

PSYCHOLOGYTOOLS

Functional Analysis

British English

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Functional Analysis

Description

Functional analysis examines the causes and consequences of behaviour. One assumption of functional analysis is that behaviour is contextual – it is influenced by the environment around the individual. Behaviour has consequences and in operant conditioning terms these can be seen to reinforce or punish a behaviour, making it more or less likely to occur in the future. This classic A-B-C functional analysis worksheet can be used to collect information about what came before a behaviour (antecedents), the behaviour itself, and the consequences of the behaviour.

Instructions

This is a Psychology Tools case formulation (case conceptualisation) diagram. Put simply, case formulation is one method of a client and therapist coming to shared understanding of a difficulty. The formulation contextualises the difficulty, making its origin and maintenance understandable. Case formulations are best completed collaboratively, with clients positioned as the 'experts in themselves'.

References

Haynes, S. N., O'Brien, W. H. (1999). *Principles and practice of behavioral assessment*. Springer.

Functional Analysis

Antecedents

Factors which preceded a behaviour

Behaviours

Consequences

What happened as a result of the behaviour?



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Consider situational (where, when?), social (who was or wasn't there?) and emotional states.

What are the short-term and long-term factors that make this behaviour more likely to happen again?

Functional Analysis

Antecedents

Factors which preceded a behaviour

Nightmare or flashbacks of sexual abuse memory

Daily life tasks involving leaving the house

Time alone at home during the day is used to think about life

Behaviours

Self-harming behaviours (cutting)

Avoidance of social activity – e.g. won't take children to school

Rumination about fault and blame for the traumatic events

Consequences

What happened as a result of the behaviour?

Short-term: Feels 'grounded' – reduction in panic overwhelmed feelings
Long-term: Shame about inability to cope

Feels less anxious when avoids – can avoid anticipatory anxiety too by not even committing to engage in any activity outside

Short-term: Feels semi-productive at the time – like I might solve it
Long-term: I never solve it. Feel depressed and hopeless

Consider situational (where, when?), social (who was or wasn't there?) and emotional states.

What are the short-term and long-term factors that make this behaviour more likely to happen again?

Contact us

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