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How Online Learning can Retool Minds and Reshape Hearts



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The Invisible Gorilla

- “Learning how everyday illusions work . . . will help you notice and avoid being victimized by them in the future (attention, perception, reasoning, memory, cause, knowledge, and confidence).”
- “You’ll be wary of thinking you know more about a topic than you really do.”
- “You can make better decisions, and maybe even live a better life, if you do your best to look for the invisible gorillas in the world around you . . . “

Daniel Simmons and Chris Chabris

Session Purpose

How Online Learning can Retool Minds and Reshape Hearts

1. Discuss the unseen forces that shape our attitudes and behavior toward other people.
2. Explain ways in which teachers can help learners analyze information leading to positive attitudes and action in our local and global communities.

NEWS



“9 out of 10 Americans don't fact-check information they read on social media - American adults spread fake news because they place a lot of trust in their social media friends and acquaintances.”

Investigating How People Determine the Credibility of Online Information

- Wineburg, S., & McGrew, S. (2016). Evaluating Information: The Cornerstone of Civic Online Reasoning.
- "Many assume that because young people are fluent in social media they are equally savvy about what they find there. Our work shows the opposite."
- "Overall, young people's ability to reason about the information on the Internet can be summed up in one word: bleak."
- "Young people often can't distinguish the difference between well-established groups and fringe sources."

Investigating How People Determine the Credibility of Online Information

Wineburg, S., & McGrew, S. (2017). Lateral reading: Reading less and learning more when evaluating digital information.

Taking bearings and lateral reading.

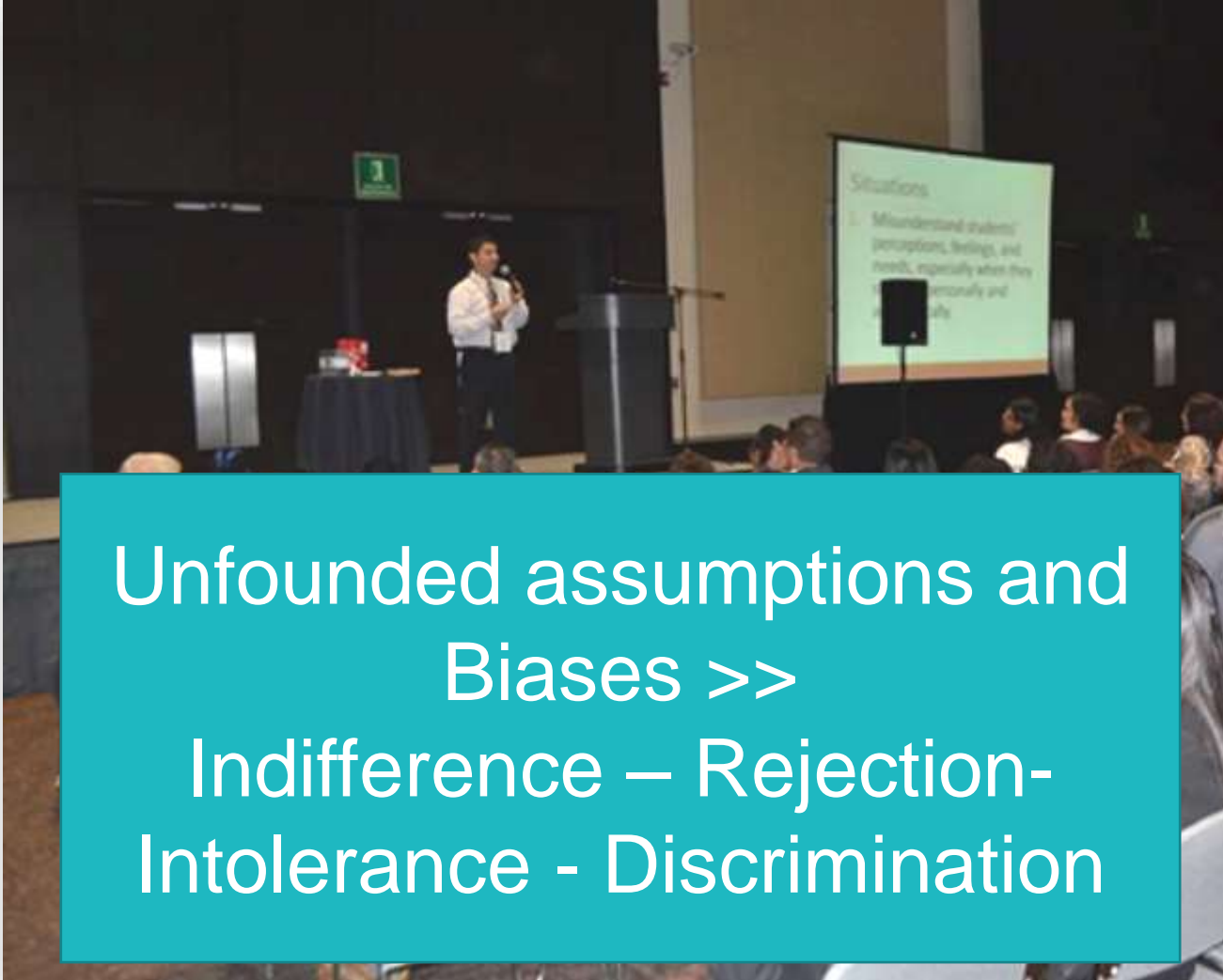
“Only two of the ten historians adroitly evaluated digital information. Their colleagues were often indistinguishable from college students in their meandering searches and general befuddlement. Both groups often fell prey to the same digital ruses. Considering our participants’ intellectual caliber, we are left to ask: What is it about the Internet that bedevils intelligent people? Why are they often no wiser after reviewing a website than before? What did fact checkers do that allowed them to quickly and accurately discern the trustworthiness of information? How is it that they often spent less time on a website but ended up learning more?”

Dangers of Faulty, Incomplete, and Distorted Information

- It can engender false perceptions and stigma based on questionable evidence that can lead to **negative attitudes** and **discrimination** based on **gender**, **age**, **race**, **sexual orientation**, **body type**, **disability**, **religion**, marital status, **national origin**, and **health status**.
- It can alter and distort people's beliefs and attitudes and ultimately actions toward certain groups.



Finding Your Way in a Dynamically-Changing Profession



- Political upheaval
- Social justice issues
- Hunger / food insecurity
- Racial discrimination
- Refugee crisis
- Emotional, physical, and mental health
- Gender equality

Main Points

1. Recognize your role of empowering students to greater critical thinking and excellence.
2. Become aware of how unaware we are about the world around us.
3. Understand the nature of logical fallacies, heuristics, and thinking errors that can lead to distorted attitudes and positions.
4. Apply careful scrutiny to any online source.
5. Develop the skills to analyze and fact-check online information.
6. Have the courage alter your current opinions and follow your convictions.
7. Be the change that you want to see in your students and the world.

1. Recognize Your Role as a 21st-Century Educator

- Move away from information-based learning where students are simply fed information.

LEARNING

“True wisdom is knowing that you know nothing.”
– *Socrates, Greek Philosopher*



“The best teachers are those who show you where to look but don’t tell you what to see.”

A good teacher is one who makes himself (herself) progressively unnecessary. –Thomas Carruthers

2. Understand the Illusion of Knowledge and Confidence

Realize that I could be wrong about so many things and not even know it.

What do you see?





What did you see?

How many tigers did you see?



3. Understand and Dismantle Faulty Reasoning

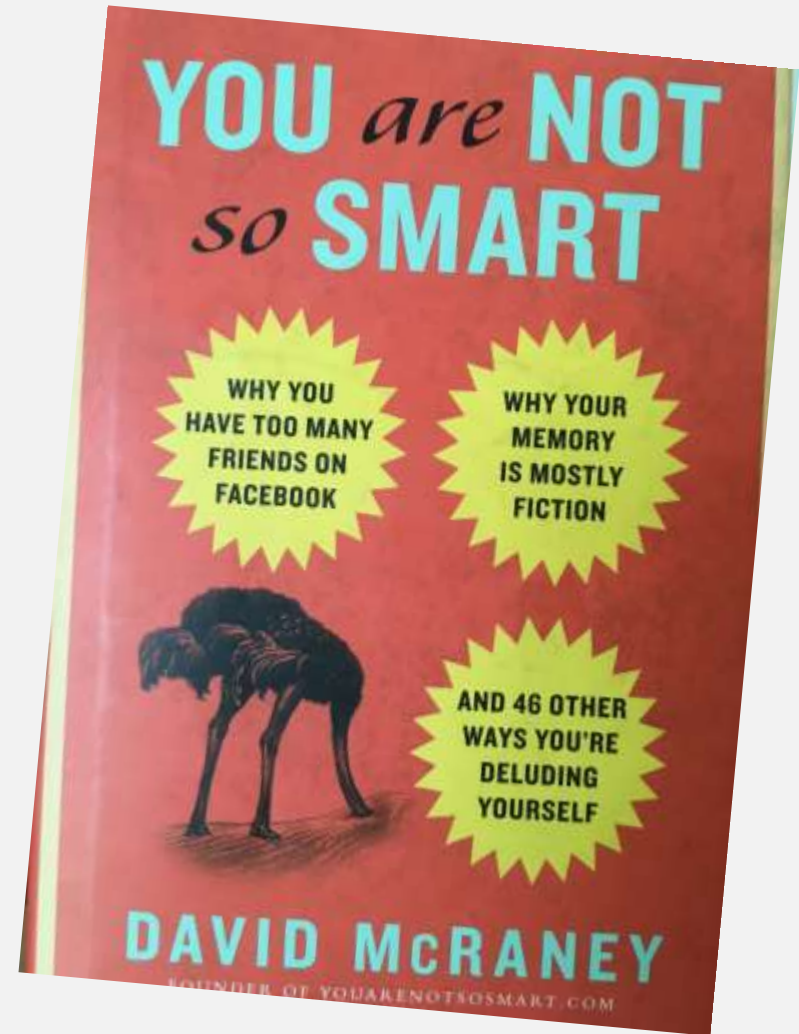
- We are so unaware of the faulty reasoning that influences our thoughts and actions.

How to Avoid Flawed Arguments

Critical thinking skills are essential for making informed decisions.

3. Understand and Dismantle Faulty Reasoning

- “**The misconception:** You are a rational, logical being who sees the world as it really is.
- **The truth:** You are as deluded as the rest of us, but that’s OK because being deluded is part of being human.”



Non Sequitur – “It does not follow.”

- “I had a roommate that was studying statistics, and he couldn’t stop talking about it. People in that field are really dry and boring.”

Appeal to Authority (False/Anonymous)

- “Experts believe that eating hot soup prevents COVID-19 infections.” (Anonymous Authority)

Confirmation Bias

- **The Mistaken Belief:** Our conclusions are the result of a careful examination of the data.
- **The Reality:** We tend to seek out information that proves our existing beliefs and ignore any evidence to the contrary.

Logical Fallacies and Heuristics

Hindsight Bias

Availability Heuristic

Texas Sharpshooter

Hasty
Generalization

False Dichotomy

Groupthink

Slippery Slope

"The eye sees only what the mind is prepared to comprehend."
- *Henri Bergson, French philosopher*

Resources

youarenotsosmart.com



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4. Apply Careful Scrutiny of any Online Source

- Who is the author and what are his/her/their credentials and affiliation? (Be skeptical of any claim)
- What is the author's goal or agenda (Is there any obvious bias)?
- Are the claims the author makes measurable?
- Has the information been adjudicated by independent sources?

Wineburg, S., & McGrew, S. (2017). Lateral reading: Reading less and learning more when evaluating digital information.

5. Use Online Fact-Checking Services Judiciously

- Google Scholar
- PolitiFact.org
- Google Fact Check Tool -
<https://toolbox.google.com/factcheck/>
- Factcheck.org
- Snopes.com

6. Have the Courage to Alter your Opinions and Follow Your Convictions

- The fear of losing human connection, respect, and dignity among family, colleagues, and friends pushes people into silence on issues that matter.

- Political upheaval
- Social justice issues
- Hunger / food insecurity
- Racial discrimination
- Refugee crisis
- Emotional, physical, and mental health
- Gender equality

“A comfort zone is the most dangerous area anyone can stay in. It is a place of no growth and no challenges.”

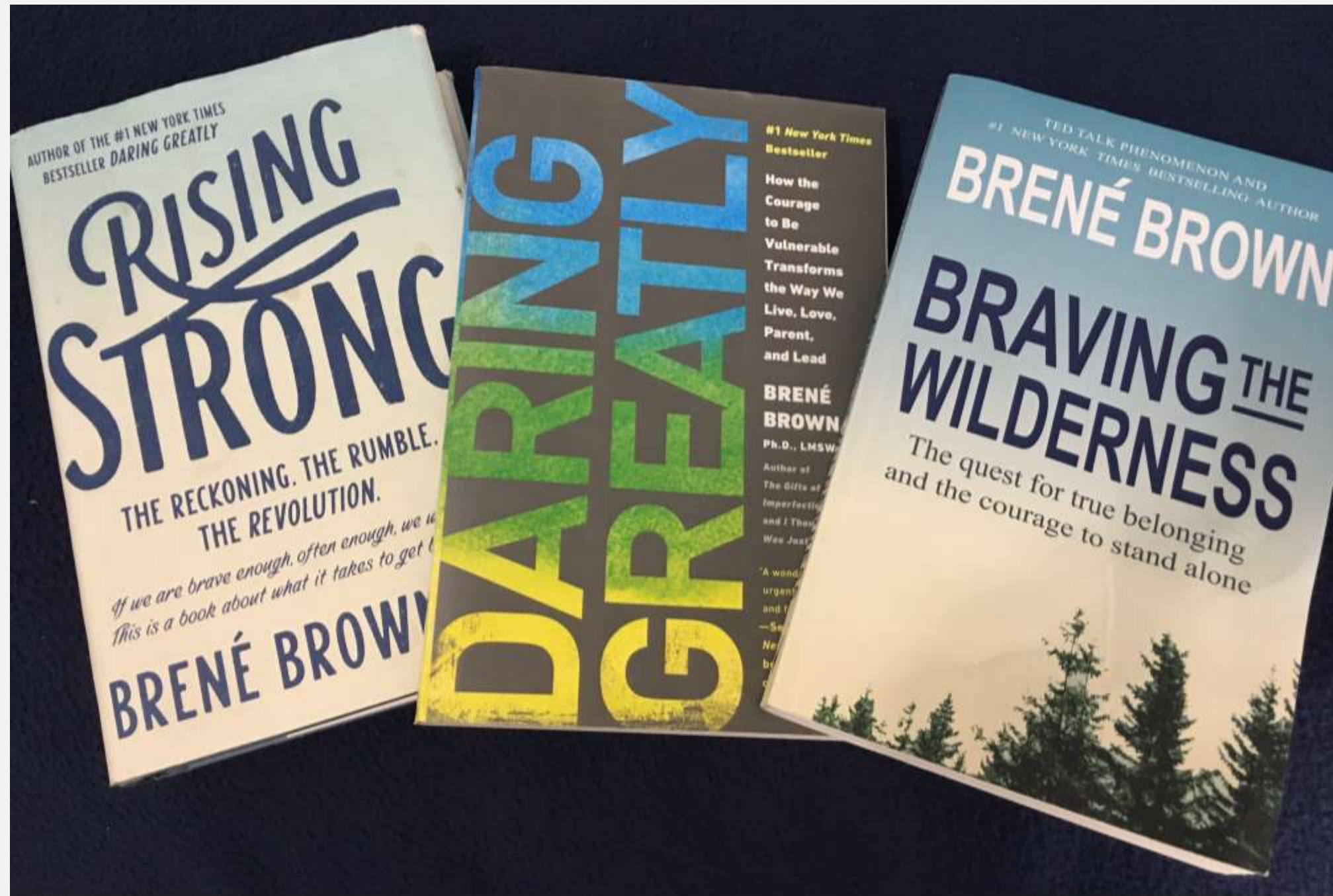
– *Brian Cagneey*, Author



FITTING IN VERSES BELONGING

“Vulnerability is about showing up and being seen. It’s tough to do that when we’re terrified about what people might see or think.” — Brené Brown





AUTHOR OF THE #1 NEW YORK TIMES
BESTSELLER *DARING GREATLY*

RISING STRONG

THE RECKONING. THE RUMBLE.
THE REVOLUTION.

*If we are brave enough, often enough, we rise.
This is a book about what it takes to get to that place.*

BRENÉ BROWN

#1 New York Times
Bestseller

How the
Courage
to Be
Vulnerable
Transforms
the Way We
Live, Love,
Parent,
and Lead

BRENÉ
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Author of
*The Gifts of
Imperfection*
and *I Thought
Was Just*

"A wonder-
ful, urgent,
and timely
—
New York
Times
bestseller"

TED TALK PHENOMENON AND
#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR
BRENÉ BROWN

BRAVING THE WILDERNESS

The quest for true belonging
and the courage to stand alone

7. Show Learners the Importance of Soft Skills in Engaging with Others.

1. Listen to understand, not to reply
2. Apply the Platinum Rule
3. Validate opinions
4. Seek to understand
5. Be the change that you want to see in others.

GROWTH


“A mind that is stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions.”

— *Oliver Wendell Holmes*



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“chameleonic”
Teachers can
adapt.