

Changing behavior case analysis

Psychology, Behaviorism



Changing Behavior Case Analysis Carlissa Tigue Psychology Narketta

Sparkman Baker College October 25, 2012 The client, Mrs Freeman has been a drinker for 15 years and she currently drinks a fifth of Vodka a day and a six pack of beer. She is the mother of three girls and three boys. She has developed health issues related to her long term drinking habit. Mrs. Freeman wants to quit drinking for her own health and the health of her children. Classical conditioning could explain Mrs. Freeman's drinking addition. Her drinking acted as an unconditioned stimulus.

As she continued to drink, she craved for more drinks and then stronger drinks this becomes her unconditioned response. Over time social, environmental and psychological influences became the conditioned stimulus for Mrs. Freeman's drinking habit. When Mrs. Freeman finds herself in certain situations that make her feel uncomfortable her conditioned response is to have a drink. An example of this would be that Mrs. Freeman finds having depending solely on herself stressful, so she has a drink or two or maybe three.

Mrs Freeman knows that this is not the behavior she wants to continue but because of classical conditioning (Morris & Maisto, p. 153), she continues to drink whenever possible. The negative effects of her drinking are poor health for her and her children. The cost of buying liquid and beer on a regular bases are things Mrs. Freeman wants to stop. Mrs Freeman could use classical conditioning to learn to quit drinking. She also could go to AA meetings and get a sponsor. The meetings would be the unconditioned stimulus (Morris & Maisto, p. 154). Every time Mrs.

Freeman wants a drink she could go to a meeting or call her sponsor. Mrs. Freeman should pay attention to things that upset her and led her to having a drink. She should continue to go to her AA meetings and talking to her sponsor. In time the continued behavior of going to AA and speaking with her sponsor would become her conditioned stimulus. When Mrs Freeman finds herself in a situation that she cannot handle, she calls her sponsor or attend a meeting, this would become her conditioned response to situation that she cannot handle. Operant Conditioning could also play a part in Mrs.

Freeman's drinking habit. Mrs. Freeman started drinking when she was younger, as she got older she drunk more due to pressure. She continued to drink because she had so much going on, that she could not handle. The good feeling associated with drinking acted as a positive reinforcement, that made her continue her behavior. Now that Mrs. Freeman is grown and all on her own drinking has had a negative effect on Mrs. Freeman's life. She has gone to work drinking, and been warn not to do it again. This has not stop Mrs. Freeman from drinking, she now just hides her drinking better. Mrs.

Freeman knows that if she continues this behavior, she could loss her job. She has been affected by both positive and negative reinforcement (Morris & Maisto, p 159). The negative reinforcement of drinking is poor health and the possibility of losing her job. These things have made Mrs. Freeman motivated to quit drinking. Instead of having a drink Mrs. Freeman will call her sponsor or even have a cup of coffee. She will reward herself by buying herself a new dress every time, she doesn't pick up a drink. Mrs. Freeman is motivated to quit drinking for her health and the health of her children.

Cognitive and social learning also play a role in maintain unwanted behaviors (Morris & Maisto, p 174). Growing up with a father who was drinking everyday played a part in Mrs. Freeman's emotional state. She grew up not knowing that the same thing could happen to her. Mrs Freeman saw her father drinking every day, she stole drinks when her father was not around. Mrs. Freeman modified her behavior so that her mother nor father knew she was drinking. Seeing her father get yelled at by her mother led Mrs. Freeman to learning how to not get caught drinking.

When she reached adulthood, she had tried to quit drinking on several occasion. She felt that it was something wrong with her. As a young adult just finishing school Mrs. Freeman felt overwhelmed, and the drinking become worst. This type of behavior is known as learned helplessness (Morris & Mastio, p. 164). My conclusion is that after speaking with Mrs Freeman, and hearing her story with drinking. Mrs. Freeman will continue to seek help to overcome her addition. With the right people and motivation, she will be fine. Mrs. Freeman will live a productive life in society if she continues to follow the plans that she has set forth.