



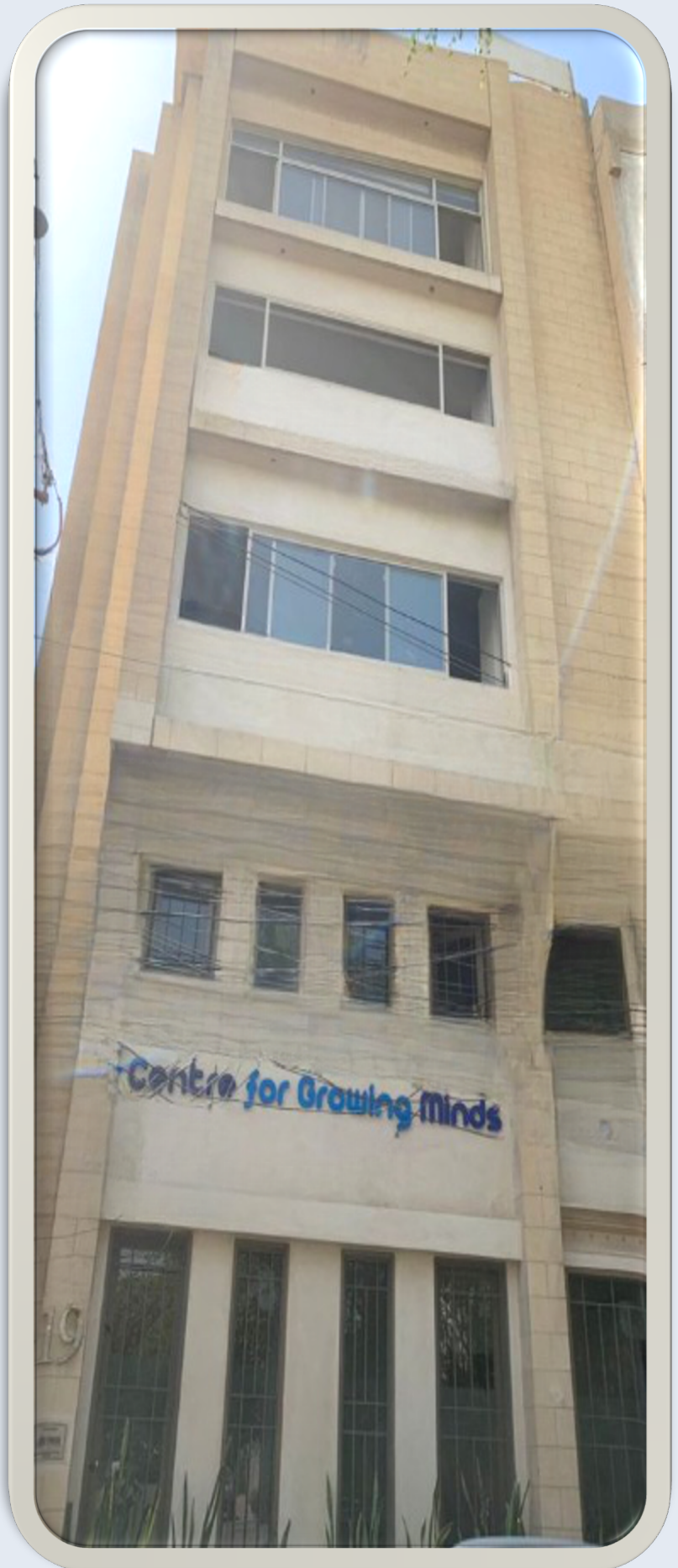
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Sept - Oct 2023

Volume 9

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Focus of the month:
Parent training and types
of reinforcement
- Insight on the Effects of
Medication on Behaviour
- What is ACT? A little
about Acceptance and
Commitment therapy
- Highlights of the month



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Difference in Types of Rewards Influence Behaviour


Naiha Khan

Parent trainings are a means of providing parents with knowledge on how to influence their child's learning and to promote consistency and generalization of skills across various settings. Behaviour technicians work on modelling intervention plans, explaining behaviour analysis principles and taking data within sessions. One important concept in behaviour analysis is reinforcement, or in simple terms, a system of providing rewards. Rewards are part of consequences, and shape future behaviours.

During parent trainings, a hierarchy of individualised reward systems are recognised for each child, to identify rewards with highest to lowest value. Rewards may include physical to non-physical items. Keeping the hierarchy in consideration, parents are taught to reward behaviours or skills based on how strongly the behaviour needs to be taught. This concept is differential reinforcement.

If the child has performed well, the reward should be more than if the child has performed like they would on average. If the child has required their parent's help in responding to a task, the child should be helped, and rewards should be reserved for other better performed tasks. If the child has engaged in functional behaviours, the parent can show an increase in attention to promote the functional behaviour. Helping parents understand the concept of providing a difference in attention is very important. Non-functional behaviours can be maintained by parent's attention such as making comments, looking at the child with a difference in facial expression or as little as to just saying "no". Understanding how you can vary the intensity and the type of attention you provide your child, when teaching them to learn a new skill or reducing an undesirable behaviour is one key element of parent training.

Below are some examples of how a parent can respond differently to three different levels of the same behaviour:

Parent says "copy this design"	Child copies within 3 seconds 	Reward: Parent makes direct eye contact and gives their child a high 5. They reassure them and says, "that's right" and provides a preferred toy (Highest reward)
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Parent says "copy this design"	Child copies the design but takes 10 seconds	Reward: Parent makes eye contact and praises the child and moves on to the next teaching opportunity (Lower value reward)
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Parent says “copy this design”	Child makes and error	Consequence: Parent looks at design, says “good effort, let’s try again” and immediately helps the child to correct the error (Lowest value of reward and skill taught)
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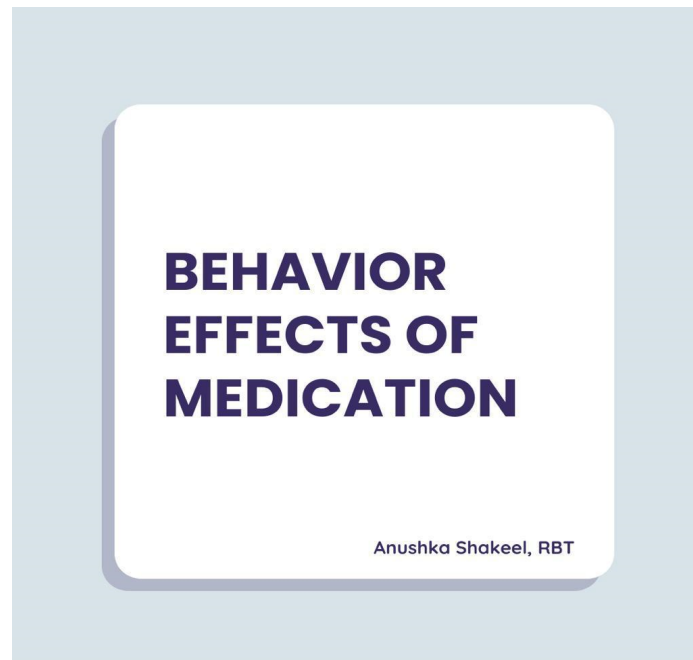
In all three scenarios, the parent provides *different rewards/ consequences* based on the performance of the child. In all three strategies, the next time the child will make the design, they will have learnt from the consequence that was provided before.

At home, this strategy can be implemented on any kind of behaviour. Some other examples are listed below:

1. Your child can express how they feel versus engaging in inappropriate behaviour. You can provide them with your *increased attention* by talking about how well they did
2. Your child hits you when they want to show you something. You can model for them the correct way they can ask for you to “look” and avoid giving extra attention to their behaviour by:
 - (1) avoiding commenting on the behaviour
 - (2) redirect the child’s attention to something else
3. Your child followed something you requested, immediately reward them with a big smile on your face

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How does medication impact behaviour?
Anushka Shakeel



**METHYLPHENI
-DATE**

Common brand names:
Ritalin, Concerta

It is a central nervous system stimulant used for ADHD and narcolepsy. It helps increase the ability to pay attention and stay focused.

Side effects:

- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Irritability
- Drowsiness
- Restlessness
- Nervousness
- Headache
- Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep

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ARIPIRAZOLE

Common brand names:
Abilify, Abilify Mycite

It is a second generation (atypical) antipsychotic used for schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, and irritability associated with autism.

Side effects:

- Tiredness
- Nervousness
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Constipation
- Increased appetite
- Weight gain
- Headache
- Muscle stiffness

RISPERDONE

Common brand names:
Risperdal, Risperdal M-Tab

It is a second generation (atypical) antipsychotic used for schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and irritability associated with autism.

Side effects:

- Increased appetite
- Weight gain
- Nausea
- Drowsiness
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Insomnia

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An Insight into Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

By Anushka Shakeel

Acceptance and commitment therapy was first introduced in the 1980s by the psychologist Steven C. Hayes. Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) is an evidence based approach to psychological change. It aims to bring about psychological change by helping individuals develop ‘psychological flexibility’. Psychological flexibility is the ability to contact the present moment more fully and accept thoughts and feelings without judgement. ACT promotes psychological flexibility by focusing on six key processes. The processes are as follows;

1. Contact with the present moment : To focus on the present moment and what is happening with you or in your surroundings right now rather than what has happened in the past or will take place in the future.
2. Diffusion: To recognise that your thoughts are just thoughts and are detachable. This means that you are able to take a step back from your thoughts and not get consumed by them.
3. Acceptance: To let yourself experience without any judgement or urge to fight your thoughts and emotions.
4. Self as context: To take a step back and observe yourself and your mind (including the thoughts that come and go).
5. Values: Values are what you stand for/care about and what is meaningful to you.
6. Committed action: The ability to act in a way that is consistent with your values and game plan, even when you are under pressure and face difficult thoughts and emotions.

These processes of ACT help an individual to be aware in the present moment while accepting their feelings and emotions and just seeing them as detachments of themselves. When the individuals see themselves in context, they are able to take committed actions that are aligned with their values and are meaningful to them.

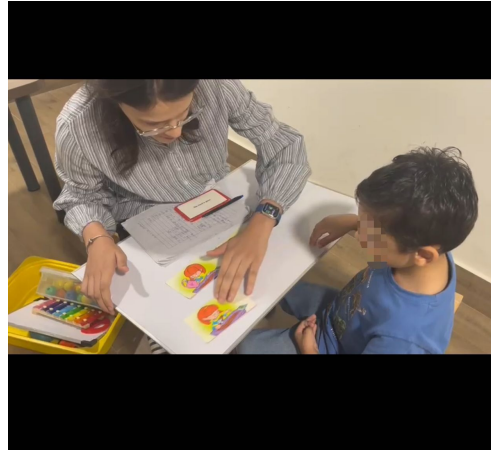
ACT can be used in our day to day lives to take committed actions that are in-line with our values. For example, I tend to feel anxious when I have an upcoming exam and I am not well prepared. Applying ACT, the first step is to be present in the moment and accept that I feel anxious. The next step is to recognise that my thoughts and feelings are just thoughts and feelings, I can step back from them to work towards what is valuable to me. In this case, it is valuable to me to do well in my exam. Once I recognise this, I can come up with an action plan to study for my exam.

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Group session



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Happy birthday to our RBT, Malaika Malik!



A happy birthday to our BCaBA, Sarah Amin!