Conspiratorial Thinking

FIVE REASONS PEOPLE FALL FOR CONSPIRACY THEORIES

1. **Compelling Stories**
   - Conspiracy theories present exciting, fascinating narratives.

2. **Simplified Explanations**
   - Complex social issues and problems are rarely clear-cut. Conspiracy theories provide people with simplified explanations ... and someone or something to blame.

3. **Motivated Reasoning**
   - Believers in conspiracy theories tend to only search for and present information that confirms their theory — and to find far-fetched reasons to dismiss anything that proves them wrong.

4. **Sense of Belonging**
   - Many conspiracy theory communities provide believers with a sense of connection and purpose that all people need.

5. **Cognitive Biases**
   - Conspiracy theories seem much more credible and compelling than they actually are because they take advantage of common errors in the ways we think.

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**“Proportionality Bias”** is an innate impulse to believe that major problems have major causes.

**“Illusory Pattern Perception,” or “Patternicity,”** is a natural tendency to see meaningful patterns and connections in unrelated events and details.