

Cognition on behavior

Psychology



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Cognition on Behavior The pathway between behavior and cognition is intertwined. This goes along with the debate of the biological and environmental implications within society. It is much like sociology in that there is a simultaneous effectiveness between the two. The cognitive patterns and thoughts within a person are shaping the behavior while external behavior is concurrently shaping the cognitive patterns. A common type of therapy, which is used when there are behavioral abnormalities, which are the result of cognition, is CBT, or cognitive behavioral therapy, which relies on a therapist to help reconstruct new cognitive patterns in an effort to deter the abnormal behavior. There are many different abnormal behaviors, which reflect unhealthy thought patterns. They can surface due to stress, anger, sadness, etc. One of the most popular topics in contemporary health psychology is the idea of stress. In our increasingly globalizing and demanding the world, the pressures of life have increased due to our use of technology in attempts to become more efficient. In this way, the daily stressors of life have increased. Stress is when a person's perceived coping resources are not enough to balance their perceived demands. The cognitions that a person has regarding stress helps determine the types of coping measures that a person will implement. There are two primary types of coping: adaptive and maladaptive. Adaptive coping measures are usually healthy and productive ways of dealing with stress such as exercising, working, etc. Maladaptive coping measures are usually unhealthy and in some cases can cause additional problems such as drinking, drug use, etc. Thus, the way in which a person thinks will cause a reaction in how they will deal with these stressful issues (Soreq, Friedman, & Kaufer, 2010). Another malady that has roots in cognitive patterns is depression. Depression is

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characterized by low energy levels, periods of intense sadness, changes in eating and sleeping patterns, etc. In cases of depression, a person becomes a prisoner to their own thoughts. As a result, it is hard for them to escape the problems that they cling to because most of the time they are caught in a circular path of reasoning. This can occur at any point of a person's life, but is usually known to accompany the death of a loved one, after periods of high stress, etc. The depression lies in the cognitive aspects of psychology, but can also affect the behavior as well as the physiological ways of being. Depression can change the levels of neurotransmitters in the brain, which will again in turn cause changes in the cognitions and behaviors of the person. Lastly, there are a majority of anxiety disorders that have a seat in the abnormal cognition patterns. For example, hypochondriasis and obsessive-compulsive disorder have cognitive patterns that are fixed and focused on specific types of symptoms. Therefore, this leads to them behaving as if they are sick all the time or undergo rituals in order to control their compulsions respectively. While there are medications that can help regulate this behavior, CBT and other methods of therapy are commonly used in order to help a person understand their thought patterns to correct the behavior. There is a delicate balance between the external world and the internal world of a person that impacts the overall relationship of cognition and behavior. Some conditions are deterministically rooted, while others are the result of environmental interactions. Thus, there are many different therapies that can be applied in helping a person alter a specific behavior, however the most commonly used ones are behavioral therapy, CBT therapy and rational emotive behavioral therapy, REBT. A therapist must look to see the relationship between the start of the person's behavior and see what

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environmental/biological/psychological inputs would have caused this arise in behavior. From there, a therapist can examine the relationship and attempt to undo the damage through assigning homework assignments to help a client learn, classical/operant conditioning, etc. In some cases of clinical disorders, such as schizophrenia, medications are the main application of therapy due to the fact that the cognitive patterns are rooted in abnormalities of the physiology and neuroscience of the individual. A psychiatrist would implement medications that would affect the neurotransmitters and other physiology that should impact/control abnormal thought patterns, thus restricting the abnormal behavior (Corey, 2008). The connection between most cognitive patterns and behaviors are understood, however as more is discovered about the biological aspects of psychology, researchers learn more about what drives behavior and how the environment is involved in shaping this or vice versa. As more is learned, the above-mentioned techniques are modified and other techniques are created in an effort to further correct abnormal thought patterns and behavior.

Resources Corey, G. (2009). Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy. Belmont, CA: Brooks Cole. Soreq, H, Friedman, A, & Kaufer, D. (2010). Stress - from molecules to behavior: a comprehensive analysis of the neurobiology of stress response. New York, NY: Wiley.