

PERSUASION FOR GOOD: NEUROSCIENCE HACKS YOU CAN USE

There's a lot going on in our brain that we aren't aware of: **40 to 90 percent of everything we do is unconscious.** This means we aren't as "rational" as we think we are. Facts & stats alone won't change hearts and minds—but these neurohacks can help!

KNOW WHO YOU'RE TALKING TO



The Rider and the Elephant: The elephant, our unconscious system, is intuition and instinct. It reacts quickly! The rider, our conscious system, is slower, more rational, and takes effort to engage.

Just as the rider and the elephant have to communicate to reach their destination, our internal conscious and unconscious systems need to communicate to reach a decision.

The Guardians: All of our brains are wired to resist change because it causes our fight-flight-freeze response to kick in. When we're feeling defensive or threatened by an idea, that's our guardians showing up to protect our brain. But we can talk to our guardians by leading with compassion, curiosity, and vulnerability.

We're often talking to the guardian, not the elephant. How do we sidestep our brain's defenses and talk to who's really in charge?

RECOGNIZE THE BARRIERS THAT CAN HOLD US BACK

In-group favoritism means our brains are all wired for implicit bias and automatically categorize people into groups.

Building empathy for others helps us overcome this.

Internalized sexism can make us doubt what we know and make us vulnerable to disinformation.

We have to build up self esteem so that we can build up political agency and help support our community to stand up for what we believe.

Racial resentment is complex and shows up differently in all of us. This topic can make our guardians rush to our defense. Work around them by using deep canvassing tactics: listen, storytelling over fact battling, defer judgment, lead with curiosity.

KNOW THE WEDGES BEING USED TO DIVIDE US

Disinformation and grievance politics are everywhere, especially on social media, and reinforcement from our political bubbles makes us vulnerable to it.



KEEP IT POSITIVE

Tap into the right type of empathy: There are multiple types of empathy, and tapping into the wrong kind is counterproductive. Choose positive, empowering images to inspire action.

Use episodic simulation to imagine the future: Our brains let us vividly remember the past and vividly imagine the future. This is directly tied to empathy; give people the opportunity to vividly imagine themselves helping. Narrative details really help!

Avoid negativity: Our brains are wired to focus on the negative, but now we're flooded with negativity online. Look for ways to reframe threats as opportunities, or victims as heroes. Focus on one another's strengths, not our weaknesses.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Emotional metabolism is important for all of us. Tap into your own reward system by repeating this affirmation to yourself. *Where am I? Here. What time is it? Now. What am I doing? The best I can.*