

Episode 22 – RTT Series – Understanding Reasoning

This podcast presents a way to understand the brain's ability to use reasoning to become cognitively centered. Emotional centering involves regulating the intensity and switching between emotional states. Behavioral centering, particularly physiological centering, focuses on transitioning from extremes to a calm baseline. It's a little harder to understand the concept of becoming cognitively centered, but a good place to start is with a look at how the brain employs reasoning.

A traditional dictionary definition of reasoning states that it has to be logical in nature. However, reasoning is better understood as a broader action of figuring out reasons why the world is the way it is. Early in life, before the parts of your brain that are capable of logical reasoning have sufficiently developed, parts of your brain understand the world in terms of emotions. The Artist parts of your brain process sensory information as feelings and find patterns and associations between your experiences and your feelings.

Your feelings and your Emotional-Reasoning evolve as you mature, accommodating more nuanced and contradictory feelings. Emotional-Reasoning doesn't go away as you mature. It's the only kind of reasoning that some sections of your brain are capable of doing.

Other parts of your brain, the more cognitively sophisticated parts I call The Scout, develop the ability to do Magical-Reasoning. This develops out of experiencing correlations and connections between people, objects, and places, often based on imitation and symbolism. Magical-Reasoning also persists into adulthood, coexisting with Logical-Reasoning. Magical-Reasoning becomes the basis for much of how you make sense of social situations and social rules.

As your frontal cortex develops, Logical-Reasoning becomes better at moving beyond correlation and predicting cause and effect. Logical-Reasoning takes more energy. It doesn't take the place of Emotional- and Magical-Reasoning; instead it exists simultaneously in different parts of your brain.

The Chief parts of your brain, that specialize in regulating the rest of your brain and body, use yet a fourth type of reasoning that I call Influencer-Reasoning. This type of reasoning guides you in who to copy and follow. There's six sources of influence: Relationship, Authority, Power-Broker, Charismatic, Expert, and Fame influences.

By blending the four types of reasoning, you'll become more centered. You can also help your child-clients to become more skilled at using each of the four types of reasoning. That's the focus of the next episode.