

Behavioral Therapy: B.F. Skinner

- All behaviors, healthy and unhealthy, have been **reinforced in the past** and can persist into present life.
- Individuals can **acquire** problematic or anti-social behaviors and beliefs which cause anxiety and depression
- Most behaviors following birth are learned. We are born with the instinct to survive. All subsequent behaviors that continue are **reinforced by an individual's environment** and are **conditioned classically** or **modeled socially**.
- Personality development is simply a learned reflex describing how we learned to respond to life and how these responses were reinforced.
- The goal of behavioral therapy is to help the client reduce depression, anxiety and a variety of other behavioral disorders by identifying the offending behavior and modifying or extinguishing the behavior with appropriate techniques.

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- The role of the therapist is to develop a trusting relationship with the client such that the client will reveal an accurate description of the problem. The therapist will assess the client's needs, identify the frequency, intensity and duration of the behaviors, and then in collaboration with the client, choose the appropriate techniques and goals.

Some common Behavioral Therapy techniques. There are about 70 techniques.

- **Acceptance:** Must be a dual relationship. Therapist does not necessarily condone client's behavior but therapist must demonstrate that he does accept the client.
- **Modeling:** Rehearsing or imitating behaviors which are targeted for learning.
- **Systematic Desensitization:** Relaxation exercises paired with anxiety producing images or situations over time.
- **Token Economy:** tokens are accumulated by client to earn the reinforcing reward in exchange for producing the target behavior.
- **Flooding:** Client is presented with the anxiety producing behavior for a length of time such that the client can no longer remain in the anxious state and the client begins to associate the stimulus with calm.