

‘CHANGE YOUR MIND ABOUT SAFETY’

Session Handout



Gaining a deeper understanding of why we behave the way we do.

- *How does stress impact on behaviour?*
- *Why is day dreaming important?*
- *How can we develop habits to protect us?*
- *Why do we sometimes choose to take risks?*
- *What drives us to behave in certain ways?*

This event has been designed to be both enlightening & entertaining, as well as inspirational. The aim is to empower everyone toward making the best choices for safety for themselves & others in both their personal & professional lives.

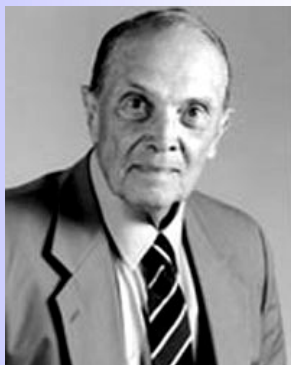
“Nobody plans to injure Themselves at work.”

“Nobody can think of safety All day long.”

The Science of the Mind

‘On average human beings can only process between 5 and 9 chunks of information consciously at any one time.’

7 +/- 2



Dr George Miller

‘The Magic Number’

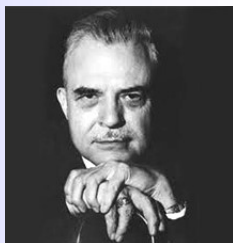
Published in 1956

‘ALPHA’ STATE

‘Mind & Body in two different places’



Ernest L. Rossi



Milton H. Erickson

The pioneering scientists whose research led to our understanding of the different states of mind we all have.

THE SCIENCE OF THE MIND

Most are now aware or familiar with the terms **conscious**, **subconscious** and **unconscious** mind.

The **Conscious Mind** takes care of your present awareness but is limited by the amount of information it can hold at any one time, and for how long (George Miller – ‘7 +/- 2’), whereas your **Subconscious Mind** acts like a storehouse for all your conditioned and inherited responses and experiences, with the **Unconscious Mind** dealing with all the bodily functions we don’t really have to think about, such as breathing, heartbeat, digestion etc.

Through repeated reinforcement, tasks and actions we undertake become controlled & co-ordinated by our sub-conscious minds, which creates ‘**sub-routines**’ or ‘**habits**’ which happen automatically, - leaving our conscious minds free to wander.

We all have these built in ‘**Automatics**’.

Once we understand how subconscious routines and conditioning work together, we are closer to exposing the building blocks of those unexplainable incidents.

Could a proportion of incidents be blamed on mind and body in two different places? - Meaning your body can be in one location carrying out a task, with your mind in a completely different location?

STATES OF MIND

- **Beta** FULLY AWAKE. ALERT. THE ‘HERE & NOW’
- **Alpha** DAY DREAMING. “THE ZONE”
- **Theta** LIGHT SLEEP. DOZING
- **Delta** DEEP SLEEP

Alpha activity This is when we let the mind relax. It tends to happen when we feel safe and secure, with nothing present that will activate our **fight or flight** responses, i.e. no threats.

Alpha sleep is a naturally occurring rhythm, as we go through our day we all relax, and then have periods of higher activity.

Scientists believe that we all, on average, spend **10 minutes in every hour** in an ALPHA state. Activity becomes an ‘**automotive process**’, controlled by the sub-conscious, whilst your mind is elsewhere, busy thinking about other things.

These are our ‘**Habits**’. Things we do **Automatically**.

Many people have different names for this sensation. Sports people call it ‘**The Zone**’ and many sports people want to be in the zone while competing, as they believe best performance happens when they don’t over-think things.

In everyday life we call this ability **having a skill**.

It’s almost as if our mind and body can be in two different places at the one time:

The body in one reality conducting a task, while our mind is doing something different, - perhaps thinking of holidays, what’s for dinner, or other internal thoughts.

If we consider ourselves and those we work with as skilful at what we do, it makes sense to notice from now on how much of your daily life you are consciously processing and how much of your day you are spending in the ‘**alpha**’ state, especially when at work.

If you can connect to this concept and wish to protect yourself while ‘**in the zone**’, a good approach is to scan your environment before commencing any task, and following that up with any **immediate corrective actions** that are necessary.

The ‘Key Message’ is do to do a **20-second scan** around the environment you are working in before dropping into ‘**Skilful Mode**.’

MAKING & BREAKING HABITS

Bad habits we have formed over the years can be time wasting, unhealthy, obnoxious, boring or outright dangerous. They can limit our effectiveness, stunt our personal growth, determine our immediate safety and dissipate energy. Good habits on the other hand can be constructive, positive, healthy, and desirable. They can save time, relieve tension, increase our effectiveness and keep us safe.

Habits are **automatic responses** that we are conditioned to make.

The definition of a habit is something we do automatically with little, if any, forethought, - devoid of conscious choice. It could be driving, smoking, drinking, excessive eating, working at height without fall protection, chewing gum, lifting incorrectly, and so on.

Through a process of repetition, reminders and determination, we can, over time, make or break any habit.

Scientists believe that repeating something for an average of 21 days continuously will help form that action into a 'cognitive shortcut', - or habit. A key to learning is repeated exposure, as although the subconscious accepts, it cannot distinguish the difference between positive and negative routines. Repeated exposure of positive experiential learning returns the best results for the individual.

TIME - v - RISK

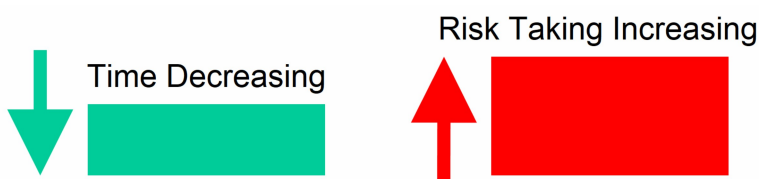
We can all make choices and decisions which are not always in our best interest in respect of safety.

One of the biggest drivers toward taking a chance is motivated by the need to save time and energy. These repeated conscious 'time-savers' have a danger of turning into the 'automatic' behaviours of tomorrow.

Time -v- Risk can be observed daily on our road networks, sometimes leading toward serious accidents.

We all make these conscious choices not only in work but in our personal lives too. Why take the long route when a **risky shortcut** could save some time? 'Why clear the kid's bikes out of your way to reach those stepladders, pulling and yanking them free, all that time and inconvenience, *what a waste of time.*' -or- 'I know, why not just balance on the short stool to change that light bulb?'...

Taking risks to save time can not only result in an injury to yourself, but may influence others around you to do the same, by setting a bad example.



RISK PERCEPTION

Why would people do things that others may see as dangerous?

THE INTERNAL OPTIMIST – 'Bad things only happen to other people'.

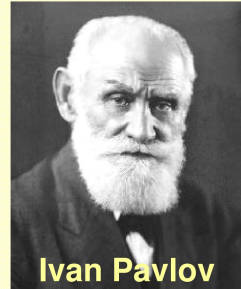
Nearly all of us have an **internal optimist** which can drive us to make choices based on our perception that 'it is OK for me to do this, **I am in control**'.

This misplaced belief is referred to as '**The Experience Myth**'. Perhaps driven by a bad habit developed in the past, or a time constraint tempting us to perhaps 'cut corners'.

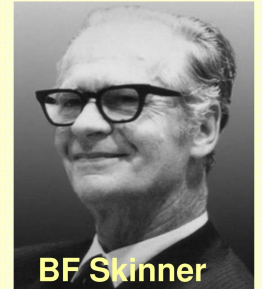
It is important that we strive to re-align our beliefs to reality, and perhaps consider why it is ok for you to stand on that chair to change a light bulb, but if you saw someone else doing it that way, you would consider it taking a risk.

WHAT YOU REPEAT BECOME HABITS

Routines run by your SUBCONSCIOUS



Ivan Pavlov
*Classical Conditioning.
Mental Pairing.*



BF Skinner
*Operant Conditioning.
Toward & Away-from
Motivation.*

*The pioneering scientists
who discovered*

Classical and Operant Conditioning.

Pavlov with his discovery of 'Mental Pairing', & Skinner with his study into 'Repeated Positive Reinforcement'.

Scientists believe that it takes around 21 days of repetition to form a new 'Cognitive Shortcut', or what most of us know as a new habit.

**REPEAT REPEAT REPEAT
To create new, safer habits**

RISK PERCEPTION

**PROMOTE A
'WALK OVER' CULTURE**

**'The observer
always sees more.'**

POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

A few tips to support positive outcomes when communicating

1. *Be courteous & respectful*
2. *Be positive*
3. *Adopt friendly tonality*
4. *Discuss rather than argue*
5. *Refer to the 'Key Messages'*
6. *Listen to their point of view*
7. *Offer help and support*
8. *Praise good practice*
9. *Be part of the solution*
10. *Use humour & keep it light*
11. *Make it a two-way talk*
12. *Finish on a positive*



PROACTIVE MINDSET

- **THINK SAFE**
- **BE SAFE**
- **GO HOME SAFE**

CULTURE

'SHARED COMMON BELIEFS WITHIN A GROUP'

There is a culture in every workplace. People control the cultural inputs and outputs, be this consciously or subconsciously. Culture has more of an impact on safety than the physical problems. So to understand culture, we need to have an understanding of people.

IT IS ALL ABOUT WHAT YOU BELIEVE

We focus on the term 'behaviour', but our behaviour is the end product of what we believe. Belief can be very powerful in determining how we behave. Influence our beliefs, - and we can change our behaviours.

HOW IT WORKS...

LEADERS

BELIEFS

EXPECTATIONS

ATTITUDE

BEHAVIOUR



MANAGERS

BELIEFS

EXPECTATIONS

ATTITUDE

BEHAVIOUR



WORKERS

BELIEFS

EXPECTATIONS

ATTITUDE

BEHAVIOUR

Our beliefs can be influenced by observing the behaviours of our mentors and peers.

We tend to conform to the will of those in authority & we are often driven to calibrate to the behaviours of the majority so as to 'fit in'.

So it is actually our beliefs which drive our behaviours. Our beliefs are our reality, but we should also always study some of our beliefs and ask ourselves *"are they valid?"* Look for the evidence underpinning our beliefs, and consider objectively whether the belief is indeed reality, or just based on our perception.

THE KEY MESSAGES

1. **Take Immediate Corrective Action**
In case you forget (7+/- 2)
2. **Do an ALPHA Scan (up to 20-seconds)**
Before you drop into 'ALPHA' ('THE ZONE')
3. **Promote a Walk-Over Culture**
The observer always sees more
4. **Time v Risk**
The Internal Optimist. Better late than never.
5. **Repeat Repeat Repeat**
To create new, safer habits
6. **Be Positive about Safety**
Recognising the positives. To motivate.