PREDICTIONS AND MEMORY LOSS

In “Prediction Predicament” [Advances], Hannah Seo notes that making predictions impairs people’s ability to remember predictive events. I see this a lot in the martial arts. Often when an instructor demonstrates a technique, the students will be busy imagining what comes next and how they think the technique should be performed while failing to see the variation that the instructor is demonstrating. It’s like the students are watching to confirm their predictions instead of observing to learn something new.

IAN McINTYRE via e-mail

RECOVERING FROM ADDICTION

“Hope for Meth Addiction,” by Claudia Wallis [Science of Health], encourages describing the growing evidence base for contingency management as an effective treatment for stimulant use disorder, particularly in conjunction with bupropion and naltrexone. It notes that one trial of the two drugs found that they helped a significant number of treated users test methamphetamine-free at least three quarters of the time.

Wallis’s piece is to be applauded for its apparent recognition that complete abstinence is not the only recovery pathway. Harm reduction is effective, and reoccurrence of substance use is not unusual for most people as they seek recovery. While abstinence-based approaches may be ideal for some, they don’t work for everyone. Contingency management and harm reduction are both important strategies that can lead to improved health and wellness for those who are still struggling with harmful substance use.

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ERRATA

In “The Math of Making Connections,” by Kelsey Houston-Edwards, the bottom illustration in the box “Square Lattice” should have depicted the white pipe at the top left of the lattice filling with water.

In “Scientists: Admit You Have Values,” by Naomi Oreskes [Observatory], the end of the quote attributed to Francis Bacon should have read: “... man prefers to believe what he wants to be true.”