

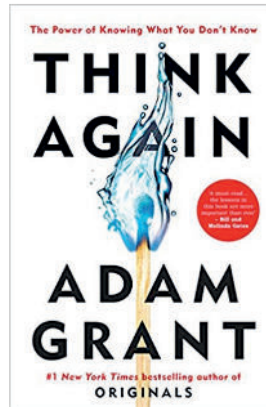


THINK AGAIN: THE POWER OF KNOWING
WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW

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THE BOOK



Think Again:
The Power of Knowing what you don't know

by Adam Grant



INTRODUCTION

Considering the casual ease with which we change things like our homes, wardrobes and phones, why is it so hard to update our views and opinions? It is too easy to let your ways of thinking stagnate and to let comfort overcome logic. With *Think Again*, Adam Grant teaches us that rethinking is as important as thinking.

Rethinking is a skill that can take you a step beyond the competition. And not only that, it is a skill that can be taught.

Through insightful anecdotes and thorough research, much of it his own, academic and best-selling writer Grant lays out how you can learn to rethink just as well as you think. He shows that what you don't know is just as important as what you do know.

Think Again is an essential read for anyone who is looking to expand their way of thinking and to get a step up in our ever-changing world.



5 BEST QUOTES

"We're mental misers: we often prefer the ease of hanging on to old views over the difficulty of grappling with new ones."

"

"We learn more from people who challenge our thought process than those who affirm our conclusions. Strong leaders engage their critics and make themselves stronger. Weak leaders silence their critics and make themselves weaker."

"It's a sign of wisdom to avoid believing every thought that enters your mind. It's a mark of emotional intelligence to avoid internalizing every feeling that enters your heart"

"When we're searching for happiness, we get too busy evaluating life to actually experience it. Instead of savoring our moments of joy, we ruminate about why our lives aren't more joyful."

"I believe that good teachers introduce new thoughts, but great teachers introduce new ways of thinking. "



7 BIG IDEAS

Adam Grant breaks *Think Again* into three sections: individual rethinking, interpersonal rethinking, and collective rethinking. In each section are several big ideas.

INDIVIDUAL RETHINKING

1. DEVELOP A HABIT OF THINKING AGAIN

In order to break your habit of maintaining stale ideas, you need to start thinking like a scientist. Too many people preach, prosecute, and politic. These methods leave no room for changing your mind. A scientist looks to the facts and sees ideas as hypotheses that require testing and retesting. Thinking in this way opens up opportunities to pivot our mindsets.

It is also vital not to define yourself by your opinions but rather by your values. People often feel as if letting go of an outdated idea is somehow letting themselves down. This is far from the case. If you remove opinions from your self-concept, you are free to change your mind in the face of evidence. If you value curiosity and flexibility as positive traits that define you, change will be far less confronting.

Once you are free of embedded opinions, try seeking out information that goes against your views. Even if you don't agree, it is highly beneficial to step outside your echo chamber to see how the other side thinks and to challenge your own assumptions.

2. CHALLENGE YOUR CONFIDENCE

Grant spends some time teaching about the Dunning Kruger effect. In a nutshell, this effect shows that the less people know about a subject, the more they think they know.

Experts are defined by the fact that they know as much about what they don't know as what they do know. As soon as you start to feel like you know more about something than everybody else, take a moment to reflect. Chances are you are not as knowledgeable as you thought. There is always room to learn.

If you are feeling the opposite way and are constricted by doubt, reframe and think of it as a learning opportunity. Have confidence in your ability to learn rather than doubt over your lack of knowledge. In fact, be prepared to be wrong and enjoy your mistakes. They are just another opportunity to learn.



7 BIG IDEAS

3. INVITE OTHERS TO QUESTION YOUR THINKING

Accept that, whatever the subject, someone probably knows more than you do. Seek out these people and start a conversation. Adam Grant also advises creating a challenge network as well as a support network. Your support network is great but runs the risk of becoming a group of 'yes men'. A challenge network keeps you on your toes by encouraging you to rethink.

Grant tells the story of the famous Wright Brothers, inventors of modern flight. They argued furiously but constructively. They turned their disagreements into debate and eventually changed the world.

INTERPERSONAL RETHINKING

4. ASK BETTER QUESTIONS

In order to persuade someone, you need to listen to them. By listening and asking questions more than making statements, you can guide someone into new ways of thinking. Ask how rather than why. Asking someone why they hold their views often makes them double down. Asking them how they might make their views a reality can be eye-opening for them.

Another great line of questioning is, "What evidence will make you change your mind?" This leaves the door open to others making their own decisions rather than you bullying them into change. In the same vein, getting to the root of how people formed their opinions in the first place can help to reframe their thinking. Ask, "Would you think the same thing had you been born somewhere else?" for instance.

5. MAKE DISAGREEMENTS A DANCE, NOT A BATTLE

The world is not black and white. Take the time to see the shades of grey. Make sure to acknowledge your competitor's claims and point out where you agree. This is an engaging technique that helps you reframe the points in which you differ.

Finally, enjoy a range of emotions when you argue or disagree. Grant shows how, in a series of organised disputes about controversial topics, the pairs who emotionally engaged on a broader spectrum were more likely to come to a compromise.



7 BIG IDEAS

COLLECTIVE RETHINKING

6. TEACH YOUR KIDS AND CREATE LEARNING ORGANISATIONS

Grant employs a weekly myth-busting dinner with his kids that encourages critical thinking. He also advocates having your kids do multiple drafts and to see feedback each time. This teaches them that they won't always get things right the first time. And Grant wants you to stop asking kids what they want to be when they grow up. It creates the feeling that our work defines us. "I want to work as a police officer, I want to be a good person." Not only that, in reality very few of us work one job that defines us our whole adult lives.

In creating outstanding learning organisations, let go of the idea of best practices. This suggests that things are already as good as they can be. This is almost never the case.

Grant advocates striving for better practices at all times. He also advocates creating psychologically safe environments. In such environments, individuals are safe to ask questions and own up to mistakes. Keeping mistakes from management for fear of reprisals or not questioning a possibly bad decision for the same reason can have disastrous effects.

7. STAY OPEN TO RETHINKING YOUR FUTURE

Don't get bogged down in ten-year plans. Who knows what will interest you years from now? Don't think that a change of environment will fix everything. If you are unhappy in Paris you will probably be unhappy in New York.

Consider that it may be how you are acting, not where you are that is influencing your mental health. Along with this, schedule time to do a life checkup. Ask how your beliefs and goals are evolving. How much are you learning? Is your next step the right one or do you need to rethink?

Finally, find the time to think again on a regular basis. Stop doing for a while and start thinking and learning. Grant himself does this weekly by reaching out to his challenge network to ask what ideas and opinions he might be rethinking.

**3 ACTION STEPS**

Think Again presents three main action steps. Adam Grant suggests the following:

THINK LIKE A SCIENTIST

By thinking like a scientist, you can learn to rethink and not to entangle self-concept with opinions. Scientists see all ideas as hypotheses that need testing.

EMBRACE CHANGE

Change is good. Changing your mind is not weakness. The ability to do so can actually be a saving grace. By sticking resolutely to a failing idea, you have little hope for the future. Learn to see when to change and embrace it willingly.

SEE THE WORTH IN OTHERS

Listen, reach out, teach. Be open to other ideas and opinions and investigate them deeply. Explore rather than rebut or rebuke. Allow others to teach and guide you as much as you hope to teach and guide them.

**1 KEY TAKEAWAY**

The key takeaway of Adam Grant's Think Again is how vital it is not to stagnate. The world is an ever-changing place and we need to change with it. Allowing your ideas and opinions to change and grow is not weakness.

Changing your ideas and rethinking your actions and opinions are doors to new achievements. Solutions come from change and rethought. Staying the same is counterproductive.

Nobody is perfect and everyone needs to rethink on a regular basis. To fail to rethink is to fail to change and grow, to stagnate. By rethinking you can stay a step ahead.



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Think Again

by Adam Grant

Grant on the power of knowing what you don't know.

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