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Miller's Maxims for the Use of the Mind

1. The mind is a mismatch detector. It is easier to see what is wrong than what is right.

2. People try to reduce mismatches. They seldom try to falsify their own ideas.

3. Stereotypes are easier than statistics. People believe in correlations that do not exist and overlook correlations that do.

4. In order to understand what another person is saying, you must assume it is true and try to imagine what it could be true of.

5. Similarity is asymmetrical. The unusual is always more similar to the familiar than the familiar is to the unusual. Impart new information by relating it to old information.

6. Reality is vastly overrated. It is the point of origin from which the mind departs. There is nothing more practical than a good theory.

7. The span of attention is limited; people seldom find anything they are not looking for. Always search where the light is best.

8. Two little problems are easier to solve than one big problem. Carve big problems at their joints.

9. All other things being equal, how much you learn depends on how much you study.

10. Human language is shaped by the minds of infants. Speaking is innate; writing is an invention.

11. Most people use logic to test a conclusion already reached by intuition. It helps them make their presuppositions explicit.

— George A. Miller