

The Elephant And The Rider - Behaviour Change Model

The metaphor of the Elephant and the Rider is a model for behaviour change defined by Jonathan Haidt. He uses a metaphor of a rider (our rational side) riding an elephant (our emotional side) to describe how and why we think, feel, and act in the ways we do (our behaviour). This model also helps us understand how we can change our behaviours.



Image source: <https://youtu.be/X9KP8uiGZTs>

The model explained:

The rider is our rational, thinking side.

The elephant is our emotional side.

The rider can tell us where we want to go, but our emotions don't always let us go that way; our emotions often dominate us.

This is why even when we know we should be doing something our emotions can stop us or slow us down.

You can help someone change their behaviour using the following steps:

1. Give the rider (the brain) clear directions.
2. Motivate the elephant (by tapping into our emotions).
3. Shape the path and show the way to change.