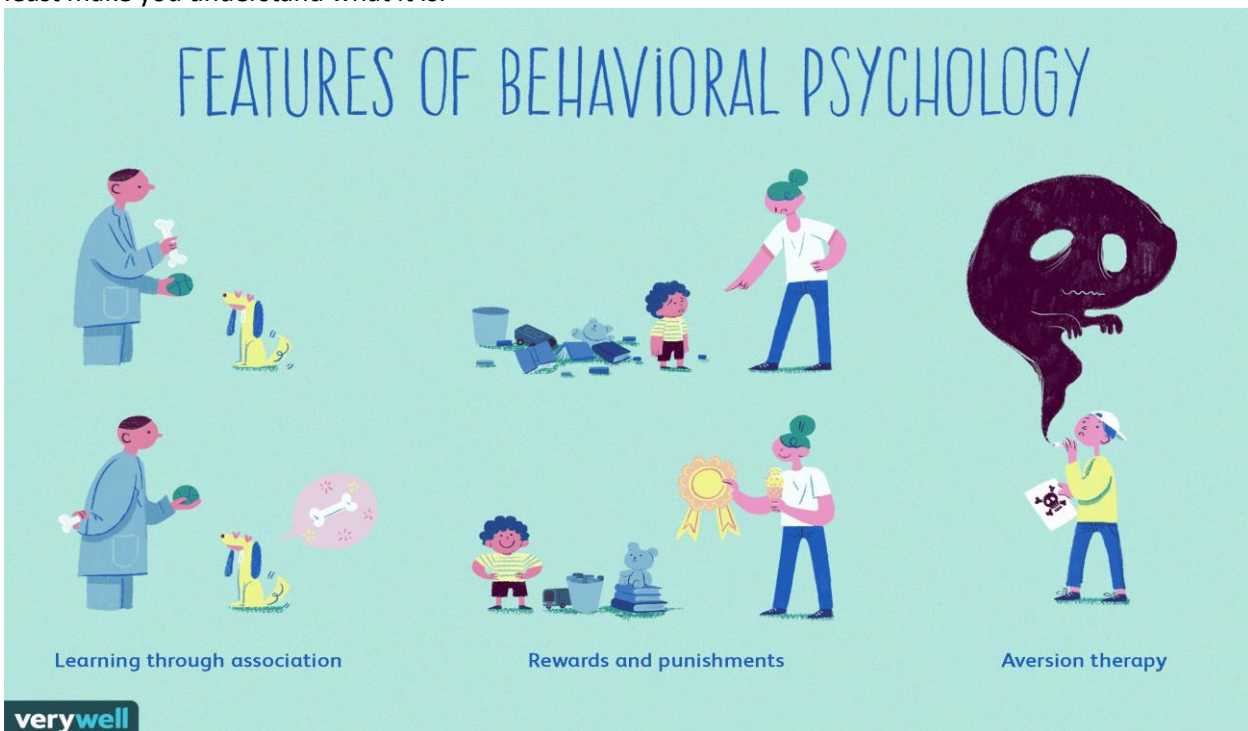


Behavioral Psychology

This topic right there is a very vague topic. I don't think I can cover every aspect of it but I am going to at least make you understand what it is.



verywell

Starting from behavioral psychology itself what is it? As we all know that words ending with 'ology' means 'study of' and 'psych' means 'the mind'. So, psychology means study of mind or study that involves mind and word 'behavioral' itself suggest that it has something to do with behavior, but we do not define it as it is. We define 'Behavioral Psychology' as 'the study of the connection between our behavior and our mind.' It tells how our mind is connected to our behavior.

It is also sometimes referred as 'Behaviorism'. Well now let's define behaviorism, it is an approach to the understanding of behaviors of human and other animals. Behaviorism assumes that all behaviors are either reflexes produced by a response to a certain stimulus in the environment or may be a consequence/result of that individual's history.

Let me quote an experiment here to make you understand this concept.

So, a Russian physiologist, 'Ivan Pavlov' (1849-1936), was experimenting on his dogs that their salivation increases when they heard or smell food. He put all his dogs in isolation with a food bowl and a device which can measure their saliva production. With time he noticed that the dogs would begin to salivate when a door was opened to feed them. Apparently, this response demonstrated the basic principle of classical conditioning, which is not a concept. It means dogs conditioned food with door opening which on the other hand means their mind associated door opening to the food resulting in certain behavior such as jumping in excitement and salivation.

So, we understood now that what is behavioral psychology. Let's move forward to why we behave in certain way, why certain behaviors are associated with environmental events.

Scientists are still trying to study about the patterns in our actions and behaviors. Our behaviors are associated with certain stimuli from outside world and sometimes from our past and we keep that in our mind and then behave in certain way whenever we see that stimuli.

Now we would move on to our habits. We acquire our habits as a result of certain triggers we see around us. Scientists define these triggers, which regulates our habits, in 5 categories. Namely: Time, Location, preceding events, Emotional state, and other people.

Number 1 is time. Time, I think, the most common trigger. We are used to Certain tasks at time of the day, we just do it unconsciously like brushing our teeth, having a breakfast, having a smoke break at its time of the day. This trigger helps us to stick with the routine.

Number 2 is location. Our brain associates certain locations, like used to brush our teeth in bathroom, smoking outside, having meal on dining table. So, acquiring certain habits along with time, we need location too. If you must assign new habits, you must overcome previous triggers.

Number 3 is preceding events. Our brain also associates certain habits with preceding events, meaning what happened earlier or before it, like washing your face after brushing your teeth, or dressing up after breakfast, smoking after lunch. We do all these unconsciously without even noticing or trying because our mind has already associated these behaviors with preceding event trigger.

Number 4 is emotional state. Some of our habits are associated in our mind through emotions. Like calling your mom if you are late at work, getting a present for friends or family on special occasions. Emotional state can also be considered as a trigger if we get depressed or upset on certain event means our specific emotional state, of being depressed or upset, is connected to that event and events like that.

Number 5 is other people. The old saying is 'A man is known by his company.' Yes, it is true. We are going to talk about how other people around you triggers losing or acquiring good or bad habits. A study in the 'New England Journal of Medicine' found that if your friend become obese, then your risk of obesity increases by 57%, even if your friend lives hundreds of miles away.

In short, our habits/ behaviors are simply responses to the environment we are in whether its time, location, emotions, events or other people triggering it, and our mind associates these behaviors to these triggers.

Now people are studying even the intentions, thoughts, and reactions of criminals before, during and after their crime. It basically studies that what makes someone commit a crime. So, you see connecting our behaviors of our mind which means may be unconsciously our mind thinks about certain activities so by this phenomenon we are able to study and reason the crimes of criminals even if its murder or theft or anything. People are out there who are trying to study criminals, which is good, because by this we know humans are not that bad after all, on which you can disagree with me. This type of study also tells us the reasons why that person got involved act so that crimes could be controlled and certain behaviors, of others to these people who lead them to crimes can be prevented.