

Psy 115F

Self Behavior Modification Project

The second written assignment will involve developing and implementing a behavior modification program on your self. You will choose a health behavior you would like to change (e.g., increase exercise, reduce dietary fat, stop smoking, sleep more, stop biting your nails, use seat belts, practice safe sex, etc.). You will then use what you have learned to develop and implement a behavior modification program. The program and its results will be presented in a written report. Ideally, I would like to see one week of baseline and a minimum of 2 weeks of intervention for this project. However, you may have a longer intervention period if you wish.

Use the following Outline:

Introduction: 2-3 page introduction which reviews the behavior you have chosen to change and why this is an important behavior for your health. Use what you learned about using the scientific literature from the first paper to write this section. You do not have to describe studies in great detail, but you should talk about how common the behavior is, what effect it has on health, and what is the evidence for this. This is a short, scholarly review.

Background: Write a short autobiographical sketch of yourself and your history with the behavior of interest. In this section, you should describe the problem, why it is a problem for you, what you have done in the past to try to solve this problem, and what barriers or obstacles exist that keep you from successfully changing the problem behavior.

Goals: Describe exactly what changes you want to make in this behavior. Does this represent an increase in frequency, decrease in frequency, etc. Be very specific about what you want to accomplish. Make sure your goals are specific and behavioral.

Motivation: How will making this change affect your life? What benefits do you anticipate receiving if you are successful?

Specific Plan: In this section, you should describe your assessment and intervention plan. How will you collect data on the behavior in order to evaluate whether or not it is changing. Describe any forms or graphs you plan to use. What behavior modification technique or techniques will you use? Describe the technique and how you plan to apply it to solving your behavior change problem. If you had someone else involved (e.g., giving rewards) who else was involved and what did that person do. Please note that you **MUST** use one or more behavior modification strategies. It is not sufficient to say that you will try hard or apply additional will power to solve a problem. It is not necessary to use standardized and validated measures for this project. You may feel free to create your own rating scales or self-monitoring forms. Be creative. You can also consult the scientific literature to get behavior modification ideas (e.g., look at studies on reducing bed wetting for ideas on how to change your bed wetting).

The data: Your program should consist of two phases. First, you will collect some baseline data for at least a week. What is the frequency or intensity of the behavior before you started your behavior modification program. The second phase should be the intervention phase. As you implement the plan, how did the behavior change over time? You should use tables and/or graphs to present detailed data on how your behavior changed from baseline to treatment. It is not sufficient to just attach diaries to your paper. You need to analyze and summarize the data in the diaries. The analyses usually are not complex with frequencies, percentages, or means displayed in tables or graphs often being sufficient.

Evaluation: Summarize what you did and what the results were. Were you satisfied? Overall, how well did the intervention work? If you were to do it again, what would you do differently? Was it harder or easier than you thought it would be? What did you learn from this exercise? Do you think you will be able to maintain the behavior changes? Do you have any plan for how to maintain the changes?

Due Dates:

The assignment is due in two stages: Wednesday October 9 you should have the Introduction, background, goals, motivation, and specific plan written. I will give you feedback on this, and you can

start your intervention shortly after that. You have until November 22 to complete the project and turn in the entire paper which will now include data and evaluation sections. Be aware that I want at least one week of baseline, and two weeks of intervention data. There are about five weeks between when you turn in the first part, and when the final assignment with data is due. Plan accordingly. If you wish, you can include more than 2 weeks of intervention by starting right away (this would be ideal if your plan involved something like losing weight or training for a Marathon).