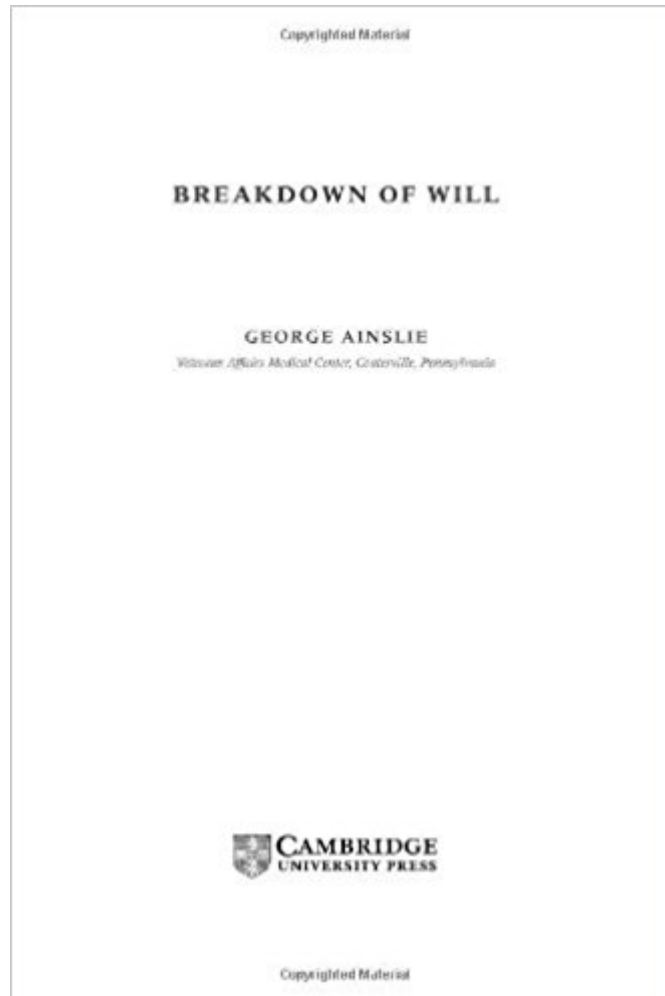




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Breakdown Of Will



Synopsis

Ainslie argues that our responses to the threat of our own inconsistency determine the basic fabric of human culture. He suggests that individuals are more like populations of bargaining agents than like the hierarchical command structures envisaged by cognitive psychologists. The forces that create and constrain these populations help us understand so much that is puzzling in human action and interaction: from addictions and other self-defeating behaviors to the experience of willfulness, from pathological over-control and self-deception to subtler forms of behavior such as altruism, sadism, gambling, and the 'social construction' of belief. This book integrates approaches from experimental psychology, philosophy of mind, microeconomics, and decision science to present one of the most profound and expert accounts of human irrationality available. It will be of great interest to philosophers and an important resource for professionals and students in psychology, economics and political science.

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Customer Reviews

This book has fundamentally impacted the way I think about decision making. There is no dearth of theories dealing with flaws and characteristics of decision making. From Prospect theory to expected utility, everyone talks about rational decision making and heuristic based decision making. This book touches on the idea of decision making from the perspective of will power. Willpower and bargaining between our successive motivational states is the fundamental that this book stands on. In addition to many things, some of which are highly theoretical and difficult to understand for a casual reader, the author talks about 5 motivational states that a person has to deal with and continuously bargain with. Pains, Itches, Addictions, Compulsions, Optimal Behavior are the five states that we continuously deal with. A particular decision at any moment may fall into one of these states, so if you find yourself into a dilemma anytime, you most likely will be battling between these states. Your impulsive decision to buy a luxury car may battle with your optimal self of saving money for rainy day. So your decision at any time would depend on the state that you were in at that time. The book, although difficult to understand, if absorbed would help in understanding the uncertainty of decision making in self and people around us. Literature and fiction is abundant with such examples where people make impulsive decision, this book would help in understanding why that happens and why a human beings, in spite of being so advanced may be helpless in the face of their own decision making. Picoeconomics is another book by the same author and may be worth a read if you like this book.

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