



Human Optimization

Pod Club Discussion Questions



E37 Helpful vs. Unhelpful Thinking Patterns: How to Use the Mental Models in a Healthy Way

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The three big questions explored in the podcast:

Question 1

What exactly are “thinking patterns”, and how do we distinguish between those that are helpful and unhelpful?

Question 2

Why do we commonly default to unhelpful patterns of thinking?

Question 3

What steps can we take to start using helpful thinking patterns and mental models to help us achieve our goals?

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you personally define “helpful” and “unhelpful” thinking patterns? How does this relate to your prior conception of “positive vs. negative” thoughts?
2. What are some of the key characteristics that separate “helpful thinking” from “unhelpful thinking?”
3. What is an area of your life where you tend to experience “unhelpful thinking patterns?” Why do you think this is the case, and what are some of the negative impacts that result?
4. If you were able to shift your perspective from “positive vs. negative” thinking to “helpful vs. unhelpful” thinking, what benefits do you think you would experience?
5. Do you think recognizing your thinking as “helpful” vs. “unhelpful” will be easy or challenging? Go around your group and ask everyone if this will be easy or hard for them. Then, ask why?
6. Once you are able to recognize certain thoughts as “unhelpful”, what strategies will you use to move on and not perseverate on them (think about the strategies offered in section three of this episode).
7. Tell your group at least one new thing (action step) you are going to do or behavior you are going to adopt to improve your thinking as a result of this episode?
8. Based on this episode, what is one small change you are going to make to help improve in this area. How are you going to keep yourself accountable to that and measure your success? (Be sure to keep it simple, start small, and make it very clear).