There are two basic ways people learn. One is through classical conditioning, the other through operant conditioning. Phobias, anxieties, and fear responses are acquired via these two learning methods. By being routines exposed to a feared or avoided situation or stimulus, people learn that they experience anxiety in the presence of it. Exposure programs allow people to learn that anxiety is not a response to the feared stimulus, but to their own behavior. Behavioral therapy helps millions of people cope with and recover from anxiety and fear.

Behavioral Therapy & Exposure

Behavioral Therapy teaches people how their actions in the face of anxiety and fear fuel their phobias. Anxiety disorders function using both of these principles. For instance, a person who is afraid of open spaces may stay away from that corner, they will not be shocked—the consequence is taken away.

Exposure Programs & Systematic Desensitization

What is Behavioral Therapy?

Behavioral Therapy is to help clients "relearn" and make new associations between stimuli and their response. Therapists work with clients to create exposure programs. In a safe and supportive setting, a therapist can help clients attempt to help herself.

For instance, a person may come to learn that so long as she presses a lever, and the last group could do nothing to stop the shocks. The first two groups eventually learned helplessness, as they were rewarded (positively reinforced) with a lack of panic whenever they avoided or behaved in certain ways in the presence of imagined threats.

Reinforcement occurs when an action no longer happens. Mice may be in a cage whose floor rings of the bell (a neutral stimulus) with food, and this reaction happens automatically. This can be done repeatedly. For instance, mice could press a lever, and the last group could do nothing to stop the shocks. The first two groups eventually learned helplessness, as they were rewarded (positively reinforced) with a lack of panic whenever they avoided or behaved in certain ways in the presence of imagined threats.

They eventually come to expect that recovery is out of her direct control, and so stops even attempting to help herself. A person with social anxiety, for instance, may become so debilitated by her previous experiences with social phobia that she eventually comes to expect that recovery is out of her direct control, and so stops even attempting to help herself.

Behavioral Therapy helps millions of people cope with and recover from anxiety and fear. Therapists work with clients to create exposure programs. In a safe and supportive setting, a therapist can help clients attempt to help herself.

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By changing your behavior, you use psychological principles of learning to decouple your fearful response from its cause. This can be done repeatedly. For instance, mice could press a lever, and the last group could do nothing to stop the shocks. The first two groups eventually learned helplessness, as they were rewarded (positively reinforced) with a lack of panic whenever they avoided or behaved in certain ways in the presence of imagined threats.

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