



# **ABC's of Behavior Management**

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Behavioral and emotional issues significantly affect interactions with others and the ability to develop and maintain social relationships.



# Behavioral Changes Post TBI

- Depression
- Mood swings/Lability
- Impulsivity and Hyperactivity
- Intermittent Explosive Disorder
- Physical Aggression
- Self injury
- Inappropriate sexual behavior
- Hoarding
- Paranoia
- Decreased sensitivity to others
- Focus on self
- Intrusiveness



These issues combined with all the other changes or effects of TBI (physical, medical, communication, sensory, psychosocial) increase the likely occurrence of maladaptive or problematic behaviors.



Maladaptive or problematic behaviors can be exhausting, frustrating and/or traumatic for everyone involved.

Staff, family, friends, caregivers, peers as well as the acting out person.



# The ABCs of Behavior Management

- A = Antecedent
- B = Behavior
- C = Consequences

Go back to the basics



# Antecedent

- Precipitating factors
  - What is happening before the behavior
  - What the environment is like
- 



## **What are some factors that may contribute to behaviors?**

Think about a situation where you or someone you know has “lost control”.

Where were you? Who was around? What were they doing? What time of day was it? What was going on around you? What had just happened? What had happened earlier in the day? How were you feeling? Was it quiet/loud? What was the weather like?

# Do We Have Control Over These?





# We don't have control over:

- Weather
- Prior events
- Behavior of others
- Phone ringing
- Fatigue, hunger or comfort of others

But we can control our response to situations and anticipate events. What can you do?



# We can have control of:

- The noise level
- Our response to situations and behaviors
- Our voice (tone, volume, cadence)
- Our body language
- Our behavior
- Anticipate needs (hunger, fatigue...)
- Anticipate Situations (seating, late meal)



## What could be done to prevent a behavior?

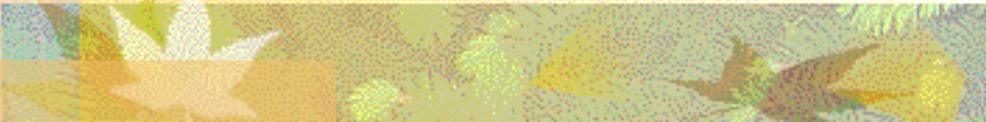
- Turn down volumes/phones. Turn down lights.
- Check your voice and body language. What are you doing to contribute?
- Communicate – don't assume everyone knows what is going on.
- Support – listen.
- Keep track of what seems to be an antecedent.



# B = Behavior

**What are some of the behaviors you encounter?**

- What a person DOES
- Not how you are feeling
- Behaviors can be “good”, “bad” or “neutral”
- Don’t focus solely on negative behaviors
- Remember to “Catch them doing something good”. Ask for positive feedback to the positive behavior.



# Behavior vs. Emotional State

- Behavior is what a person DOES
- Action not emotion
- Emotions are the feelings
- It's OK to feel mad, frustrated, sad, angry, depressed, bored
- It's not OK to yell, cuss, hit, destroy property...

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- Identify the behavior with detail.  
Know what you want to address.
  - Prioritize based on frequency, duration, magnitude.
  - Consider the likelihood of success



# C = Consequences

- What we as survivor, family, staff, friend do in response to behavior (reaction)
- What others around the acting out person do
- How the environment changes after the behavior
- THIS WE CAN CONTROL



# What is the #1 consequence most likely to encourage a behavior to persist?

- ATTENTION
- Whether the behavior is “good” or “bad” attention will encourage it.
- Encourage positive behavior with praise, eye contact, smile, laugh, interact, praise, listen, thank you, reward
- Step in and encourage the positive, even neutral behavior. Too often we want to “let sleeping dogs lie.”



# Effective Consequences for Problematic Behaviors

- Active Ignoring
- Redirection
- Setting Limits/Giving Choices
- Take a break
- Reward or Point System



# Active Ignoring

- Used with annoying or mildly disruptive behaviors such as repetitive questions or comments, pouting or seeking attention.
- Ignore the behavior not the person
- Let them know what you are be doing



# Redirection

- Create a distraction (through comment or task) to divert attention elsewhere
- Important to be able to “read” the anxiety or escalating behavior to avert crisis
- Intervene in a timely manner
- Know what is meaningful or enjoyable to the person



# Setting Limits

The nervous system hates a  
command and loves a choice

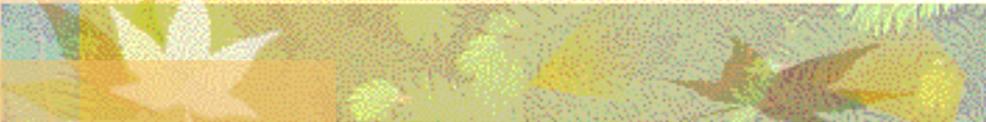
Thank you Dr. Woodcock

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- Give choices. “Here is what happens when you stop the behavior or here is what happens when you continue the behavior”
  - Identify meaningful choices with input.
  - Must be clear, concise and simple.
  - Reasonable and enforceable.
  - State the positive consequence first.
  - Your voice is key. Tone. Volume. Cadence.



# Take A Break

- Frequently used as a consequence when setting limits
- Not meant to be a naughty stool or “sit in the corner” time out.
- It is a strategy that we all use
- This is meant to be a technique for teaching a strategy for you to use before behavior gets out of control
- With consistent cueing and direction, you can learn to use this tool on your own



# Reward or Point System

- Focus on positive. Earn points vs. lose points.
- Earn points for targeted positive behaviors
- Track behaviors to accumulate points for reward or “get to”
- Review at least daily
- Keep fresh and meaningful to you



# Keys to a Successful Behavior Plan

- Keep it simple. Focus only on 1-3 behaviors.
- Prioritize the behaviors that are most critical.
- **Be consistent.** Everyone needs to do and say the same thing. Use a script for consistency.
- Get input and agreement from everyone especially you as the acting out person
- Know what is a “get to” or reward for you (praise, money, activity, TV, games)
- Always plan to reward positive behavior with positive consequences.



# Concepts to review

- **Behavioral Theory:** We adjust our behavior (consequences) in order to influence the behavior of others. If we follow the plan consistently, we can modify behavior. This does not work immediately; it works over time. Revisit the plan periodically and change as needed.

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- **Intermittent Reinforcement:** Inconsistently consequencing a behavior is likely to cause it to persist. This works with both positive and negative behavior. If you are not acting as a team, consistently – the behavior will continue.
  - The “bad” news is – you must consequence every negative behavior
  - The good news is – you don’t need to consequence every positive behavior.

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- **Behavioral Approximation:** Moving in the general direction of the desired behavior. It doesn't need to be exact, just better. Sometimes it's not pretty but it's getting there.

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- **Tracking Behavior:** Use a system to keep track of how often the behavior occurs so you are able to assess the progress. Sometimes, just tracking the behavior can decrease occurrences. “Let’s see how often this behavior occurs..” Tracking will help you know when you need to make changes.



Thank you

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