

3-2 Module three Activity

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PSY-211: Lifespan Development

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November 13, 2022

Activity Journal

Learned Behavior from an External Stimuli

One learned behavior for me was cooking; I learned from an early age how to do simple things like preparing something to eat for myself and my younger brother if we were hungry and no one was available then. This was before microwaves and food delivery, so food preparation included a stove, possibly an oven, and a knife.

External Stimuli affecting behavior

Stimuli affected this behavior because my younger brother lived in a single-parent household. My mom had to work, so... When we arrived home from school and wanted something or if mom had to work on the weekend, it was either go hungry, eat cereal, or learn some basics of operating the utensils and appliances in the kitchen.

Awareness that the stimuli influenced behavior; if so, how was I aware?

Yes, I knew that my behavior (learning to cook) was influenced by the stimuli (being hungry). I was more aware when mom was scheduled to night work at her job, and part of the behavior was not only to prepare food but to warm it up and clean up afterward. I was aware that I had to take on the behavior willingly to satisfy the stimuli of being hungry and responsible for a younger sibling.

Was the conditioned Behavior Positive or Negative? If positive, how to reinforce, and if negative, how to change.

Most of the learned behavior was positive; the food had been safely prepared, served, and cleaned up. Positive reinforcement for this behavior would be the ability to consume a hot, freshly prepared meal and successfully attend to my younger siblings' needs. Several times, the behavior was harmful, like forgetting to watch the food while cooking and it burns, dropping it

on the floor and having to throw it away, or hurting myself with a knife or other implements. The opposing end of the behaviorally learned stimuli would be, forgetting to prepare or burn part of the meal and ending the day hungry. Another behavioral change to change things would be more cognizant of the learned behavior being performed and block out other, non-important stimuli.

Specific behavioral changes in response to external stimuli.

In continuing with the behavior mentioned earlier (learning to cook), the changes that occurred were: “counterconditioning, stimulus control, reinforcement management, helping relationships, and self-liberation” (Prochaska, Redding, and Evers, 2008). By learning to cook, counterconditioning changed how I could help feed my brother and myself, stimulus control, and being cognizant and aware of the kitchen environment while preparing food. Reinforcement management, being able to have a hot, nutritious meal that I had prepared, my brother and I were able to eat and then continue the remainder of our day more successfully. Helping relationships, the change added to my ability to give to others in their time of need. Knowing I could help my family and friends learn this new skill set. Self-liberation, with this new behavior, I have now proven more maturity, self-reliance, and independence.

Behavior change, was it positive or negative?

The behavior changes at first seemed as if it was negative. Another responsibility was added to my wheelhouse of household tasks. As time progressed, I understood that the behavior change was positive, not only for my family but for myself too. Additionally, the positive was not only for the present but also a behavior that I could carry throughout my life span. It would grow as I sought to increase my knowledge of this behavior.

Learned Behavior; is it an Example of Classical Conditioning, Operant Conditioning, or neither?

I believe that both Watson's (Classical Conditioning) and Skinner's (Operant conditioning) play a part in the learned behavior of cooking. First, Watson's theory, the study of human emotion, in this case, hunger, we want to satisfy this emotion. The behavioral change, learning to cook, is an excellent way to satisfy this need without relying solely on someone else to fulfill this emotion. Secondly, Skinner's theory, behavior that is followed by a pleasant consequence is highly likely will be repeated over and over. The expectation of successfully preparing, serving, and partaking in a meal encourages me to continue with this learned behavior and grow as time goes on.

References

- Prochaska, James O., Redding, Colleen A., & Evers, Kerry E. (2008). The Transtheoretical Model and Stages of Change. In K. Glanz, B. k. Rimer & k. Viswanath (Eds.), *Health Behavior and Health Education* (4th ed., pp. Part 2, Chapter 5). Jossey-Bass.
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