

Rationality Color Wheel Worksheet 1

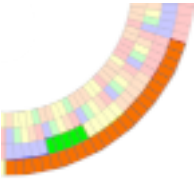
This worksheet is part of a series that illustrates how you can use the Rationality Color Wheel to think critically.

Cause and Effect

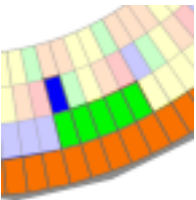
Example 1: Researchers studied 1,000 people who developed a dangerous disorder that has a 20% survival rate. They found that 80% of those who survived took an homeopathic remedy. Of those who died, 40 did not take the homeopathic remedy. Did the remedy help?



A randomly selected person was "unlikely" (20%) to survive the disease.



An ill person who survived was "likely" (80%) to take a homeopathic remedy.



But those who did not survive were "very likely" (95%) to have taken a homeopathic remedy (only 40 (5%) out of the 800 people who died did not take a remedy).



Hence, we can see that those who took the homeopathic remedy were "unlikely" to survive. The homeopathic remedy did not help (it actually reduced the likelihood of survival).

Can you think of instances where you have seen stories advocating for alternative medicines presented like this one? Did you find the result surprising? Did you find it misleading? How do you think advertisers and online "influencers" might use similar "facts" to attract attention and make money?

