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Neandertal Know-How



The Logic of Failure



Why do trains crash when the signals are working? Why does a nuclear reactor melt down with all operators alert at their posts? Why do so many of our best-laid professional and personal plans so often go awry?

Dietrich Dörner, winner of Germany's highest science prize, considers why—given all our intelligence, experience, and information—we make mistakes, sometimes with catastrophic consequences. Surprisingly, he finds the answer not in negligence or carelessness, but in what he calls “the logic of failure”: certain tendencies in our patterns of thought—such as taking one thing at a time, cause and effect, and linear thinking—that, while appropriate in an older, simpler world, prove disastrous for the complex world we live in now.

Dörner finds no lack of examples. Why did the Aswan Dam planners who brought the blessings of cheap electricity to Egypt not realize that they would also interrupt the annual floods that for millennia had kept the Nile Valley rich and fertile? Why do planners of Third World health programs not realize that increased life expectancy requires increased food and thereby inadvertently end up contributing to starvation? Working with intriguing computer simulations of his own invention, Dörner exposes the flaws in our thinking. His examples—sometimes hilarious, sometimes horrifying—and brain-teasing thought experiments teach us how to solve complex problems. Together they make *The Logic of Failure* a corrective tool, a guideline for intelligent planning and decision making.

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Undoing Depression

Richard O'Connor, Ph.D.

What Therapy Doesn't Teach You
and Medication Can't Give You

Despite therapy and support from loved ones, the major reason people with depression stay depressed is that they don't know how else to be. In a futile effort to save themselves from pain, they have learned habits that feel normal and natural, like part of the self. But these emotional habits backfire; instead of reducing pain, they just perpetuate depression. This book, by a psychotherapist who has personally struggled with—and overcome—depression, teaches you how to unlearn the “skills of depression” and replace them with healthier, more adaptive ways of being.

Against the backdrop of a thought-provoking discussion of the nature of depression, highlighted by vivid and moving case studies, Richard O'Connor presents a program for undoing depression. He begins by reviewing five key elements of our personality in which depression affects functioning—emotions, behavior, thinking, relationships, and the self. He explains how skills we develop in these areas, such as emotional control, isolation, putting others first, and being overresponsible, actually prevent our recovery. It is only by making a deliberate effort to rid ourselves of these depressed habits that we can be cured. With clear, step-by-step explanations and exercises, O'Connor imparts positive behavioral skills and demonstrates how to put them to work in a wide range of life

situations, from love, marriage, and divorce to work, family, and community. By showing you how to integrate new ways of thinking, acting, relating, and feeling into your life, he enables you to once more enjoy a vital, rich existence.

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