS?



THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

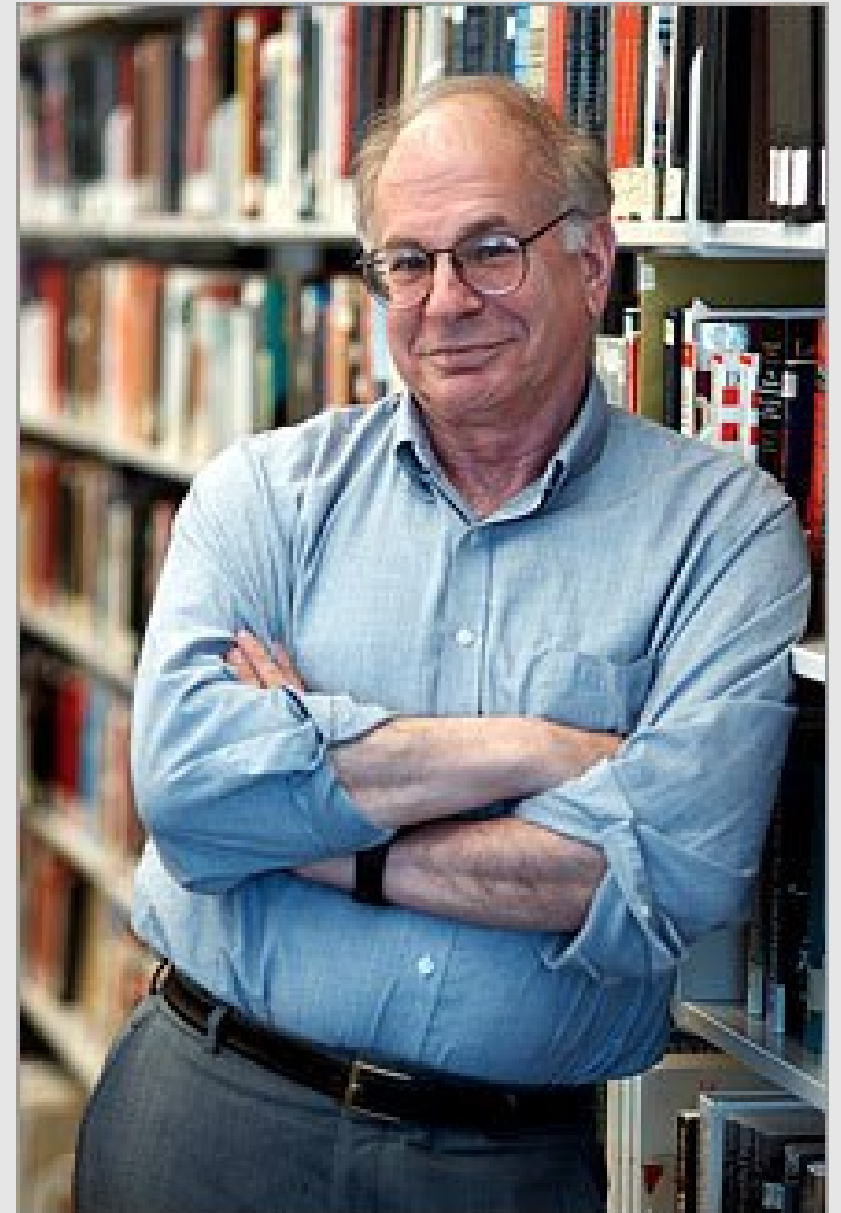
THINKING,
FAST AND SLOW



DANIEL
KAHNEMAN

WINNER OF THE NOBEL PRIZE IN ECONOMICS

“[A] masterpiece . . . This is one of the greatest and most engaging collections of insights into the human mind I have read.” —WILLIAM EASTERLY, *Financial Times*



COURTESY: UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

SYSTEM 2

Cognitive
Conscious
Linear

SYSTEM 1

Intuitive
Unconscious
Associative



SYSTEM 2
(ME)



SYSTEM 1 (NOODLES)

WHY DOES NOODLES EXIST?

NOODLES SAVES US ENERGY!

SYSTEM 2

Uses **lots** of glucose

SYSTEM 1

Uses less glucose

A bat and a ball cost \$1.10.

The bat costs one dollar more than the ball.

How much does the ball cost?

WHAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT FACT ABOUT
NOODLES?

NOODLES DOESN'T COMMUNICATE VERY
WELL.

COGNITIVE BIASES HAPPEN WHEN NOODLES
DOES SOMETHING AND I DON'T NOTICE

LET'S BE PERFECTLY CLEAR ABOUT THIS

COGNITIVE BIASES ARE NOT:

- A result of having mental health challenges
- Something that is “wrong” with you
- Always a negative effect

COGNITIVE BIASES ARE:

- Part of being human
- Difficult to notice when they happen
- Potentially harmful to our recovery

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THE BIG 3 BIASES



NARRATIVE BIAS





NARRATIVE



FALLACY



NARRATIVE



HEURISTIC

HUMANS

LIKE

STORIES

Fred's parents arrived late.

The caterers were expected soon.

Fred was angry.

WE DON'T PROCESS NARRATIVE DATA IN THE
SAME WAY WE PROCESS FACTUAL DATA

After spending a day exploring beautiful sights in the crowded streets of New York, Jane discovered that her wallet was missing.

WE HAVE A STRONG TENDENCY TO FALL PREY
TO THE *POST HOC ERGO PROPTER HOC*
LOGICAL FALLACY

WE SEE CAUSALITY AND STORY EVERYWHERE



CAUSALITY HELPS NOODLES FIGURE THINGS
OUT

NOODLES' JOB IS TO MAINTAIN A MODEL OF
YOUR WORLD

THAT MODEL NEEDS TO BE *COHERENT*

FOR EXAMPLE...



AVAILABILITY HEURISTIC

Bananas

Vomit

NOODLES' MODEL IS *ASSOCIATIVE*

THE MORE YOU ENCOUNTER SOMETHING,
THE EASIER IT (AND EVERYTHING
ASSOCIATED) COMES TO MIND

How many poisonous plants grow in
Nebraska?

How many different models of cars are sold in the US?

THE EASIER IT IS TO THINK OF INSTANCES,
THE HIGHER OUR ESTIMATE OF THE COUNT

THINGS THAT INCREASE AVAILABILITY:

- Repetition
- Recent exposure
- Personal involvement

THE MORE AVAILABLE A CONCEPT IS,
THE MORE TRUE IT FEELS



LOSS AVERSION

Choice 1

I give you \$100

I flip a coin

If it's heads, you lose \$50

If it's tails, you lose \$0

Choice 2

I give you \$50

I flip a coin

If it's heads, you win \$0

If it's tails, you win \$50

Which choice do you prefer?

NOODLES *HATES* LOSING ANYTHING!

OTHER STUFF HE HATES:

- Giving up
- Backing down
- Admitting mistakes

KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN FOR THESE THREE
TODAY

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THE
RECOVERY
JOURNEY



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DEFINING RECOVERY FOR
OURSELVES

RECOVERY REQUIRES CHANGE

RESTRUCTURING YOUR STORY

RE-FORMING YOUR REALITY

WHAT GETS IN OUR WAY?

OSTRICH EFFECT



We ignore obviously negative situations

MERE EXPOSURE EFFECT



We have an undue preference for familiar things just because they're familiar

ILLUSION OF TRUTH EFFECT



The more familiar a statement is, the more we are likely to believe it to be true

NOODLES HAS BUILT A MODEL OF OUR
CURRENT WORLD

ENVISIONING A BETTER WORLD IS *HARD*...

BUT WE MUST BELIEVE IT EXISTS



RECOGNIZING OUR STRENGTHS

LOADING OUR BACKPACK WITH OUR
BEST TOOLS FOR THE VARIOUS LIFE
DOMAINS

WHAT GETS IN OUR WAY?

IT STARTS WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S
OPINIONS...

ILLUSION OF TRANSPARENCY



We believe other people can see right through us... and that we can see through others

“ IF THESE PEOPLE SAY I DON'T HAVE THIS
STRENGTH, THEN I MUST NOT...”

NEGATIVITY BIAS



We remember negative memories better than positive ones

MOOD-CONGRUENT MEMORY



When we're sad, we remember times when we were sad better

When we're happy, we remember times when we were happy better

CLUSTERING ILLUSION



We tend to overinflate the importance of small clusters of things...

In other words we see patterns where there aren't

TTTTFFFF

FFFFTTTT

FTFFTTTF

CONFIRMATION BIAS



We want to confirm our preconceptions, so we tend to:

- Search for confirming information more
- Focus on confirming information more
- Arrive at confirming interpretations more
- Remember confirming information better

WE NEED TO:

- Assume you *do* have strengths and work from there
- But challenge our memories and assumptions
- Realize the final decisions about our strengths lies with *us*

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SETTING A COURSE

NOW WE NEED A PLAN!

NOODLES IS *GREAT* AT MAKING PLANS!

...OF COURSE, THERE'S A COUPLE
PROBLEMS...

WHAT GETS IN OUR WAY?

PROJECTION BIAS



We tend to believe that others – including our future selves! – share our current emotional state

THE ONLY PERSON LAZIER THAN PRESENT
YOU IS FUTURE YOU

PLANNING FALLACY



We tend to believe that everything will go right with our plans

THIS IS KIND OF GOOD!

JUST-WORLD HYPOTHESIS



We want to believe that the world is fair and just

WE WANT OUR EFFORTS TO BE REWARDED

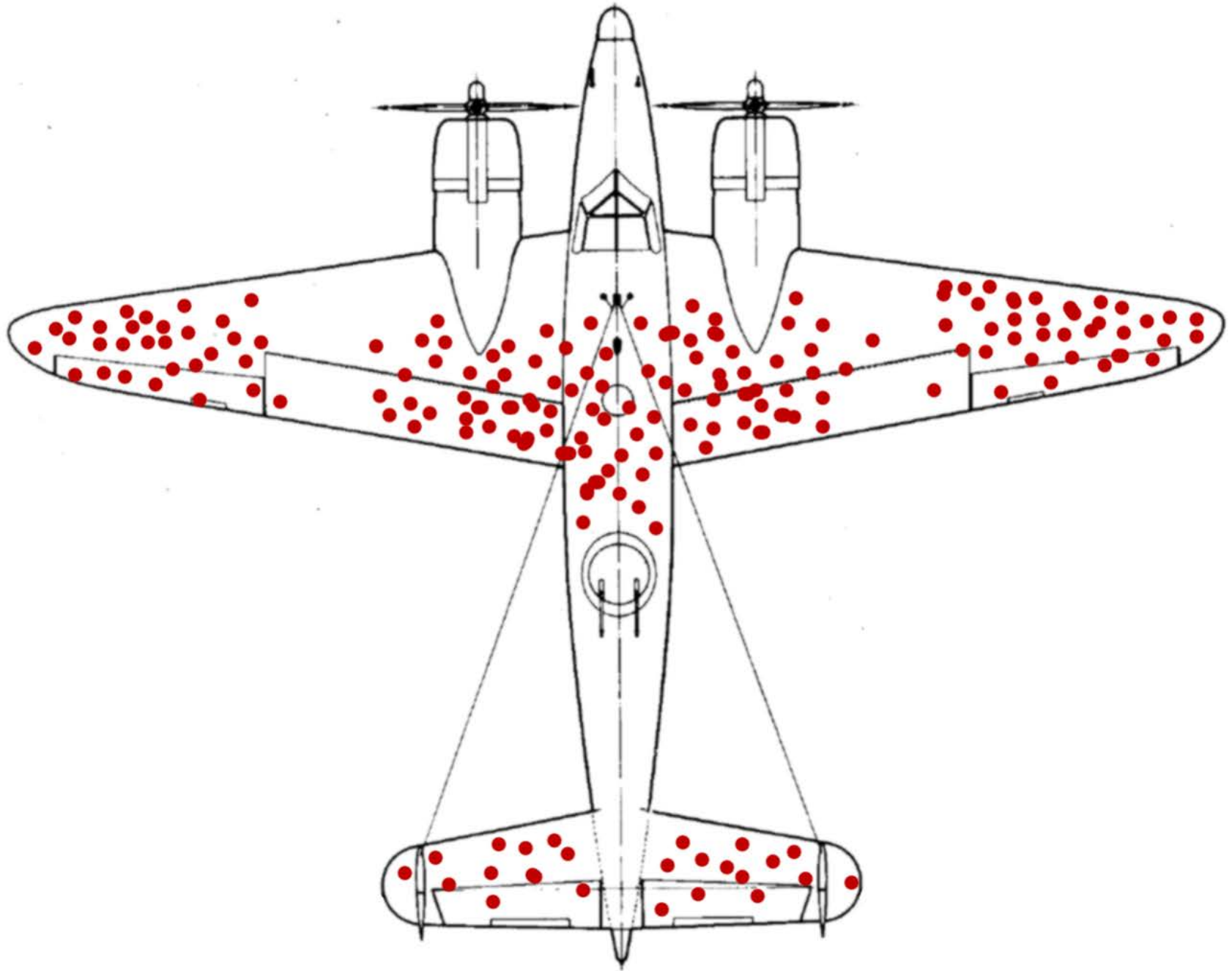
WHEN OTHERS' PLANS DON'T WORK, WE
TEND TO BLAME THEIR EFFORTS

WE LOOK FOR EVIDENCE AROUND US

SURVIVORSHIP BIAS



When we look for examples, we tend to only look at successful ones, or at the successful parts of their life



WE NEED TO:

- Be realistic about the future:
 - We have to apply effort to get somewhere
 - It won't happen just because we deserve it
- Be realistic about failure:
 - How likely are you to fail?
 - What will happen if you do fail?
 - Has failure stopped others from succeeding?

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SETTING OURSELVES IN MOTION

ACTUALLY STARTING YOUR PLAN IS SCARY

WE HAVE SOME FUN WAYS TO DELAY

INFORMATION BIAS



We tend to seek more information even when it can't help our decisions

STATUS QUO BIAS



We tend to like things to stay the same

WE HAVE TO BE *MOTIVATED* TO CHANGE

EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION

INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

YOU NEED TO BE CHANGING FOR *YOU*

OR YOU WON'T SURVIVE A SETBACK

WE NEED TO:

- List our reasons for changing
 - Keep them positive
 - Focus on intrinsic reasons
- Recognize fear and procrastination for what it is
 - Do it anyway

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COPING WITH STRUGGLES AND
MAINTAINING YOURSELF

WE HAVE TO WATCH OUT FOR FALLING INTO
OLD TRAPS

ATTENTIONAL BIAS



Our attention tends to be captured by things we think about a lot

NOODLES HELPS YOU FALL INTO FAMILIAR
THOUGHT PATTERNS

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SOMETHING GOES
WRONG?

HINDSIGHT BIAS



We tend to see past events as predictable

“OH, I KNEW IT ALL ALONG.”

“ I KNEW I COULDN'T DO THIS.”

EXAGGERATED EXPECTATION



The real world tends to be less extreme than our expectations

SUBJECTIVE VALIDATION



We tend to perceive that something is true if our mindset says it must be true

To that end, we find perceived connections between coincidences

OUTCOME BIAS



We tend to rate a decision based on the outcome, not the quality of the decision at the time it was made

BASICALLY NOODLES FOCUSES US ON THE
STORY, NOT WHETHER WE COULD ACTUALLY
HAVE DONE BETTER

MOTIVATED SKEPTICISM



We tend to only look hard for contrary evidence when we don't agree with something

WE NEED TO:

- Try to recognize coincidence for what it is
- Never let the difference between your performance and your expectations stop your progress
- Set a standard for proof and stick to it
- Don't let yourself get stuck in old thought patterns



GENERAL STRATEGIES

MINDFULNESS

THE BEST WAY TO AVOID COGNITIVE BIASES
IS TO QUESTION WHAT NOODLES BRINGS YOU

“ DO I REALLY BELIEVE THIS THOUGHT?”

NOODLES *HATES* BEING BORED...

SO BEING BORED IS A GOOD WAY TO FIND OUT
WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT THE MOST

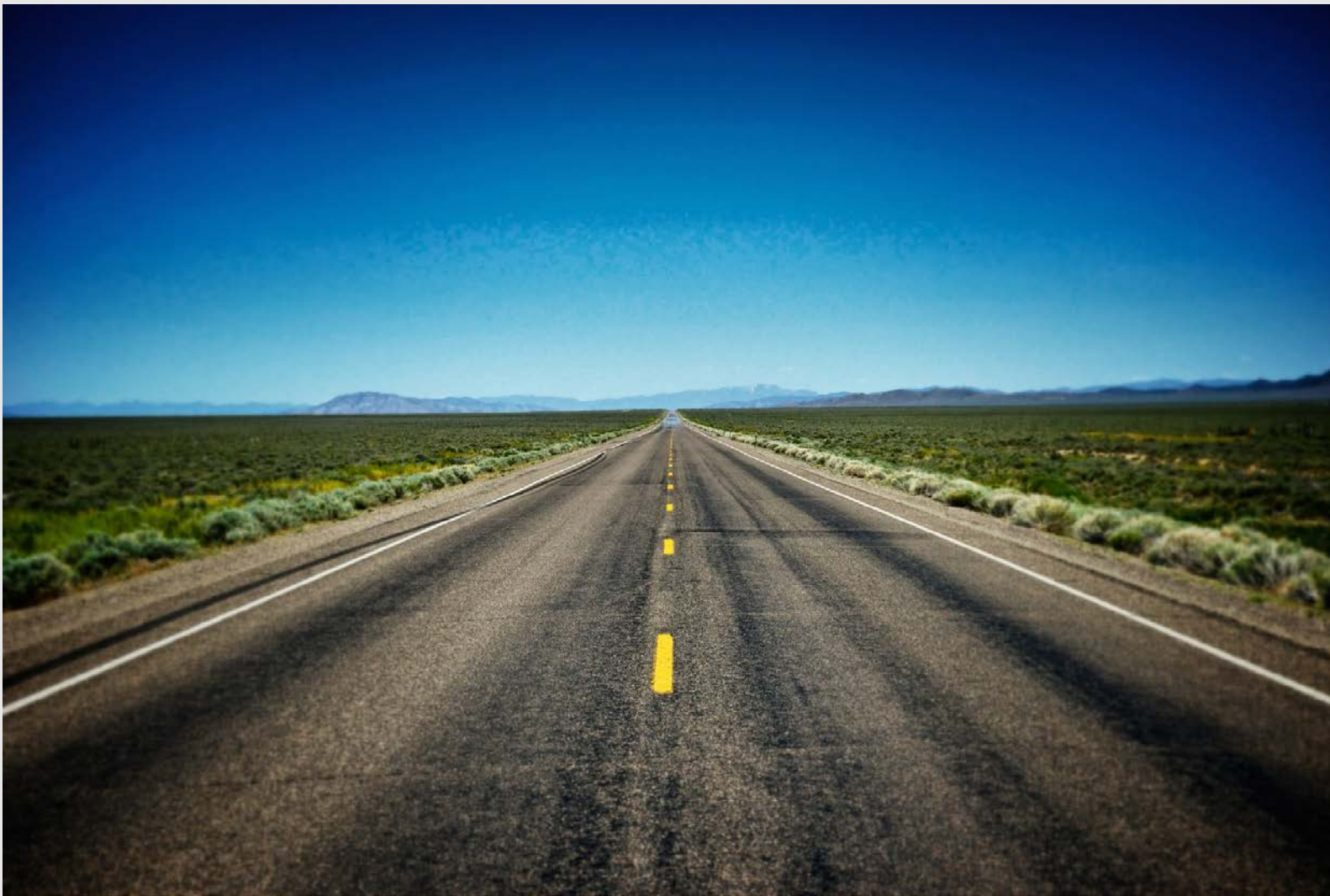
“BIAS BUDDIES”

I) Find someone you trust who can act as an honest mirror for you

SUPPORTIVE MIRROR

HONEST MIRROR

- 1) Find someone you trust who can act as an honest mirror for you
- 2) Learn about biases together
- 3) Listen to each other and ask – “Do you believe the story, or is this a bias talking?”



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THANKS!





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