

David Eagleman

Quotes

Brain, Reality, Believe, Mind, People, Running, Choices, Views, Mean, Ideas, Thinking, World, Eye, Vision, Years, Numbers, Perception, Writing, Doe, Space

What we find is that our brains have colossal things happening in them all the time.

~David Eagleman

Every atom in your body is the same quark in different places at the same moment in time.

~David Eagleman

Instead of reality being passively recorded by the brain, it is actively constructed by it.

~David Eagleman

As an undergraduate I majored in British and American literature at Rice University.

~David Eagleman

The first lesson about trusting your senses is: don't. Just because you believe something to be true, just because you know it's true, that doesn't mean it is true.

~David Eagleman

It turns out your conscious mind - the part you think of as you - is really the smallest part of what's happening in your brain, and usually the last one in line to find out any information.

~David Eagleman

You are more likely to believe that a statement is true if you have heard it before - whether or not it is actually true.

~David Eagleman

Love was not specified in the design of your brain; it is merely an endearing algorithm that freeloads on the leftover processing cycles.

~David Eagleman

There is a looming chasm between what your brain knows and what your mind is capable of accessing.

~David Eagleman

What a life in science really teaches you is the vastness of our ignorance.

~David Eagleman

We don't really understand most of what's happening in the cosmos. Is there any afterlife? Who knows.

~David Eagleman

Your brain is built of cells called neurons and glia - hundreds of billions of them. Each one of these cells is as complicated as a city.

~David Eagleman

I know one lab that studies nicotine receptors and all the scientists are smokers, and another lab that studies impulse control and they're all overweight.

~David Eagleman

You're not perceiving what's out there. You're perceiving whatever your brain tells you.

~David Eagleman

It is the most wondrous thing we have discovered in the universe, and it is us.

~David Eagleman

To a space alien or a German Shepherd dog, two humans would be indistinguishable, just as attractive and unattractive space aliens and German Shepherd dogs are difficult for you to tell apart.

~David Eagleman

Among all the creatures of creation, the gods favor us: We are the only ones who can empathize with their problems.

~David Eagleman

Our internal life and external actions are steered by biological cocktails to which we have neither immediate access nor direct acquaintance.

~David Eagleman

Every week I get letters from people worldwide who feel that the possibilian point of view represents their understanding better than either religion or neo-atheism.

~David Eagleman

I spent my adult life as a scientist, and science is, essentially, the most successful approach we have to try and understand the vast mysteries around.

~David Eagleman

I call myself a Possibilian: I'm open to...ideas that we don't have any way of testing right now.

~David Eagleman

Since we live in the heads of those who remember us, we lose control of our lives and become who they want us to be.

~David Eagleman

The conscious mind is not at the center of the action in the brain; instead, it is far out on a distant edge, hearing but whispers of the activity.

~David Eagleman

If choices and decisions derive from hidden mental processes, then free choice is either an illusion or, at minimum, more tightly constrained than previously considered.

~David Eagleman

I always bounce my legs when I'm sitting.

~David Eagleman

Neuroscience over the next 50 years is going to introduce things that are mind-blowing.

~David Eagleman

Our reality depends on what our biology is up to.

~David Eagleman

We're trapped on this very thin slice of perception ... But even at that slice of reality that we call home, we're not seeing most of what's going on.

~David Eagleman

There are always wonderful mysteries to confront.

~David Eagleman

People wouldn't even go into science unless there was something much bigger to be discovered, something that is transcendent.

~David Eagleman

I'm using the afterlife as a backdrop against which to explore the joys and complexities of being human - it turns out that it's a great lens with which to understand what matters to us.

~David Eagleman

Who you are depends on the sum total of your neurobiology.

~David Eagleman

There are an infinite number of boring things to do in science.

~David Eagleman

All activity in the brain is driven by other activity in the brain, in a vastly complex, interconnected network.

~David Eagleman

...you are battered and bruised in the collisions between reminiscence and reality.

~David Eagleman

It is only through us that God lives. When we abandon him, he dies.

~David Eagleman

Death... The moment, sometime in the future, when your name is spoken for the last time.

~David Eagleman

We believe we're seeing the world just fine until it's called to our attention that we're not.

~David Eagleman

If our brains were simple enough to be understood, we wouldn't be smart enough to understand them.

~David Eagleman

We are not conscious of most things until we ask ourselves questions about them.

~David Eagleman

Even though the outside world has not changed, your brain dynamically presents different interpretations.

~David Eagleman

As Carl Jung put it, "In each of us there is another whom we do not know." As Pink Floyd sang, "There's someone in my head, but it's not me."

~David Eagleman

The majority of human beings live their whole lives unaware that they are only seeing a limited cone of vision at any moment.

~David Eagleman

Once you begin deliberating about where your fingers are jumping on the piano keyboard, you can no longer pull off the piece.

~David Eagleman

Nothing is inherently tasty or repulsive - it depends on your needs. Deliciousness is simply an index of usefulness.

~David Eagleman

Consciousness is the smallest player in the operations of the brain.

~David Eagleman

One of the most pervasive mistakes is to believe that our visual system gives a faithful representation of what is "out there" in the same way that a movie camera would.

~David Eagleman

All creation necessarily ends in this: Creators, powerless, fleeing from the things they have wrought.

~David Eagleman

My lab and academic work fill my day from about 9 am to 7 p.m. Then I zoom out the lens to work on my other writing.

~David Eagleman

Everybody knows the power of deadlines - and we all hate them. But their effectiveness is undeniable.

~David Eagleman

Because vision appears so effortless, we are like fish challenged to understand water.

~David Eagleman

Modern neuroimaging is like asking an astronaut in the space shuttle to look out the window and judge how America is doing.

~David Eagleman

As we develop better technologies for probing the brain, we detect more problems.

~David Eagleman

Asleep vision (dreaming) is perception that is not tied down to anything in the real world; waking perception is something like dreaming with a little more commitment to what's in front of you.

~David Eagleman

Odor carries a great deal of information, including information about a potential mate's age, sex, fertility, identity, emotions, and health.

~David Eagleman

Interestingly, schizophrenics can tickle themselves because of a problem with their timing that does not allow their motor actions and resulting sensations to be correctly sequenced.

~David Eagleman

We are not at the center of ourselves, but instead - like the Earth in the Milky Way, and the Milky Way in the universe - far out on a distant edge, hearing little of what is transpiring.

~David Eagleman

Just like a good drama, the human brain runs on conflict.

~David Eagleman

If you ever feel lazy or dull, take heart: you're the busiest, brightest thing on the planet.

~David Eagleman

Evolve solutions; when you find a good one, don't stop.

~David Eagleman

A mere 400 years after our fall from the center of the universe, we have experienced the fall from the center of ourselves.

~David Eagleman

Vision is more than looking.

~David Eagleman

Behavior is the outcome of the battle among internal systems.

~David Eagleman

Awareness of your surroundings occurs only when sensory inputs violate expectations. When the world is successfully predicted away, awareness is not needed because the brain is doing its job well.

~David Eagleman

The drives you take for granted ("I'm a hetero/homosexual," "I'm attracted to children/adults," "I'm aggressive/not aggressive," and so on) depend on the intricate details of your neural machinery.

~David Eagleman

The more familiar the world becomes, the less information your brain writes down, and the more quickly time seems to pass.

~David Eagleman

Humans have discovered that they cannot stop Death, but at least they can spit in his drink.

~David Eagleman

Everything that creates itself upon the backs of smaller scales will by those same scales be consumed.

~David Eagleman

You are part of a complex social network that changes your biology with every interaction, and which your actions can change.

~David Eagleman

Keep in mind that every single generation before us has worked under the assumption that they possessed all the major tools for understanding the universe, and they were all wrong, without exception.

~David Eagleman

Brains are like representative democracies. They are built of multiple, overlapping experts who weigh in and compete over different choices.

~David Eagleman

Visual cortex is fundamentally a machine whose job is to generate a model of the world.

~David Eagleman

Think about the brain as the densest concentration of youness. It's the peak of the mountain, but not the whole mountain.

~David Eagleman

This is what consciousness does: it sets the goals, and the rest of the system learns how to meet them.

~David Eagleman

If you are a carrier of a particular set of genes, your probability of committing a violent crime goes up by eight hundred and eighty-two percent.

~David Eagleman

One of the most impressive features of brains - and especially human brains - is the flexibility to learn almost any kind of task that comes its way.

~David Eagleman

Just give the brain the information and it will figure it out.

~David Eagleman

The brain runs its show incognito.

~David Eagleman

We are not the ones driving the boat of our behavior, at least not nearly as much as we believe.

~David Eagleman

We spend our lives on a thin slice between the unimaginably small scales of the atoms that compose us and the infinitely large scales of galaxies.

~David Eagleman

The main thing known about secrets is that keeping them is unhealthy for the brain.

~David Eagleman

Given the billions of neurons, this means there are as many connections in a single cubic centimeter of brain tissue as there are stars in the Milky Way galaxy.

~David Eagleman

The first thing we learn from studying our own circuitry is a simple lesson: most of what we do and think and feel is not under our conscious control.

~David Eagleman

All life is no more than a match struck in the dark and blown out again.

~David Eagleman

Knowing yourself now requires the understanding that the conscious you occupies only a small room in the mansion of the brain, and that it has little control over the reality constructed for you.

~David Eagleman

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