

Rosling's instincts

General problem: Overdramatic world view

1. Gap instinct – the old joke that there are two kinds of people in the world: those who think there are two kinds of people in the world and those who know better!

which makes us divide things into two groups. This instinct fuels the mis-conception that the countries in the world can be divided into rich and poor, with a gap between the two groups. In reality, most countries are in the middle.

Either/or thinking

Ways To Control The Instinct

One way to control the gap instinct is to identify the majority. We also need to remember that “the view from up here” often distorts what we see. For people at income level 4 it is easy to overlook the huge differences in quality of life between income levels 1 and 2.

Dollar Street exercise <https://www.gapminder.org/wp-content/uploads/Factfulness-Teachers-Guide-Eng-181010.pdf>

Continuua exercises

2. The Negativity Instinct, which makes us take more notice of the bad than of the good. This instinct fuels the misconception that the world is steadily deteriorating, when it is in fact improving.

3. The Straight Line Instinct, which makes us assume that lines in graphs are straight. This instinct fuels the misconception that the world's population is just increasing, and will continue to increase if nothing drastic is done. In fact, the world's population is increasing a lot, but the rate of increase has already begun to slow down, and the line in the graph will almost certainly be horizontal as we approach the end of this century. 4.

4. The Fear Instinct, which makes us focus our attention on dramatic dangers and overlook those things that pose the biggest risk. This instinct fuels the misconception that the world is more frightening than it really is.

5. The Size Instinct, which makes us misjudge the proportions or sizes of certain things. This instinct makes us systematically underestimate the progress that has taken place in the world.

6. The Generalization Instinct, which makes us generalize incorrectly. It is impossible to avoid generalizations, but incorrect generalizations makes us clump things together, like people and countries, that are actually very different.

7. The Destiny Instinct, which gives us the impression that innate qualities determine the fate of people as well as countries. This instinct fuels the misconception that societies and cultures are not in a constant state of change, and it makes us mistake slow rates of change for no change at all.

8. The Single Perspective Instinct, which concerns our love of simple ideas and attracts us to simple explanations and solutions. As a result of this instinct we often misunderstand the world and become blind to information that does not fit into our perspective.

Lakoff: Single causality

9. The Blame Instinct, which makes us search for a culprit when something bad happens and a hero when something good happens. This instinct blocks our analytical skills and makes us simplify the world instead of searching for alternative explanations.

10. The Urgency Instinct, which gives us a sense of urgency—“now or never!”—and makes us want to act immediately (while we seem to lack the instinct to take long-term risk seriously). This instinct impedes our ability for critical thinking when we face complex problems.