

October is



## CONFLICT RESOLUTION MONTH IN COLORADO

*Listen. Talk. Work it Out.*

### About Us

Each year, Conflict Resolution Month in Colorado selects a book that enhances problem-solving skills and/or inspires dialogue. Over 300 copies of the book are distributed across Colorado - to the Governor and Lieutenant Governor; legislators; supreme, district, and appellate court judges; alternative dispute resolution professionals; and various public libraries, including Little Free Libraries.

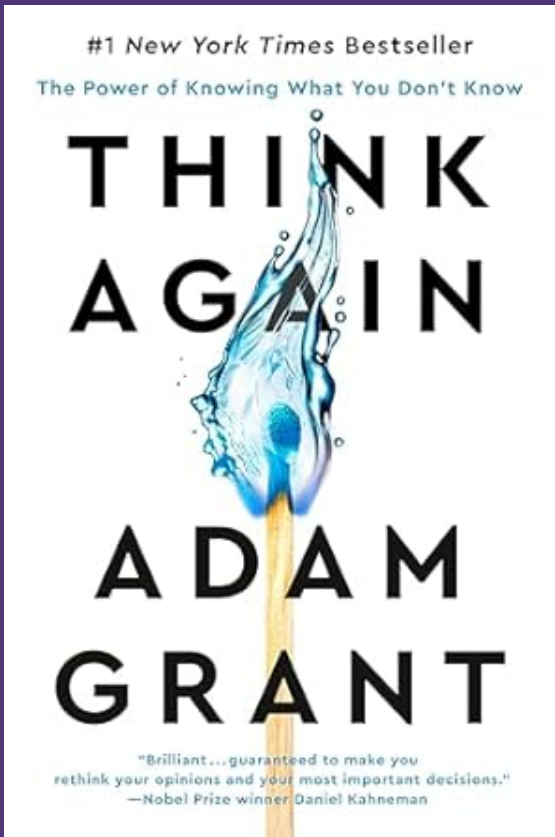
This Reader's Guide was created to further conversation and inspire connection with others.

Learn more. Get involved.

[www.conflictresolutionmonth.org](http://www.conflictresolutionmonth.org)



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### 2024 Book Selection

**"RETHINKING**  
is a skill set, but it's also a mindset. We already have many of the mental tools we need. We just have to remember to get them out of the shed and remove the rust."

—ADAM GRANT,  
*THINK AGAIN*

Organizational psychologist Adam Grant is an expert on opening other people's minds--and our own by developing:

- The ability to unlearn and rethink
- To practice Mental Flexibility rather than Cognitive Laziness
- To question arguments and convictions that differ from our own
- To seek out people's perceptions that force us into discomfort

# Guiding Questions

## INDIVIDUAL RETHINKING: How to open our mind to rethink

1. Think like a scientist: Run Experiments to test hypotheses and find knowledge.
2. Avoid thinking like Preachers, Prosecutors, or Politicians.
3. Beware of the Mount Stupid: The danger lies not only in a lack of competence, but also in an overestimation of competence, i.e., Dunning-Kruger Effect.
4. Get into Task Conflicts, instead of Emotional Relationship Conflicts: Well-performing groups do not hesitate to present opposing perspectives.
5. Attain a Confident Humility: Balance between Armchair Quarterback Syndrome and Impostor Syndrome.
6. Have a Challenging Network: A group of people we trust to point out blind spots and help us overcome our weaknesses.

## INTERPERSONAL RETHINKING: How to encourage others to rethink their concepts

1. Debate like a Dance: A good debate is not a battle, it's more like a dance without choreography.
2. Learn to Debate: Find a common denominator, focus on a few arguments, avoid getting into an attack-defense spiral, and ask lots of questions.
3. Exercise Counterfactual Thinking: Imagine how the circumstances of our lives could have unfolded differently.
4. Practice Motivational Interviewing: Ask open-ended questions, listen reflectively, affirm the other person's desire and ability to change.

## COLLECTIVE RETHINKING: How to create communities of lifelong learners

1. Avoid Binary Bias: When it comes to complex issues, knowing the other side's opinions isn't enough; the opposing arguments do not change our view, they generate polarization.
2. Teach How to Check the Facts: Teach children to question information instead of simply consuming it; reject rank as a proxy for reliability.
3. Teach how to think like a scientist: Identifying problems, developing hypotheses, and devising their own experiments to test them.
4. Build A Culture of Learning: Learning culture organizations innovate more and make fewer mistakes, combining psychological safety with accountability. Performance culture organizations generate short-term results; but people stop innovating, learning from mistakes, or freely sharing ideas.

## LISTENING MODES:

Mental Flexibility: Thinking again can help you generate new solutions to old problems and revisit old solutions to new problems.

Cognitive Laziness: We favor the comfort of convictions over the discomfort of doubt, and we let our beliefs get brittle long before our bones. We are afraid of rethinking our answers, ideas and viewpoints.

“When a core belief is questioned, though, we tend to shut down rather than open up. It's as if there's a miniature dictator living inside our heads controlling the flow of facts to our minds much like Kim Jong Un controls the press in North Korea. The technical term for this psychology is the totalitarian ego and its job is to keep out threatening information... Neuroscientists find that when our core beliefs are challenged, it can trigger the amygdala, the primitive “lizard brain” that breezes right past cool rationality and activates a hot fight- or- flight response. The anger and fear are visceral: it feels as if we've been punched in the mind.”

Name a time when you feel that you have been “punched in the mind.” What was your feeling and how did you react to the punch? In hindsight, what could have been a different response?

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Change talk is referencing a desire, ability, need, or commitment to adjust. Some people have reasons to change and some reasons to stay the course. Change talk is the “golden thread” that needs to be explored.

How can you apply “change talk” to your professional life or personal life?

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