

# Preface

This book is about intuition: thinking and decision-making driven by the non-conscious mind.

The question of intuitive thinking is ever the more pressing today, in a world that is changing faster all the time. The ability to commit decision-making to the rapid non-conscious mind and to differentiate between viable and non-viable intuition is critical to functioning in today's fast-paced world.

But what is intuition? And how can we work with it? What, in other words, are the nature and function of intuitive thought?

Research in the last few decades by, in particular, the proponents of the *dual process theories of cognition* offers us a powerful, scientifically credible basis to study intuition. In the framework of the dual process theories, backed up by findings in positive psychology, evolutionary psychology, neuroscience and the philosophy of the mind, intuition can be defined as the capacity to carry out viable non-conscious cognitive operations within a valid domain of operations familiar to the cognitive agent.

By understanding how this cognitive facility works, we can perform significantly better in situations demanding excellent decision-making and thinking skills. Understanding intuition helps us make better decisions, solve problems, to be more creative and even achieve the optimal state of flow more often in our everyday lives.

The purpose of this book is to construct a structured model of intuitive thought, based both on the mainstream theorizing on intuition and dual processing, as well as on empirical research concerning intuition and the non-conscious.

This book is positioned at the crossroads of philosophy of the mind, cognitive psychology and positive psychology, with an emphasis on the philosophically pressing questions of the nature of the mind and intuitive thinking. The method employed is a combination of qualitative meta-analysis and philosophical conceptual analysis.

The nature of intuition is studied first in a historical context. Then, a model of intuitive thought is constructed, drawing from the most prominent dual processing theories, as well as from studying recent empirical evidence. Finally, the relevance

of intuition for well-being and decision-making is studied in the context of positive psychology, cognitive psychology and decision-making theories.

The purpose of this book is to provide a scientifically sound view of how intuitive thought takes place, and how intuition can be used to better our lives.



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Decision Making

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