



Why We Lie: The Evolutionary Roots of Deception and the Unconscious Mind

David Livingstone Smith

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Deceit, lying, and falsehoods lie at the very heart of our cultural heritage. Even the founding myth of the Judeo-Christian tradition, the story of Adam and Eve, revolves around a lie. Our seemingly insatiable appetite for stories of deception spans the extremes of culture from *King Lear* to Little Red Riding Hood, retaining a grip on our imaginations despite endless repetition. These tales of deception are so enthralling because they speak to something fundamental in the human condition. The ever-present possibility of deceit is a crucial dimension of all human relationships, even the most central: our relationships with our own selves.

Why We Lie elucidates the essential role that deception and self-deception have played in evolution and shows that the very structure of our minds has been shaped from our earliest beginnings by the need to deceive. Smith shows us how, by examining the stories we tell, the falsehoods we weave, and the unconscious signals we send out, we can learn much about ourselves and our minds.

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