

Good example of operant and aversive conditioning in stopping smoking essay

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There are various methods that a therapist can use to help clients overcome compulsive habits such as smoking. Operant and aversive conditioning are some of the major approaches used. The following shows the steps and actions that a therapist can use. The primary assumption is that the client cooperates throughout the process.

B. F. Skinner argued that pairing actions with appropriate reinforces would lead to the change of behavior (McLeod, 2015). The reinforcement can either be positive, neutral or negative. In this case, the therapist can wrap the cigarettes in packages that have explicit images of the effects of smoking to the persons. Actual images of the smoker would be better placed for this purpose than photographs of other people. That would deter the desire to smoke by creating fear. The therapist may also post similar images in the client's home, put as screen savers of mobile phones or computer to serve as a constant reminder.

Additionally, the client may reward himself or herself when the urge to smoke comes. For example, he can go the nearest coffee shop and take a cup of coffee with a friend. Negative punishment such as working out when the urge arises can also help stop smoking. Such can be as simple as press-ups, sit-ups, among others. Such would reduce the frequency of taking cigarettes significantly and eventually ending.

The therapist can also accompany operant conditioning with aversive conditioning. Nausea-inducing drugs can help in discouraging the client from smoking. Every time the client get the urge to smoke, he or she can take the drug. The resulting bad feeling helps to reduce the desire and consequently smoking.

Operant conditioning helps in reinforcing behaviors by rewarding appropriately. It would be helpful if the client gets exposure to the adverse effects of smoking by placing images of him or her in the wraps, and other areas that readily visible. The client can also engage in other punitive actions such as working out. Aversive conditioning involves inducing of unpleasant stimuli, and a nausea-producing drug is appropriate.

Work cited

McLeod Saul. Skinner -Operant Conditioning. 2015. N. P. N. d. Web. July 17, 2015. Available at