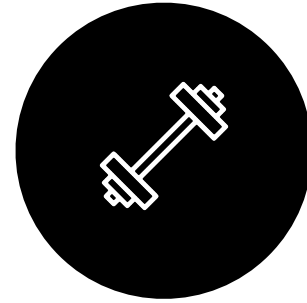


# LEARNING and Strengthening



At times, ***your thoughts may get in the way of successful execution of an idea.*** It's because the ***mind gets conditioned to give attention to limiting behaviours, thoughts and habits.*** This causes misalignment. Find out how ***you can re-learn and strengthen your mind to be more success-seeking.***

**S**o often people pay an expensive price for a missed opportunity. A lot of the times, this is the result of how the mind has been conditioned overtime to think from a *fixed mindset* rather than from a *growth mindset*. This can occur through a process of *learning called, classical conditioning*. It's learning that occurs when a neutral stimulus becomes associated with a stimulus. This theory was identified by Ivan Pavlov. He noticed that each time he rang a bell before presenting food to dogs, they would begin to salivate because through classical conditioning, they associated the ringing of the bell (neutral stimulus) with food (stimulus).

With the case of developing a fixed mindset, over time

you may have learned to associate a certain stimulus that you've been conditioned to with a conditioned response. For example, perhaps you've always been around negative, unsupportive people and their opinions have led you to turn your back on certain opportunities out of fear of being negatively judged. Later in life you may be in the company of uplifting and positive people, but you may perceive their good-hearted feedback as being judged this may create the same fear in you causing you to back down on potential success. What if you learn to reduce your fear of potential judgements and teach yourself to cope with unwanted situations and move ahead?

## **ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY**

ACT was developed by Steven C. Hayes in 1982. It

helps people unlearn limiting behaviours by acknowledging them and embracing their thoughts and feelings. It incorporates mindfulness along with behaviour change strategies to get one to commit to actions that will enrich their life.\*

The ACT framework consists of six core processes:

1. **Acceptance** - allow the negative conditioned behaviour.
2. **Cognitive Defusion** - view the experience from opposite views.
3. **Being Present** - awareness of the present without predicting the outcome.
4. **Self as Context** - self outside of the experience.

# CONDITIONING YOUR MIND TO LEARN POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS STRENGTHENS YOUR ABILITY TO CREATE HAPPINESS AND SUCCESS FOR YOURSELF.

5. **Values** - establishing core beliefs
6. **Committed Action** - committing to action and positive behaviour changes consistent with values.

ACT is a third wave therapy which prioritizes health promotion from a holistic approach of behavioural and psychological processes and eliminate limiting behaviours by diminishing classical and negative operate conditioning.

## ***OPERANT CONDITIONING FOR SUCCESSFUL HABITS***

B.F. Skinner was a behavioural psychologist and he developed the theory of operant conditioning - it's the idea that behaviour is determined by its consequences; whether it be by reinforcements or punishments that will either reduce or increase a certain behaviour.

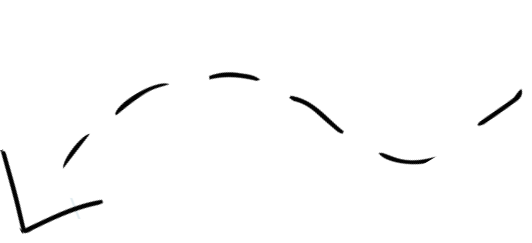
Operant conditioning is the result of behaviours you exhibit that are under conscious control - this can be applied to the way you learn and unlearn certain habits and behaviours. There are two components of this type of conditioning: *reinforcement and punishment*:

1. **Reinforcement** is any event that either strengthens or increases a behaviour. There are two kinds of reinforcers:

- a. **Positive reinforcers** - favourable outcomes after the behaviour occurs. Such as keeping up with your fitness routine for a week and then rewarding yourself with a treat meal.
  - b. **Negative reinforcers** - the removal of unfavourable events after the behaviour occurs. You may have done a good job on a project at work and your boss doesn't micromanage you as much.
2. **Punishment** is an event that causes a decrease in a certain behaviour. There are two kinds of punishments:
    - a. **Positive punishment** - the outcome that weakens a certain behaviour following an event. Maybe your fitness coach may add one mile run to every workout because you haven't been committed to your program.
    - b. **Negative reinforcers** - a favourable outcome or event is removed after a behaviour occurs. If you don't follow deadlines, your boss may remove the mini basketball net in the office.

## ***STRENGTHEN YOUR POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS***

As you know, setting small goals motivates individuals to take action. Consider incorporating operant conditioning reinforcers into your action plan to better establish success habits as you work towards fulfilling your goals.



**DO YOU FIND YOURSELF EXHIBITING LIMITING BEHAVIOUR TRAITS THAT MAY BE PREVENTING YOU FROM SUCCEEDING WITH YOUR ENDEAVOURS? (IF YOU AGREE WITH MOST OF THESE, IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO LEARN HABITS FOR SUCCESS )**

- You often relate your past negative experiences to your current situations
- You've never considered setting punishments for your continuous negative behaviours
- Self-awareness has not always been on the forefront of your day-to-day life
- You've rarely stopped to experience an event outside of yourself
- You don't take time out to celebrate your positive behaviours
- Your focus is on all the things that aren't working rather than reinforcing behaviours that present positive outcomes

**HERE ARE 10 WAYS TO LEARN AND STRENGTHEN YOUR SUCCESS HABITS**

**#1 Reinforcement.** Create both positive and negative reinforcers to reward your success habits. Change up your reinforcers often to keep yourself motivated.

**#2 Have an accountability partner.** Pair up with a good friend and keep each other accountable. Implement reinforcers as needed.

**#3 Raise your self-awareness.** Identify your values, your core beliefs and set boundaries. This helps you align your thoughts with your actions, and limits negative behaviours from arising.

**#4 Create a visual reinforcement tracker.**

Reward your new habits/progress with stickers or checkmarks. The visual representation motivates you to build more positive habits.

**#5 Change your environment/social activities.** Is there an opportunity for you to remove yourself from a certain unsupportive or limiting environment? Notice how your habits begin to change.

**#6 Celebrate your successes.** When you give attention to your positive behaviours rather than focus on your challenges or limiting behaviours, you are likely diminish your negative habits.

**#7 Identify your triggers.** Keep a notebook handy with you at all times and write down situations, thoughts and feelings that trigger behaviours that lead to negative consequences.

**#8 Live in the present moment.** Gain control of your mind by focusing on the tasks that need to be done during a specific moment. This prevents you from exhibiting negative behaviours.

**#9 Create a schedule/routine.** Consistency is key towards learning, and strengthening positive habits.

**#10 Desensitize yourself to distractions.** When you eliminate certain distractions, you are able to better demonstrate positive behaviours towards achieving a goal. Identify potential distractions, i.e. social media, negative people, constant snacking and isolate yourself from these 'unnecessary noises.'