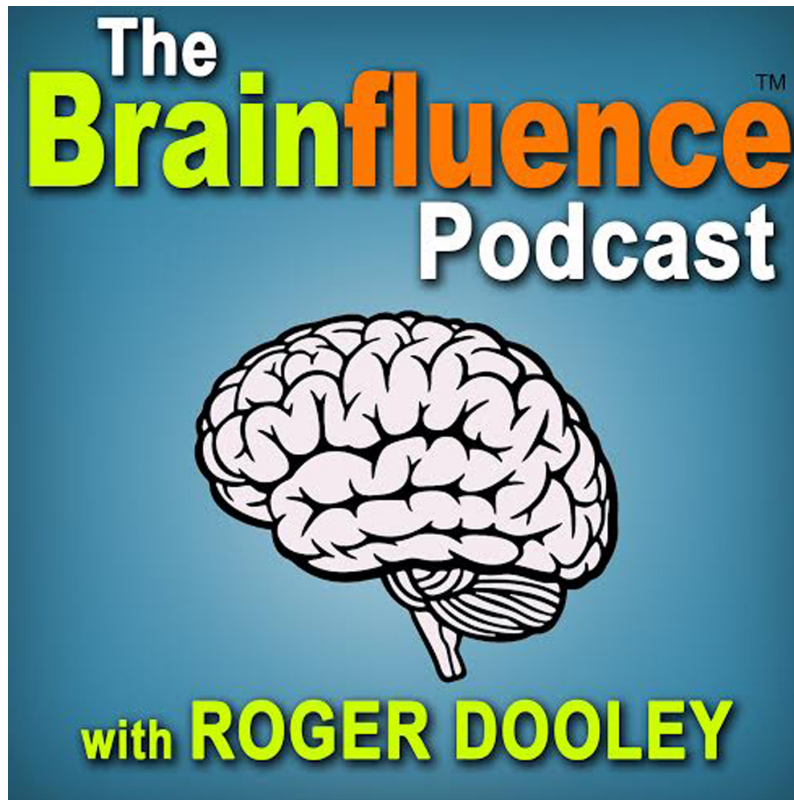


Marketing to Mindstates with Will Leach

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Full Episode Transcript

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Roger Dooley

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Welcome to Brainfluence, where author and international keynote speaker Roger Dooley has weekly conversations with thought leaders and world class experts. Every episode shows you how to improve your business with advice based on science or data.

Roger's new book, *Friction*, is published by McGraw Hill and is now available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and bookstores everywhere. Dr Robert Cialdini described the book as, "Blinding insight," and Nobel winner Dr. Richard Claimer said, "Reading Friction will arm any manager with a mental can of WD40."

To learn more, go to [RogerDooley.com/Friction](https://www.RogerDooley.com/Friction), or just visit the book seller of your choice.

Now, here's Roger.

Roger Dooley: Welcome to Brainfluence. I'm Roger Dooley. When today's guest launched his new book, somehow I missed it. But at the suggestion of several of you, my listeners, or as we say in Texas, y'all, I checked it out and found it to be a great read.

So joining me today is Will Leach. Will's the founder of Trigger Point, a behavioral research and design consultancy that helps brands understand and change consumer behavior, using behavioral research and design.

Will's over 25 years of behavioral insights experience, and is a behavioral design instructor at the Cox School of Business at Southern Methodist University. Will's also the author of the book I mentioned earlier, Marketing to Mind States, a practical field guide to applying behavioral design to research and marketing.

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And stay tuned, because I think Will is going to have some free downloadable content for you as well.

Welcome to the show, Will.

Will Leach: Hey, thank you very much for having me, Roger. I appreciate it.

Roger Dooley: Yeah, so Will, you were not born a behavior designer. How did you find your way into this world?

Will Leach: I was not. In fact, I would tell you I was almost the exact opposite. I started my career in the US Army, being told what to do and when to do it and then I found my way over into grad school over Texas A and M University.

Roger Dooley: That's one way of controlling behavior, I guess.

Will Leach: That's right. That's right.

Roger Dooley: Tell people what to do and they'll do it.

Will Leach: That's right. And I did my master's degree in applied econometrics. So I had never understood the importance of emotions and decision making. I was told that data will help me predict behaviors. And I was the classic marketing researcher who found my way into behavioral economics and behavioral psychology through my time working at PepsiCo. And so as the story goes, I was running a laboratory over there called a smart lab where we got to run behavioral science experiments and it was my rotation and I got involved with neuro marketing back in probably 2009 and neuro testing. And that's when I was initially introduced to behavioral psychology and the importance of understanding non-conscious factors of

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decision making. And I was hooked, couldn't stop thinking of anything else and here I am today.

Roger Dooley: Well very good. And that's interesting that your path parallels with I think what is going on in the market as a whole to a degree. I started off in neuro marketing, writing about it and really focusing on some of the sort of hard science tools of neuro marketing, FMRI, EG and so on. And sort of migrated into much more of a behavioral science approach to things because it seemed like those ideas were more easily applicable by a range of people. And then Nielsen itself, who's the biggest consumer neuroscience firm on the planet, just earlier this year said that they were repurposing their 20 neuroscientists, at least in part, into behavioral science trainers and consultants. So I think that's fairly typical. Oddly enough.

Will Leach: It is. It's becoming more common. So good, good. So I can actually grow with an industry for sure because it hasn't grown as fast as I would've thought it has, but more and more sciences is starting to prove the power of understanding people at an emotional level and what you can do for business. So it's great to hear that other people are following suit.

Roger Dooley: Well you're leading the way, Will. While we're on that topic, I guess your book focuses... I don't want to get too far ahead of things here, but your book talks a lot about observing customers, talking to them in their own context or environment and so on. What do you think about some of the tools of consumer neuroscience as being useful for understanding it and it's not a topic that you really get into much in the book and I'm just curious what your opinion is since you have some exposure to that area.

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Will Leach: Yeah, we do a little bit of work with a couple of companies, actually with Nielsen as being one of them and some neuron zinc. Here's how I think about it. What I love about neuroscience is that it helps me understand a lot about the what in the very first initial, let's call it 1/20th of a second, on how messaging or marketing is going to be received and whether it's going to hopefully, or at least help me predict whether it's going to impact things like longterm memory and awareness, things like that. So I love it for that. What I love actually even more, and I'm doing more and more of this research actually, is integrating our work around behavioral psychology and mind state marketing in with neuro. And with this company I'm working with right now, we talk about it like this. We say what neuro does is tell me what's going to happen in the first 1/20th of a second.

But then I can understand more about, so what am I going to do with this advertisement if the first initial neurological reaction is in some way disadvantaged. So the idea is that when you marry behavioral psychology and behavioral design in with neuro not only can understand how effective this is going to be, but let's make tweaks to the messaging itself. Because if I fail at the neurological level, it doesn't matter how much psychology is involved with kind of your marketing, it's going to be initially... There's going to be an avoidance reaction.

So it's the marrying of the two where if I can get a great reaction in the first 1/20th of a second let me now integrate psychology to now drive kind of that emotional arousal we're looking for. So I'm having that discussion more and more as people are trying to figure out, well

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how do I integrate neuroscience into behavioral psychology. And what I think all of it, it's the stuff that you started talking about a decade ago, neuro marketing. I think it's the combination of both of those now.

Roger Dooley: Yeah, I think initially it was kind of an outlier and people criticize might be a point that I could incorporate this other stuff when I should just be focusing on measuring brain activity. But to me it was a very natural progression and I'm pleased to see that you're saying the two can be integrated very effectively. So Will, one statistic you throw out early in the book is that our brains make more than 35,000 decisions a day. I don't don't know if that's a provable number or not, but I think it kind of goes along with Gerald Zaltman of Harvard's estimate that 95% of our decision making processes are non-conscious. So, I think that regardless of what kind of statistic you use, it seems like the only way we can function as humans is that we don't think about most of the decisions we make. And even the ones we do think about usually have a major non-conscious component. Would you agree with it?

Will Leach: Absolutely. Yeah. I'm with you. I always wonder like how do people get this that we see 10,000 adverts a day or that we make 35,000 decisions? But I think you're right. The point is, is that we're making a lot of decisions every day and the vast majority of them we're never even aware of. So when I teach this, I'll oftentimes just say, "Guys in the audience," I'll say, "You guys have 10 seconds to tell me the last 10 decisions you've made." And you can't even get people to think about the last 10 decisions, let alone this idea of hundreds of decisions that you are making conscious or non-conscious. So end of day, we have a lot of complexity in our world. We have a lot of

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decision making that we were having to undertake and so much of it's being driven by these contextual factors that are way outside of our conscious awareness. And so if you don't understand those contextual factors, whether it's environmental or psychological or what have you, then you really truly don't understand decision-making of your customers. You have glimpses of it, but you really don't really understand it.

Roger Dooley: Well, that seems to be the key principle in the book Will, is that the customer is not static. You know, I think that a lot of types of marketing presumed that the customer is either a single typical customer, or at most, perhaps several different kinds of customer where you develop personas for each of the buyers that you might be looking for. But those tend to be pretty much static over time where you are making the point that in fact it's contextual that that same person at home may be in a different mind state then while standing in front of the checkout counter at the supermarket.

Will Leach: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Thank you for noticing that because not everybody does. What I'm trying to express is that we're an amalgamation of moments in time, these temporary moments of emotional arousal that we'll call trigger points. But it's these mind states that you're under in these moments of emotional arousal and if we can message to these moments, it's much more effective than trying to message to a personality type or to an attitudinal kind of bias that you may have because we all know that our attitudes shift. We have attitudes, we have belief systems, we have values. The problem is that these shift a bit based upon whether I'm hungry or not, physiological

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factors or psychological factors, if I'm in love versus if I'm really angry.

And so thank you for that because really what the book is trying to tell you is understanding these moments in time and if I can message to these moments in time and these mind states that you're under in these moments of time, it's much more effective. So, I think sometimes people get confused. Well, is a mindset new segmentation, it's a personality type? It's not, but it does help you understand an attitudinal segment that you may be working with or does help you understand maybe a personality profile that you may have been placed under. But knowing that moments matter and environments matter, and that's what the basis of this book is, is if you understand these moments, you have a much deeper understanding of somebody who's in an attitudinal segment in these moments.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. I think if anybody doubts that they could just imagine a scenario where they are, say on a diet, and trying to avoid sweets and carbs and in the morning they can resist that muffin. If they went shopping at noontime, they would not buy a cake at the supermarket. But in the middle of the afternoon when they're pretty hungry and they're cognitively depleted and somebody has a birthday at the office and offers them a big piece of cake, they yield to that temptation.

Will Leach: That's right.

Roger Dooley: And I think that's maybe an extreme example, but it is really, I think, true for many, many different things that in

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a particular context you're going to feel differently about the exact same product or offering.

Will Leach: Very much so. And I would still suggest that most attitudinal segmentations that are out there, that all these big brands are using, are still not taking that into account. So I remember back in my days at PepsiCo, we would have our attitudinal segments and this may be the healthy eater or this may be the environmentalist and we'd have our names. And then we'd look at their basket data level data and we'd say, "Well, they're the healthy eater. Why do they have ding-dongs? Why is it in their basket?" And that's why it's because, yes, my attitude is to eat healthier. But in the moment on a Friday night, when I'm really hungry and I've had a long week, that cognitive depletion you're talking about. Yeah, my beliefs didn't change, but in that moment, that mind state that I was under, I hit that. And back 10 years ago we didn't have an understanding of that.

We just assumed that the data was wrong or well, you know what, these things just kind of happen now. Behavioral psychology can help us understand these moments in time. So our segmentations haven't, I don't think caught up to it yet, but the more and more conversations I'm having with some of the biggest companies in America, they're starting to ask how can we overlay this idea of mind states on top of our current segmentation? Just so we have not only an attitudinal understanding or belief system or I'm sorry, belief understanding of our target, but also moments in time.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. Will, one story pretty early in the book is a very cautionary, at least I find it very cautionary, tale about

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market research and even AB testing. I mean, I've been warning people about market research for as long as I've been writing. And typically that means trusting customer surveys and such. But generally I'm a big fan of testing, like AB testing. But you had an experience with PepsiCo in their big supermarkets simulation. So explain that.

Will Leach:

Yeah, this was actually the reason why I got into behavioral psychology, behavioral economics. So there was a laboratory in Dallas, Texas where I was running this laboratory that we talked about and I was doing package testing. So this is the way the package testing would work. We would pre recruit maybe 75 or 100 people to come in and shop this environment. Now this environment, this is not a virtual environment. We had a facility, it was about the size of a Best Buy. And so I actually could make it look like a Kroger, like a Walmart. So we would pre recruit people, we'd have them shop these aisles just like you would any other store. Right? So we did package testing and the normal testing you get a control, which was the old Tostito's packaging. So we had 75 people go through the laboratory and then we would see how many people actually chose Tostito's and we'd look at their checkout to see how many people actually bought Tostito's.

Great. So then what supposed to happen was overnight, later on this afternoon, we're supposed to get a package set of all the new packages of Tostito's and then, the next day we're going to put those on the shelf to see what was the change. And what happened was the new packaging never arrived. It was late, but I had already pre recruited 75 people the next day. It's very expensive to bring that many people in and we can't just cancel these peoples

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the night before. So what did I do? I said, "You know what? I'm just going to go and run the exact same test." Same types of people. Right? But I was going to have, "Hey listen, it's the same planigram, the same flow, the same price points, the same packaging. I'm just going to get a larger base. What else am I going to do?"

And it was in that, looking at that data, an analyst working for me and she said, "Will I've got to talk to you." And she said that our A and our B, even though all the variables were the same, supposedly the same, same plano grams, same flow, same types of shoppers, very different results. And if you come from Texas A and M, where I controlled all the variables, but yet a very different outcome happened. That scared me. And so I told her like, "You can't tell anybody, right?" Because I was like, "We have to figure this out."

And word got out and I'll never forget this, where a senior vice president who was running shopper marketing, he said, "Will you have to figure this out because if you can't tell me whether your first test was control or your second test was control, if you can't tell me, which is right, then why am I spending \$5 million a year on this facility?" And that scared me because in my world that's not supposed to happen.

That was my very first... He gave me a year. And that was my very first kind of push into, well, what is going on? What could possibly have changed? It was emotions. And that's when I read Dan Ariely's book, like we all have read, who he just floored me in understanding this idea of emotion based decision making. And that's the one thing I couldn't control. I couldn't help. I couldn't control really

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people coming in with different emotional states. And that was my thing. So my AB test actually hurt me in many ways, but it-

Roger Dooley: Because it was an AA test with some results.

Will Leach: That's right or a BB. Right? Nobody knew. And that was, it was huge because it shook me to my core in terms of marketing research and our methodologies because our methodologies were supposed to take this stuff into account and it didn't. There was still change. And so yeah, we have some issues in marketing research, though we're getting so much better. 10 years later we're getting so much better, but we still have some work to do for sure, Roger.

Roger Dooley: Mm-hmm (affirmative). What do you think the problem was? They're just too small of a sample size. I mean, I know coming from the direct mail industry years ago, we would always test at least 5,000 customers with a mailing, and even then, we would get outliers occasionally, things that were just sort of anomalies in the data that if we repeated we would not see you again.

Will Leach: Yeah. So I think we found out, I'll never know for sure. Right? But what we did was we actually talked. We found out that the hostess who was checking in respondents on day one, she was not talking about the test. So we had our normal hostess who would enter, who would let people in, and it was supposed to be very non-discreet. Nobody knew it was a Frito-Lay lab. In fact, it was supposed to be... Most people thought it was an academic lab. In fact, on day two, we actually had a temporary worker come in and she explained what we

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were going to be doing. And so we're going to be watching you.

Roger Dooley: Whoa, okay.

Will Leach: So at that point, we think that's probably it, right? A whole group of people thought they're being watched and so maybe they're much more deliberative. I'm not positive about that, but that's the big variable that we think, so the context changed, right? I can't control context. Context changed, these people were introduced to the idea that they were going to be doing or they're going to be watched and we believe that's probably what it was.

Roger Dooley: Right, yeah. Should have gone with the video introduction that was consistent for everybody. Yeah, that's really interesting.

Will Leach: Hindsight bias, Roger.

Roger Dooley: Yeah, I guess so. Yeah. One of the other experiments that you mentioned in the book was something that proved the utility of what you called hedonic bundling, which is something that I had not heard of before. I mean I've written about bundling, but not from a hedonic standpoint.

Will Leach: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah, it was one of our very first, probably most successful, behavioral economics experiments at PepsiCo and really what I did was I read work from Ravi Dar over at Yale and the idea is this, is that most of the time when we, in consumer packaged goods space, we give discounts if you buy multiple products. That's called a bundle, right? And so what normally happens is if you buy two of these items

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together, we will give you one discount. Let's say a dollar for instance, right? A dollar off if you buy these things together. It's the classic bundling idea, and we've done it for decades. Ravi did work back in probably I think 2011, some of it was a while ago, where he said, "Wait a minute, what if, rather than placing a discount on the entire bundle, what if you placed the discount on something that people feel slightly guilty about or has something as a high hedonic charge?"

And in that case, not only are you giving somebody value because you're providing them a discount, a dollar off the total bundle, but you're actually placing the discount of the thing that they feel guilty about, thereby lowering their feelings of guilt. And when I read this academic article, I was floored. I'm like, "Oh my gosh, I work in a business that has lots of experience in hedonics associated with the right chips and sodas." So what we did was we did some research around bundles of Pepsi and Frito-Lay products and I just did some implicit association work to figure out that people felt slightly higher hedonics were associated with beverages, sodas, than they were with chips.

And so all I did was I took the exact same offer, so I did AB testing again, or actually this was... Yeah, this was on the control test. And so what we did was we had this normal bundled offer, which is buy both together and save 70 cents on this bundle. Right? And we had been doing that for a long time and that's actually a really nice discount. A lot of people found that to be appealing. However, I took the exact same discount and then rather than saying 70 cents off the bundle, I said, we're going to save you 70 cents off the soda because people felt

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slightly more hedonics against that. Or slightly more guilty about buying soda. We dramatically changed purchase intent, or not purchase intent, actual purchases. We actually did this out in market.

So it's the classic experiment. I tell this to my clients all the time. There's so much great work in academia. There are brilliant people out there. They're doing these incredible studies, but nobody in corporate America reads this stuff and I'm sitting there reading this thinking, "Oh my gosh, I can do the exact same thing with my company here." And that study won us an explore award because of how we changed the way that we think about bundling opportunities and just thinking about where would you place a discount on two items, and it's a real simple thing that we've done two more times with other companies and it seems to be pretty consistent. If you can discount people's guilt or make people feel a little bit better about a decision, they will reward you with purchases. Right?

Roger Dooley: Yeah. I think that at least one of your big customers, Walmart, has been doing quite a bit of the same approach. I've had actually now two of their past global heads of behavior design, on the behavioral science, on the show and now there's a third one who I haven't spoken to yet. But that approach sounds very similar, where the first thing they do is figure out... Well they have to understand the need for an intervention of some kind. Like in this case, you want to sell this bundle, but then they go to the research first and tried to find relevant papers, come up with a proposed intervention and then pilot it somewhere, which is what you did. You tried this in one little store first, right?

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Will Leach: Yep.

Roger Dooley: And then if it looks good that they would scale it up and roll it out.

Will Leach: Yep. Roll to 10 stores and then roll it to 40 stores. That's exactly right. And, I would always encourage, I encourage marketing researchers all the time. I always say to them that you're first... The minute somebody comes to you with a behavioral change problem, whatever it is, I want to drive baskets, I want to drive penetration in my brand. I have a new innovation launch. The first thing they should be doing is going in Google Scholar. that is your best friend because chances are somebody has already looked at your problem, some professor out there, somebody, some academic institution has looked at your problem and may not be exact for your categories or may not be exact, but I'm telling you there's so much great things on Google Scholar and that's all I did.

The reason why I even got into the kind of this stuff was that when budgets are taken away, kind of towards the end of the year when you're in corporate America, it's August and they have to kind of start making their numbers. So you start seeing your research budget taken away. Google Scholar is still around and so I used to learn so much from Google Scholar and that's how you start. You start there with a small experiment somebody else has done and exactly like you said, one store, maybe out to 10 stores and then run that thing out and your chances of success are going to increase threefold for sure.

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Roger Dooley: Yeah. I do want to get into the mind state concept. But there was one other anecdote that I found hilarious, although it probably was not so hilarious to you at the time and that was the extremely noisy chip bag.

Will Leach: Oh, yeah.

Roger Dooley: It's a great, great, great example of developers not really understanding the market or even saying, "Gee, well how might people react to this?" Will, why would you tell that story? That is the best. And there's a YouTube video to go with this and we will link to at least one of those videos in the show notes. Just to continue your embarrassment.

Will Leach: That's great. Yeah. Thank you. This is my embarrassment. So in my book I'm very open about-

Roger Dooley: You were not the guy who developed the package though.

Will Leach: No.

Roger Dooley: So in your defense...

Will Leach: In my defense, but unfortunately I was also, I was the researcher who didn't pick it up either. So this is what happened. It's probably in what? 2010 I think, SunChips went to a biodegradable bag. We wanted to do what's better for the planet and PepsiCo has a long commitment of trying to be more sustainable. And their lead brand was going to be SunChips. And so R and D, Packaging R and D went out and figured out, through a lot of work by the way, it's not easy to make bags biodegradable and some more sustainable. And so we took the stand and we're going to be the environmental brand with SunChips.

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We're going to lead PepsiCo in this space. And we moved forward. And so we created an ad campaign. We created a brand new executional strategy around how are we going to push this new biodegradable bag.

And as the story goes, and we talk about in the book, that when we got the bag, probably only about three months before this was going to be launched. By now, we've already sold it into Walmart. We have already placed an advertisement on American Idol. So there's no going back, and R and D came back with the prototype, the final prototype, that we're going to go out with. And the bag is incredibly, or was, incredibly loud. And when I tell your listeners it's loud, I know what you're thinking. I thought the same thing, like, "Well I guess." My brand manager called me. She goes, "You need to hear this bag." I thought, she's overreacting, she's overreacting. And the bag sounds like glass breaking. And I heard this in real time, it was on a Friday. And here's what I did. I had no time to do research.

I didn't know what I was going to do. But it was viscerally intrusive. It was, it just gave... It made you cringe. So what I did was over the weekend I had three bags. All there were, three bags and I asked one person who was having a party, "Take the bag to your party." The next bag, I actually went to a grocery store that Friday afternoon, local in Dallas and I put the prototype bag up on the aisle in front of a bunch of other SunChip's bags. And I just watched people. And Roger, one of the most scary things you've ever seen is when somebody touches your products and pulls away in like fear. Because when you touch this bag, it would make a crackling pop. And the same thing happened at this party.

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And so on Monday when I kind of had to bring us all together and say, "Guys, when you have your customers, your shoppers, touch your product and viscerally react and pull back and almost yelp. That's a bad thing." It's a long story that goes on. We still launched the bag, we tried to message around it. It wasn't incredibly successful. It was the great intent but the problem was research was not talking to R and D and we just assumed R and D was doing their thing and it was going to be a great product and marketing. We just assumed that research was focused on this bag and we were all talking together and it was an eventful, eventful couple of weeks of when we launched this bag. And we ultimately had to pull back on the bag as well because of how much customer fear was involved with them touching this bag.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. What could go wrong with a bag, right? I mean, bag's a bag. Well, Will I was just reading that secret consumption is a thing that as people consume certain types of products in secret some of the time and for women in particular, but men too. Food is one of those products that is often consumed outside the view of others because they feel guilty about it. And I would guess a chip bag that you could hear in the house next door would be a problem for secret consumers.

Will Leach: That's right. You're in the office place, right? It's a snack in the office.

Roger Dooley: Now you're not going to sneak it, that's for sure. So let's talk about mind states. You identify 18. That seems like a fairly precise number. Explain the origin of that Will.

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Will Leach: Yeah. So basically what I did was I looked at four different social sciences over the course of a decade to help me understand decision making. And the first is goal theory. Then I moved into motivational psychology. Regulatory fit theory was the third, which is kind of the works for Tory Higgins and finally behavioral economics. So the two middle options, motivational psychology and regulatory fit theory, I looked at kind of looking at all the work that's been done in these two different fields. And what we came up with was mostly a lot of off of Rice's work over at Ohio State, was that we believe there are nine core motivations that drive the vast majority of decision making. Now this is decision making. I'm not talking about biological pullback reactions. So things like security, right? Very mass low or Dessi and Ryan's work with autonomy and belonging.

So we believe there's nine achievement, empowerment, belonging, esteem, etc. So that's nine. And then if you think about Tory Higgins' work around approach, which just mean we either approach going after goals and trying to maximize gains, which is called promotion regulatory fit or minimize loss, which is called prevention. So there's two different approaches. That's how we come up with our 18 mind states. So when you're in these moments of emotional arousal, you are generally driven by one motivation. And remember there are nine and then, you are going to go after your goals and either promotion regulatory state or prevention regulatory state. So nine times two is 18.

Roger Dooley: So how do you determine which of these are important?

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Will Leach: Yep, so we do in a number of different ways. Ultimately, there's many different behavioral research methodologies you can get. What we tend to do is we love storytelling because when people tell stories about their ideal experience or if they tell about their first very brand experience and we can get them to talk, what you'll find is just kind of like poker. There are subtle hints or cues or tells almost that they tell you. And so what we do is we use artificial intelligence to identify these cues through language. It's through unstructured data. Frankly, that's the way we tend to do it. And it's when people talk about experiences, they will tell you things about, well, for instance, that they're talking about having to overcome this barrier, how important it was to overcome this barrier. When I hear that, that signals achievement motivations or maybe talking to somebody talking about, it's so important for us all to work on this idea together. That's belonging.

So I look for tells, especially when it relates to whether they're trying to seek gains or minimize losses, promotion prevention. But there are many other ways of doing, you can use implicit association techniques. You can use quantitative tools like you're starting to see more behavioral discrete choice methods, making people do trade offs as well. But ultimately the power is you've got to get people into context. You have to get them into, hopefully, as close to that mind state as possible. And so what we try to do is place you into context.

So when we ask you to do a piece of research and it's on cereal, I want you in breakfast, like I'm not going to feed you a survey or feed you an activity at 10:00 PM unless it's a product that you normally consume at 10:00 PM. So getting you into context and hopefully having you tell

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stories about your first experience or the experience in the moment. I can get those tells if I get you to actually talk about them.

Roger Dooley: Mm-hmm (affirmative). It reminds me a little bit of Martin Lindstrom that we use on the show a while back discussing the ideas in his book, *Small Data*. And he encouraged marketers to spend lots of time with their customers in their own environments to look for cues as to what was important to them. And so not exactly what you're doing. His was more observational than a trying to tease out what they're really thinking, although probably did some of that, but I mean he went to tremendous lengths to get into environments including like flying the length of Russia to visit homes in different places, but eventually came up with some insights that there's no way you would have gotten either from conventional market research or what a lot of marketers do is say, "Well, I eat breakfast everyday so I have a pretty good idea of what breakfast is about." And assume that your customer's treat it the same way.

Will Leach: Yeah, very much so. He's brilliant. I love him. Yeah, We've used some of his work in small data even in our methodology. But you're right, observation of behavior is usually the first thing you want to try to do before you ever engage with a customer and try to understand what they do because you know you can make the case Roger, that the environment and where we make decisions are at least as important as a psychology. And many times I think you can make the case that it's more important.

So I think observation is a precursor to any good piece of research, even if you're going to just do a few of them, a

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few observations, it'll tell you a lot about what's influencing psychology.

Roger Dooley: Yeah, well I think even in customer experience beyond trying to determine the mind state, there are so many bad examples of customer experience and user experience that it's pretty clear that whoever designed that process did not observe customers using the process. Now, where you say even the most the simplest observation is sending an intern or junior associates out into the field to watch customers say, "Well wow, they seem to be having a difficulty getting the package open or seem to be... They can't figure out how to use the app when they get to this point." You know? But those things seem to persist forever. So obviously there's no-

Will Leach: It's a process. It's a process, Roger. We're going to get there.

Roger Dooley: Or like you, "Oh well hey, yeah we know that's a problem, but we're on a budget for this fiscal. So maybe next year."

Will Leach: That's right. That's right.

Roger Dooley: So explain a bit about the promotion and prevention mindsets. We've written about that at neuro marketing in a few different posts. And I'm wondering if some products, like I would guess a life term life insurance, clearly seems to be a prevention mindset. Like okay, you don't want to die and leave your family destitute, so buy this and you're going to prevent them from being in the food line or something. But it seems like other kinds of products could appeal to... Well it could go either way. As I say, even in the financial space, a savings product could be something

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that you could sell as a way of increasing your wealth, your status and so on. Or as a way of insulating yourself from future financial disaster.

Will Leach: No, I think you nailed it. Right. So Tory Higgins out of Columbia, he's been studying this idea of how do we approach our goals and like I said, there is promotion and prevention and a couple of things. One, there's a book called Focus and you should read it or if the listeners want to learn more about it, because he wrote a book on it. But his papers actually, go to Google Scholar and listen or look up Tory Higgins and his work and Google Scholar is just as good. In fact, maybe even better, his actually academics.

But here's the idea is that we have natural tendencies, but you're not one or the other. Right? So you're not 100% promotion, which is always trying to swing for the fences and to maximize your gains. And you're not 100% prevention either. You have tendencies. I tend to be more prevention. Just in general, I'm a little bit more risk adverse. However, on my company, I swing for the fences for whatever reason. In that context, I'm much more promotion. So first off, you're not one or the other. You're both. And just like you said, industries tend to have a little bit of both as well.

Some industries like insurance are heavily prevention, because by definition, insurance is trying to protect you from catastrophic loss. However, most industries, to your point, are both. Think, imagine if you are a sporting... Let's say Nike. And so if your athletic apparel, right? So the idea is, well, if you're Nike, there are some athletes that are about, I want to use my equipment to my chances of

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beating the next person. Right? And that's a huge focus for them, right? So they're going to look for brands, they're going to look for strategists, for messaging that tells them if you take this path, if you buy my products, you are going to maximize your chances of domination.

You could have the exact same goal and you could have the exact same motivation, but other people will take prevention, like I am about not losing and that may be more underarm. I think about Norman Bell, "protect this house", remember that old campaign protect this house? Very much prevention cues, they're messaging saying if you buy Under Armor, it's about minimizing your chances of not beating this person. Right? And you're not going to make mistakes.

And so I think to your credit of understanding that industries have natural kind of tendencies, but also people have these natural tendencies as well. But you know, Higgins work will tell you that at least in America, looking at all industries 60% of people tend to be more promotion, 40% prevention. So it's not massive difference. It's 60/40 and if you go into Asia, that reverses a little bit. But by industry very different. New moms, very prevention. If you've had a new baby, you're going to look at the world about protection, a baby, which is minimizing a risk. So there's some tendencies by life stages that you'll see, but also industry.

Roger Dooley: Great. Well, I think we could probably go on and on here, Will. Let me remind our audience that today we are speaking with Will Leach, founder of Trigger Point and author of Marketing to Mind States: A Practical Field

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Guide to Applying Behavioral Design to Research and Marketing. Will, how can our listeners find you?

Will Leach: I am on all the major social media sites and if you want to go to LinkedIn it's Will Leach on LinkedIn. I've also, Twitter at trigger_ pointer and just kind of look me up. And ultimately if you go to will-leach.com you can read more about the book and how we're trying to change an industry around behavioral design.

Roger Dooley: Right. And I think you've got a couple of downloads related to your book there, correct?

Will Leach: I do. I tried very hard to get all this work that we've been doing last 10 years out to everyone's hands. So if you go to marketingtomindstates.com and to the resources tab, there are lots of different resources. You can download all 18 of these behavioral activation briefs, which tell you specifically from strategy down to tactics on how to apply behavioral design to these different mind states. So go through them. But there's also other resources like books to read, podcasts to listen to. You're on there, Roger, but all sorts of different resources.

Roger Dooley: Otherwise we would be deleting this particular part of the segment Will.

Will Leach: That's right.

Roger Dooley: Awesome. Well we will link to all of those places and to any other resources we mentioned including the crazy loud chip bag video on the show notes page at rogerdooley.com/podcast and we'll have a transcript there too. Will, thanks for being on the show. It's been fun.

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Will Leach: Thank you so much Roger. I appreciate it.

Thank you for tuning into this episode of Brainfluence. To find more episodes like this one, and to access all of Roger's online writing and resources, the best starting point is RogerDooley.com.

And remember, Roger's new book, *Friction*, is now available at Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and book sellers everywhere. Bestselling author Dan Pink calls it, "An important read," and Wharton Professor Dr. Joana Berger said, "You'll understand Friction's power and how to harness it."

For more information or for links to Amazon and other sellers, go to RogerDooley.com/Friction.

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