

4 Common but Harmful Myths About how Your Brain Works

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The brain is endlessly fascinating. Despite the amount of time we spend thinking, few of us learn much about the way our minds and brains work. As a result, there are some persistent myths about the brain. It is worth highlighting them, because you'll think more effectively if you work *with* your brain rather than against it.

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A potential danger of labeling yourself as right-brained or left-brained is that you will ignore the information that you get from either your intuitive or effortful system. The most effective thinkers are ones who learn to rely on both their intuitive judgments (which reflect the statistics of events, objects, and people they have encountered in the past) as well as their reasoning (which reflects procedures they have learned to carry out). After all, good decisions think right and feel right.

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As the cognitive neuroscientist [Joseph LeDoux](#) has pointed out, our emotional and reasoning systems work in concert. When faced with risky decisions, for example, it is possible to talk yourself into almost anything. But, the tingle of anxiety that comes along with those risky decisions is providing valuable information that you should not ignore.