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THINK BETTER WITH ADAM GRANT'S 'THINK AGAIN' A BETTER MINDSET FOR GROWTH

Think about the sting you feel when you are proven wrong. It hurts, doesn't it?

But what if it didn't have to? Better yet, what if it shouldn't?

Regardless of our attempts at humility, humans' egos have inflated, and we are all conditioned to believe that being wrong somehow equates to being a bad person. However, renowned author and psychologist Adam Grant challenges this notion in his New York Times bestseller, "Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know."

With today's divisive climate, Grant argues that we hold our beliefs up like a badge, illuminating them so brightly that we become blind to other truths or realities. Far too often, our mindsets focus on what is black and white, rather than understanding the gray nuances found in between.

In "Think Again," Grant's third book, he argues that as rapidly as we get information in today's digital world, we cannot be expected to fully know all of it. Being wrong is

part of human nature, but as we gain more accessibility to information, we must be willing to do two things: rethink and unlearn.

Grant challenges readers to stand in the discomfort of being wrong, celebrate that there is something new to learn, and challenge themselves to interact with those who propose a new way of thinking. By doing so, Grant asserts that we can speak and argue with conviction while actually engaging and listening to arguments as if we are wrong. This allows us to learn, engage, and grow.

In "Think Again," Grant asks readers to consider better ways to approach their steadfast beliefs. Readers will find amusement in Grant's real-world examples of turning skeptics into believers within a variety of topics. And, through these examples, readers will discover new ways to listen so they can gain a greater understanding of the world around them.

You can pick up your copy of "Think Again" and other books by Grant from an independent book retailer or by visiting Amazon.com.



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THE GREAT ORNAMENT HEIST OF 2001

Mom's Legacy Covers Our Christmas Tree!

My family is pretty good at avoiding drama, but way back in 2001 we almost had our very own World War III — over Christmas ornaments!

That might sound crazy, but the truth is they weren't — and aren't — just any ornaments. They're a set of 200 painstakingly crafted decorations that my mother made in the early 1980s. She suffered from cancer at the time, and making those ornaments was her way of keeping busy. Every single one is unique, exotic, and delicate.

Each ornament began with a Styrofoam ball, either round or egg-shaped. Once she had that base, Mom gathered hundreds of pins, buttons, glass beads, and other reflective items. Then, she carefully wrapped the Styrofoam in rich fabric or metallic ribbon. Finally, she loaded the pins with beads, buttons, and trinkets, and pressed them into the surface of the ornament one by one. The finished decorations are works of art, and each one took a week or more to complete!

As you can imagine, when my mother passed away in 1983, those ornaments became family treasures. She made them in a broad variety of colors and sizes, and each one was crafted with painstaking love and care. The ornaments stayed with my father, but there was an

understanding among the family that one day, they would pass to my daughters (since I'm an only child). Then, my father remarried in 1985.

My father's new wife, Betty, was a very sweet woman. She proudly brought out my mother's ornaments and decorated the tree with them each year. There was only one problem: Betty seemed to think that when she married my father, everything that once belonged to my mother now became hers. So, when Dad died a few years later, she refused to give us the ornaments!

We found out on the day of my father's funeral in 2001, right around Christmastime. When my wife, Kaye, spotted my mother's ornaments on the tree, she mentioned that my father had always wanted our girls to have them.

"But those are my ornaments!" Betty said.

To Kaye, those were fighting words! I didn't realize just how much Betty upset her until the five of us were several hundred miles down the road on our way home.

"Travis, I have to confess something," she said. "We stole the ornaments!"

Each of our girls reposessed a single ornament from Betty's tree and pocketed it. Just in case they never saw Gramma's collection again. I couldn't believe it! Kaye started to laugh, then our daughters did, and finally I cracked up too! That's the one bright memory from my father's funeral — laughing over our contraband ornaments, right at the start of what could have been the West Family WWII.



Fortunately, we did establish a detente a few years later. Kaye convinced Betty to package up the ornaments and send them our way. When they arrived — a bit worse for wear — Kaye and the girls took turns choosing their favorite pieces. Each of them ended up with a set of 25–30 ornaments that we still compare, comment on, and admire on our trees every Christmas.

The ornaments will always remind me of my mother's patience, resilience, and pride. Of course, given the discrepancy between the 200 or so ornaments mom made and the 120 that arrived on our doorstep, we're still convinced Betty kept the best ones for herself. I suppose I can't blame her — they really are too beautiful to resist.

From my family to yours, merry Christmas!

Travis West

KILLING TIME

WHAT TO DO WHEN WORK IS SLOW

Every business has a slow season, and for many, it comes at the end of the year. With coworkers and clients focused on the upcoming holidays and using the last of their vacation time, you might find yourself with a lot less than usual on your plate.

If you've got some downtime at work this season, it's tempting to kick back and relax. That's not wrong, but finding ways to stay busy will likely benefit you and your career in the long run. Here are some ideas.

GET ORGANIZED. Does your inbox look like a disaster area? Or does your desk look like a bomb hit it? We often brush aside these "housekeeping" tasks, saying we're too busy, but now your excuse is gone. It's time to dig in and get organized. Sort through your emails and file what you need in easy-to-find locations. Dust your desk, give it a good scrub, and throw out what you don't need. Lastly, take some time to plan out any projects for the next few months — you will thank yourself later.

DEVELOP YOURSELF. When did you last take time to expand your skills or improve your marketability? If you can't remember, a slow spell at work is the perfect time to engage in continuous



learning. Many employers have optional online training courses, and other websites offer lessons for free or at a small fee. Determine your weak spots and dive in. Also, if it's been a while since you've updated your LinkedIn page, now is a great time to update your information.

LEND A HAND. Remember that just because your work has slowed down, it doesn't mean everyone else's has. Find out what your coworkers are up to. If they've got a lot going on, offer to help where you can. They'll remember the next time you need a favor, not to mention when performance review time comes around. Plus, you'll also build connections and learn about parts of the business you might be unfamiliar with.

A little work now can pay off later. Do yourself a favor and find a way to be productive during any seasonal downtime.

BEING PROACTIVE ABOUT WATER QUALITY

Our October newsletter introduced a book titled "Healthy Buildings: How Indoor Spaces Drive Performance and Productivity." The following article discusses another of the nine foundations of a healthy building discussed in that book.

WATER QUALITY

There are three main avenues of personal exposure to contaminants. They include dermal exposure (through our skin), respiratory exposure (through our lungs), and ingestion, commonly done by eating or drinking.

Water, which is considered necessary for life, can also be a source of contaminants. Because of this, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has created and regulates the nation's primary and secondary drinking water standards. As part of those regulations, municipal water systems must sample and analyze their water to ensure that it doesn't contain elevated levels of any items listed on the EPA's list. But those municipalities are only required by federal law to sample their water once a year.

That doesn't seem to be frequent enough to me, but hey, I don't make the rules!

Some of our largest clients — those with the deepest pockets and the most to lose — now have domestic water that is in their

buildings' holding tanks sampled and tested annually. We do this sampling at the same time as our proactive IAQ review of their building. We then add the results of the laboratory's analytical report into our IAQ report.

Water samples are collected from a domestic holding tank and placed into eight separate bottles. The samples are then put on ice and forwarded to the analytical laboratory. Once there, the samples are analyzed for metals (copper, lead, zinc, etc.), physical factors (hardness, pH, dissolved solids), inorganic analytes (chloride, fluoride, sulfates), as well as trihalomethanes, acids, and volatile compounds. The complete list of 94 separate compounds is pretty comprehensive. Ultimately, the results provide a snapshot of what you, your tenants, and staff regularly ingest.

Showing a tenant that you are keeping their staff's health in mind with the water your building is delivering is a real positive! And if you do find an elevated concern for a chemical, metal, or some other compound, you can aggressively resolve it before a problem occurs.

Being proactive about water quality and the indoor air that your building delivers goes a long way toward having a healthy building — which ultimately drives performance and productivity.

CUT THE BOUNDARY WIRE!

GETTING TO KNOW SEGWAY'S GPS LAWN MOWER

Robotic lawn mowers used to stay in your yard using boundary wire. But they need to move over because GPS mowers are here to take over! Segway recently introduced its first robotic mower, which uses GPS to guide the mower.

Robotic lawn mowers have been around for some time now, and thank goodness, because sometimes, mowing the lawn can be a hot, sweaty, time-consuming process. Segway's Navimow is both safe and efficient and gets the job done by relying on a virtual boundary put into place using Navimow's app for your phone. The app gives directions to the mower, telling it which areas to avoid. Most other robotic mowers have boundary wire to outline the space for the robot to mow within, and changes in the yard mean tedious wire changes. With the Navimow, when the space to be mowed needs to be adjusted for a new tree planted or a temporary game of cornhole set up on the lawn, the changes can be made within the app.

The GPS, or Exact Fusion Locating System, maintains the robotic mower's positional accuracy within 2 centimeters. An algorithm helps the mower develop a path in which areas never need to be crisscrossed or mowed twice. If the GPS signal happens to be weak, the Navimow uses its many sensors on all sides to keep the mowing on track.



What about surprise obstacles? Its Blade Halt Technology helps it detect unexpected pets, kids, or toys in the lawn and will bring the spinning blades to a halt. The Navimow is built to withstand rainfall, but when it senses rain, it returns to its charging station.

With Segway's four models of the Navimow, you might find one that works well for your yard. For those who live in warmer climates, the Navimow is the perfect option for year-round convenience. For those who live in colder climates, the Navimow makes sure you can spend your warm summer months doing something much more fun than mowing the lawn! For more free time to spend enjoying the things you love and an impeccable lawn, you can't go wrong looking into the perks the Navimow has to offer.

HAVE A LAUGH WITH TRAVIS



DIY HOLIDAY EGGNOG

INGREDIENTS

- 6 egg yolks
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 2 cups milk
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1 pinch salt
- 1/4 tsp vanilla extract
- Cinnamon and whipped cream, for garnish

DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium bowl, whisk the egg yolks and sugar until light and creamy. Set aside.
2. In a saucepan over medium heat, stir together the cream, milk, nutmeg, and salt. Bring to a simmer.
3. Add a spoonful of the milk mixture to the egg mixture. Whisk vigorously and repeat, one spoonful at a time.
4. When most of the milk is whisked in, add the egg mixture to the saucepan.
5. Whisk until the liquid thickens slightly or reaches 160 F. Remove from heat and add vanilla extract.
6. Pour the eggnog into a glass container and cover. Refrigerate.
7. When the eggnog has thickened, pour it into glasses, garnish, and enjoy!