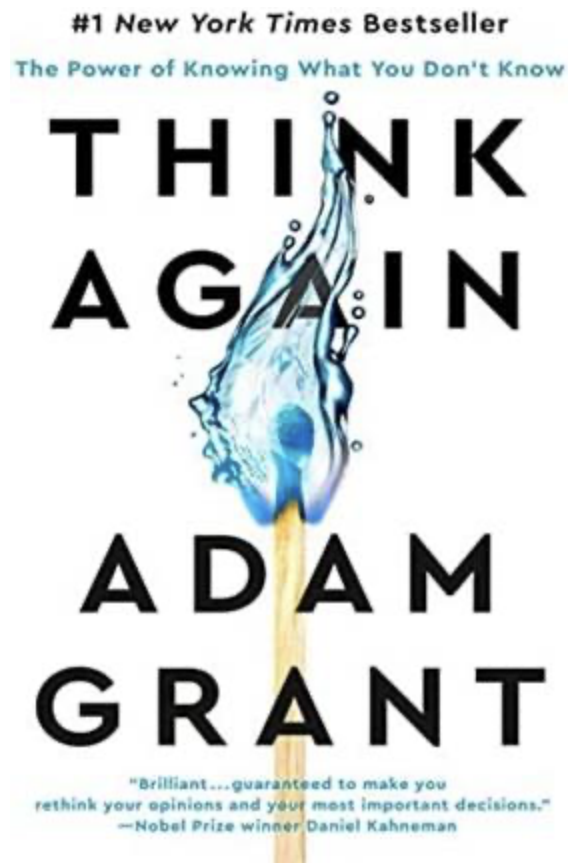




Think Again

Tags	booksummary selfimprovement
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Goodreads Link	https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/55539565-think-again?ac=1&from_search=true&qid=hvhpwNoSPz&rank=1



Favorite Quotes

We learn more from people who challenge our thought process than those who affirm our conclusions. Strong leaders engage their critics and make themselves stronger. Weak leaders silence their critics and make themselves weaker. This reaction isn't limited to people in power. Although we might be on board with the principle, in practice we often miss out on the value of a challenge network."

We listen to views that make us feel good, instead of ideas that make us think hard.

Research reveals that the higher you score on an IQ test, the more likely you are to fall for stereotypes, because you're faster at recognizing patterns. And recent experiments suggest that the smarter you are, the more you might struggle to update your beliefs.

those who can't . . . don't know they can't. According to what's now known as the Dunning-Kruger effect, it's when we lack competence that we're most likely to be brimming with overconfidence."

Overview

Think Again is a book about the benefit of doubt, and about how we can get better at embracing the unknown and the joy of being wrong. Evidence has shown that creative geniuses are not attached to one identity, but constantly willing to rethink their stances and that leaders who admit they don't know something and seek critical feedback lead more productive and innovative teams.

New evidence shows us that as a mindset and a skillset, rethinking can be taught and Grant explains how to develop the necessary qualities to do it. Section 1 explores why we struggle to think again and how we can learn to do it as individuals, arguing that 'grit' alone can actually be counterproductive. Section 2 discusses how we can help others think again through learning about 'argument literacy'. And the final section 3 looks at how schools, businesses and governments fall short in building cultures that encourage rethinking.

In the end, learning to *rethink* may be the secret skill to give you the edge in a world changing faster than ever

Notes

- Dunning - Kruger effect: Dunning-Kruger effect, in psychology, is a cognitive bias whereby people with limited knowledge or competence in a given intellectual or social domain greatly overestimate their own knowledge or competence in that domain.
- Yes, we're entitled to hold opinions inside our own heads. If we choose to express them out loud, though, I think it's our responsibility to ground them in logic and facts, share our reasoning with others, and change our minds when better evidence emerges.
- A meta-analysis of those studies showed that relationship conflict is generally bad for performance, but some task conflict can be beneficial: it's been linked to higher creativity and smarter choices.
- Notice what Brad (Brad Bird newly hired at Pixar) didn't do. He didn't stock his team with agreeable people. Agreeable people make for a great support network: they're excited to encourage us and cheerlead for us. Rethinking depends on a different kind of network: a challenge network, a group of people we trust to point out our blind spots and help us overcome our weaknesses.
- The ideal members of a challenge network are disagreeable, because they're fearless about questioning the way things have always been done and holding us accountable for thinking again.

- We learn more from people who challenge our thought process than those who affirm our conclusions. Strong leaders engage their critics and make themselves stronger. Weak leaders silence their critics and make themselves weaker.
- People were at least 40 percent more receptive to criticism after they were told "I'm giving you these comments because I have very high expectations and I know that you can reach them." It's surprisingly easy to hear a hard truth when it comes from someone who believes in your potential and cares about your success.
- When we're trying to persuade people, we frequently take an adversarial approach. Instead of opening their minds, we effectively shut them down or rile them up. They play defense by putting up a shield, play offense by preaching their perspectives and prosecuting ours, or play politics by telling us what we want to hear without changing what they actually think. I want to explore a more collaborative approach one in which we show more humility and curiosity, and invite others to think more like scientists.
- Most people think of arguments as being like a pair of scales: the more reasons we can pile up on our side, the more it will tip the balance in our favor. Yet the experts did the exact opposite: They actually presented fewer reasons to support their case. They didn't want to water down their best points. As Rackham put it, "A weak argument generally dilutes a strong one."

Actions for Impact

Practical takeaways from the book

I. INDIVIDUAL RETHINKING

A. Develop the habit of thinking again

1. Think like a scientist - When you start forming an opinion resist the temptation to preach, persecute or politick (campaigning for support). Instead treat your emerging views as hypothesis and test it with data.
2. Define your identity in terms of values, not opinions - It is easier to avoid getting stuck to your past beliefs if you don't become attached to them as part of your

present self-concept. See yourself as someone who values curiosity, learning, mental flexibility and a searcher for knowledge. As you form opinions keep a list of factors that would change your mind,

3. Seek out information that goes against your views - You can fight conformity biases and escape echo chambers by actively engaging with ideas that challenges your assumptions. Keep yourself surrounded with people who have contrarian views rather than just "Yesmen"

B. Calibrate your confidence

4. Beware of getting stranded at the summit of mount stupid - Don't confuse confidence with competence. Beware of the Dunning - Kruger effect which tells us that the better you think you are the higher the risk that you are overestimating yourself and the greater the odds that you will stop improving. To prevent overconfidence in your knowledge, reflect on how well you can explain or teach a given subject.
5. Harness the benefit of doubt - When you find yourself doubting your ability, reframe the situation as an opportunity for growth. Knowing what you don't know is often the first step towards developing expertise.
6. Enhance the joy of being wrong - When you find out that you have made a mistake, take it as a sign that you have discovered something new. Don't be afraid to laugh at yourself. It helps you focus less on proving yourself and more on improving yourself.

C. Invite others to question your thinking

7. Learn something new from each person you meet - Everyone knows more than you on something. Ask them about what they have been rethinking lately or about the times they have changed their mind about something in the past 1 year or so.
8. Build a challenge network and not a support network - It is helpful to have cheerleaders encouraging you but you also need critics to challenge you. Invite them to question your thinking and tell them that you respect their pushback.
9. Don't shy away from constructive conflict - Although relationship conflict is usually counterproductive. Task conflict can help you think again. Try framing disagreement as debate. People are more likely to approach it intellectually and less likely to take it personally.

II. INTERPERSONAL RETHINKING

A. Ask better questions

10. Practice the art of persuasive listening - Active listening. Show an interest in helping people crystallize their own views and uncover their own reason for change. A good way to start is to increase your questions to statement ratio.
11. Question how rather than why - Asking the why question is important, however, many a times when people describe why they hold extreme views. they would double down and intensify the commitment. Instead when they try to explain how would they make their views a reality, they often realize the limits of their understanding and start to tamper some of their own terms.
12. Ask what evidence would change your mind - You cant bully someone into agreeing with you. It is often more productive if you ask them what would open their minds and then see if you can convince them on their own terms.
13. Ask how people originally formed an opinion - Many of our opinions like our stereotypes are arbitrary. We've developed them without rigorous data or deep reflection. To help people reevaluate prompt them to consider how they'd believe different things if they have been born at a different time or in a different place.

B. Approach disagreements as dances, not battles.

14. Acknowledge common grounds - A debate is more like a dance than a war. Admitting points of convergence doesnt make you weaker - it shows that youre willing ti negotiate about what is true, and it motivates the other side to consider your point of view.
15. Remember that less is often more - If you pile on too many reasons to support your case it can make your audience defensive - and cause them to reject your entire argument based on its least compelling points. Instead of diluting your argument, lead it with your strongest points.
16. Reinforce freedom of choice - Sometimes people resist not because theyre dismissing the argument but because they're rejecting the feeling of their behavior being controlled> it helps to remind that they have a choice on what they believe.
17. Have a conversation about the conversation - If emotions are running hot, try redirecting the discussion to the process. Like the expert negotiators who comment on the feeling and test their understanding of other side's feelings, you can

sometimes make progress by expressing your frustration and disappointment and asking people if they also share it.

III. COLLECTIVE RETHINKING

A. Have more nuanced conversation.

18. Complexify contentious topic - There are more than two sides to every story. Instead of treating polarizing issues to two sides of a coin, look at them through the many lenses of a prism. Seeing the shades of gray can make us more open.
19. Don't shy away from caveats and contingencies - Acknowledging competing claims and conflicting results doesn't sacrifice interest or credibility. It is an efficient way to engage audiences while encouraging them to stay curious.
20. Expand your emotional range - You don't have to eliminate frustration or even indignation to have a productive conversation. You just need to mix in a broader set of emotions along with them--you might try showing some curiosity or even admitting confusion or ambivalence.

B. Teach kids to think again

21. Have a weekly myth-busting discussion at dinner - It's easier to debunk false beliefs at an early age, and it's a great way to teach kids to become comfortable with rethinking. Pick a different topic each week--one day it might be dinosaurs, the next it could be outer space--and rotate responsibility around the family for bringing a myth for discussion.
22. Invite kids to do multiple drafts and seek feedback from others - Creating different versions of a drawing or a story can encourage kids to learn the value of revising their ideas. Getting input from others can also help them to continue evolving their standards. They might learn to embrace confusion--and to stop expecting perfection on the first try.
23. Stop asking kids what they want to be when they grow up - They don't have to define themselves in terms of a career. A single identity can close the door to alternatives. Instead of trying to narrow their options, help them broaden their possibilities. They don't have to be one thing--they can do many things.

C. Create Learning Organizations

- 24. Abandon best practices - Best practices suggest that the ideal routines are already in place. If we want people to keep rethinking the way they work, we might be better off adopting process accountability and continually striving for better practices.
- 25. Establish psychological safety - In learning cultures, people feel confident that they can question and challenge the status quo without being punished. Psychological safety often starts with leaders role-modeling humility.
- 26. Keep a rethinking scorecard - Don't evaluate decisions based only on the results; track how thoroughly different options are considered in the process. A bad process with a good outcome is luck. A good process with a bad outcome might be a smart experiment.

D. Stay open to Rethinking your future

- 27. Throw out the ten-year plan - What interested you last year might bore you this year- and what confused you yesterday might become exciting tomorrow. Passions are developed, not just discovered. Planning just one step ahead can keep you open to rethinking.
- 28. Rethink your actions, not just your surroundings - Chasing happiness can chase it away. Trading one set of circumstances for another isn't always enough. Joy can wax and wane, but meaning is more likely to last. Building a sense of purpose often starts with taking actions to enhance your learning or your contribution to others.
- 29. Schedule a life checkup - It's easy to get caught in escalation of commitment to an unfulfilling path. Just as you schedule health checkups with your doctor, it's worth having a life checkup on your calendar once or twice a year. It's a way to assess how much you're learning, how your beliefs and goals are evolving, and whether your next steps warrant some rethinking.
- 30. Make time to think again - When we look at our calendar, most of us will notice that it is mostly full of doing. Hence set a goal of spending an hour a day thinking and learning and more importantly rethinking and unlearning. Reach out to your challenge network and ask what ideas and opinions they think we should be reconsidering.

