

COGNITIVE BIASES

Conformity Bias

KEY WORDS

conformity | independence | choice | authenticity



“Everyone’s doing it, so it must be right!”

Sometimes, we feel the pressure to do something simply because the majority is doing it. It's that feeling that if everyone is saying something, it must be true, or if everyone is following a trend, we should do it too. It's a natural human behaviour: we want to be part of the group, not stand out or be excluded!

For example, it might happen that if your friends are wearing a certain style of clothing, you feel the pressure to do the same, even if it's not really your style. Or if everyone is on a social media platform like Instagram, you might feel like you don't want to be the only one not on it.

“I don’t want to be left out.”

There are several reasons why we feel this way:

- **Social Acceptance:** We want to be accepted and part of a group. Standing out too much can make us feel uncomfortable.





- **Fear of Rejection:** The fear of being excluded or judged can push us to adopt the opinions or behaviours of the majority.
- **Lack of Confidence:** Sometimes, we may feel unsure about our own thoughts or decisions and rely on the group's opinion as a safety net.

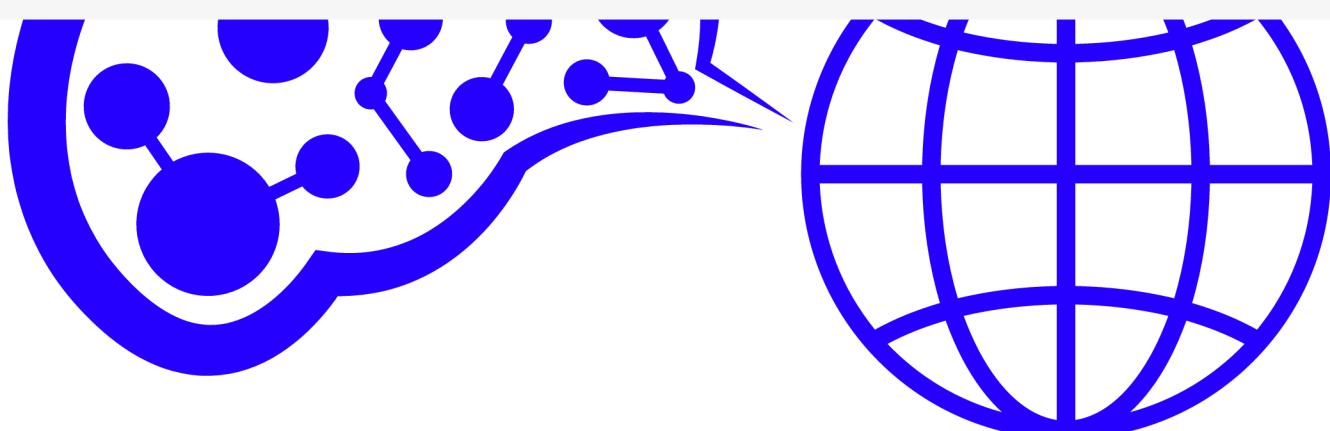
"If everyone's wearing it, it must be cool."

Let's look at how conformity bias can sneak into our everyday lives, often without us even realising it!

- **Restaurant Choices:** When everyone orders the same dish, you might feel compelled to do the same, even if it's not what you want.
- **Trends in Entertainment:** Hype around a new movie or show can push you to watch it, just to keep up with the crowd, even if you're not interested.
- **Travel Destinations:** Social media can make you feel like you have to visit the same trendy places everyone else is posting about.
- **Fitness Trends:** If a new workout or diet is all over the place, it's easy to jump on the bandwagon, even if it doesn't match your goals.

"I just want to blend in."

Being aware of how conformity bias influences our decisions helps us make more independent choices. It's natural to want to fit in, but it's also important to stay true to who we are and what we think. By recognising this mechanism, we can avoid being influenced by the crowd and make more conscious decisions.



"Sometimes it's easier to go along with the crowd."

Conformity bias is a natural part of human behaviour, but it's important to recognise when it's influencing our decisions. Reflecting on what we think and do helps us avoid following the crowd out of convenience, allowing us to make more authentic choices.

Group Think:

- Think about a recent trend or popular opinion you noticed among friends or on social media.
- Reflect: Did you embrace it because you truly wanted to, or just because everyone else was doing it? Did you feel pressured to follow? Why?

Breaking the Mold:

- This week, try something different. Wear something out of fashion or voice a different opinion.
- Reflect: How did it feel to stand out? Any reactions?



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