Smarter Tomorrow Reading Group Guide
By Elizabeth R. Ricker

Resources

- For links to buy the book, as well as for additional resources—including neurohacking tools, tests, and quizzes—go to: www.ericker.com
- To review the book please go to Good Reads and Amazon—greatly appreciated!

Discussion Questions
PART I

- *Introduction & How to Use This Book* tells the author's story of struggling in reading.
    - Have you or anyone you know ever experienced anything like the author's struggles? If you feel comfortable, share your story with the group and learn from others' experiences, too.
    - What aspects of neurohacking appeal to you?
- *Chapter 1*: *Scientific Self-Help* expresses a critique of self-help.
    - Were there ideas or stories in this chapter that surprised you? If so, which ones?
- *Chapter 2: Neurohackers, Revealed* includes a variety of stories about neurohackers.
    - Which ones stood out to you the most? Why?
- When you encountered research about neurodiversity and the uniqueness of each brain in *Chapter 3: The Evidence*, how did you feel?
    - Some people have strong emotional reactions to the ideas of neurodiversity and the uniqueness of each brain, such as surprise at the scientific findings, relief that their suspicions have been confirmed, anger that no one told them this before. Did anyone in your group experience any of these? Or other strong feelings?
    - What are the broader implications of living in a society that designs solutions with the "average" person in mind, but ignores how unique each of our brains are?
    - Were there experiences you had in school, as a patient in the healthcare system, or at work where you encountered policies or ways of teaching that seemed like a poor fit for you? Were there places where you wished there had been more personalization? If so, how do you wish things had been handled differently for you? If you were designing a school, healthcare system, or workplace, how might you personalize things better?

- *Chapter 4: Nuts and Bolts* introduces the "FSTR" - Focus, Selection, Training, Reflection—the Neurohacker's Ladder.
  - Which rungs of the Neurohacker's Ladder stuck out to you?
  - Were there parts of the FSTR process that you found confusing or that you wanted to discuss? If so, bring these up in your group so that you can support each other's learning.
- *Chapter 5*: *Optimize to Motivate* introduces the idea of accountability buddies and chains.
  - Would you be interested in finding a neurohacking buddy? If so, consider whether you and someone else in your reading group might make good partners.
  - Would you be interested in forming a neurohacking chain? Here, there are no mutual partners. Instead, person A reports to person B, person B reports to person C, person C reports to person D, etc. This flexible approach allows for people outside of your group to join the chain, too. Neurohacking chains can scale to many, many people linked together.
- *Chapter 6: Debugging Yourself* describes health and lifestyle issues that can cause mental performance issues.
  - Have you personally worked through any of these in the past? If you feel like sharing your journey, pick one to discuss with the group.
  - Were there any solutions to health and lifestyle challenges offered in the book that you were surprised by or that you want to try out yourself? If so, discuss!

PART II
- From a general perspective, which of the four mental targets (executive function, emotional self-regulation, memory and learning, creativity) most intrigued you and why?
- From a personal perspective, which of the four mental targets do you suspect might be a bottleneck for you or might you want to work on? Any specifics you want to share?
- *Chapter 11: Choosing your Mental Target* contains two concepts that may have been new to you: wobble and jaggedness.
  - Did either of these two concepts - or any other concepts in the chapter - surprise you, resonate with you, or make you think differently about aspects of your own mental experiences? If so, which?
  - What personal experiences have you had that are related to the concepts in this chapter?

- Chapter 12 discusses life satisfaction and "say to do" scores.
    - In what ways might recording and measuring your life be empowering?
    - In what ways might this type of self-tracking feel threatening?
    - If you were designing your own life satisfaction and "say to do" scoring system, what might you put in it?
    - How do you see life scoring as being similar or different from other parts of neurohacking?

PART III

- This part of the book introduces interventions including placebo, exercise, blue light, neurofeedback, and video games.
    - Which of the interventions in this section most appealed to you, and why?
    - Were there any interventions that you definitely want to try?
    - Any that you don't?
- Which stories from these chapters stuck out to you, and why?
- What science from these chapters did you find particularly surprising or intriguing?

PART IV

This part of the book introduces interventions including neurostimulation, nootropics, gene editing, hybrid humans, new applications for cognitive data, and even a new economic system involving neurohacking.

- Which ideas or technologies most appealed to you, and why?
- Were there any that you definitely want to try when they become available to the general public?
- Were there any that you do not want to try when they become available to the general public? If so, which ones and why not?
- Are there any ideas or technologies that you do not think anyone should have access to? If so, which ones and why not?
- Which stories stuck out to you and why?
- What science from these chapters did you find particularly surprising or intriguing?

PART V

- Did any part of the book affect how you think about questions of nature and nurture, free will, potential, or your own sense of identity? If so, how has your thinking changed?
- Which self-experiments are you most drawn to try first? Why?
- Are there any that you don't want to try and if so, which? Why not?
- Neurohacking buddies and chains.
    - If you're eager to start neurohacking, who else in your reading group might be interested in being your neurohacking buddy? Could you form an accountability chain together?
    - If you are intrigued but feel hesitant, what is holding you back? Discuss with your group.

Are there additional resources or support you think might help? If so, the author welcomes you to leave a message on her website: https://www.ericker.com/