

Spiritual Blindness Course Schedule
Learn to open eyes and ears to see and hear God's truth

1. Fixed vs. Growth Mindedness (contempt Prior to investigation)
2. Cognitive Bias - Ways we self manipulate our beliefs
3. Preconception Blindness - We resist changing our beliefs and understandings
4. Self Fulfilled Prophecy - We seek to fulfill beliefs and make them true/
Placebo affect
5. Selective attention - We find what we are looking for
6. Milgram's Authority - We do what authority tells us even when we don't want to
7. Mandella affect - Our minds create information that did not happen and make it real within our memories
8. Group Think - Conformity at the expense of irrational decisions
9. Asch Conformity - We seek agreement with others, group acceptance
10. Ego Defense Mechanisms - More ways we deny or avoid uncomfortable truth
11. Introspection - We must pay regular attention to our thinking, interpretations, and conscious choices.

Our minds must be double checked for accuracy due to their fallible tendencies. Regular introspection is necessary to discover the mistaken beliefs and thought messages we choose to obey. If we do not assess our Inward Authority we will be condoning foolish decisions within ourselves.

1. Fixed vs. Growth Mindedness

Definition: “In a fixed mindset students believe their basic abilities, their intelligence, their talents, are just fixed traits. They have a certain amount and that's that, and then their goal becomes to look smart all the time and never look dumb. In a growth mindset students understand that their talents and abilities can be developed through effort, good teaching and persistence. They don't necessarily think everyone's the same or anyone can be Einstein, but they believe everyone can get smarter if they work at it”
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carol_Dweck

Discussion: How many of us follow the fixed mindset paradigm? Growth? How does such thinking affect our pursuit of God or theology?

Quiz 1

Quiz 2

Quiz 3

People suffering from addiction will rarely change due to a fixed mindset, they can't see themselves in abstinence. They won't live in abstinence due to their unwillingness to try and see what it is like.

Spiritual Experience Appendix “Alcoholics Anonymous” Page 568

“Willingness, honesty, and open mindedness are the essentials of recovery. But these are indispensable.”

“There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance— that principle is contempt prior to investigation.”

—HERBERT SPENCER

Page 13 “Belief in the power of God, plus enough willingness, honesty and humility to establish and maintain the new order of things, were the essential requirements.”

Can we make drastic changes to improve our condition with God? Can we be entirely honest or grow toward it? Are we willing?

2. Cognitive Bias

Heuristics can be mental shortcuts that ease the cognitive load of making a decision. Examples of this method include using a [rule of thumb](#), an [educated guess](#), an [intuitive](#) judgment, [guesstimate](#), stereotyping, [profiling](#), or [common sense](#).

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heuristic>

Bandwagon Effect - "As more people come to believe in something, others also "hop on the bandwagon" regardless of the underlying evidence."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bandwagon_effect

Confirmation Bias - "the tendency to search for, interpret, favor, and recall information in a way that confirms one's preexisting beliefs or hypotheses."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confirmation_bias

Illusion of Control - "The illusion might arise because people lack direct [introspective](#) insight into whether they are in control of events. This has been called the [introspection illusion](#). Instead they may judge their degree of control by a process that is often unreliable."

Information Bias - "Information bias is a [cognitive bias](#) to seek information when it does not affect action. People can often make better predictions or choices with less information: more information is not always better. An example of information bias is believing that the more information that can be acquired to make a decision, the better, even if that extra information is irrelevant for the decision"

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information_bias_\(psychology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information_bias_(psychology))

[Bias blind spot](#)

[Choice-supportive bias](#)

[Empathy gap](#)

[Anchoring](#)

[Gambler's fallacy](#)

[Hindsight bias](#)

Illusory correlation

Preconception Blindness

“In other words, the greater the initial blur, the clearer the picture had to be before people could recognize it. Second, the longer people were exposed to a blurred picture, the clearer the picture had to be before they could recognize it.” Page 14 Psychology of Intelligence Analysis

The longer a person accepts something to be true the more difficult it will be to see otherwise. Much convincing information will be necessary for one to change his or her mind. They will need to become convinced.

Imagine being faced with a decision. A man you are convinced to be a messenger from God stands before you and describes certain behaviors you must choose to do. He provides a clear plan of action. But there is fear within you. Your mind looks for a way out. Your friends turn away from the messenger, change the subject etc.

What do you do with the truth just provided to you?

Do you look deeper into how it can be done or focus more on the awkwardness of it and how it might be wrong?

Do you postpone or take some action?

Recall Information Bias - Do we seek more info instead of taking action?

What exactly stops us from taking action?

Step one: As we start each day meditate, pray, and place God's character traits within our conscience.

On days we don't do this simply write down the reason why. If too busy, describe specifically how we failed to prioritize getting centered with God.

This is a fact finding and fact facing process set to see the truth in the rational behind our choices. If we can do this we will uncover truth about how we make choices that could change our lives for the better.

Self Fulfilling Prophecy - We seek to fulfill beliefs and make them true (also - Confirmation bias)

Video

“A positive or negative prophecy, strongly held belief, or **delusion**—declared as truth when it is actually false—may sufficiently influence people so that their reactions ultimately fulfill the once-false prophecy.”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-fulfilling_prophecy

Introspection and carefully evaluating our beliefs to see the evidence behind them is incredibly important for accurate understanding and choices.

How we interpret and accept information ought to be examined with introspection to avoid the maladjustments of our fallible minds.

A person who chooses to renew their mind and transform will think differently and act differently. Old knowledge will be denied and new ideas will be practiced. Introspection must occur for this to be possible.

Placebo Effect

Video 1 CBS News

Video 2 NCCIH

Video 3

The physicians and studies in the videos describe and prove how physical treatments and perceived care affects our physical condition.

Do we rely more upon spiritual gatherings and activities than growing with God inwardly?

How much of our faith is dependent upon certain customs and rituals?

How exactly are we growing and improving spiritually within our minds and hearts? What spiritual conditioning methods are we practicing?

Selective attention

(click for PDF & the lesson)

Milgram's Obedience Study

Video 1 - Short

Video 2 - Long

Who is our authority? (Police, Doctor, Teacher, Parent, Spouse, Pastor, Counselor, Mentor, Coach)

If our authority figures tell us to do something we believe to be wrong, would we do it? What would happen if we chose not to comply?

As we seek to follow and obey God within our hearts and minds we can encounter many situations of social awkwardness.

To stay true to God we may need to be in conflict with others in our most intimate circles.

Group Think

“Group members try to minimize conflict and reach a consensus decision without **critical evaluation** of alternative viewpoints by actively suppressing dissenting viewpoints, and by isolating themselves from outside influences.”

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groupthink>

Video 1 Best

Video 2 example short

Video 3 Kahn Academy conformity and group think 7 min

Conformity Experiments and tests

Video 1 Asch

Video 2 Elevator

Video 3 Waiting room

Our minds will seek to follow the crowd. We can experience discomfort if we do not comply. Living in spiritual obedience will involve discomfort.

Mandela Effect

Video

Video 2 example

When someone else falsely describes what happened in a situation we previously experienced and we accept or believe that description, it will then become how we remember it. This is an example of the Mandela Effect.

“The “Mandela Effect” is what happens when someone has a clear memory of something that never happened in this reality.”

<https://mandelaeffect.com/about/>

Ego Defense Mechanisms - Mental defenses against discomfort

“A defence mechanism is an **unconscious** psychological mechanism that reduces anxiety arising from unacceptable or potentially harmful stimuli”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Defence_mechanisms

Video 1

Video 2 Kahn Academy

Introspection - We must pay regular attention to our thinking, interpretations, and conscious choices.

Video 1 Lion Story

Video 2 Description of how to do introspection 5 min

Video 3 Introspection & Self Reflection