

Behaviorism



- John B. Watson
 - Little Albert – classically conditioned Baby Albert to be scared of everything that was white and furry, by pairing a white rat (etc.) with a loud gong noise behind him.

Classical Conditioning in Practice

CC is used in a range of different settings, many of which are concerned with therapeutic benefits. These include:

Aversion therapy and systematic desensitisation.

Aversion Therapy

- When people develop behaviours that are habitual and harmful to themselves or to others, such as substance dependence, it is difficult to help them permanently stop the unwanted behaviour.
- **Aversion therapy** is a form of behaviour therapy that applies CC principles to inhibit or discourage undesirable behaviour by associating it with an aversive stimulus.
- The aim of aversion therapy is to suppress or weaken undesirable behaviour.
- E.g. to stop unwanted behaviour such as nail biting, we might paint our nails with a foul-tasting substance.
- The association between nail biting and the unpleasant taste is learned quickly.

Limitations of Aversion Therapy

- The learned aversion often fails to generalize.
- People may experience the aversion only when they *know* that the UCS is going to coincide with alcohol consumption.



When was aversion therapy first used?

- 1930s to treat alcoholism.
- Alcoholics were administered painful electric shocks whenever they could smell, see or taste alcohol.
- Today, nausea-inducing drugs are paired with alcohol consumption to make the alcoholic feel ill.



Association becomes so strong that the person begins to anticipate nausea as an inevitable result of consuming alcohol.

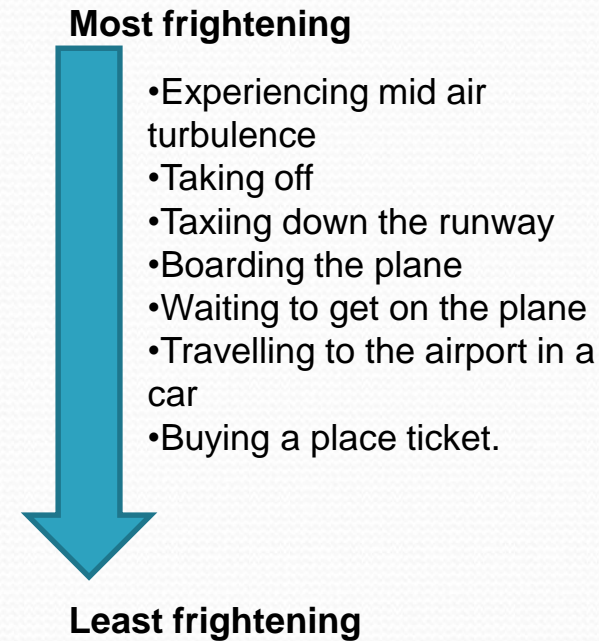
Systematic Desensitisation

- Developed on the 1950s by psychiatrist Joseph Wolpe, **systematic desensitisation** is a kind of behaviour therapy that attempts to replace an anxiety or fear response with a relaxation response through a classical conditioning procedure.
- The client associates being relaxed with the anxiety or fear-arousing stimulus by means of a series of graded steps.
- Basic principle is that the client is gradually desensitised to anxiety or fear-arousing objects, activities or situations.

Wolpe's procedure:

1. Person is taught to relax.
2. Break down the fear arousing situation into a logical sequence of steps (steps are ranked from least to most fear-inducing).

- Case study: fear of flying.



Learned Taste Aversions

- ⌘ When it comes to food being paired with sickness, the conditioning is incredible strong.
- ⌘ Even when food and sickness are hours apart.
- ⌘ Food must be salient (noticeable).

Garcia Effect

- John Garcia demonstrated that taste aversion is different from standard CC.
- Garcia accidentally discovered the occurrence of a taste aversion when investigating the effects of radiation on rats.
- Findings suggest that Garcia's Taste-Aversion Studies - show that classical conditioning is influenced by biological predisposition.

