Identity-based Motivation and Making Sense of Difficulty

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Date: 20th Oct 2023 (Friday)
Time: 10:30 am – 12:00 pm
Venue: Room 4047, Lee Shau Kee Business Building, HKUST

Abstract:
When people experience difficulties thinking about and working on their tasks and goals, does difficulty signal self-relevance or irrelevance, do they double down and engage more or disengage and use their time elsewhere? I draw on identity-based motivation theory to predict and show that these difficulty-as-importance and difficulty-as-impossibility mindsets are better understood as two coins rather than two sides of a single coin and that which one people draw on has consequences for how they think about time, their goal investment, and how painful it feels to let go of impossible dreams. I also show that difficulty-as-impossibility may be less chronically accessible in some cultures than others and draw inferences about what that implies.