1. Reward and Punishment Superresponse Tendency

Incentives and disincentives strongly determine an individual’s actions. People tend to act according to what serves their own interests, so specific behaviours can be encouraged by using rewards and discouraged by using punishment.

These responses are very powerful and effect individuals both consciously and subconsciously. When offered incentive, the person consciously recognizes that they will receive either something they want or something they don’t want based on how they behave. Additionally they’re conditioned to believe that the rewarded behaviour is one that is beneficial to them or that the punished behaviour is harmful to them. This is often on a subconscious level.

With repetition, this bias can be used to condition people to behave a certain way long-term and the reward doesn’t have to be given every time. Giving a reward at irregular intervals encourages the individual to keep up the behaviour in the hope of receiving a reward, and the occasional rewards assure them that it’s still available. The response to repeated rewards or punishments will stick.
2. Liking/Loving Tendency

The old saying “love is blind” has some psychological truth to it. People often overlook flaws in things they like or love. It happens with any object of affection: people, animals, objects, companies, products, or anything else that the individual has a positive view of. The brain loves to love and will distort facts to continue loving. This phenomenon is also known as the Halo Effect.

Additionally, people tend to like things that are associated with the object of their affection.

The brain also loves the feeling of being loved. The desire to be liked by friends, family, and strangers is a strong one and influences people to behave in ways they believe will earn the affection of others, even if they wouldn’t behave in those ways otherwise.

This bias affects people’s compliance. An individual is likely to comply to the wishes of the object of their affection because of the love they feel for them.
and because they hope for their love in return.

3. Disliking/Hating Tendency

The phrase is “love is blind,” but hate has a way of putting blinders on people as well. When an individual hates someone or something, they ignore the virtues in that person or thing. The brain overlooks the good in something that is hated so that the individual can continue to hate it, and it can do this to a point that is practically irrational. This phenomenon is also known as the Reverse Halo Effect.

The brain’s ability to distort facts to ignore virtues also causes the individual to find more reasons to hate the object of their dislike and strengthen their hatred. This makes it very difficult to let go of the feeling and have a change of heart about people, animals, objects, companies, or products that are disliked.

Additionally, people tend to dislike things associated with the things they already hate.
4. Doubt-Avoidance Tendency

Doubt is an unpleasant feeling, one that many would prefer to not experience. The mind would much rather avoid doubt than face it, and so it functions accordingly.

This bias developed from the need to survive. Early humans who faced immediate physical dangers often (like predatory animals) needed to be able to make a decision quickly to get out of danger, so the brain would eliminate doubt to force quick action. Today, even being faced with non-life-threatening decisions triggers a similar response. When a difficult decision arises, the brain eliminates doubts so that a conclusion can be reached quickly and the stressful situation can be resolved as soon as possible.
5. Inconsistency-Avoidance Tendency

Each individual has their own identity complete with beliefs, habits, and preferences. People naturally function in a way that is in alignment with their identity and to do otherwise can feel uncomfortable or difficult. Being reluctant to change is the brain’s method of avoiding inconsistency. It simply avoids straying from the existing patterns of thought and behaviour because it saves programming space.

Because the brain avoids inconsistency, habits are very difficult to change. Bad habits tend to be especially difficult to break, whether physical (like nail-biting) or mental (like biased-thinking). Despite the potential hard to the individual’s well-being, the bad habit is what the individual is used to so it’s what their brain will try to hold onto.

Cognitive errors can arise when behaviours are beliefs are contradictory. This mismatching is stressful to the brain so beliefs are shifted to accommodate the new behaviour. The inconsistency is resolved by changing to create consistency.
6. Curiosity Tendency

Curiosity is a natural tendency for humans. Many mammals are curious, but humans are much more curious than any other species.

This tendency likely developed in early humans because it was helpful for survival in a variety of ways. Curiosity would have helped people develop ideas for acquiring food, finding or making shelter, and protecting themselves from predators. It helped early humans develop and has driven the progress of civilizations over thousands of years. People today are still strongly motivated by curiosity which has resulted in many life-changing and culture-shifting discoveries and inventions.

Following a feeling of curiosity leads to dopamine rewards which feels good and encourages the individual to do the same again in the future. Consistency and these dopamine rewards can encourage devotion to new interests and endeavours. However, the combination can also contribute to the formation of bad habits which are very difficult to break because of inconsistency-avoidance.
7. Kantian Fairness Tendency

People want their experiences to be fair. They treat others the way they feel is fair and expect reciprocal courtesy. When an individual feels that they’ve experienced unfairness it can result in frustration, anger, and the desire to get even with the person or group responsible. The concept of fairness is learned early in life and experiences that stray into unfairness are jarring.

However, people will tolerate a small amount of unfairness if they believe it’s part of making a system work. They are comfortable with giving priority to someone else in a particular situation if it means that the system will function smoothly and/or if they will receive priority at another time. There is give and take, but everything works out favourably. People will follow behaviour patterns that make a system work for everyone so long as everyone else does the same.
8. Envy/Jealousy Tendency
Envy and jealousy are two very similar emotions that affect human behaviour. Jealousy is experienced when a person fears they’ll lose something important or valuable to them. Envy is experienced when a person sees someone else in possession of something they desire but don’t have and senses lack. These feelings cause a discomfort which can arouse hatred, anger, and insecurity among other negative emotions. People most often feel jealous or envious of those close to them.

It’s thought that envy and jealousy evolved to motivate humans to attain necessary resources and hold on to them. In today’s world, however, jealousy is typically not related to survival at all. Instead it’s felt in relation to things people desire for their personal happiness or satisfaction. It may have been beneficial for survival earlier in human history, but today the feeling of jealousy is largely considered a destructive emotion. It can create conflict between individuals and have a negative effect on self-esteem.
9. Reciprocation Tendency
The brain is wired in a way that makes reciprocation the natural response. When a person is treated kindly, they feel inclined to be kind in return. Likewise, if a person is mistreated, they feel the desire to be hurtful back. The reciprocation tendency is closely related to the Kantian fairness tendency: people see reciprocation as fair. Be good to others and they’ll be good in return.

Reciprocation can be unpleasant, especially when it’s negative. No one likes being mistreated, even if they mistreated the other person first. It’s also inconvenient that the brain’s natural response to being mistreated is to lash out in return because it can create even more trouble than there already was. But turning the other cheek is inconsistent with the brain’s existing programming, so it’s difficult to do.

Positive reciprocation has the potential to cause trouble too because the tendency can be manipulated for personal gain. People can be influenced to do favours by doing favours for them. They will feel the need to reciprocate even if doing so isn’t good for them.
10. Influence-from-Mere-Association Tendency
Perception is heavily affected by association. The way people see objects, places, situations, and other people is often determined by who and what those things are associated with. An individual who associates an item with a person they love will probably love that item. Likewise, an individual who associates an item with a person they hate will likely dislike that item. The feelings the person has about one object will transfer over to things surrounding it.

This bias can be manipulated to influence people's thoughts and feelings. A person can be manipulated by portraying subjects to them in a particular way to sway their opinions. This tactic is frequently used in news media and in marketing.
11. Simple, Pain-Avoiding Psychological Denial
Denial is one method the brain uses to cope with difficult information and situations. Even if something is objectively true, an individual can be in such deep denial that they don’t accept it as truth. People will distort facts in order to avoid feeling psychological pain.

People most often use denial to deal with pain surrounding love and death. Problems in relationships, break-ups, and losing loved ones are some of the most painful experiences people can have. Some people will block out an event entirely or blur certain details in an effort to ease the pain caused by the situation.

Sometimes psychological denial can be useful. It could be what allows a person to continue with their life until they’re more prepared to deal with the truth. Denial can also be helpful when a situation is uncertain and an objective truth isn’t
available. In this scenario, denial is used to avoid wondering about what the truth could be and prevents the person from getting lost in possibilities. Using denial as a coping mechanism repeatedly can cause an individual to develop a distorted view of reality.

12. Excessive Self-Regard Tendency
People generally see themselves as above average. They may feel that they’re smarter, funnier, or more attractive than the people around them. Overestimation of skills is part of this bias. It’s common for people to feel they’re exceptional at a particular activity compared to other people. This is part of what is known as the Dunning-Kruger effect. When appraising the value of items, people have a tendency to overvalue their own belongings. This is the endowment effect. Just as people see themselves as superior, they see the things they own as superior as well.
This tendency can help raise an individual's confidence up in a helpful way, but it can also lead to problematic overconfidence. These beliefs of superiority are often inaccurate and this distorted perception of reality can lead to trouble, especially when abilities are over-estimated.

13. Over-Optimism Tendency

The human brain is naturally drawn to over-optimism. People generally believe that things will work out and that they have a good amount of control over their lives. This is true for people everywhere regardless of age, race, gender, or nationality.

A tendency to feel optimistic is helpful in life. Having hope even in difficult times helps people to keep moving forward and keep doing their best. It makes life feel brighter and pushes people to chase their dreams. However, when optimism crosses the line into over-optimism, it can cause trouble. Individuals can feel so positive about a situation that they jump in
without properly assessing the potential risks. Their level of optimism is driving them to act but they don’t think their choice through and it makes them vulnerable.

14. Deprival-Superreaction Tendency
People tend to feel loss with intensity, often more than is rational for the situation. The brain is wired toward loss aversion, which means it very much does not like to experience loss and prefers to gain and keep as much as possible. So when people do experience even a small loss, it feels significant. Loss of a belonging, a person, a status, or anything else that holds value for an individual can trigger a significant reaction.

The threat of loss is also very upsetting. Though nothing has been actually lost, the idea that something could be taken away can trigger many of the same
feelings that true loss brings up. Again, the intensity of feelings tends to be irrational.
There are situations in life where success was missed by just a hair. The close proximity to success makes the failure feels like a loss of something that was already achieved.

15. Social-Proof Tendency

An individual’s thoughts and actions are influenced by the thoughts and actions of those around them. This is also known as the bystander effect. Each person will adjust the way they behave in accordance with how other people around them are acting, and if they are thinking differently from the others, they’ll question their thoughts and may adjust them as well. The tendency is most easily triggered when people are stressed or confused but can occur in any situation.

The tendency to comply with group behaviour and thought evolved in humans to ensure social cohesion. When a community can work together effectively, they’re better able to survive and thrive. However, being swayed by the crowd has risks. It could be problematic if the group’s behaviour is harmful or ignorant, their opinions are objectively wrong, or if adhering to the group’s thoughts leads to poor choices.
16. Contrast-Misreaction Tendency

The brain tries to understand the world by making comparisons because the senses can’t measure in units. It relies on the contrast between two things (two temperatures, two colours, etc.) to interpret what is being perceived.

Contrast can inform an individual to an extent, but because the information isn’t always measurable, the final conclusions can be wrong. The brain can be tricked by optical illusions, mixed sensations, and distorted sounds among many other things, so the perceived contrast may not accurately reflect the situation at hand. Additionally, the impressions of contrast are subjective, which means two
people looking at the same scene could have two completely different opinions. For these reasons, contrast is sometimes very misleading as a means of interpreting the world.

Contrast can also be misleading even when numbers are involved. The perceived value of the contrast between two pieces of data can seem significant when it’s not or vice versa.

17. Stress-Influence Tendency

Stress is a strong influence on behaviour. In high-stress situations, the human body produces adrenaline. This chemical causes reactions to be faster and more extreme which is useful in emergencies. However, the ability to make good decisions can suffer when adrenaline kicks in and that’s problematic in day-to-day high-stress situations. It can also amplify the effects of other biases which further distorts thinking. When stress is extreme, mental breakdowns can occur.
and recovery is difficult.

Light stress isn’t usually as detrimental to decision-making and can actually improve performance. It serves as a push to act but isn’t so much pressure that the individual panics or experiences major errors in thought.

18. Availability-Misweighing Tendency
The brain emphasizes information that is readily available. Familiar facts and concepts, emotions recently felt, and personal memories are all used to analyze situations and make decisions as well as what is experienced with the five senses in any given situation. Because this information is easily accessible, the brain gives it precedence over information that is hard to remember or has been blocked by other biases.
But just because information is available doesn’t mean it’s the most useful. It can be inaccurate or incomplete. Using only what the brain can easily reach and ignoring other important information can result in poor choices and ignorant opinions.

The easy-to-access information can still be used productively, though. Conjuring a clear image can be helpful in persuading others and for forming distinct memories.

19. Use-It-Or-Lose-It Tendency
Skills that have been learned and developed will attenuate when they aren’t used. Even well-developed skills can suffer from lack of use. The individual has to be engaged in activities that utilize the skill on a regular basis for the brain to hold
onto the ability. Similarly, knowledge that has been learned can be lost if it isn’t accessed regularly.
This tendency is a result of brain plasticity. When a skill is practised, the brain forms new neural pathways and they becomes stronger the more the skill is used and the neurons are fired. But when the skill is rarely or never used, those circuits will decay over time and the skill will be gradually forgotten.
Skills that are well-developed and frequently practised are lost at a slower pace than those that are less developed. Well-developed skills are also easier to regain when starting to use them again compared to less developed skills.

20. Drug-Misinfluence Tendency
Certain substances manipulate brain chemicals to create a sense of happiness.
People who are unhappy or have experienced trauma sometimes turn to alcohol,
drugs (recreational and pharmaceutical), or other mind-altering substances to cover their pain. It’s an effective way to block out negative feelings but it isn’t real happiness and doesn’t actually solve anything because the underlying issue is not addressed. They often use these substances in combination with simple pain-avoiding psychological denial to grasp for some level of comfort.

This tendency is harmful mentally and physically. Abuse of drugs and alcohol can cause serious damage to the body’s organs and can even result in death. If the substance damages the brain there can be negative changes in cognition, making it more and more difficult to process thoughts and emotions when not under the influence. Some of the physical harm caused by substance abuse can be reversed but some is irreparable. Substances that create a false happiness are often addictive which make them very difficult to stop using. Even if the body isn’t physically addicted, individuals can be driven to keep using a particular substance because it has become a bad habit. In this scenario it can still be very difficult to stop due to inconsistency-avoidance tendency.

21. Senescence-Misinfluence Tendency
Aging typically results in a loss of certain abilities and small decreases in cognitive function. Some skills will be lost as people advance in age and learning new skills becomes increasingly difficult. Recalling previously learned information is also more challenging for seniors. This is a natural part of getting older but it affects some individuals more than others.

People who use their skills regularly are more likely to maintain their abilities into their later years. Older people are more prone to the use-it-or-lose-it tendency than young people so abilities can be lost quite quickly if they aren’t used. Individuals who are constantly learning new things and challenging themselves often experience less mental decline in general. In elderly people, denial of senescence is common. They often don’t want to admit that they’re losing abilities and memory recall because they idea of it is frightening.

22. Authority-Misinfluence Tendency

Humans tend to follow orders simply because they’ve been given. Being addressed by someone who has some kind of authority causes people to behave
submissively to the dominant figure. They will often comply with requests from the authority figure without hesitation and without requiring an explanation.

Hierarchies support this tendency. Society is structured so that is a relatively small number of leaders compared to average citizens. Politicians, government officials, and police officers are all people with authority to lead and guide the rest of the members of society and keep systems running smoothly. There are also people who hold authority in smaller arenas, like managers in stores and teachers in classrooms. People will comply to the orders of individuals in these types of positions because of the authority they hold.

Submitting to the requests of those who hold authority is not necessarily a bad thing in all situations, but can be dangerous if the authority figure has sinister motives. It can also limit an individual's ability to make decisions for themselves which is problematic when the authority figure is wrong.

23. Twaddle Tendency

When people have nothing to say, they often start rambling about nothing. This happens both in writing and when speaking. It’s simply difficult for people to just not speak, so they start to babble, spouting whatever comes to mind. Confusion can also cause individuals to ramble about nothing or spend time carrying out meaningless actions.
This tendency likely evolved to help people appear more confident and capable and therefore valuable to the community. Instead of saying nothing when they have nothing to offer, an individual will try to come up with information to share in an effort to contribute. It seems to be a way for people to protect themselves from being seen as useless or lacking knowledge, which could put their place in a community at risk.

Twaddle can be problematic in numerous ways. First, it wastes time. It takes only a few seconds for an individual to admit they have nothing to contribute, but babbling or carrying out unnecessary tasks wastes time that could be used in a more productive way. Second, twaddling on when someone asks for advice could result in them being led astray. And third, people who ramble about having abilities that they can’t back up could get themselves into situations where they’re expected to do more than they actually can. This could lead to major problems in work environments.

24. Reason-Respecting Tendency
Humans are more inclined to act when they are given a reason to do so. The brain naturally wants to know “why?” and children begin asking this question from a very young age. When simply given an order, people might feel hesitant to comply if they don’t know the “why” behind it. They are much more likely to comply if the order comes with an explanation as to why it should be carried out. The individual’s brain recognizes that there is a reason behind it and respects that enough to cooperate.

This tendency is so strong that the reason doesn’t even have to be a good one for it to be effective. So long as there is some kind of reason attached it can influence people to comply, even if it doesn’t really make sense for the situation.
25. Lollapalooza Tendency
Many different tendencies and biases can occur together to lead an individual toward a particular outcome. Additionally, certain tendencies can work in tandem with other tendencies and intensify their effects.

Because there are so many different biases and they can interact in so many different ways, their combined effects can be very helpful or very harmful. Tendencies can work together to motivate, increase productivity, and ultimately achieve success. However, they could also work together to form bad habits that are easy to break, mislead people into poor decisions, and lead people down dangerous paths.