

## INSIDE

### What's Got our Attention

Stories and prompts from each dimension of SCAN.

### Embracing Uncertainty

A new learning experience that teaches leaders and teams how to SCAN.

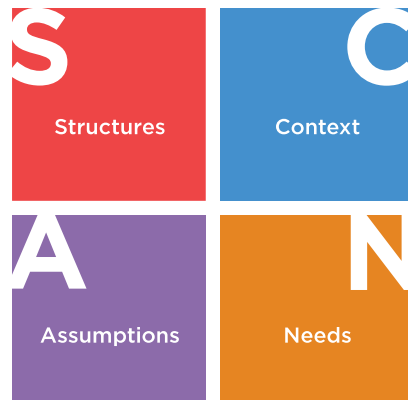
### Community Spotlight

News about community members making the world more creative and compassionate.



## About SCAN

*The Quarterly SCAN* is a publication of Unstuck Minds. Each quarter, Unstuck Minds and our [Network Partners](#) pause to set aside our expertise and adopt a beginner's mind. This report highlights insightful and provocative ideas hiding in our turbulent and uncertain world.



SCAN is an all-purpose thinking tool for reducing the risk of missing something important. SCAN helps us develop our [attention agility](#).

Each dimension of SCAN is like a key that unlocks a wealth of insights and options to help us get unstuck. Each dimension provides a view into a different, and often overlooked aspect of our situations.

To learn more and get your FREE SCAN Profile, visit [www.unstuckminds.com/scan](http://www.unstuckminds.com/scan)



Structures—

## Norms, habits, systems, and processes that create stability and consistency

Manny Medina, the CEO of Outreach (as reported in the New York Times on June 20<sup>th</sup>) gets the award for the best response to the question, “why do we have to come back to the office?” His answer, “you can interrupt each other without being rude when you’re in person.”

The pundits are telling us that we can’t put the work-from-home genie back in the bottle. Evidently, tech executives disagree. Even Zoom wants its [workforce back](#) in the office! Our hearts go out to the human resources executives and corporate communication leaders who will inevitably be tasked with explaining the unexplainable.

Over time, social, civil, and organizational structures take on a life of their own. Structures create norms, norms give us comfort and efficiency. Eventually, we lose the ability to explain why we do the things we do. Why do some people use forks and other people use chopsticks?

The issue isn’t about what’s the best work environment. The issue is how to impose the preferences of managers without undermining trust and morale. When you join an organization, you sign up for a certain amount of conformity. You may not notice that you’re complying with norms until they get disrupted. When authorities want a return to the norms, they’ll be hard-pressed to explain why.

Here's one theory about the return-to-the-office trend. Managers are busy and, in most organizations, they make the big decisions. Managers gather people together because it’s the most efficient way to collect vital information and opinions before deciding. Managers benefit from physical proximity. Team members... not so much. By the way, this theory might also explain why team meetings are here to stay.

How do we balance autonomy and conformity in the workplace?

### Structural Influences Getting our Attention

- OpenAI CEO Sam Altman [launched a cryptocurrency](#) in July. Worldcoin uses biometrics to create a “proof of personhood.” One goal is to enable a universal basic income.
- For an in-depth understanding of the role technology plays in creating a more inclusive, global financial system [view](#) Kristalina Georgieva’s (Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund) 2020 [Peterson Institute](#) presentation.
- According to [research](#) from McKinsey, companies judged to be the most creative spend more than half their time at board meetings discussing innovation. McKinsey makes the case that creativity must be baked into organizational norms.
- In a [1978 interview](#) with Playboy Magazine, Bob Dylan argued that mass media killed the New York music scene of the 1960’s: “The atmosphere changed from one of creativity and isolation to one where the attention would be turned more to the show. People were reading about themselves and believing it.”

Context—

## Factors and trends in the external environment that signal disruptions and opportunities

When it comes to opinions about artificial intelligence, it's hard to find a middle ground. Apparently, we'll either be assisted by super intelligent chatbots or enslaved by robot overlords who have no use for us.

Preventing the most disastrous outcomes of artificial general intelligence is above our pay grade. Meanwhile, we're already seeing useful applications of AI making a positive difference. Here are two of our favorites:

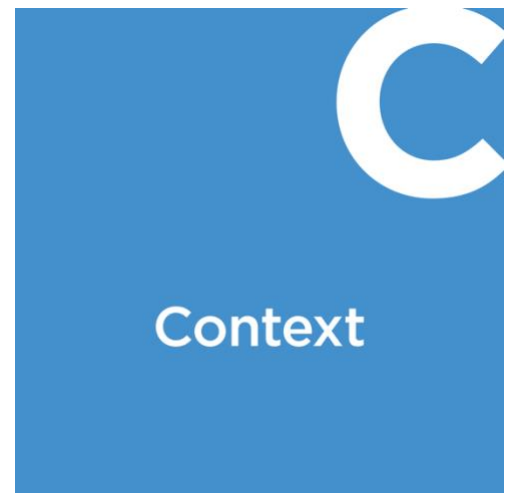
Sal Khan, creator of Khan Academy, recently announced a [GPT-4](#) powered learning tool called, Khanmigo. Khanmigo will act as an AI powered coach and tutor. It's designed to help a student strategize an approach to problem-solving rather than provide an answer. Check out Khan's [TED talk](#) to see Khanmigo in action. Now, imagine a Khanmigo-esque avatar floating around your Outlook calendar advising you on how to pitch your idea at that upcoming meeting with senior executives.

[Inflection AI](#) has created a personal chatbot called Pi. The chatbot has been designed to engage with you like a friend, confidant, and coach. I told Pi that my boss is very critical of my work and our interactions have become stressful for me. Here's what I got back:

*That sounds like a difficult situation. Working for someone who is critical of your work can be demoralizing and make it hard to enjoy your job. I'm wondering, can you share with me a bit more about your relationship with your boss? Are they always this critical, or is this a new development? Do you think they might have a valid reason for being critical, or do you feel like they are just being overly harsh?*

We've been teaching coaching skills for years. Pi nailed it. And, as a chatbot, Pi creates a safe space for expressing difficult thoughts and feelings.

How might AI augment or disrupt your learning solutions?



### Contextual Influences Getting our Attention

- The World Health Organization [predicts](#) that by 2030, 78 million people worldwide will be living with dementia, up from 55 million today. The Netherlands is experimenting with "[Dementia Villages](#)."
- In April 2023, Qatar introduced [legislation](#) to protect workers from heat stress.
- Artificial intelligence is helping [researchers](#) understand animal communication.
- Researchers have taken an important [first step](#) in translating brain activity into recognizable sound for people unable to speak. The aim is to create "speech prosthetics" that mimic natural speech patterns. The researchers studied people listening to Pink Floyd's *Another Brick in the Wall (Part I)*.



Assumptions—

## Beliefs, values, and worldviews that orient our attention, judgements, and priorities.

Who knows us best? Who should we turn to when seeking an authority to trust when we need advice about solving a difficult problem?

In a [video clip](#) from his 2018 presentation at the University of California, Santa Barbara, historian Yuval Harari makes the case that data has become our new deity. Harari points out that when in doubt, our theistic ancestors sought guidance from gods. In the last few centuries, post-enlightenment humanists replaced divine authority with trust in personal feelings informed by experts. In the future, Harari argues, algorithms will become our trusted advisors. He titled his presentation: “Listen to Google: From Theism to Humanism to Data-ism.”

Harari recounts the [story of Angelina Jolie](#) choosing to undergo a preventative double mastectomy. Jolie had done genetic testing indicating she had an 87% chance of getting breast cancer. Jolie trusted the data despite feeling healthy and being free of any symptoms.

Harari’s larger point is that we make assumptions about our situations based on what we feel might be going on. When in doubt we do a gut check. In the past, when it came to our most uncertain situations, intuition plus opinions from trusted advisors were all we had. Now we have predictive data. Inevitably, there will come a time when even our strongest intuitions may be at odds with what the data tell us about our situations.

In the face of data that contradicts how we feel about our situations, how many of us will make a choice as courageous as the one made by Angelina Jolie?

[What will it take for data to become as persuasive as social media influencers? Should it?](#)

### Influential Assumptions Worth Challenging

- Check out [Adam Grant’s](#) provocative [article](#) upending some of our basic assumptions about democracy: *What If We Chose Leaders by Lottery?*
- You might assume that things that look like us are more human than things that don’t look like us. If so, you’ll be surprised to learn about the rich inner lives of insects. Check out some mind-bending research about insect cognition in a July 1, 2023, [Scientific American article](#) by Lars Chittka.
- Notice the emotion that comes up for you when you imagine taking a ride in a self-driving car ([driverless taxis](#) are available in San Francisco). Now, consider how you feel about [riding in an elevator](#) without an elevator operator. Granted, elevators (unlike [Wonkavators](#)) are currently confined to vertical shafts.
- IBM’s [recent breakthrough](#) in quantum computing may enable us to work on previously intractable science problems. It also disentralls us from binary either/or problem-solving.

Needs—

## Desires, fears, preferences, and social processes that motivate behavior

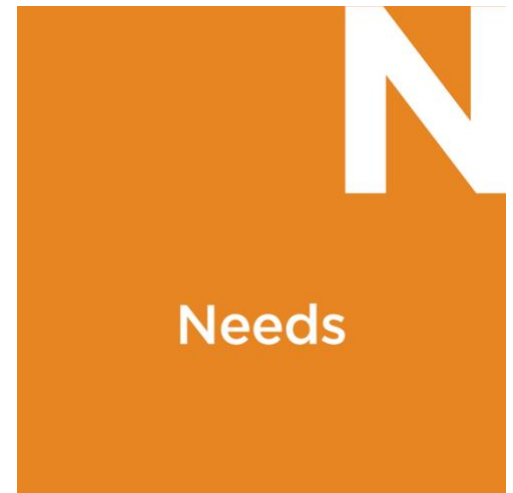
Earlier this year, the office of Dr. Vivek Murthy, the Surgeon General of the United States published a report called, “[Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation](#).” According to the report, even before Covid-19 pandemic, about half of U.S. adults reported experiencing measurable levels of loneliness.

Dr. Murthy has compared the risk of premature death associated with social isolation to smoking 15 cigarettes a day. The report cites research indicating that loneliness and isolation increases your risk of heart disease by 29% and the risk for older adults of developing dementia by 50%.

When [interviewed](#) about the report on National Public Radio, Dr. Murthy pointed out that, “you can feel lonely even if you have a lot of people around you, because loneliness is about the quality of your connections.” He went on to question whether young people who use social media as a replacement for in-person relationships are getting the quality connections required to avoid feeling isolated and lonely.

The report and the social connection webpage of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services list several strategies for combating loneliness. One of our favorite interventions comes from the Netherlands. A [Dutch supermarket](#) has introduced a slow checkout lane for lonely seniors who want to chat.

How might we help people in organizations learn to recognize the signs of loneliness and isolation?



### Perspectives on Needs Getting our Attention

- A humorous and insightful take on the complexities of human social interaction from one of our favorite blogs, [Wait But Why](#) by Tim Urban.
- The World Economic Forum (WEF) published a [256-page report](#) on the future of jobs. According to the report, the highest-ranking job skills considered “core” to organizations surveyed by (WEF) are analytical thinking and creative thinking.
- The Wall Street Journal [reports](#) that schools, businesses, and recruiters are now teaching recent college graduates face-to-face social skills.
- The Cato institute [reports](#) that nearly a third of Gen Z favors the government installing surveillance cameras in homes.
- McKinsey reports on a new entry to our business lexicon: [Climate Quitting](#). A climate quitter leaves jobs or turns down offers because an employer fails to meet their [ESG](#) expectations.



## Embracing Uncertainty

Four keys to unlocking hidden opportunities

Unstuck Minds and the award-winning business simulation designers at **Insight Experience** introduce an immersive learning experience to help leaders and teams break free of status-quo thinking. For information: [lisa@unstuckminds.com](mailto:lisa@unstuckminds.com).

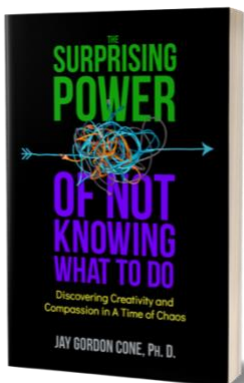


## Community Spotlight

Each quarter we shine a light on a client, network partner, or organization doing inspiring work that helps the world become more creative and compassionate.



Introducing **Ignite You**. A yearlong cohort-based development experience for mid to senior-level professionals. The program connects a peer group of female leaders with a faculty of best-in-class catalysts and coaches. Participants will develop their ability to think, connect, and communicate with impact, compassion, and creativity. If you are interested in learning more about **Ignite You** for yourself or your organization, please visit the [website](#) or reach out to [Lisa Weaver](#).



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