



Changing Offender Behavior Through Effective Disapproval in a Correctional Environment

By: Phil Nunes Vice President
Oriana House, Inc.

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Principles of Cognitive Behavioral Theory

1. Thinking affects behavior
2. Thinking can be influenced
3. Changes in thinking will produce changes in emotion and behavior

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Principles of Social Learning Theory

1. Human being learn to behave by watching other human beings behave
2. The behavior human beings learn is reinforced by their social environment

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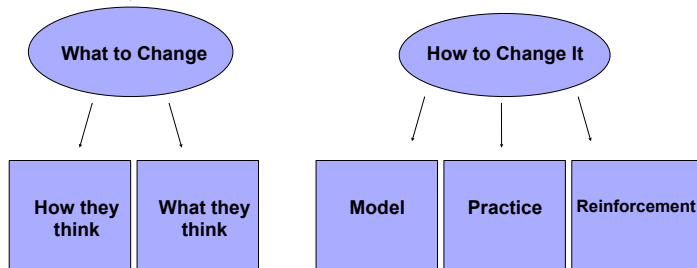
Social Learning Theory (cont.)

Social learning theory incorporates the behavioral processes of:

1. Modeling
2. Practice
3. Reinforcement

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Cognitive Behavioral VS



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... Combined Result

In combining CBT and SLT we can:

- teach and reinforce the cognitive skills that will reduce the likelihood of offender recidivism.
- Assist offenders in productive behavior change

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Changing Roles

- As employees working in a community “correctional” environment we must move away from the stereotypical roles of correctional punishers to viewing ourselves as “agents of change”. We must achieve this through effective role modeling and rewarding behaviors to reinforce pro-social actions.

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Changing Environment

- We must create an environment that is geared towards repetitive reinforcement of positive or pro-social behaviors...this can only be achieved by reinforcing such behavior.
- In changing our environment towards reinforcing behavior on a regular basis, we will find ourselves having to punish less and create a more positive environment for our staff and clients to work / live in.

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Importance of Pro-social Modeling

- Replacing anti-social “high risk” behavior with pro-social “low risk” behavior is the goal
- Consistent demonstrations of pro-social behaviors provide quality opportunities for learner imitation

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Quality Model Characteristics

- Personable
- Objective
- Collaborative
- Competent
- Reward pro-social behaviors
- Punish anti-social behaviors
- Demonstrates pro-social behaviors and attitudes

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Awareness of Personal Characteristics

- How does your “stuff” affect your interactions
- Personality
- Demeanor
- Attitudes
- Style
- “Hang Ups”

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High Quality Relationships Improve Likelihood of Behavior Change

- Behavior is reinforced through environmental cues
- Demonstrate respect
- Demonstrate enthusiasm
- Demonstrate concern
- Teach
- Reward
- Punish

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Setting the Tone

Objectivity

- Treat what a client says/does merely as information to work with
- Avoid personal judgments / interpretations
- Avoid guessing at motives

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Setting the Tone

Empathy

- An informed understanding of a clients situation & what maintains their ambivalence toward change.
- An acceptance without judgment of the client
- Some behaviors are not acceptable – all people are
- Clients need to perceive this acceptance before they feel safe in trying new ways of behaving

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Facilitating Change

Learning

- Learning refers to a relatively permanent change in behavior produced by experience
- The law of effect state that a response followed by a pleasant consequence (reinforcement) will tend to be repeated, and a response that is followed by an unpleasant consequence (punishment) will tend to decrease in frequency

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Defining a Behavior

WHY DO WE DEFINE A BEHAVIOR

- Need to communicate exactly what we want someone to do or refrain from
the client needs to know, in specific terms what you want them to do
- Need to define, specifically, for ourselves what we want the client to do
we need to know what a specific behavior looks like so we know when it is being performed

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Defining a Behavior

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD TARGET BEHAVIORS

- Narrow in scope
May only address part of the problem
May be limited by time and place

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Defining a Behavior

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD TARGET BEHAVIORS

- Unambiguously defined
- precise definition
 - defined so well anyone will recognize it

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Defining a Behavior

ACCELERATION AND DECELERATION

- Increase use of adaptive behaviors
- Decrease maladaptive behaviors
- Best to specify both – extinction and replacement

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Defining a Behavior

HOW DO WE DEFINE A BEHAVIOR

- Dead Man Rule
- Never ask a client to do something a dead person can do
- Ash them to something active

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SECTION 4

Effective Use of Reinforcement

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Reinforcement

The systematic use of reinforcement is the most powerful tool in strengthening or teaching new behavior.

The effective use of reinforcement involves selecting and administering appropriate reinforcers.

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Reinforcement

DEFINITION

Positive reinforcement involves the application of a stimulus to increase behavior

Example

An offender completes his homework assignments for one week, and receives two extra hours of free time.

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Reinforcement

DEFINITION

Negative reinforcement involves the removal of a stimulus to increase behavior

Example:

An offender remains sober for four consecutive months, and the probation officer extends her curfew

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SELECTING REINFORCERS

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Reinforcement Types of Reinforcer

- **Tangible:** extra food, magazines, letters, phone calls, pass time, material objects that stand for something or can be exchanged
- **Symbolic:** certificates, awards, points, tokens
- **Social:** Attention, praise, approval (most commonly used)

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Social Rewards are the most powerful

- Easy to administer
- Limitless supply
- Used immediately
- Natural reinforcers

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Reinforcement

EXAMPLE OF REINFORCERS

Some sample reinforcers in correctional environments include:

- specific praise/feedback on performance
- private room/choosing desk or bed
- extra visit/telephone call, television/radio privileges
- going outside
- indirect praise
- group recognition
- field trip
- game room privileges
- Items from commissary
- extra shower
- job in special setting
- extra food/snacks
- free time
- lunch with staff member
- weekend pass
- badges, ribbons, certificates
- playing host for visitors

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Reinforcement

GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING REINFORCERS

- The client to select from a menu of reinforcers
- Consider using generalized reinforcers
- Consider asking the person

Generalized reinforcers are consequences that are pleasant or reinforcing for most people (e.g. food, money, and social attention)

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Reinforcement

GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTERING REINFORCERS

- You cannot tell whether any given stimulus will be a reinforcer for a behavior until you try it and observe its effect on the behavior of interest
- What works as a reinforcer for one person may not be a reinforcer for another person

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Reinforcement

GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTERING REINFORCERS

- The reinforcer must be administered during or immediately following the behavior
- Reinforcement must be contingent on performing the desired behavior. In other words, the person must be required to engage in the desired behavior in order to receive reinforcement
- Reinforcers should be administered consistently

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Reinforcement

GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTERING REINFORCERS

- The client should be aware that the reinforcer is a consequence of performing the target behavior
- Continuous reinforcement is useful when first strengthening a behavior, but then switch to an intermittent schedule of reinforcement in order to maintain the behavior (i.e., make it resistant to extinction)

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Small Group Discussion

Discuss with your colleagues some reinforcers you might have at your facility, some you could institute, and how you might identify additional reinforcers

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EFFECTIVE SOCIAL REINFORCEMENT

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Reinforcement

EFFECTIVE SOCIAL REINFORCEMENT

- Immediately tell the offender that you like the type of behavior or speech just exhibited
- Explain why you like what the client said or did (provide specific reasons).
- The support provided to the client regarding the approved behavior is given greater emphasis in order to distinguish it from the type of support normally given to the client.

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Reinforcement

EFFECTIVE SOCIAL REINFORCEMENT

- The staff member encourages the client to think about why the behavior for which he/she was just rewarded is desirable, and what kinds of short and long term benefits can be derived through continued use of this behavior
- Use a variety of social reinforcers
- Pair you social reinforcement with other reinforcers

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Reinforcement Role Plays

“Giving Feedback” skill steps

1. Decide if you want to provide objective information to someone about their behavior, thoughts, and feelings.
2. Decide what kind of information you wish to provide
3. Think about different way to give the information and pick one way
4. Pick the right time and place to give feedback
5. Give the other person the information in an objective manner

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Punishment/Response Cost / Effective
Disapproval

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Punishment

Punishment also involves the application of
a stimulus to decrease behavior

Example

An offender has possession of contraband,
and the correctional officer gives him extra
chores to do

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Punishment

Punishment also involves the removal of a stimulus to decrease behavior

Example

An offender has a positive drug screen after a weekend pass, and his case manager takes away his privileges for one week

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ADMINISTERING PUNISHMENT

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Punishment

ADMINISTERING PUNISHERS

- The consequence (removal of reinforcers or introduction of undesirable consequences) should occur immediately after the target behavior
- The consequence should be administered each time the target behavior occurs
- The client should be made aware of the target behavior for which the consequence will be administered

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EFFECTIVE DISAPPROVAL

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Effective Disapproval

Recall the importance of social reinforcers from our previous discussion

The effective use of disapproval is also an important part of the behavioral change process!

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Effective Disapproval

COMPONENTS OF EFFECTIVE DISAPPROVAL

- Immediately tell the offender that you did not like the type of behavior or speech just exhibited by the client
- Explain why you did not like what the offender said or did (provide specific reasons)

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Effective Disapproval

COMPONENTS OF EFFECTIVE DISAPPROVAL

- The staff member encourages the client to think about why the behavior is undesirable and what kinds of short and long term consequences will be derived through continued use of this behavior
- Alternative pro-social behaviors are discussed, modeled and /or rehearsed with the client

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Effective Disapproval through Feedback

Role Plays

“Giving Feedback” skill steps

1. Decide if you want to provide objective information to someone about their behavior, thoughts, and feelings.
2. Decide what kind of information you wish to provide
3. Think about different way to give the information and pick one way
4. Pick the right time and place to give feedback
5. Give the other person the information in an objective manner

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Effective Use of Authority

COMPONENTS OF EFFECTIVE USE OF AUTHORITY

- Focus message on behavior and not the client
- Be direct and specific concerning demands
- Use your normal voice. Do not yell and scream !!!
- Specify choice and attendant consequences-this is a big one! Do not use doomsday ultimatums

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Effective Use of Authority

COMPONENTS OF EFFECTIVE USE OF AUTHORITY

- Give encouraging messages
- Support words with action – Follow through!
- Provide respectful guidance towards compliance
- Looking for good things to not just compliance monitor
- Staff reward or praise compliance

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Avoiding Power Struggles

- Disengage yourself
- Divert Client's Attention
- De-escalate
- Make reasonable accommodations
- Validate client's concern
- Keep the focus on choices
- Use your energy constructively

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Setting Limits

- Keep your focus on behavior
- Use normal voice
- Specify choices with accompanying consequences
- Establish clear, objective limits
- Give encourage message
- Support your words with actions
- Consistently enforce consequences
- Video

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Effective Reinforcement and Effective Disapproval

Discussion Questions

- Describe some of the barriers to selecting / administering reinforcers
- Discuss how you could go about implementing effective reinforcement and disapproval practices
- Assess your program and determine ways to deal with any deficiencies