

How cognitive psychology affects your life

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How Cognitive Psychology Affects your Life: Partial Review of the book ' A Mind Of Its Own' Through her book ' A mind of its own' Cordelia Fine attempts to provide a simple and interesting description of the way the brain works. Instead of approaching research from a traditional perspective, she has developed the chapters so that they emphasize the different functions served by mental processes rather than focus on the processes themselves. The first three chapters - The Vain Brain, The Emotional Brain and The Immoral brain provide insight into the way our brain uses information to help boost our ego and how emotions provide clues to understanding facts. In the first chapter, Fine describes the different ways in which the brain uses information about abilities and situations to help us feel good about ourselves. While this can lead to unrealistic expectations from the self; the positive perspective helps people take up challenges and experience positive emotions where they would otherwise have experienced negative thoughts and feelings. The chapter also uses information of how depressed and non-depressed persons respond to information to emphasize the importance of the positive representations. Chapter two provides an interesting read about how emotions often affect representations of information, attitudes and decisions even when people think that they are being perfectly rational. An important point Fine develops is how these emotions are less likely to affect decisions and performance if the person is made aware of them. The chapter helps understand the subtle role played by emotions in an individual's everyday functioning. The third chapter focuses on how people are likely to modify the way they see events to suit their purposes. Through the use of concepts like the ' Just world hypothesis' and the use of the fundamental attribution error and the self serving bias people often represent events to

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enhance their value and to justify their own needs while playing down those of others.

Reading this book helps improve the manner in which we understand our own functioning. I have become aware of how I often under-estimate the time I need to complete a task or over-estimate my ability to complete it; and have consciously tried to become more objective in these decisions. I have also become aware of how expectations and social norms have steered me towards some activities and away from others on the basis of gender. Like the examples in the book, I often find myself providing justifications for my weaknesses that may not be necessary, but I now realize that these justifications help me retain face with myself far more than they do with others. This book definitely helps in understanding the functions played by different mental processes in everyday life.

Works Cited

Fine, Cordelia. *A Mind of its Own: How your Brain Distorts and Deceives*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2006. Print.