

Psychologist says students can learn to turn off TV

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not get much done. I say, 'Fine, sit there and don't worry about it, it will come. Don't yield to the temptation of getting up.'"

Forced to choose between the boredom of just sitting and opening a dry textbook, eventually it becomes more interesting to open the book, Ziesat said.

No reward

Another major reason that people procrastinate studying is that there is no reward connected with the effort, the psychologist explained.

In trying to improve study habits, he said he employs the Premack principle which states that any high frequency behavior can be used as a reinforcer in increasing any low frequency behavior.

"We have the student list all of his favorite activities that would be practical to do after an evening's work," Ziesat said. "We then encourage him to engage in something he enjoys each evening after accomplishing whatever task he has set for himself."

To be most effective, this reinforcing activity should be done immediately after completion of the work — not before — and should last no longer than the amount of time spent studying.

"A lot of this is basic common sense, but it has only recently been confirmed experimentally," he said.

Procrastinators treated successfully

His own research, published in the February issue of "Psychological Reports," involved 56 University of

Arizona students who had admitted that procrastination was a problem for them. By the end of the semester, those who were given training in stimulus control and self-reward significantly increased the amount of time they spent studying.

"They also reported that their study problems were less serious, that it was easier to make themselves study and that their attitudes toward themselves as students, toward doing homework and toward college improved during the course of treatment," Ziesat wrote.

Ben Franklin agrees

An important adjunct to the self-control techniques, the psychologist said, is self-monitoring — actually graphing or keeping a daily table of the behavior pattern that one is trying to change. While social scientists don't agree on whether record keeping is beneficial in itself, Ziesat said he favors it.

"Some people think it's mechanical and distasteful to graph their lives on paper," he said. "But if you're hurting enough, you'll try this sort of thing. It's nobody else's business, and you can keep the record to yourself."

"For most behavioral problems, including procrastination, punishment should be used only as a last resort because so many other approaches can work better. A lot of research indicates that punishment frequently does more harm than good. At the same time, it's important for parents to set limits for their children and enforce those limits."



"If he's a real procrastinator, he may just sit there for the first few sessions and not get much done. I say, 'Fine, sit there and don't worry about it, it will come. Don't yield to the temptation of getting up.'"

Benjamin Franklin, incidentally, also advocated the practice and described how he did it in his autobiography.

Phobia (excessive fear) of examinations or classes is another cause of procrastination that is not at all uncommon among college students, the therapist said. The most effective current

treatment is called "systematic desensitization."

It involves having the student construct a hierarchy of situations related to taking exams or attending classes. After being taught to relax, Ziesat explained, the patient works his way up the ladder, first in his imagination, until he can remain relaxed during the actual event.

Only as last resort

Parents often ask whether punishment alone can make a young person study.

"For most behavioral problems, including procrastination, punishment should be used only as a last resort because so many other approaches can work better," the psychologist said. "A lot of research indicates that punishment frequently does more harm than good."

"At the same time, it's important for parents to set limits for their children and enforce those limits," he added.

Don't give up

Ziesat said parents shouldn't be surprised if procrastination gets worse at the beginning of treatment. Nor should they give up on behavior modification after a few days.

"Either consciously or unconsciously, the child may be saying 'Oh, are these the new rules of the game? Let me see how far I can push him or her.'"

The psychologist said most children will eventually give up in the face of consistent parental control and be happier as they realize it comes from caring.

Organ procurement program spreads wings

By John Becton

The Duke-UNC Organ Procurement Program continues to grow in a number of ways.

Recently, it expanded into South Carolina, when physician's associates Michael Phillips and Corbin Peterson flew to Darlington, S.C., to assist a local surgeon in the surgical recovery of two kidneys from an accident victim.

(The flight itself, in one of the airplanes belonging to the University of North Carolina, was a first. While airplanes had been used previously for transporting organs, this was the first time members of the team had flown to a recovery site.)

The South Carolina hospital joins an active network of hospitals, including Duke, the Durham VA, N.C. Memorial, Durham County General, Cape Fear Valley in Fayetteville, New Hanover Memorial in Wilmington, Danville (Va.) Memorial, Wesley Long in Greensboro, Craven County in New Bern and several community hospitals in North Carolina.

Through this network and the Southeastern Organ Procurement Foundation (SEOPF), the procurement program matches donated organs with appropriate recipients.

The two kidneys from Darlington were matched, using the SEOPF computer, with one recipient at Duke and a second in Virginia. Both kidneys began functioning as soon as they were transplanted, Phillips said.

Along with its geographical growth, the program which began retrieving kidneys in 1974, now is procuring eyes, bone, muscle and skin, and the increase in the number of organ donors is significant.

In 1974, the program had eight kidneys

donated. By 1977, the number had increased to 30. Flights to New Bern and Wilmington this past weekend brought this year's total to 40. Also, this year there have been 32 eyes retrieved, including four procured last weekend, and there have been five bone donors and seven muscle donors.

The Duke-UNC program has received organs for transplantation in this area from as far away as Minnesota. It has sent organs as far away as Copenhagen, Denmark, to be matched with compatible donors (see *Intercom*, 5/20/77). Most organs procured in North Carolina, however, are used in-state.



IT'S THE REAL THING—Eight-year-old Marc Hawley gets a close look at a pair of kidneys that were hooked up to a Waters Transport Module, a portable kidney transport machine which keeps the kidneys viable when they are being moved to a transplant site. The machine supplies the kidneys with necessary gases (O₂ and CO₂) and maintains a constant 7°C temperature to retard cell breakdown. Marc is the son of Carol Hawley, former secretary to Dr. James F. Glenn, professor and chief of the Division of Urologic Surgery. (Photo by Parker Herring)

Want to save gas?

The Durham Jaycees and the Research Triangle Lung Association are offering a free one-minute gas savers-auto emissions check Saturday, Oct. 14, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at South Square Mall. This is another program supported by Christmas Seals for the prevention and cure of lung diseases.

Professional news

Dr. Lennart Fagraeus, assistant professor of anesthesiology has been invited to participate in a meeting in Luxembourg, Oct. 12-13, on "Medical Aspects of Diving Accidents."

The meeting which is part of an ongoing dialogue concerning the treatment of divers on the oil rigs in the North Sea, is jointly sponsored by the Commission of European Communities (Common Market) and the European Undersea Biomedical Society.

Fagraeus will present a new treatment procedure for severe cases of decompression sickness after air diving, that has been developed in the F.G. Hall Laboratory for Environmental Research (hyperbaric chamber) at Duke.

The new treatment was recently published as the lead article in the *Lancet* and is the result of international team work in which Dr. John N. Miller, associate professor of anesthesiology and medical center for the F.G. Hall Laboratory and Dr. P. B. Bennett, professor of anesthesiology and director of the F.G. Hall Laboratory, have been instrumental, together with Drs. D. H. Elliot and T. G. Shields from England and Dr. J. Grimstad from Norway.

Experience now covers four cases of serious refractory decompression sickness in which the divers, initially severely paralyzed following air dives, were successfully treated at raised pressures breathing oxygen-nitrogen mixtures for several days in a hyperbaric chamber. Two of the patients were actually able to walk out of the chamber unassisted, whereas the other two recovered shortly afterwards. (See *Intercom*, 9/2/77).