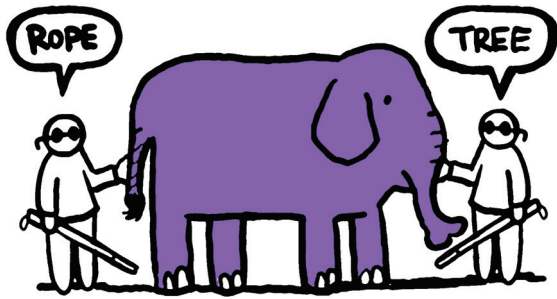


## HANDOUT 3.7B Remixed Rules of Thumb for Controlling Our Overdramatization Instincts

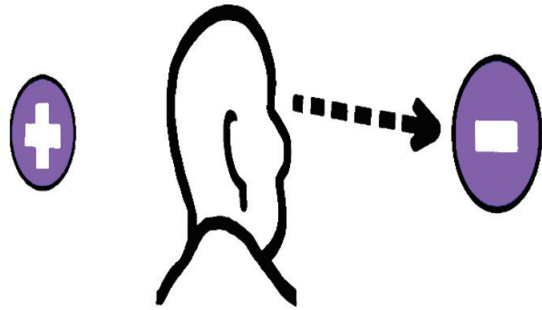


1. **The Gap Instinct:** We like to divide all kinds of things into two distinct and often conflicting groups. We tend to see only the extreme ends of data patterns, missing the great middle.

Look between the extremes!

Where is most of the data?

Remember: Reality exists along a wide range!



2. **The Negativity Instinct:** We tend to focus on the negative versus the positive.

Look for improvements and possibilities amidst the challenges!

Where is the positive news and possibility?

Remember: Good news and gradual improvements are rarely reported.



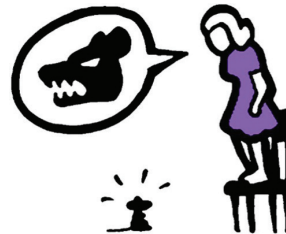
3. **The Straightline Instinct:** We falsely think everything will continue at the same pace and same trajectory.

Consider what and how things might change.

Imagine how things can change in new ways and what might change them.

How might the line bend? How might trajectories and pace differ over time?

Remember: Trend lines are never linear when we look at them over time!



4. **The Fear Instinct:** We tend to overexaggerate risks and focus on information that triggers our fears.

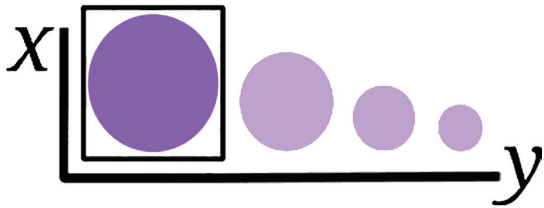
Consider the real risk. Compare the risk to those of everyday activities.

How dangerous is this in reality?

Remember: Never make decisions when you are gripped by fear!

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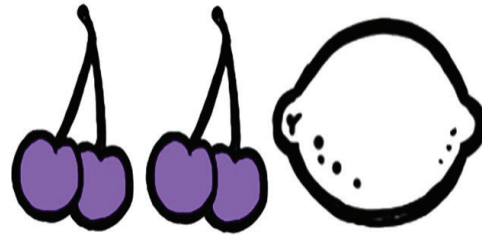


5. **The Size Instinct:** We tend to get things out of proportion, misjudge size, and exaggerate the importance of one data point.

Confirm the actual proportions!

How does this example compare to other examples?

Remember: Rates are more meaningful than amounts, especially when comparing different-sized groups.

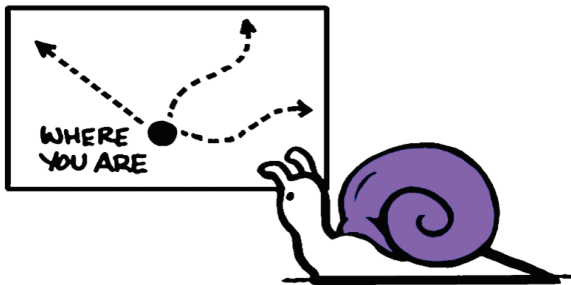


6. **The Generalization Instinct:** We often group things together that have significant differences.

Consider how things are actually similar and different in ways that matter.

Are the categories we are using correct and appropriate to the problem at hand?

Remember: "They" are not all the same!

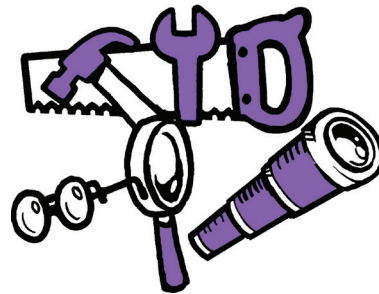


7. **The Destiny Instinct:** The way things are just the way they have to be, because of innate characteristics of people, countries, religions, and cultures.

Consider how most important changes evolve ever so slowly and occur over time, based on multiple causes.

How can you pay attention to and track slow changes and the real multiple causes of situations?

Remember: Things do change, but they often change slowly!



8. **The Single Perspective Instinct:** We see things from one position and fail to even consider that there are other positions to take. We like simplicity! My way or the highway!

Use multiple lenses for seeing and multiple tools for thinking.

What other ways of seeing and thinking are there? What other solutions?

Remember: No tool is good for every job! No lens helps you see everything. Beware of simple ideas and solutions!



9. **The Blame Instinct:** We like to have a simple reason to blame for misfortune. We want to blame individuals or single causes for problems that were created by systems and multiple causes.

Put your pointer finger down!

Think about systems instead of people. What system was designed to make this happen? How could the system be redesigned for different results?

Remember: Look for the multiple causes of problems!



10. **The Urgency Instinct:** It's now or never! We tend to want immediate solutions to problems that were created over time and that will take time to solve.

See what can be done next and do it.  
Act short term and with short steps.  
Continuously check progress.

What is the next small step? Take the step, consider, reflect, and then make the next decision.

Remember: Beware drastic actions!

**SOURCE:** Adapted from Rosling's *Factfulness* Chart. Based on remixes of student work. Illustrations by Joel Wilhelm.

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