

- So, how can a desire that p lead to a belief that p ? Mele provides 4 examples: negative misinterpretation, positive misinterpretation, selective focusing/attending, and selective evidence gathering. (26–27)

- Notice that these examples do not require that the person originally had a contradictory belief. And Mele calls these cases of self-deception.

- We can distinguish “hot” (motivated) and “cold” (unmotivated) biases. Tversky and Kahneman documented several cold biases, and Mele discusses three of these on pp. 28–29. Mele also notes that these cold biases can be incorporated into a hot bias project as well.

- Mele introduces the PEDMIN model of hypothesis testing as the central piece to his account of self-deception. According to this picture, we generate and test hypotheses (and eventually come to believe) with the goal of avoiding costly errors. According to this model, it is more important that we avoid falsely believing something that will harm us or cause us discomfort, than it is to believe the truth.

- Here is the quick application to self-deception: It would be a costly error mistakenly to believe that you are deficient in some way (e.g., below average in your profession) or to believe something that is discomfoting (e.g., that your spouse is having an affair).

- You can always get things wrong in two different ways — mistakenly believing that p or mistakenly believing that not- p . However, one way of getting things wrong often “hurts” more, and for this reason we will often have different thresholds of belief for these two possibilities. These thresholds, naturally, are relative and vary from person to person — recall the treason case, pp. 36–37.

Q: Is PEDMIN the general belief-formation rule, or does old-fashioned respect for truth more commonly rule?