Is Punishment Necessary in Brain Injury Rehabilitation?

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Objectives

Participants will be able to:

1. Define punishment
2. Describe clinical examples of punishment
3. Describe issues related to safety, civil rights, and ethics in treatment design.
4. Describe necessary preconditions for restrictive treatments.
5. Describe general approaches to decreasing unwanted behaviors.
What is Punishment?
What is Punishment?

Common usage

Clinically
What is Punishment?

**Common usage:**

A penalty imposed on an offender for wrongdoing.

Rough treatment.
What is Punishment?

Common usage examples:

- Imprisonment
- Job termination
- Traffic tickets
- Harsh words
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Punishment Happens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embarrassment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public humiliation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car accidents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is Punishment?

Clinical definition:

An environmental change contingent on behavior that produces a decrease in responding over time.

Lerman & Vorndran (2002)
## Environmental Consequences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presented</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive Reinforcement</td>
<td>Punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removed</td>
<td>Punishment</td>
<td>Negative Reinforcement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples of Punishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
<th>Long-term Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A driver is in a hurry to get to an appointment</td>
<td>The driver exceeds the speed limit.</td>
<td>The driver gets a speeding ticket.</td>
<td>The driver is less likely to speed in the future.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Clinical Examples of Punishment

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
<th>Long-term Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A person is asked to take the garbage out.</td>
<td>The person is unhappy and throws the garbage at staff.</td>
<td>The person is required to take the garbage out for a week.</td>
<td>The person is less likely to have oppositional behaviors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Environmental Impairments

Faulty contingencies

- Insufficient reinforcement of adaptive responses
- Punishment of adaptive responses
- Reinforcement of aberrant responses
## Clinical Examples of Faulty Punishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Presentation of Stimulus</th>
<th>Long-term Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An OT asks a man to make a purchase at the mall</td>
<td>A man attempts to make a purchase</td>
<td>The clerk is rude and humiliates the man</td>
<td>The man is less likely to purchase items in public</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Clinical Examples of Faulty Response Cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Removal of Stimulus</th>
<th>Long-term Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A woman is allowed to go the movies by herself</td>
<td>The woman gets lost and returns to her group home late</td>
<td>The woman is not allowed to go out to eat with her roommates</td>
<td>The woman is less likely to attempt independent trips</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Clinical Examples of Faulty Negative Reinforcement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Removal of Stimulus</th>
<th>Long-term Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A child is being wheeled to PT</td>
<td>The child begins to scream and bite his hand</td>
<td>The aide returns the child to his bedroom</td>
<td>The child is more likely to scream and bite his hand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Punishment is Not

Delivery of an unpleasant consequence following a behavior to decrease the future probability of the behavior.
What Punishment is

Clinical definition:

An environmental change contingent on behavior that produces a decrease in responding over time.

Lerman & Vorndran (2002)
Punishment Happens

Pain
Confusion
Embarrassment
Public humiliation
Failure
Fundamental Considerations in Treatment Design

1. Safety
2. Ethical treatment
3. Human rights
1. Safety

Freedom from threat of harm

Most important concern in providing treatment
1. Safety

All children with disabilities should grow up free from the use of restraint, seclusion, and aversive interventions to control their behavior, and from the fear that these forms of behavior management will be used on themselves, their siblings, or friends.

The Alliance to Prevent Restraint, Aversive Interventions, and Seclusion
1. Safety

Trusting relationships between a child and a teacher, combined with a sense of safety are fundamental for healthy development. Aversives, restraint, and seclusion eliminate the opportunity for such an environment or relationship.

The Alliance to Prevent Restraint, Aversive Interventions, and Seclusion
2. Ethical Treatment

Standards of conduct and moral judgment

Related to humane treatment
Use of validated treatments
Voluntary informed consent
3. Human Rights

- Personal liberties
- Humane treatment
- Effective treatment
3. Human Rights

✓ Personal Liberties

Bill of Rights
3. Human Rights

✓ Personal Liberties

“Balancing the rights to habilitation with the right to personal liberties: The rights of people with disabilities to eat too many doughnuts and take a nap.”

Bannerman, Sheldon, Sherman, & Harchik (1990) Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis
3. Human Rights

- Humane treatment
  - Positive
  - Person-centered
  - Supportive
  - Coercion-free
  - Dignity respecting
  - Autonomy enhancing
3. Human Rights

✓ Effective treatment

- Improves adaptive responding
- Decreases unwanted behaviors
- Ensures maintenance
- Promotes generalization
3. Human Rights

☑ Effective treatment
  - Improves adaptive responding
  - Decreases unwanted behaviors
  - Ensures maintenance
  - Promotes generalization
Effective treatment

Unwanted behaviors

Disrupt others’ rehabilitation
Cause injury
Threaten others’ safety
Limit vocational opportunities
Limit residential opportunities
Behavior Analysis

Analysis of environmental variables
Focus on overt behaviors
Evidence-based
Functional interventions
Focus on strengthening replacement behaviors
Objections to Behavior Analysis

... questionable and limiting in its benefit

... works best when a problem behavior needs to be eradicated—business as usual within the medical model.

...puts all of its attention on the problem and virtually ignores all other behaviors that may be viable and appropriate.

Condelucci (1995)

Viewpoints - Issues in Rehabilitation
Objections to Behavior Analysis - cont.

The more we use artificial inducements to motivate people, the more they lose interest in what we are bribing them to do.

We need to think through the approaches we use on people and consider other directions.

We need to build bridges, not use antiseptic actions that can polarize.

Condelucci (1995)
Viewpoints - Issues in Rehabilitation
Objections to Behavior Analysis

Behavioral approaches to treatment are “authoritarian.”

Brandon (1988)
Social Work Today
Objections to Behavior Analysis

Behavioral approaches prescribe controlling and domintative caregiver behaviors that fail to teach the “inherent value in human presence, participation, and reward.”

McGee, Menousek, & Hobbs (1987) Community Integration for People with Severe Disabilities (Taylor, Bilken, & Knoll- Eds.)
Objections to Behavior Analysis

Traditionally the cornerstone of most behavior programs has been punishment or ignoring behavior.

Gutierrez (1995)
*Viewpoints - Issues in Rehabilitation*
Essential Components of Behavior Analytic Programs

Person centered
Supportive
Simple
Consistent
Flexible
Positive
3. Human Rights

✓ Effective Treatment

We believe that the use of restraints is a failure in treatment.

Autism National Committee
3. Human Rights

Humane Treatment

Versus

Effective Treatment
Humane Treatment
Versus
Effective Treatment

Are they mutually exclusive?
Humane Treatment Versus Effective Treatment

“What’s so funny about…”

Elvis Costello
Humane Treatment Versus Effective Treatment

Humane treatment?

Bone fracture
Knife wound
Stupor-inducing medication
Administration of noxious stimulation
Mechanical restraint
Requisites for Restrictive Interventions

1. The individual is in an enriched environment that promotes healthy, adaptive, and pro-social behaviors.
Requisites for Restrictive Interventions

2. Less restrictive interventions have been attempted, and shown to not effectively control the dangerous behaviors.
Unwanted Behaviors

Annoying
  Noncompliance
Stigmatizing
  Drooling
Disruptive
  Vocalizations, banging objects
Dangerous
  Aggression, self-injury, noncompliance, elopement
Requisites for Restrictive Interventions

3. Any use of restrictive interventions is only one part of an individualized comprehensive program.
Requisites for Restrictive Interventions

4. Any proposed interventions have undergone:
   > Peer review by a Behavior Management Committee
   > Ethical review by a Human Rights Committee
Requisites for Restrictive Interventions

5. Written informed consent is obtained from guardians.
Requisites for Restrictive Interventions

6. Training of all staff members is documented.
Requisites for Restrictive Interventions

7. Active ongoing review of data to justify continuation as long as the procedure is in use.
Question

Is Punishment Necessary in Brain Injury Rehabilitation?
Wrong Question
Why the Wrong Question?

Is surgery necessary?
Is dentistry?
Are medications necessary?
Are PT/OT/ST necessary?
1. There is no simple answer.

2. There is no right answer.

3. It depends in part on how one defines punishment.

4. Hugs and kisses not enough.

5. Restrictive interventions are the real concern.

6. If necessary, restrictive interventions may not be inconsistent with right to humane treatment.

6. Who decides?
Question

Which is more humane?

1. Providing gentle treatment that is ineffective.

2. Providing effective treatment that restrictive
Answer
Question

Who should decide?

1. Politicians?

2. Parents/guardians in conjunction with professionals?
Fundamental Considerations in Treatment Design

1. Safety
2. Ethical treatment
3. Human rights