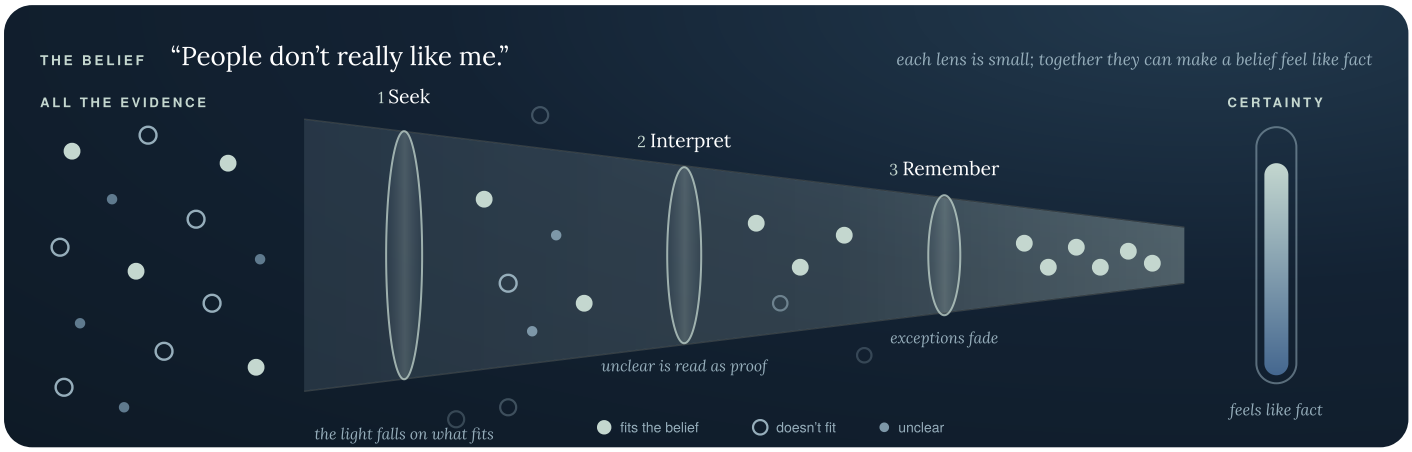
Confirmation Bias

THINKING PATTERNS

How the mind gathers evidence for what it already believes

Confirmation bias is the tendency to seek, interpret and remember information in ways that fit an existing belief (Nickerson, 1998). Everyone does it, and much of the time it saves effort. It matters most when the belief is about ourselves, because the same shortcut can quietly keep a painful belief in place.



01 The belief

about myself, other people or the world

The belief I'm looking at _____ **How true it feels** 0 | 25 | 50 | 75 | 100 *or ___ %*

02 Three lenses

tick any that sound familiar

1 · SEEK ☐ familiar

Where I look

Do I look mostly for signs it's true? "Did I mess that up?" rather than "How did it go?"

2 · INTERPRET ☐ familiar

How I read it

Does unclear evidence count as proof, while evidence against it has to work much harder?

3 · REMEMBER ☐ familiar

What stays

Do the times it came true stay vivid, while the exceptions fade or get explained away?

03 Both sides of the ledger

as fairly as I can

What seems to fit

what I notice and remember easily

What doesn't fit, or I've explained away

what may have slipped past the lens

04 Considering the opposite

a strategy with research behind it

If the opposite were true, what would I expect to see?

What would someone who knows me well, and disagrees, point out?

What could shift my view, even a little?

A MORE BALANCED VIEW

Holding all of the evidence

For example: "A few people are close to me and some aren't. A slow reply or a missed hello doesn't tell me how someone feels."

How true the original belief feels now 0 | 25 | 50 | 75 | 100 *or ___ %*

WHAT THE RESEARCH SUGGESTS

Across many studies, people show a moderate preference for information that supports what they already think (Hart et al., 2009). Simply trying to be fair helps less than deliberately considering the opposite possibility (Lord et al., 1984). The aim is a fuller picture, not doubting everything. If a painful belief about yourself feels hard to shift, a psychologist can help you look at it together.

SOURCES

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