BIASED STANCES

Out-group homogeneity

Tendency to perceive a group different from one's own as a uniform, simple and nuanced whole. This bias causes us to project individual characteristics as if they were shared by all. The result is a simplification that dehumanises and separates.

- "Anyone who votes for that party is fascist."
- "People from small towns are closed off."
- "Owners who rent out tourist flats are all unscrupulous speculators".

Group favouritism

Tendency to value people in one's own group more positively and justify their actions. It functions as an emotional reinforcement that feeds the collective identity. It prevents internal errors from being seen and enhances competition with others.

- Justifying the irregularity of an office of the party you vote for, which you would otherwise criticise.

- Justifying the fouls committed by your sports team but harshly criticising those of your opponents.

- Thinking that activists in your cause are committed while others are extremists.

Confirmation

Impulse to seek and remember only information that confirms what we already think. It causes us to avoid contrary data and to select inputs that comfort us. It keeps us in echo chambers that make it difficult to change our minds.

- Only following the social media accounts of like-minded people or organisations.

- Always consulting the media that share your ideology and ignoring the rest.

- Reading a news item that contradicts your opinion and immediately dismissing it because "it's probably manipulated".

#04

Backfire effect

When receiving information contrary to one's belief does not weaken it, but strengthens it. It is a psychological defence mechanism that protects identity rather than truth. The stronger the evidence, the more the person clings to their idea.

- Toughening one's opinion of security forces when someone points out that they do not all act in the same way.

- Becoming even more sceptical when someone shows you positive facts about migrants.

- Taking an even more extreme stance on tourism when you are reminded that it also generates jobs.

#05

Naïve cynicism

Assuming that the actions of others always respond to selfish or manipulative intentions. It functions as a filter that interprets good faith as naivety, generates permanent distrust and erodes social cohesion.

- "Political parties only want power; none of them really care about people.

- "That company's social responsibility is just whitewashing."

- "If a public figure makes a donation, it's probably for the photo op".

#06
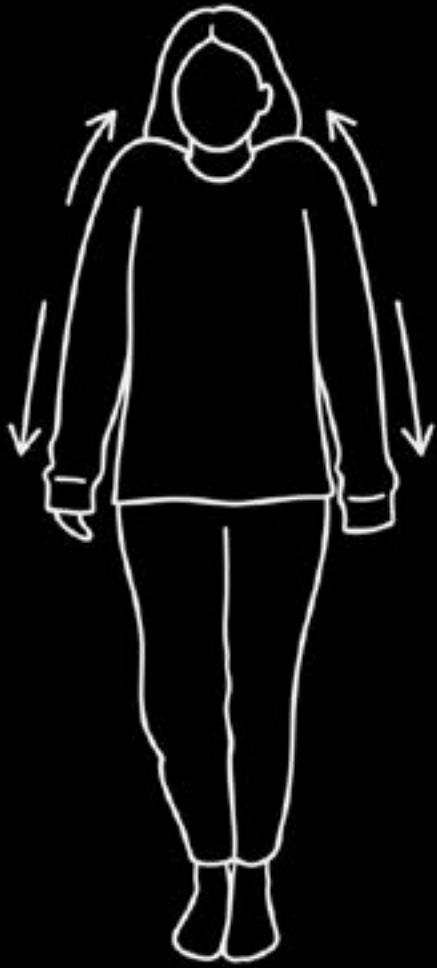
Groupthink

Tendency of the group to seek consensus at any cost, suppressing doubts and dissent. Unity is prioritised over quality of thought. This leads to poor decisions and the pressure not to question anything.

- Keeping quiet at a dinner with friends when everyone has the same opinion about the mayoress and you have doubts.

- Self-censoring yourself in the neighbourhood assembly because you know that your opinion would not be welcome.

- Not sharing a reflection on social media until you have seen that your circle approves of it.

#07
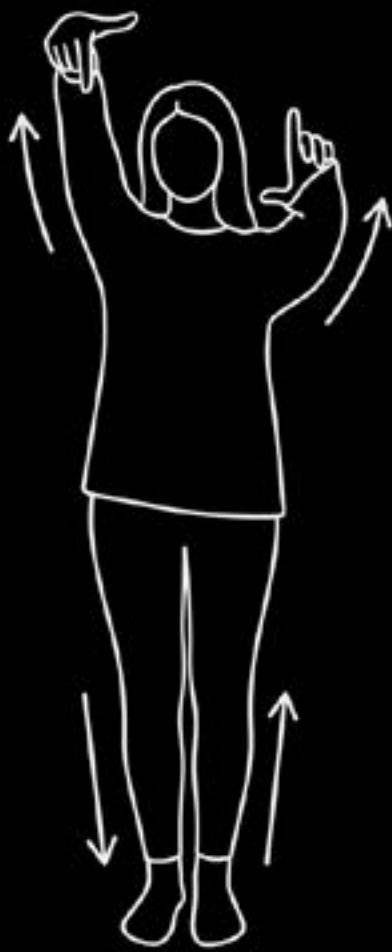
Framing effect

The way information is presented determines how we interpret it. The same fact can seem positive or negative depending on the words used. The framing outweighs the content.

- "Regularisation of migrants" or "pull factor" is the same phenomenon, depending on who explains it.

- "Squatting" or "repossession of empty housing".

- "Tourismphobia" or "defence of the right to housing".

Availability cascade

When an idea seems true because it has been repeated over and over, not because there is solid evidence. Repetition creates a semblance of truth that feeds back, amplifying fear and the perception of threat.

- Thinking that now your city is much more dangerous because you have seen several videos of robberies.

- Believing that clubbing is an epidemic because of intense media coverage.

- Feeling that "everything is going wrong" because the algorithm shows you conflict after conflict.

#09

Attribution error

Judging the mistakes of others as personal faults and one's own mistakes as the result of circumstances. It is an unequal rule that encourages moral contempt.

- "That boy is driving because he has no climate awareness" (without thinking that he has no alternative).

- "That woman buys from Amazon because she doesn't value local commerce" (not knowing that she has reduced mobility).

- "That neighbour has a Spanish flag on his balcony because he hates Catalonia" (without thinking about where he is from).
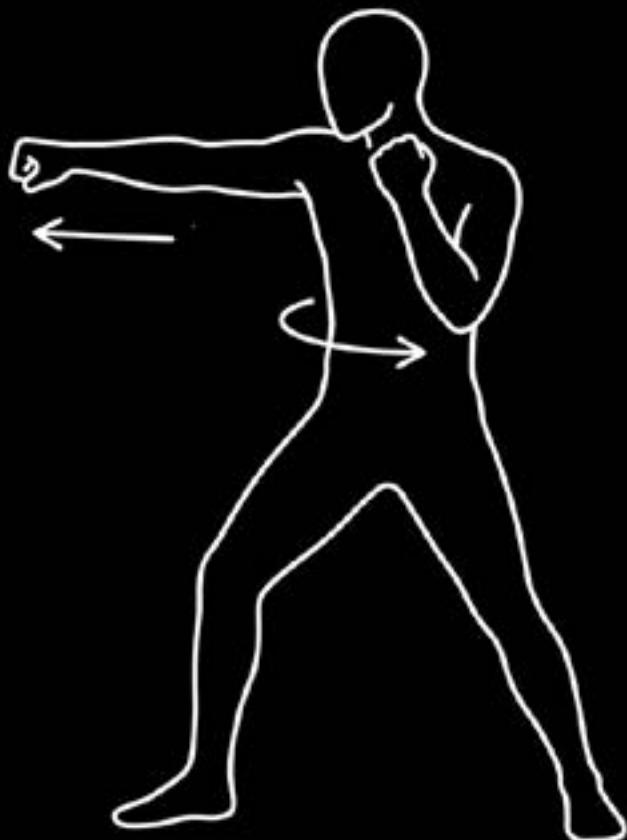
Reactance

Automatic impulse to resist when someone tells us what to do. Any suggestion is perceived as a threat to freedom and leads us to do exactly the opposite.

- Resisting cutting down on meat consumption precisely because you are told you should.

- Wanting to recycle less when the City Council launches a campaign insisting that you do it correctly.

- Distrusting the vaccine not because of the content but because "they are forcing me to do it".
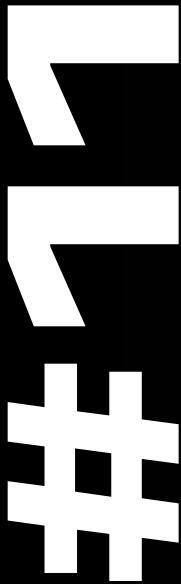
Authority

Tendency to believe or follow someone only because they are perceived as a reference. The source outweighs the content and can override critical thinking.

- Believing everything an intellectual you admire says without checking it.

- Accepting the opinion of an influencer without verifying what they are saying.

- Blindly agreeing with everything the party you vote for says.

Declinism

Perception that society is getting worse regardless of the actual data. It idealises the past and dramatises the present. It feeds pessimism and fear.

- "My city used to have authentic character. Now it's all tourists and franchises".

- "Today's youth don't try as hard as our generation."

- "Social media has destroyed public debate; before, people used to be better at public speaking".
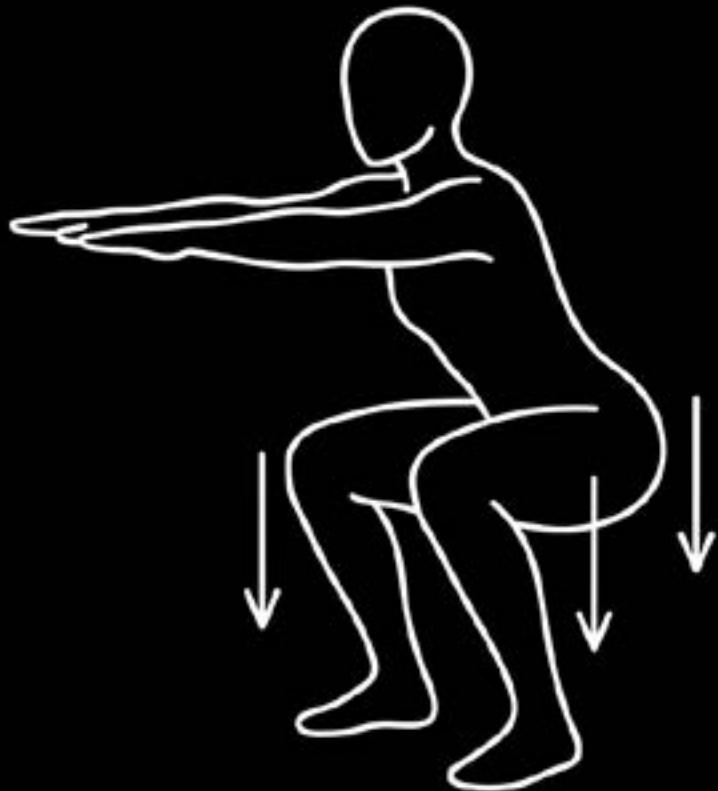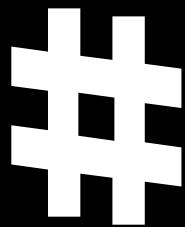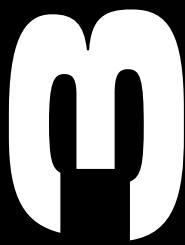
Anchoring

To be conditioned by the first piece of information, data or impression received. This initial point marks all subsequent assessments and is difficult to escape from.

- Forming an opinion about a policymaker based on the first viral headline you see.

- Pigeon-holing a person based on the first impression they gave you.

- Permanently judging a media outlet by the first and only article you read.
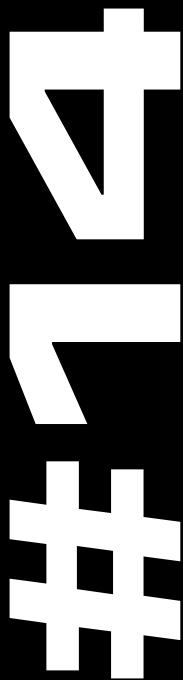
Automation

Tendency to blindly trust automated systems and algorithms, to the point of ignoring contrary evidence that is right in front of our eyes. When a machine tells us something, we assume it is correct and stop thinking for ourselves.

- Following the GPS even if you see that the road is closed.

- Believing that if Google can't find it, it doesn't exist.

- Consider everything that ChatGPT tells us to be true and verified.

Bias blind spot

Believing that we don't have biases and that only others do. It is the bias that prevents us from seeing everyone else.

- "I have no bias; I just see things clearly."

- "Others fall into cognitive traps; I think for myself."

- Laughing at the biases of others as you read this, without applying it to yourself.