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The Wisdom Paradox: How Your Mind Can Grow Stronger As Your Brain Grows Older

Elkhonon Goldberg

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The Wisdom Paradox: How Your Mind Can Grow Stronger As Your Brain Grows Older Elkhonon Goldberg
The Wisdom Paradox explores the aging of the mind from a unique, positive perspective. In an era of increasing fears about mental deterioration, world-renowned neuropsychologist Elkhonon Goldberg provides startling new evidence that though the brain diminishes in some tasks as it ages, it gains in many ways. Most notably, it increases in what he terms “wisdom”: the ability to draw upon knowledge and experience gained over a lifetime to make quick and effective decisions. Goldberg delves into the machinery of the mind, separating memory into two distinct types: singular (knowledge of a particular incident or fact) and generic (recognition of broader patterns). As the brain ages, the ability to use singular memory declines, but generic memory is unaffected—and its importance grows. As an individual accumulates generic memory, the brain can increasingly rely upon these stored patterns to solve problems effortlessly and instantaneously. Goldberg investigates the neurobiology of wisdom, and draws on historical examples of artists and leaders whose greatest achievements were realized late in life.

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