

Today

I. Forget the reading...I have a question

II. The Reading

III. Focus

I. Given a technology that allowed you to predict the future better than those around you, what would you predict?

Minority Report: predicting the future and the idea of precrime.

Whether class would be in-person next semester,

Vaccine for covid19,

Political elections,

The lottery,

The end of being stuck at home,

Solution for climate change,

Will we have interstellar travel,

Refinements:

Does prediction allow for causation?

Do we have the ability to forget what we've predicted?

What's the difference between learning and being able to predict the future more accurately?

If you've learned something, you have resources for the present. For example, knowing the answers is the same as being able to reason to an answer.

The stakes can be higher for predicting the future. It's different to create new knowledge than to learn things that are known.

Bayesian inference: having some information about a situation, learning new information, and asking how that new information influences "what you know".

People from normal backgrounds, perhaps with more mathematical background, but otherwise just interested.

Interesting in the podcast the way of thinking about chance and fate.

Good forecasters hold some of their beliefs lightly and are able to update them.

Context as a determiner for how we make decisions.

What are small scale predictions that would matter for your life?

Could we use these small scale predictions to get more feedback for ourselves and to learn to be better predictors?

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The amplification of our awareness of uncertainty.

It's extremely practical to limit our awareness of uncertainty.

Are there opportunities to open up our judgements to include a little more gradation?

There an availability heuristic at play. The more we're aware of cover cases, the more likely we think we are to suffer from it.

III. Focus

Tools to use for focus: A short crutch to get through maximum unpleasantness, 25+5mins, trying to schedule longer chunks of time.

Types of distractions: your environment, your task, your mind

The idea of flow and our current circumstances. Was much easier to find spaces for focus previously. Also the acknowledgement that flow isn't always ideal (sometimes uncomfortable strain is necessary).

Accumulating a bunch of time on simple easy tasks, instead of facing the more difficult task. Arousal vs. relaxed diffuse focus.