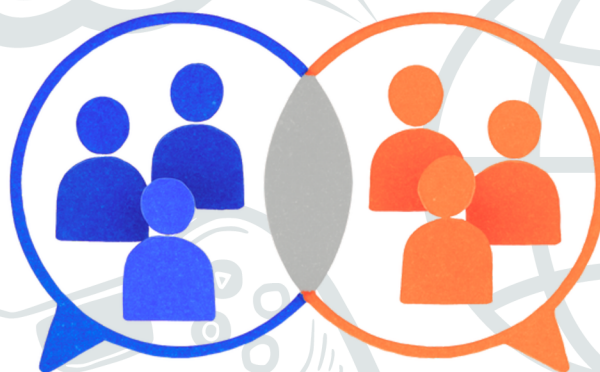


COGNITIVE BIASES

In-Group Bias



KEY WORDS

belonging | groups | red flags | loyalty | values



Sometimes we don't even notice how much we care about the groups we belong to. Whether it's your school, your favorite band, your friend group, or even your gaming crew, being part of something makes us feel good, understood, and safe.

But sometimes, this feeling of belonging can quietly affect how we think and what we believe, especially when we start seeing our group as better than others.

"I trust people like me more."

We tend to see people in our group as smarter, kinder, and more trustworthy. This can feel good, but it also makes it easier to ignore or judge people outside our circle, even when they might have something valuable to say.

That's what In-Group Bias does. It pushes us to believe, defend, or agree with something just because it comes from "our side", and to shut down anything that comes from "them", no matter how valid it might be.

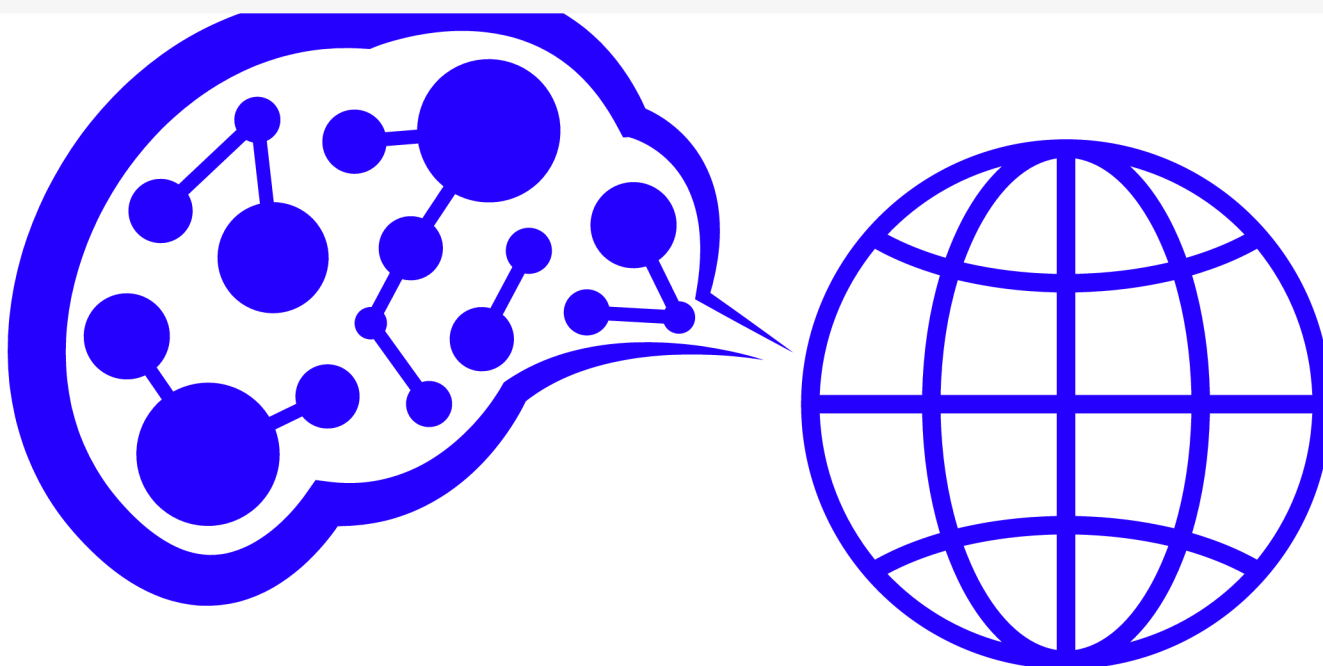


"I'm more likely to believe something if it supports my side."

Imagine you're really into climate action. One day, you see a post claiming that a well-known environmentalist politician chose to travel by train rather than plane to cut their carbon footprint. You instantly believe it and repost it: "Finally, someone who walks the talk!" But the next day, you see a similar post about a politician from the opposing party doing the same thing. Your first reaction? "Yeah right, that's just PR." That's In-Group Bias at work. We're more likely to trust information that confirms what our group believes, and we quickly doubt, ignore, or attack anything that doesn't. It's not always about logic: it's about loyalty. And when loyalty takes over, it can cloud our judgement.

"It's easy to confuse loyalty with truth."

When we feel close to a group, we often defend its ideas fiercely. That's not always a bad thing: loyalty can feel like strength. But if we stop questioning what "our side" says, we risk falling into echo chambers, where everyone agrees and outside views get shut out. Even smart, well-meaning groups can end up spreading false information, like conspiracy theories or extreme opinions, just because no one dares to disagree.



“I try to understand other sides, even if I disagree.”

Exploring different perspectives is part of learning and growing. Staying curious helps us see beyond our usual group and recognize that there are many ways of thinking. Some ideas might feel unfamiliar or uncomfortable at first, and that’s a natural part of the process. You can feel close to your group, support its values, and also create space for different points of view. This kind of openness shows attention and awareness.

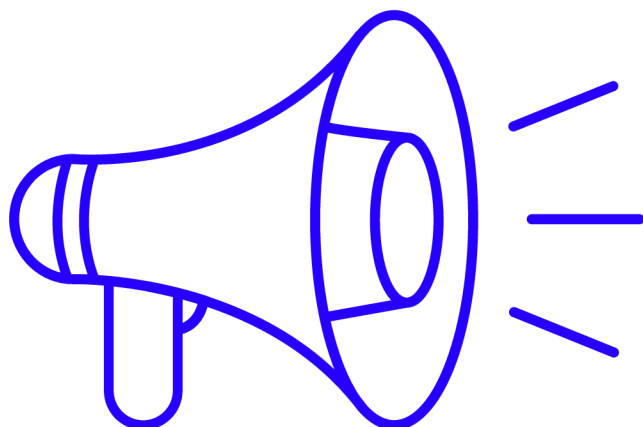
Sometimes, a simple pause is enough, a moment to ask yourself:

- “Would I still believe this if it came from someone outside my group?”
- “Am I reacting to the idea, or just to the person who said it?”
- “Can I listen just to understand, without jumping to conclusions?”

Belonging gives us strength. Reflecting on what we believe helps us give that belonging meaning.



COGNITIVE BIAS



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