MARK RABEN

SUMMARY

MEDIA

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THE SUBJECTIVE BRAIN

Do you like this painting?
Let's say that you like it while I find it hideous. What does that actually say about the painting?

Now, let's say this painting represents your mother-in-law or Donald Trump. Just as with the painting, your opinion only reflects your own unique, subjective perspective and not an objective truth.

We all view the world from our own unique perspective. This is critical for us to understand as it leaves us much more open-minded and able to relate to others in a more powerful way. It also allows us to evaluate our own ideas.

Our brain is focused on survival and not objective observation and evaluation.
As a result, it automatically creates biases to "assure" our body and personality remain alive. To that end, we have over 70 cognitive biases that serve as a filter to our personal experience. Here are several of the biases we may have.

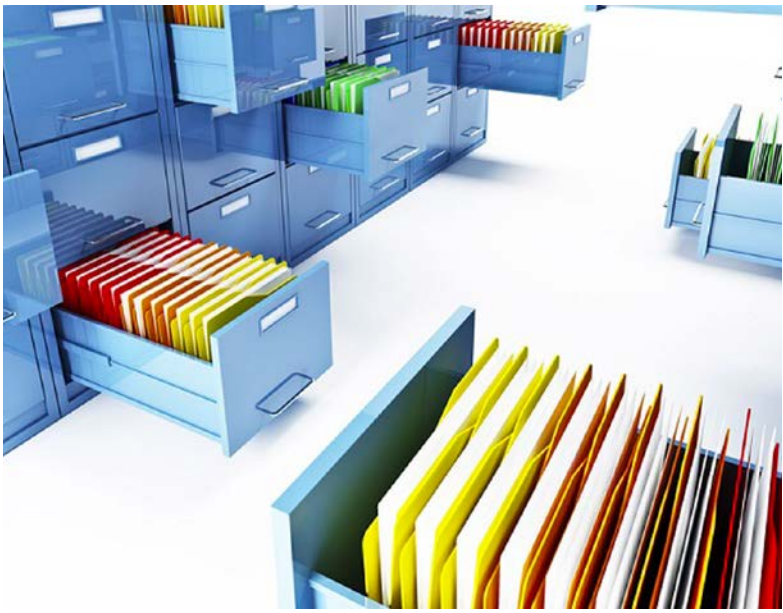
COGNITIVE BIASES

SHORT-CUTS

We all have a metaphorical "chest of drawers" in our brain. Every chest has a label attached to it which serves as a short cut.

Experiment: Quickly think of a singer you know.

Which one did you chose?
Within your brain there is a chest of drawers that contains all of the singers you know.
When I ask you to come up with a singer your brain simply reads what's on the label.
This saves the brain a lot of energy. If you apply this to your opinions you will realize that they are all just a collection of labels.



SELF-SERVING BIAS

If we win, it is because of our own action, talents, efforts and apparent free will.
If we lose it is because of the circumstances.

DECLINISM

We romanticize about the past and look at the future in a more negative, fearful way.
Hence, the common phrase,
"Everything was better in the past."

HALO EFFECT

If you believe someone like Brad Pitt is a likable, good man, your brain will attribute all type of additional positive traits to him.
For example, you will probably assume he is a great father, treats his wife kindly and always loads the dishwasher perfectly every time.

GROUPTHINK

To maintain harmony within a group, your brain will attempt to align itself with everyone else's behavioral patterns and ideas.
During a meeting if seven people agree with each other and you are an outlier, your brain will automatically work to bring you into alignment with the other seven. This explains why there is so much tunnel vision within certain groups.

SPOTLIGHT EFFECT

We often believe that people are thinking and talking about us. In reality, this is rarely true. Most people are entirely too busy worrying about themselves and trapped in their own heads to be thinking about us.

NAIVE REALISM

We believe that the way that we view the world and certain situations is more objective and accurate than the way others view the world.

CONFIRMATION-BIAS

When we hear information that confirms what we already believe we welcome it.
Information that conflicts with what we believe we often ignore, discount or avoid.

BACKFIRE EFFECT

When we work to convince someone of something often times it backfires.
The brain tends to dig in its heels and resist the convincing. For example, when one tries to convince an alcoholic to quit drinking his/her brain comes up with all types of reasons not to quit. Often times the alcoholic drinks even more having a backfire effect from the original intention.

PLACEBO EFFECT

Most of us are familiar with this effect.
Say one is given a vitamin but believes it is a painkiller. the brain will create painkiller effects even though it is not one.
The placebo effect demonstrates that our perception changes the functioning of our brain. This effect only works if the person does not know that the pill is a vitamin to begin with.

IKEA EFFECT

If you purchase a cabinet and assemble it yourself, your brain will assign more value to it that if you had purchased it already assembled.

THE UNCONSCIOUS BRAIN

UNCONSCIOUS

11.200.000
bits per second

CONSCIOUS

60
bits per second

At an unconscious level, our brain processes information at 11,200,000 bits per second. Conversely, at a conscious level, we only process at 60 bits per second. Almost all of our behavior originates at an unconscious level and then, with a minor delay, we consciously become aware of it.

Right now, you are aware of this text you are reading. And, you are not aware of the position of your feet on the floor.
Now you are! Also, you are not aware of the rate of your breathing. Now you are!
This demonstrates how our 60 bits of conscious awareness is so limited and can only focus on one thing at a time.

Have you ever noticed that after driving somewhere for 30 minutes and arriving at your destination you had no recollection of actually doing the driving? That's because your unconscious brain was driving the car while your conscious brain was focused on your thoughts and listening to music.

When you learn how to ride a bicycle the conscious part of your brain (60 bps) focuses on the actions needed to balance and ride.
This takes a lot of energy and effort.
The more you practice riding, the brain creates stronger neural connections and eventually you are able to ride the bike automatically.

THE ROUTINE BRAIN

To save energy, our brain strives to operate from a place of routine and habit as much as possible.
The advantage of this is that you can perform many tasks automatically.
The disadvantage is that change is difficult because your brain does not want to let go of these energy saving habits and routines.
The best way to create change is with small, incremental and concrete steps. This is the most efficient way for the brain to learn new behavioral patterns.

Fortunately, our brains are self learning mechanisms that allow us to evolve and create new neural connections throughout our entire lives.
The amazing thing is that once these connections are made they last forever!
For example, if you learn to play the guitar, you will be able to do it forever.
Your skills may atrophy if you do not practice but they will still be present.

THE LAYERED BRAIN

We can divide the brain into three layers:

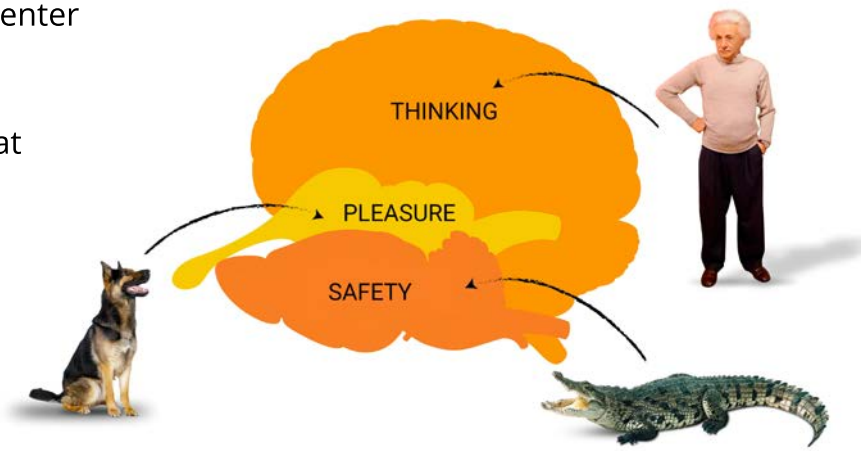
* Reptile Brain	Instinctive
* Mammal Brain	Emotional
* NeoCortex	Rational

Our reptilian brain stores all of our routines, patterns and habits. This part also is constantly scanning for danger in order to keep us safe and have our bodies survive.
In hazardous situations, it ensures we fight, flight or freeze in order to protect ourselves.
This part of the brain is also responsible for our reflexes.

Our mammalian brain is the pleasure center of our brain. When you go through the drive-in window at McDonald's it automatically scans the menu items that will bring the most pleasure.
And, usually it is a hamburger and not a salad!

Also, this part of the brain is always looking for the path of least resistance in order to save energy.

Lastly, thanks to our neocortex we can think, plan and make sense of complexity.
This is also the most idealistic layer that is happy to contribute to the good of the world.



CHANGE

If we want to change, people mainly focus on the neocortex.
Good intention, setting goals and thinking positively are nice ideas from the neocortex, but the older parts of the brain (mammal and reptile) pay little attention to it.
Unfortunately, the reptilian brain will hold on firmly to our habit and patterns while the mammalian brain will focus on the path of least resistance and focus on pleasure.

True, lasting change will only take place when all three layers of the brain are aligned and collaborating. This happens when either of these two circumstances are present: passion or urgency.

When passion is present the intrinsic drive is so big that the neocortex wants to achieve a goal, the mammalian brain experiences pleasure and then new patterns are created in the reptile brain.

When urgency is present, suffering is most likely very substantial. In this case, the brain will automatically look for a way out which creates a fertile place for old patterns and behaviors to change.

COLLABORATION

In order for people to most effectively collaborate, trust and safety must be present. When two or more people meet in person, the "trust" neuro-chemical oxytocin is created. Research at Harvard University has shown that employees at highly successful companies have higher levels of oxytocin in their blood.

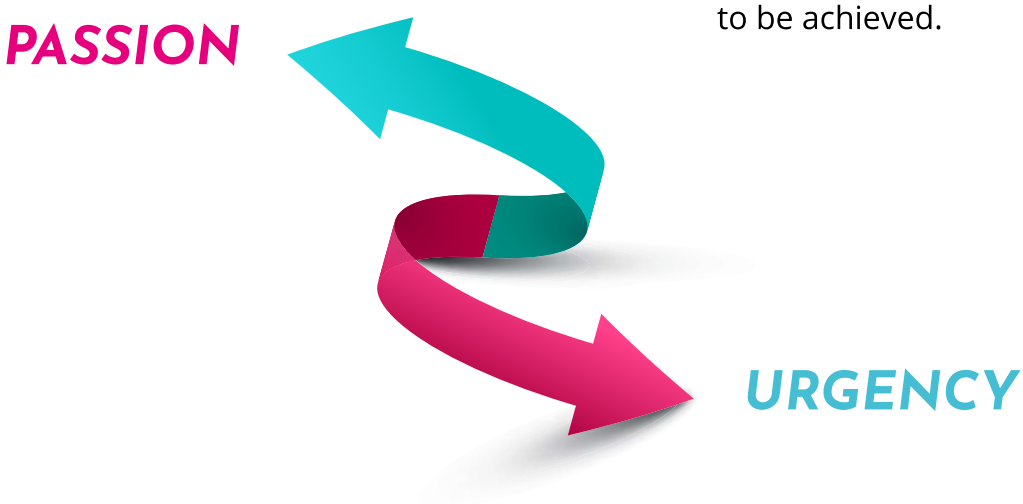
Passion and pleasure are the most important things for the mammalian brain during collaboration. Do something you are good at and enjoying collaborating with other people increases our motivation and effort.

Our neocortex is eager to contribute and to have a goal. When we contribute to a common effort and support our colleagues our happiness increases.

CLIENT ORIENTATION

The brain of the client will first scan for: "Do I trust this person, product or service?" (Reptile brain). Then it will scan for: "Will this bring me pleasure and how much effort will it take?" (Mammalian brain).
And, the neocortex simply want to reach its goal and achieve success.

There, the most simple path to success is to foster a sense of trust and connection with the client, make the journey effortless and provide clarity as to the process and outcome to be achieved.

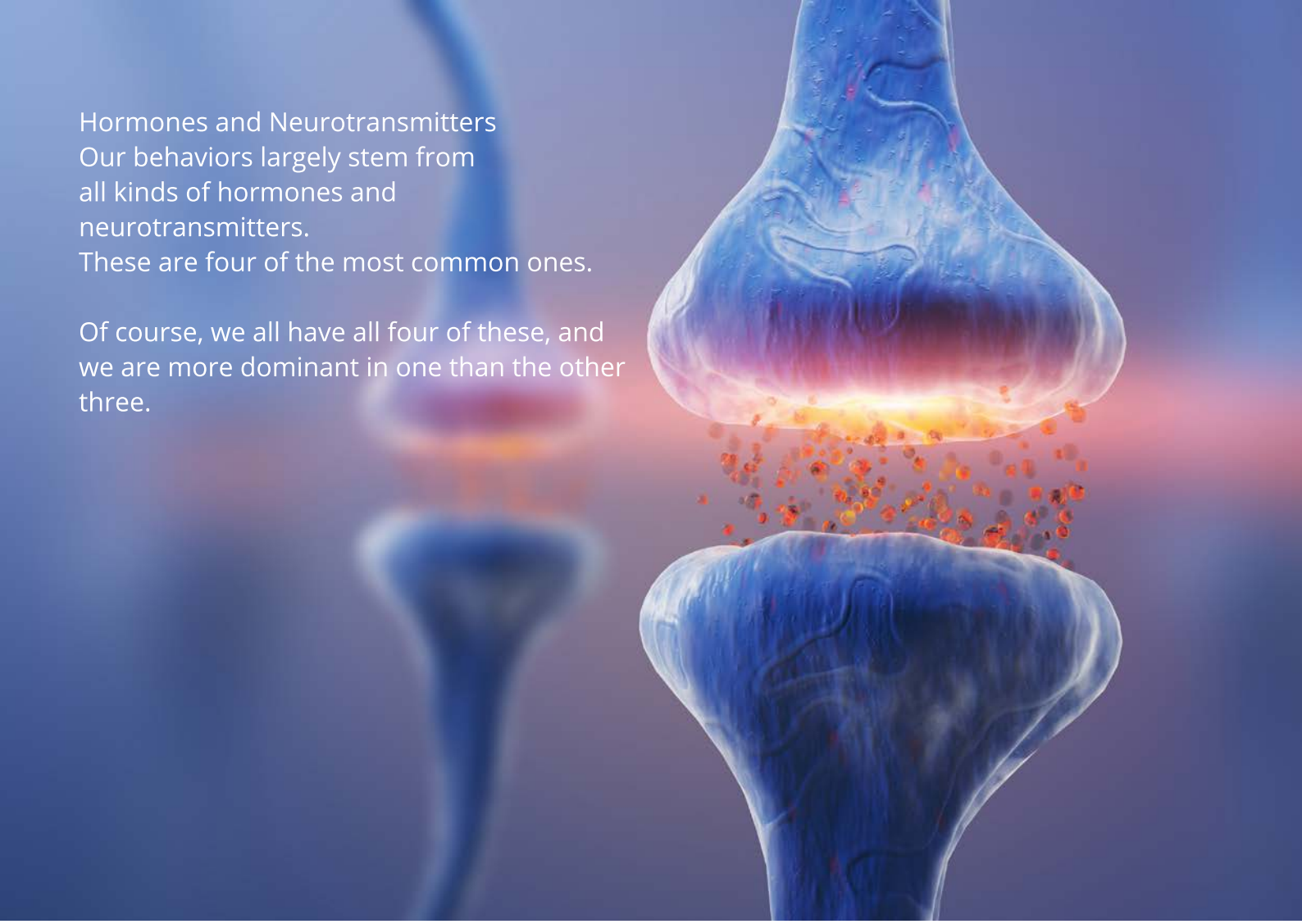


THE CREATIVE BRAIN

What is the answer to the math problem:
5 X 4?
Of course it is 20. This calculation is performed by your neocortex.
Thinking is quite useful for these types of tasks. Where creativity is concerned, thinking hard will not work. Brainstorm sessions rarely lead to new ideas and outcomes.
Typically, everyone tends to put their old ideas in play over and over again.

Artist who have a deadline regarding the production of a new album, experience stress. Tension arises when they enter the rehearsal space where they are working on the new songs. This is where the concept of “writer block” comes into play. A calm brain is a creative brain.

How does creativity work?
First fill your brain with new ideas and information, then take some rest. Trust that your subconscious brain will do the work for you and effortlessly surface creative inspiration.
Our best ideas come when we are most relaxed like when taking a shower, on a walk or during a relaxing weekend lounging around.



Hormones and Neurotransmitters
Our behaviors largely stem from all kinds of hormones and neurotransmitters.
These are four of the most common ones.

Of course, we all have all four of these, and we are more dominant in one than the other three.

Testosterone

- Dominant
- Direct
- Competitive
- Powerful
- Impatient
- Purposeful
- Wants control

Estrogen

- Considerate
- Sensitive
- Modest
- Calm
- Friendly
- Cooperative
- Wants contact

Dopamine

- Enthusiastic
- Dynamic
- Impulsive
- Creative
- Lively
- Capricious
- Wants challenge

Serotonin

- Analytic
- Structured
- Punctual
- Introvert
- Careful
- Disciplined
- Wants reasons

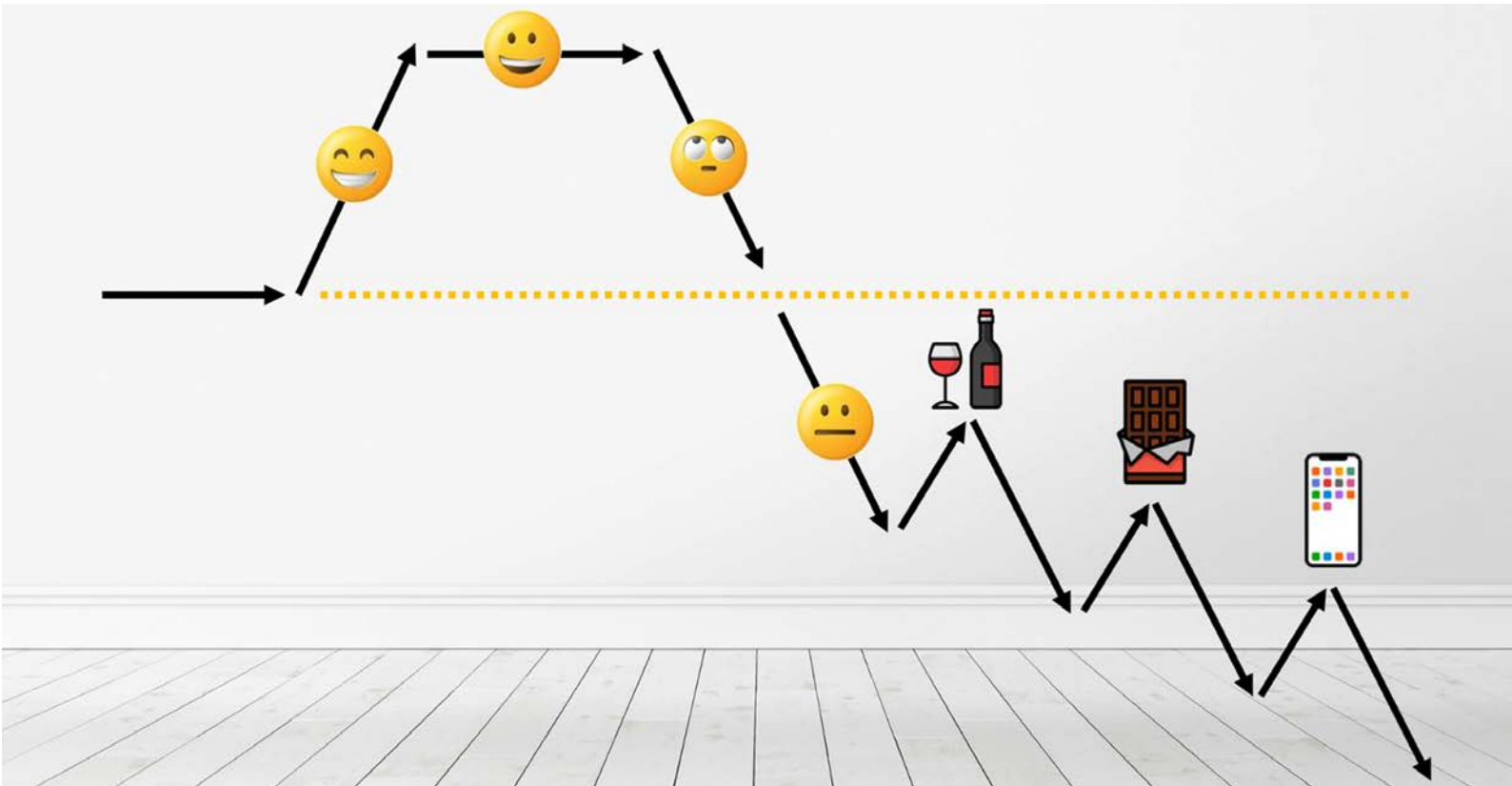
DOPAMINE

Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that plays a crucial role in motivation, reward, and creativity.
It drives us to pursue goals and complete tasks. However, the higher the dopamine peak, the greater the chance of a subsequent dip, which can temporarily reduce motivation.

A sustainable way to increase dopamine in a healthy manner is by first making an effort and then experiencing a reward.
Activities such as exercising, playing a musical instrument, completing a project, or preparing your garden for winter promote a gradual and stable dopamine release.
This helps build perseverance and long-term motivation.

On the other hand, forms of instant gratification—such as social media, junk food, gaming, or other quick stimuli—provide immediate and intense dopamine surges without requiring prior effort.
Repeated exposure to these quick rewards can make dopamine receptors less sensitive, lowering the dopamine baseline (the average dopamine level). This can result in a lack of motivation and make everyday activities feel dull and uninspiring.

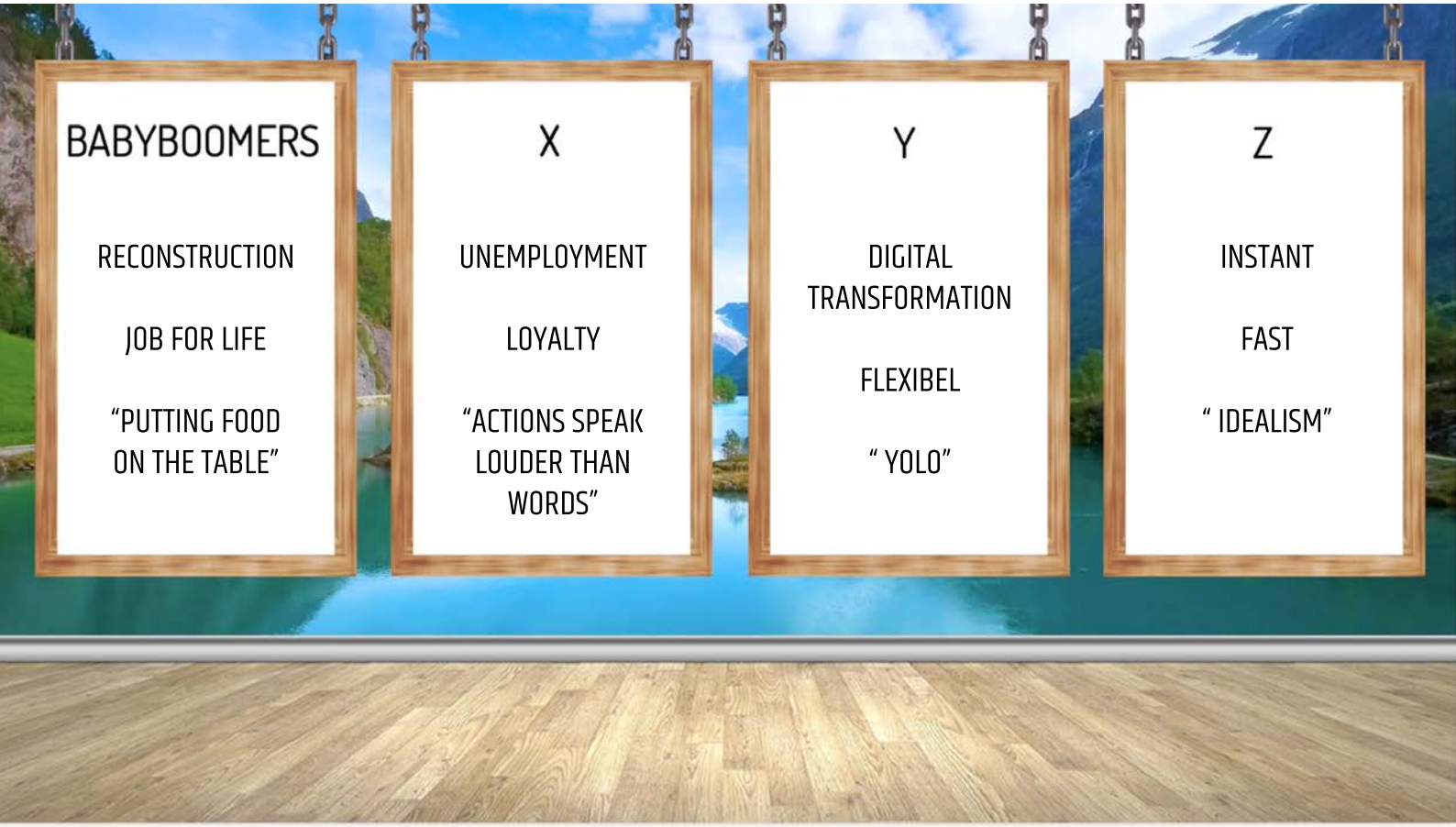
Fortunately, this process is reversible.
By incorporating periods of rest and reducing external stimuli, dopamine receptors have the opportunity to recover. This doesn't mean you run out of dopamine, but rather that your brain becomes more sensitive to natural rewards again. In this way, motivation and enjoyment of life can return in a healthy and balanced manner.

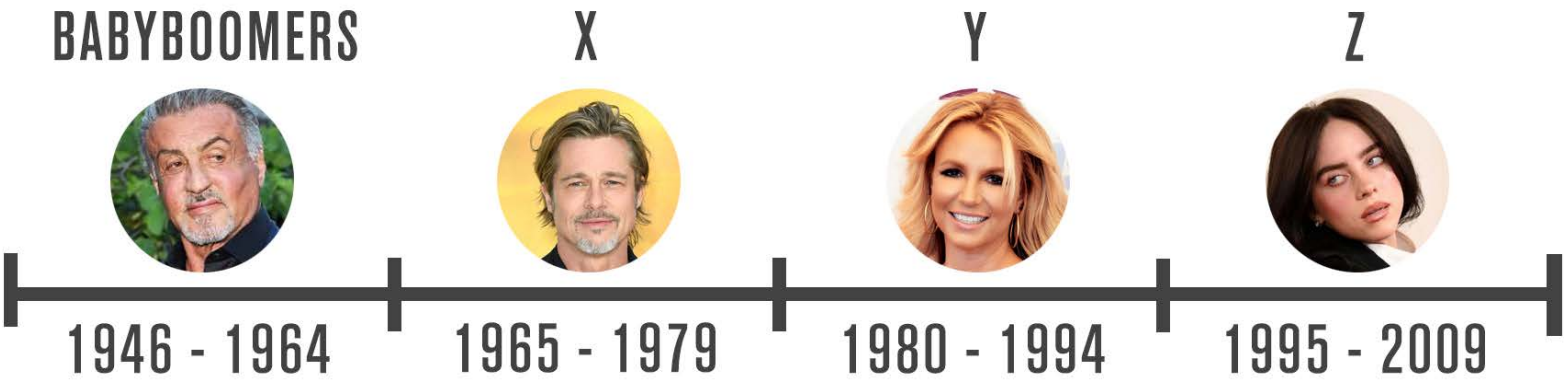


GENERATIONS

Every generation grows up in a unique era, shaped by different norms, values, and technologies. These differences make collaboration valuable.

Diversity pays off when we harness the unique qualities and perspectives of each generation.





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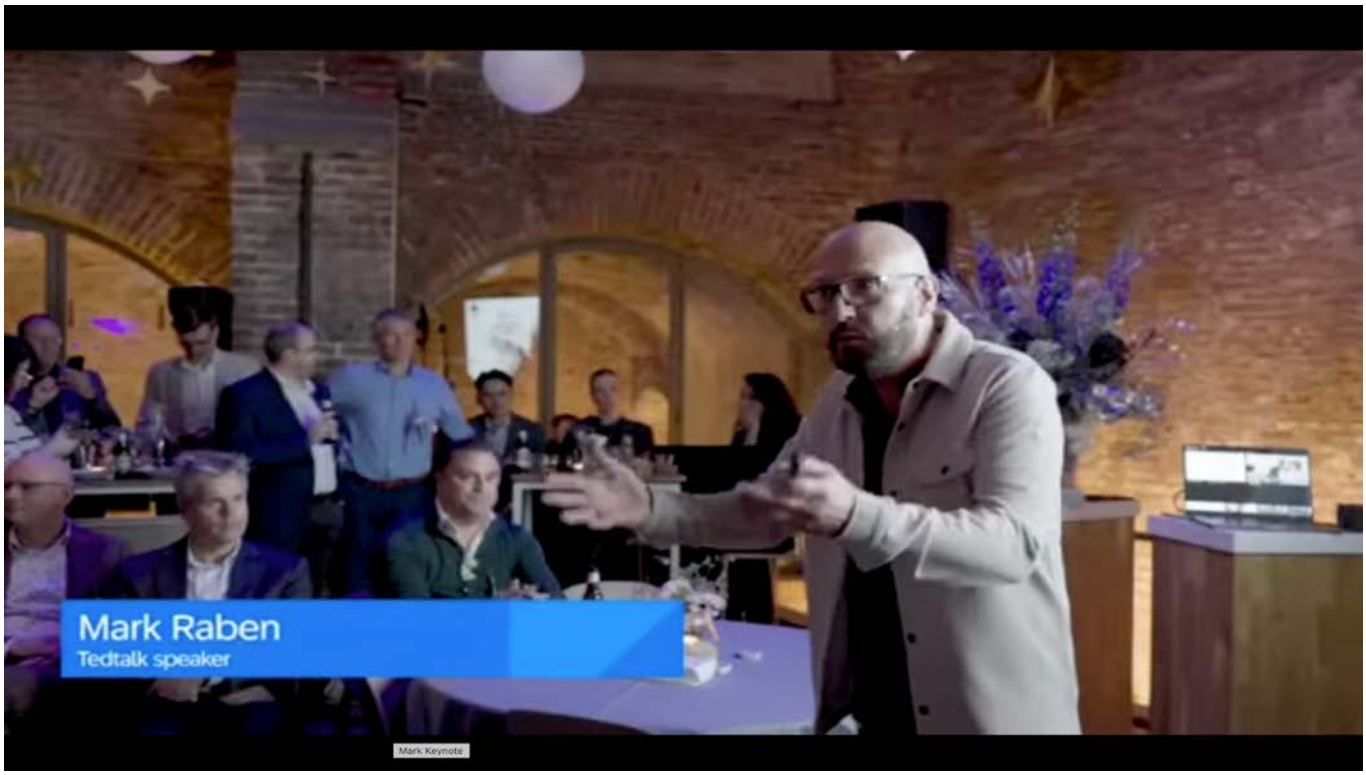

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