

Behavioral traps

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Behavioral Traps There are five behavioral traps. Those five behavioral traps are: time delay, investment, deterioration, ignorance and collective. We fall into some of these traps easily and on a daily bases, while some of us find that they are also easily avoided. The trap that you fall into really only depends on you. I would like to define and give an example of each of the behavioral traps, before I discuss which I think is the easiest to fall for and the easiest to avoid. Time delay is momentary gratification that clashes with long term consequences (short term vs. ong term). An example is finding it hard to diet or exercise regularly (Plous, 1993). The ignorance trap is the negative behavior which are not understood or seen at the outset. An example would be: People, who smoked in the 19th Century, they didn't realize thatsmokingled to lung cancer and if the information would have been available, many would never have begun to smoke in the first place (Plous, 1993). The collective trap involves more than one party. The example for this one is rush hour traffic.

Here everyone prefers to drive at the same time, taking their own self interest into play and letting everyone suffer (Plous, 1993). The investment trap occurs when prior expenditures of time, moneyor other resources lead people to make choices they normally wouldn't make. An example would be investing money on something to help out the community only to find out at 90% done that another company is doing the same thing but theirs is better, debating on whether to finish the other 10% or not (Plous, 1993).

Deterioration trap is similar to the investment trap but the cost and affect occur over time.

An example for this trap is a heroin addict. You do it to get that great feeling but then your body becomes tolerant to the drug and you then up the dose to get that same great feeling, and then you'd rather take the drug to avoid withdrawal symptoms. So what started as a pleasurable feeling ends up in a nightmare of dependence (Plous, 1993). Those are the five behavioral traps, I studied and read because to a point they all are easy to fall into, but one that I know I have troubles with and that most people have fall easily to is the time delay trap.

How many of us have tried diet after diet and exercise after exercise and end up not sticking to the plan. That's what the time delay trap does to you. " Any situation in which short term consequences run counter to long term consequences can turn into a time delay trap" (Plous, 1993). Another example of the time delay trap could be the apples in the Garden of Eden, because the apple is regarded as bait and is the ultimate temptation with its entrapping consequences (Plous, 1993).

As you look at the definitions in the earlier paragraph you might think that there really isn't one that is easily avoided, but I believe that the deterioration is that one. I believe this because this trap takes time to occur/fall into, while with the other traps they seem more likely easier to fall for. The reason deterioration take more time than the others is because it produces behavior that may seem absurd or self-destructive to others whom haven't seen the situation evolve. (Plous, 1993).

Just like the heroin addiction, your body eventually gets use to all the things you are doing and you think you need more because you aren't getting the

same affect. So over time your body takes a beating and starts to be self destructive and so on. For the time delay trap the person wants to exercise and/or diet, but something keeps stopping you. The long term consequences for not exercising and/or dieting could result in health problems and obesity. I just happen to be one of those people.

For months I have been planning to exercise more, but I always end up finding an excuse not to and then it only leads to me now being healthy or losing the weight that I have put on in the mean time. The thing that is striking about the time delay trap is that relative is that you end up with small pains and pleasures in the short run, will produce behavior that is devastating maybe even lethal in the long run. (Plous, 1993). Like for example smoking, it's a short term pleasure but in the long run you can get cancer.

We never really think that the things we do/ could be considered as a trap. We just go on day by day either eventually doing something about what we have been putting up with or just deal with the long term consequence. Which traps we find easy to fall for or to avoid really depend on you, we all have different weak points in our mind and bodies. We think about the things that we put into our bodies, but do we really think about the long term effects? References Plous, S. (1993). *The Psychology of Judgment and Decision Making*. McGraw-Hill: New York, NY.