

Book Review – Shyr Chui

## Book Review - The Scout Mindset

The Scout Mindset by Julia Galef  
Portfolio/Penguin 2021

At the outset, this book's title is ambiguous, but the sub-title quickly draws you in: "Why some people see things clearly and others don't".

We would all like to believe that we think clearly and rationally but Julia Galef makes a compelling case for the contrary. Much of the time, our thinking is clouded by personal bias, pre-existing beliefs and thinking blind spots. But after the initial depressing reality check, the author provides the reader with hope that thinking rationally, and based on objective evidence, can be developed, taught, and honed as a skill like any other.

Starting with self-awareness (how fundamental is self-awareness in all aspects of life?) before moving into avoiding bias, keeping an open mind, and avoiding the pitfalls of overconfidence, the author takes us through a very well-reasoned framework for developing the rational mindset she has coined "The Scout Mindset". Towards the end the author also reminds us of the dangers of holding our "identities" too tightly, an important skill, especially in today's polarized culture of fundamentalism and intolerance.

Favorite quote: "The rule for paradigm shifts in life is the same as it is in science. Acknowledge anomalies, even if you don't yet know how to explain them, and even if the old paradigm still seems correct overall. Maybe they'll add up to nothing. Maybe they just mean that reality is messy. But maybe they're laying the groundwork for a big change of view."

Who's the book for? If you want to escape the thinking trap of simply following the crowd and wish to develop a truly rational mindset, this is an important book for you and an important book for our times.

Rating 5/5 Stars