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1 01.15.21

- Brain has a complex set of structures that work together to do both really important, and fundamentally flawed actions

1.1 Brain Stem

- The reptilian brain
- Really just an extension of the spinal cord
- Controls automatic actions, no effect on decision-making

1.2 Middle Brain (Limbic System)

- Body's monitoring system to identify important elements of the environment
- Discriminates things of importance constantly and ambiently

1.3 Brain Cortex

- Controls higher-level thinking
- Moral decision-making, learning, conscious awareness

1.4 Hierarchy of the brain

- Information goes from the brain stem, to the limbic system, to the brain cortex
- Critically, the limbic system was never designed to collect all the information around you - that incomplete information is used for decision-making

- Understanding the interplay and potential biases of the limbic system can help us understand decision-making and prevent bad decision making
- Fear and the triggering of fear prevents higher-level decision making and can prevent the intake of new information
- Sources of information can also have a significant effect on the processing of that information - can be seen through in-group/out-group bias

1.5 Rational Decision-Making

1. Pick a goal
2. Evaluate all strategies
 - Analyze costs
 - Analyze benefits
3. Select strategy with best cost/benefit ratio
4. Bias often occurs at stage 2 because of filtration of information through the limbic system