

BEHAVIOR

OVERVIEW

Behavior is a broad term that refers to an observable reaction or response to a stimulus.¹ The way one behaves can be influenced by the five basic senses (hearing, smell, taste, touch and vision), in response to a noise, scent, flavor, sensation, or something seen. Behaviors can also be caused by more complex or circumstantial stimuli such as attitudes, beliefs, interactions, thoughts, or a series of events.² The result is an action that is visible to others, and represents a form of communication that expresses a particular message.

Behaviors can be involuntary or voluntary. Involuntary behaviors include coughing, hiccupping, muscle spasms, and sneezing. While many involuntary behaviors occur automatically, some involuntary behaviors can be voluntarily acted out. Voluntary behaviors include speaking, walking, and any actions that are the result of thought and conscious choices. Behaviors can also be appropriate or inappropriate. Many involuntary behaviors are appropriate, such as squinting at a bright light or shivering when cold. Appropriate voluntary behaviors include eating regular meals, exercising regularly, speaking politely and treating others with compassion and respect. Inappropriate behaviors tend to be voluntary, resulting from the choices one makes. These behaviors include rudeness, stealing, temper tantrums, and causing physical harm to others.²

Many voluntary behaviors, both appropriate and inappropriate ones, can be learned. In the case of mental health, behavior therapy and modification is used to reinforce more appropriate behaviors while reducing inappropriate behaviors. Behavior plays an important role in influencing the nature of our social interactions. Behavior can also impact one's physical, mental, occupational, and spiritual health.

RESOURCES

¹ <https://www.reference.com/world-view/study-history-bbe4da6f73c7112ahttps://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/behavior>

² <http://www.simplypsychology.org/attitudes.html>

³ <https://www.reference.com/world-view/inappropriate-behavior-dfd2a8d002d91494#>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information, tools, and resources about behavior, visit:

<https://www.care.com/c/stories/3473/behavior-modification-the-4-main-components/>

<http://www.goodtherapy.org/learn-about-therapy/types/behaviorism>

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/105661-behavior-modification/>

<http://www.minddisorders.com/A-Br/Behavior-modification.html>

<http://www.ncflb.com/aboutus/learningbehaviour/>

<http://www.simplypsychology.org/behaviorism.html>