



# The Mind within the Brain: How We Make Decisions and How those Decisions Go Wrong

By A. David Redish

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In *The Mind within the Brain*, David Redish brings together cutting edge research in psychology, robotics, economics, neuroscience, and the new fields of neuroeconomics and computational psychiatry, to offer a unified theory of human decision-making. Most importantly, Redish shows how vulnerabilities, or "failure-modes," in the decision-making system can lead to serious dysfunctions, such as irrational behavior, addictions, problem gambling, and PTSD.

Told with verve and humor in an easily readable style, Redish makes these difficult concepts understandable. Ranging widely from the surprising roles of emotion, habit, and narrative in decision-making, to the larger philosophical questions of how mind and brain are related, what makes us human, the nature of morality, free will, and the conundrum of robotics and consciousness, *The Mind within the Brain* offers fresh insight into one of the most complex aspects of human behavior.

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### Editorial Review

Review

"Well researched and delivered with a light touch."

--Nature

"The author, a neuroscientist at the University of Minnesota, has a flair for explaining complex ideas, and he uses humor and personal stories to keep the lay reader interested. (He also has kindly included appendices for us neuroscience neophytes.) Know that Redish has done some important work here, challenging some of our assumptions about how the brain works and paving new ways for working with some of the most challenging problems involving the brain."

--Daily Kos

"David Redish is a leading neuroscientist known for his pioneering, creative work. In this thoughtful book, he clearly describes the latest findings in brain science to help readers better understand what really drives the choices we make."

--Tali Sharot, Affective Brain Lab, Cognitive, Perceptual, and Brain Science, University College London, author of *The Optimism Bias*

"Over the last decade there has been an explosion in our understanding of how the brain makes decisions. This book, written by one of the leading scholars in the field, is a must read for anyone interested in this area."

--Antonio Rangel, Professor of Neuroscience and Economics, California Institute of Technology

From the Back Cover

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"Many parts that make up the mind have been found by now, the product of experiments and deductions from psychology, behavioral economics, neurophysiology, brain imaging, robotics, and even the philosophy of mind. A distinguished researcher in neurophysiology and behavior, Redish has started with the basic purpose for which the mind evolved--making decisions--and has used it to organize what I judge to be the best synthesis now available of these findings. In this book, he calls on his extensive working knowledge of all these

fields to explain in readable steps how the elements of decision work--and often fail to work. With meticulous but unobtrusive documentation for readers who want to go deeper, this book will appeal to novice and expert alike."

--George Ainslie, author of *Breakdown of Will* and *Picoeconomics*

"Decisions are sometimes conscious, but surprisingly often not. With an engineer's attention to mechanisms and a novelist's feel for an engaging story, Redish shows how this tension is not only possible, but sits at the core of human struggles, triumphs, and failures."

--Don Ross, University of Cape Town and Georgia State University, author of *Economic Theory and Cognitive Science: Microexplanation*

#### About the Author

A. David Redish is Distinguished McKnight University Professor in the Department of Neuroscience and the Graduate Program in Neuroscience at the University of Minnesota.

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