



Mondays with Mike

AULTCARE

MONDAY TUE

Riding an Elephant - balancing the rational and emotional sides of our brain

Jonathan Haidt, in his book *The Happiness Hypothesis*, likens the emotional side of our brain to being an Elephant and the rational side of our brain to being the Rider on that elephant. Perched atop the Elephant, the Rider holds the reins and seems to be the leader. But the Rider's control is precarious because the Rider is so small compared to the Elephant. Anytime the six-ton Elephant and the Rider disagree about which direction to go, the Rider is going to lose. He's completely overmatched.

As we contemplate a change in our work or personal lives, the Elephant is the one who gets things done. If we want to change things, we've got to appeal to both. The Rider provides the planning and direction, and the Elephant provides the energy.

So, if we reach the Riders on our teams, but not the Elephants, team members will have understanding without motivation. If we reach the Elephants, but not the Riders, we'll have passion without direction. When the Elephants and the Riders move together, change can come more easily.

The moral to this unique leadership metaphor is this:

For an individual's behavior to change, we've got to influence not only their environment but their hearts and minds.

This week, let's take a look at something we would like to change. Then, let's find ways to get our Elephants and Riders to move in harmony.

Have a great week!

