Psych328: Self-Control

Strategies to Increase or Decrease Behavior: Lesson 3

Slide #: 1   **Slide Title:** Self-Control   Lesson 3   Strategies to Increase or Decrease Behavior   **Audio**:   *[introduction music]*
Slide #: 2   **Slide Title:** Antecedents: Antecedent Control Procedures   A. What is an Antecedent Control Procedure? – control occurs when antecedent stimuli are manipulated to evoke desirable behaviors or decrease competing behaviors   1. Discriminative Stimuli (SD) – any stimulus present before the behavior, and that behavior is reinforced (type of antecedent)   **Audio**:   Now that we have a good idea and a solid foundation about what self-management is we are going to talk in detail about strategies to increase or decrease your behavior. As I go over this lesson you are going to want to think about which one of these strategies you want to incorporate into your plan. In other words this is probably the single most important lecture. This lesson is going to talk about the specific strategies you are going to use when you propose your plan. This lesson is also broken down in terms of antecedent behaviors and consequences. When you propose your plan to me you are going to propose some antecedent strategies, behavior strategies and consequence strategies, but when you go to do that refer back to this lesson and look for which strategies are under antecedents, which strategies are under behaviors and so on when you make your plan. We will start by talking about antecedent strategies and the first is antecedent control procedures. Antecedent control occurs when antecedent stimuli are manipulated to evoke desirable behaviors or to decrease competing behaviors. When we talk about antecedent control we talk about discriminative stimuli. This is any stimulus present before the behavior occurs and that behavior is reinforced. In other words it is sort of like a green light for getting reinforced. In the past when I have told this joke when my friends were present they have laughed and I have been rewarded, so in the future if I am around my friends and I have a similar joke that is sort of a SD, my friends being present for telling the joke, which is the behavior and chances are I will be rewarded afterwards. However, if it is a dirty joke and maybe I am just in high school if I am around my grandparents probably they are an SD for talking about something other than a dirty joke, because if I were to do the dirty joke in the presence of my grandparents I would probably be punished.
Slide #: 3   **Slide Title:** Antecedents: Antecedent Control Procedures (cont.)   2. Antecedent Control – varies on a continuum; high control occurs when an antecedent always precedes a behavior, and low control occurs when an antecedent rarely

precedes a behavior
Working out –
High control: wearing workout clothes
Moderate control: having friend go with
Low control: eating a large meal
Smoking –
High control: driving in car
Moderate control: finishing a meal
Low control: going to work

Audio:
Antecedent control varies on a continuum. High control occurs when an antecedent always precedes a behavior and low control occurs when an antecedent rarely precedes a behavior. I have a couple of examples here to help demonstrate this concept. Let us start with working out, that is the behavior. Something that has high antecedent control for working out is putting on your workout clothes. In other words if you wear your workout clothes you are probably going to go workout. Something that might be a moderate control for working out is having a friend go with you. In other words you are more likely to go when your friend goes with you, but you can also go by yourself, you do not have to have your friend there. Something that might be a low antecedent control for working out is eating a large meal. Chances are if you eat a really large meal and you are full, especially if you are uncomfortable it is probably not going to precede going to the gym. Let us do another example; smoking is the behavior. Anybody who smokes or who is a former smoker or knows somebody in either of those situations knows that one of the most common places somebody smokes is in their car, especially if they just got off work. So, getting in and driving your car would have a high antecedent control for smoking; you get in your car and then you light your cigarette. Something that would be moderate control would be finishing a meal. Oftentimes people who smoke have a cigarette immediately following the meal, but if it is at a restaurant, especially a smoke free restaurant then chances are they will have to wait just a little while before they can have a cigarette, that is why it is under moderate control. Low control would be going to work, most places do not allow you to smoke while you are working so chances are when you go to work you are not going to be smoking. Antecedents essentially set up whether or not we are going to do the behavior and antecedent control basically says which antecedents occur before the behavior help to control whether or not our behavior is going to occur.

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Slide Title: Antecedents: Antecedent Control Procedures (cont.)

    B. Procedures to Evoke the Desired Behavior
        1. Present SD(s) for the Desired Behavior - identify what antecedents are present before the desired behavior occurs and is reinforced, then incorporate those into your plan

        If your target behavior is to eat fruit, purchase fruit at the store so it is available to eat at home (the SD is the presence of the fruit at home)

Audio:
Now we can talk about several antecedent control procedures beginning with procedures to

evoke a certain behavior. The first is to present SD(s) for the desired behavior. You want to identify what antecedents are present before the desired behavior occurs and is reinforced, then incorporate those into your plan. In other words if you are trying to increase your exercise behavior and let us say you live in a suburb of a big city and you work in that big city and as part of a perk for your job you have access to a city gym just one block away from where you work. Well, chances are if you bring your workout clothes with you to work you may be more likely to go workout after you get off and if you forget your workout clothes chances are you are not going to work out. So, if you find out, okay on these days this is when I have gone to work out then "these" need to be defined. On the days that I bring my clothes to work I tend to go workout, well for your self-management plan you really want to make an effort to make sure you bring your workout clothes each day, this sets up the behavior. If your target behavior is to eat fruit, purchasing fruit at the store to bring home so that it is available to eat at home is also a good example. If you are trying to eat fruit and vegetables and every time you go to the fridge or into the kitchen to get a snack if fruits and vegetables are not available, then chances are you are not going to eat fruits and vegetables. However, if they are available there is a much greater likelihood that you are going to eat those fruits and vegetables for a snack.

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Slide Title: Antecedents: Antecedent Control Procedures (cont.)

2. Decrease the Effort Needed to be able to do the Behavior – arrange events leading up to the behavior so that you reach a point where it is easy to do the behavior (note: this does not refer to the amount of energy needed to do the behavior!)
3. Arrange Establishing Operations for the Desired Behavior – reminder, establishing operations can change the value of a reinforcer; try incorporating events that increase the value of the reinforcer

Audio:
We can also decrease the effort needed to do the behavior. Now, this is not the effort needed to do the behavior as in your target behavior, but what do you have to do in order to get to the point that you do the behavior. In other words you want to arrange events leading up to the behavior so that you can reach a point where it is very easy to do the behavior. Again, going back to the exercise example you want to do things like make sure you have an nice lunch, maybe even an afternoon snack, so that when you get home you are not really hungry because being really hungry might make you less likely to want to go workout afterwards and more likely you will want to go straight home and have dinner. You might want to do things like set your workout clothes out at night in a bag by the front door so that in the morning if you are running behind or if you are just prone to forgetting those sorts of things, then it is easier to remember, so you just want to set yourself up for success. The third antecedent control procedure here is to arrange establishing operations for the desired behavior. As a reminder establishing operations can change the value of a reinforcer. So you want to try incorporating events that increase the value of the reinforcers for you. For example if one of your reinforcers is to go to the movie theater you do not want to go to the movie theater at all unless you are able to purchase that with a reinforcer. If you say I can go to the theater anytime I want and also use it as a reinforcer then chances are that's not going to be an effective reinforcer because you're satiating on that reinforcer, you're full of it, you have so much that it does not matter if you have a little bit more, you can anytime so why does it matter that you can purchase that as a reinforcer.

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Slide Title: Antecedents: Antecedent Control Procedures (cont.)

    C. Procedures to Decrease Likelihood of Competing Behavior – you can use slight variations of the same strategies we just discussed:
        1. Remove SD(s) for Competing Behaviors
        2. Increase Effort Needed to be able to do Competing Behaviors
        3. Eliminate Establishing Operations for Competing Behaviors

Audio:
Now let us switch gears just a little bit and apply the three strategies we just talked about and again let us apply them to decreasing the likelihood of a competing behavior occurring. What I mean by a competing behavior is something that you do not want to do but it competes with the behavior you do want to do, so when you are doing it you cannot do your target behavior. For example, if your target behavior is to exercise then a competing behavior would be to sit on the couch and watch TV. You cannot very well exercise and sit on the couch at the same time. So we can use slight variations of the exact same strategies we just discussed. We can remove the SDs for competing behavior; in other words let us not set ourselves up for failure. Second we can increase the effort needed to be able to do competing behaviors, again let us make it more difficult to do the behaviors that we do not want to do. For example, if your target behavior is to drink water and you love soda and let us say that you're a college student on a college campus there are soda machines all over the place, but if you use a little bit of creativity you can probably design routes that you can walk to where you are not next to a vending machine. If that is the situation then you are going to have to go out of your way in order to go to a vending machine and therefore you are requiring more effort to do the competing behavior of purchasing a soda. Finally, you can eliminate establishing operations for competing behaviors. In other words you do not want to make the values of your reinforcers for competing behaviors high. A few other antecedent procedures before we start talking about strategies with behaviors.

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Slide Title: Antecedents: Antecedent Control Procedures (cont.)

    A. Accurately Identify Antecedents – Keep accurate and complete records and begin recording antecedents early enough in the chain of events
    B. Create New SD's for your Target Behavior:
        1. Use Distraction – focus on a particular thought or object; most effective during early stages of skill development

Audio:
First we can accurately identify our antecedents. This is really important. The way we do it is by keeping accurate and complete records and begin recording antecedents early enough in the chain of events. In order to accurately identify our antecedents we have to keep accurate and complete records and we do this with phase two of our self-management plans. So we are going to talk later on about how accurately record your behavior, but when you do that you want to make sure that you begin recording antecedents early enough in the chain of events. Think back to the example with exercising after work. Exercising after work may occur at 5:00 or even 6:00 pm, but if you go to work at 7:00 in the morning and you have to grab your workout clothes in

order to go work out after work, then that antecedent is occurring 8 or 9 hours before the behavior. So sometimes we have to go back really far in order to know what antecedents are occurring that are influencing our behavior. We can also create new SD's for our target behavior. One possible SD would be distraction. Self-management research has shown that distraction can work for some people, but it does vary. If you do want to use distraction focus on a particular thought or object; this is also most effective during the early stages of skill development, which means if you are already exercising and you have been exercising for a long time but you want to increase the amount you are exercising then distraction probably is not going to work for you, but if you are not exercising at all and it is almost a completely new behavior to you then distraction might be appropriate.

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Slide Title: Antecedents: Antecedent Control Procedures (cont.)

    2. Incorporate Self-Statements:
        a. Self-Instructions – any statement telling yourself to do something; make self-instructions very clear – not weak or open for interpretation
Your plan is required to include self instructions!
        b. Belief Statements – a statement that follows your beliefs and underlies your behavior
"I Must" statements can lead to anxiety, depression or worthlessness ("I must be nice") "Others must" statements can lead to anger or rage ("Others must be nice to me")

Audio:
You can also incorporate self-statements. There are two kinds of self-statements and the one I want you to use and in fact the one that you have to use in your self-management plan and one that I want you to stay away from. The types of self-statements that I want you to incorporate into your plan are called self-instructions. These are any statement that tells yourself to do something. You want to make self-instructions very clear, you do not want them to be weak or open for interpretation. Think of it as communicating assertively, but not aggressively, assertively but not passively. So you do not want to say when you wake up in the morning, "Okay well, maybe I'll lay here for a little while and then maybe I'll get up and put on my workout clothes and maybe I'll go work out then." That is pretty passive, self-instructions are telling yourself to do something. So, you might incorporate into your plan that when you wake up youare going to give yourself instructions to go work out and your self-instructions might be something like, "Okay now that you are awake you need to put your clothes on, go to the gym and work out for an hour. That statement is clear, it is not aggressive, it is assertive and it is not passive, it is also not weak or open for interpretation. Belief statements on the other hand are statements that you want to avoid. These are statements that follow your beliefs and underlie your behavior. Do not confuse these belief statements with statements such as I believe in myself or I believe I can do this, these statements underlie your behavior. For example, I might say I must be thin in order to be beautiful and if I am not thin then I am not beautiful because if we are not what we say we need to be, if we don't follow our rules then those statements can make problems. Now, if those statements are about yourself, so I must be a certain way, these statements can lead to problems such as anxiety, depression or worthlessness, such as I must be nice. If you are not nice in a situation you might think well, I am not being nice, even though I

must be nice and so you have a problem, you might be anxious about that, you might get a little depressed, depending on what the situation is and so on. You can also have belief statements about others, in other words, others must be nice to me. These statements can lead to anger or rage when somebody does not follow the rules. If you believe that others must be nice and somebody's not nice to you, usually that makes us very angry and we can even act out in rage depending on the situation. For your plans you do not want to talk about things that you must do, or ways that you must be. Instead you want to give yourself instructions to do what you want to do. If you want to take a vitamin for your plan then wake up in the morning and give yourself instructions to go to the bathroom, get a glass of water and take your vitamin.

Slide #: 9
Slide Title: Behaviors: Strategies to Develop and Strengthen Behavior

    A. "Practice" Techniques
        1. Behavior Rehearsal – practicing a new behavior frequently and in many different environments
        2. Imagined Rehearsal – thinking about how to do the behavior
        3. Modeling – performing a behavior after observing others doing the behavior correctly

Audio:
Let us switch gears now and talk about some strategies related to behaviors. The first types of strategies are what we call practice techniques. Now, behavioral rehearsal is just a fancy word for practice and it is a word that was created by behavior analysts to describe practicing a new behavior frequently and in many different environments, at least as many different environments as you can. Just because you may not be able to be in that environment does not mean that we cannot rehearse it. If you are at work, for example, and your goal is to go workout after work you might want to use imaginary rehearsal. This is thinking about how to do the behavior. You can also imagine yourself in the environment in which the behavior occurs and again you are thinking about yourself doing the behavior in that environment. So, maybe on your lunch break you can imagine yourself going to the gym after work and you can sort of visualize what it is you want to do and how you want to feel after you do that. You can also use modeling, which is a term that comes from social psychology and this is performing a behavior after observing others doing the behavior correctly. This is really helpful if you do not know how to do the behavior at all. For example, at the gym you may notice that they have the big balls full of air and many people use those balls to do their sit ups off of, but if you have never used the ball you may not know how to do it. So while you are doing weights you might peek over your shoulder and see someone using a ball to do sit ups. That would be an example of modeling.

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Slide Title: Behaviors: Strategies to Develop and Strengthen Behavior (cont.)

    B. Specify your Goals and Sub-Goals
        1. Identify the Consequences for Changing – identify the long-term and short-term advantages and disadvantages of changing behavior and of maintaining the original behavior
        2. Determine your Final Goal – this is what you ultimately hope to accomplish; most likely well beyond this class

Audio:
It is also important to specify your goals and sub-goals. First you want to identify the consequences for changing. You want to say what the long-term and short-term advantages are of both changing and maintaining the original behavior. Many times with this class self-control students tell me, "Well I don't have any advantages for maintaining the original behavior, that's why I want to change my behavior." But from a behavior analytic perspective something is reinforcing the behavior that is occurring now, or something is preventing you from doing the behavior at the level you want to do it. That is why you are making an adjustment, that is why you are doing self-management. So think hard about what the long-term and short-term advantages and disadvantages are for both changing your behavior and maintaining the original behavior. You also want to determine your final goal. This is what you ultimately hope to accomplish and it is most likely to go well beyond this class. If you have a fairly simple behavior that responds very well to your self-management plan then two weeks is probably going to be enough for you, but I would say there is probably 75% of the behaviors that students have selected for self-control in the past that the final goal is not met for those behaviors at the end of the two week period that this class goes through. Remember also that when you determine your final goal that you state it in terms of your operational definition.

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Slide Title: Behaviors: Strategies to Develop and Strengthen Behavior (cont.)

3. Determine your Sub-Goals – be clear and specific, keep a reasonable level of difficulty, and specify your criterion for moving from one sub goal to the next
C. Write a Self-Contract – summarize key elements of plan, and state what behaviors will produce what reinforcers, and when and how those reinforcers will be obtained

Audio:
You also want to determine your sub-goals and these should also be stated in terms of your operational definition. When determining your sub-goals you want to be very clear and very specific. You want to keep a reasonable level of difficulty and you want to specify your criterion for moving from one sub-goal to the next. In other words if my final goal is to work out and I would like to run for 60 minutes three times a day and I'm not running at all right now. Then my final sub-goal is defined as running 6 times per day three days per week and my operational definition is running at the gym for a 10 minute period. So, I want my behavior to occur 6 times per day 3 days per week. Well, my sub-goal might be to first do the behavior for 20 minutes a day, 3 days a week and after I can successfully do that for a week then I might want to move up to 30 minutes a day, 3 days a week and after I have successfully done that for a week then I want to move up to 40 minutes a day, 3 days a week and so on, but it is important you do not say during week 1 of the plan I am going to do 20 minutes a day, during week 2 I am going to do 30 minutes and so on. You want to have criterion for moving from one sub-goal to the next. If your week 1 goal is to do 20 minutes a day, 3 days a week and you can only do 10 or 15 minutes a day then you have not met that sub-goal and so it does not make sense to move on to the next sub-goal. You want to set yourself up for success, so you do not want to move on to the next sub-goal if you are having difficulties with the current one. The last behavior strategy is to write a self-contract. You'll all be doing this with your behavioral self-management proposal and I will be providing guidelines on the instruction sheet for that. A self-contract essentially summarizes key elements of your plan and states what behaviors will produce what reinforcers and when and

how those reinforcers will be obtained. There is always a statement that says you are not going to cheat on your reinforcers because that is really important. Many college students here write a self-contract and they think it is sort of silly, but the research has been very clear. People of all ages, children, teenagers, adolescents, early adults, middle adulthood, any time somebody writes a self-contract it really does make it more likely that they are going to stick to that contract. People like to stick to what they say they are going to do, they do not like to be hypocritical and so being clear on your self-contract and signing yourself contract and agreeing not to cheat on your plan really will help you set yourself up for success for not cheating on your plan.

Slide #: 12
Slide Title: Consequences: Reinforcer Strategies

    A. Contingency – obtaining a reinforcer is dependent on doing a behavior
       Reinforcer = behavior then reward
       Bribe = reward then behavior
    B. Use a Schedule of Reinforcement – reinforcers are delivered after the behavior occurs a number of times or after a specific amount of time

Audio:
The final section we are going to talk about are strategies related to consequences and we are going to start with a little bit of a refresher on the importance of contingency. Again, this is obtaining a reinforcer being dependent on doing the behavior. In other words, do not give your daughter $5 before she cleans her room and then expect her to clean her room. Instead ask her to clean her room and as soon as she is done then offer her the reinforcer. With the reinforcer the behavior occurs, then the reward is given and what do you call it when a reward is given before the behavior? Well, this is called a bribe and oftentimes bribes do not work. We also want to use a schedule of reinforcement. Reinforcers are delivered after the behavior occurs a number of times or after a specific amount of time has passed. This allows us to not necessarily give ourselves the big reinforcers every time the behavior occurs and in fact not reinforcing every single time the behavior occurs makes the behavior stronger and occurring more often. There are four different schedules of reinforcers that you are going to want to consider. There are two types of response based schedules and two types of time based. Ratio schedules are response based schedules and there are two of those, the fixed ratio schedule and the variable ratio schedule. A fixed ratio schedule is when a reinforcer is received after the behavior occurs a set number of times.

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Slide Title: Consequences: Reinforcer Strategies (cont.)

    1. Ratio Schedules – response based
       a. Fixed Ratio (FR) – reinforcer received after the behavior occurs a set number of times
          Getting candy after 5 correct math problems
       b. Variable Ratio (VR) – reinforcer received after the behavior occurs an average number of times
          Getting candy after an average of 5math problems

Audio:
Now, I am going to use an example for all four of these schedules and that example is a little boy named Bobby and who is in the 7th grade and he is working on math problems, which he really

hates to work on. So we are going to come up with some reinforcers to try to encourage Bobby to do the math problems. Now, if I put Bobby on a fixed ratio 5 schedule that means that Bobby is going to get candy after every 5 math problems that he does. An example for Bobby with a variable ratio schedule he is going to get candy after an average of every 5 math problems. What this means is that sometimes he might have to do one problem before he gets a piece of candy, sometimes he might have to do 6 problems before he gets candy and sometimes he might have to do 3 problems, it is unpredictable, but for every 20 problems that he does he is going to get 4 reinforcers somewhere along those 20. With a fixed ratio schedule, Bobby after doing 20 problems is still going to get four reinforcers, but those reinforcers are delivered on a predictable schedule of after every 5 math problems. So a fixed ratio schedule is response based and it is predictable and a variable ratio schedule is response based and it is an average, so it is unpredictable.

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Slide Title: Consequences: Reinforcer Strategies (cont.)

2. Interval Schedules – time based (plus 1 behavior)
   a. Fixed Interval (FI) – SR+ after the behavior has occurred during a set amount of time
      Getting candy after doing math for 5 minutes
   b. Variable Interval (VI) – SR+ after the behavior has occurred during an average amount of time
      Getting candy after doing math an average of every 5 minutes

      Special Note! Remember, after time has passed, the behavior must still occur once (contingency!)

Audio:
We also have interval schedules and these are time based and I put in parentheses here plus one behavior and what that means is going back to contingencies. So with interval schedules you get a reinforcer after a certain amount of time has passed but the reinforcer is not automatically delivered after the time is up, you have to have the time being up and then the behavior has to occur at least once, in other words the reinforcer is still contingent on the behavior occurring not just the amount of time. A fixed interval schedule is when the reinforcer is delivered after the behavior has occurred during a set amount of time. In other words maybe Bobby has to work on math problems not 5 math problems, but instead this time work on math problems for five minutes; every 5 minutes that Bobby is working on math problems you're going to give him a piece of candy. With a variable interval schedule, however, we are going to be unpredictable again. This is where we are going to administer the reinforcer after the behavior has occurred an average amount of time, in other words getting candy after an average of every 5 minutes. If Bobby works on his math problems for 20 minutes on the fixed interval schedule he is going to get 4 reinforcers and 4 pieces of candy, but each of those pieces of candy are going to be given after 5 minutes. With the variable interval schedule after 20 minutes of working Bobby could still get 4 pieces of candy, but if might be that he gets the first one after 20 minutes and he gets the second after working for 8 more minutes and so on. The variable interval schedule is unpredictable. Remember that with a fixed interval or variable interval schedule after the time has passed the behavior still must be prolonged in order to get the reinforcer.

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Slide Title: Consequences: Reinforcer Strategies (cont.)

    C. Use a Token Economy – system where your earn small reinforcers (tokens) that can be exchanged for larger reinforcers
Money, airline mileage plan programs, coffee punch cards

What other example of token economies can you think of?

Audio:
The third reinforcer strategy that everyone will be using is using a token economy. This is a system where you earn small reinforcers, which we call tokens, that can be exchanged for larger reinforcers such as a day at the spa or a foot massage by our partner or the opportunity to go camping for the weekend or maybe just the idea of renting a movie. So, with the token economy system you earn tokens immediately after the behavior occurs. This allows us to reinforce the behavior immediately after the behavior, but you do not have to run to the movie theater immediately after going to workout. Students use all kinds of tokens and you are going to select your tokens that you think are going to be most appropriate for your plan. Some examples of token economies, the most prominent is money. For example, what is money, it is just a piece of paper after all, but after we, we as in our society, give value to that piece of paper it then becomes a token for which you can exchange for larger reinforcers. Another common example is airline mileage plan programs or coffee punch cards. With the airline mileage plan program one mile is one token. For most companies after you get 20,000 miles you get to buy a free ticket. Same with coffee punch cards; it may be that after you buy ten coffees you get one free; so each punch is a token and after you collect 10 tokens you get to exchange that card for a free coffee. Think about what other examples of token economy you experience in your everyday life.

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Slide Title: Consequences: Reinforcer Strategies (cont.)

    1. Select your Tokens – tokens should be portable, easy to access, and there should be enough tokens available at any given time
Star stickers, paperclips, pennies
    2. Identify your Reinforcers – list several possible reinforcers that you will only earn by exchanging tokens. Include in your list various levels and types of reinforcers
Remember to incorporate physical, praise, and activity based reinforcers

Audio:
For your self-management plan you will be developing your own token economy system. This is perhaps the single most important part of your self-management plan and you should put a lot of time and thought into putting together a strong, solid token economy system. You want to begin by selecting your tokens. These should be portable, easy to access and there should be enough tokens available at any given time. Some examples of tokens students have used in the past are little star stickers, paperclips, pennies, or for the student that has the tightest budget you might like to use just checkmarks on a piece of paper, anything you decide what a token is, you are the one who is going to give it value. After you select your token you need to identify your reinforcers. You want to list several possible reinforcers that you will only earn by exchanging tokens. In other words during the two weeks in this class when you implement your self-

management plan you are not going to access those things on that reinforcer list unless you do so by purchasing them with your tokens. You want to include on your list various levels and types of reinforcers, so you want to have some reinforcers that you can earn with just a small number of tokens, you want to have some reinforcers that you can purchase with a moderate amount of tokens and you want to have some reinforcers that you have to have a lot of tokens to use in order to purchase it. In other words if you do not meet your sub-goal for that week, but you are still doing your behavior a little bit you want to have something small that you can still purchase and reward yourself for because you do not want to get discouraged and if you work hard and you get a little bit of progress going and you do not get a reinforcer oftentimes what happens is you get discouraged. At the same time if you're not doing the behavior at the level you want to be doing it you do not want to reward yourself with the biggest reinforcers, you want to save those for meeting hurdles that were tough to get to. So, when you identify your reinforcers your list should be pretty big and you should also include physical, praise and activity based reinforcers. Keep in mind to have a minimum of about 5 reinforcers that are available for you to purchase, at least 3 reinforcers that are low value, at least 3 that are medium value and at least 3 that are high value.

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Slide Title: Consequences: Reinforcer Strategies (cont.)

3. Assign a Value to your Reinforcers – identify how many tokens each reinforcer will cost. Make sure the cost is reasonably difficult, but not out of reach.
   Renting a movie may have a low value, whereas going to the movie theater may have a medium value
4. Determine When the "Bank" is Open – Identify when you will be able to purchase reinforcers. You can make certain reinforcers available at the end of each day, and others available at the end of each week.

Audio:
You will also want to assign a value to your reinforcers. This is where you identify how many tokens each reinforcer will cost. You want to make sure the cost is reasonably difficult, but not out of reach. This is more specific than saying whether or not your reinforcer is low, medium or high value. In order to do this it has to make sense. You have to calculate, if my first sub-goal is to do 8 behaviors in the first week then if I get one token for each behavior then the maximum number of tokens I can earn each week, or at least the first week is 8 tokens. If this is the case you do not want your low value reinforcers to cost 10 tokens because it is impossible to buy them then. Instead it might be better to say, okay my low value reinforcers are probably going to cost about 2 or 3 tokens each, my medium value reinforcers are going to cost about 3 to 6 tokens and my high values are only going to cost 7 or 8 tokens, in other words I really met my sub-goal for that week so I am going to get a big reinforcer. I put here on the slide that renting a movie may have a low value, whereas going to the movie theater may have a medium value. I want this to make sense and when I go to evaluate your plans, that is what I am going to be looking at is can you reasonably get this number of tokens? Is it too easy to get those reinforcers based on your system, or is it appropriate? Determine when the bank is open, this is again up to you. You want to identify when you will be able to purchase your reinforcers. You can make your bank open one day a week, often students like their bank to be open on Friday at 5pm. Some students like to have the bank open all the time. Think about what type of person you are and how you like to operate and what would be most appropriate time for the bank to be open. In other words

if you really need to be reinforced every day then you probably want the bank to be open at least once a day where you can purchase something small for doing something that day. Something else that students like to do is incorporate a bonus. For example, after you have identified your sub-goals it might take you a few weeks to meet your first sub-goal, it might take you a week and a half, irrespective of this you might want to put an extra bonus in when you meet your sub-goals, so students might have reinforcers that are valued high and in order to obtain them you have to meet a sub-goal to get the bonus during that cycle.

Slide #: 18
Slide Title: Consequences: Reinforcer Strategies (cont.)

5. Implement Token Economy – immediately follow each occurrence of the behavior with a token, and do not allow yourself to cheat! Stick to the plan exactly as it was designed
6. Important Side Note – remember to exclude some rewards from your token economy. Incorporate non-contingent positive events in your plan.

Audio:
When you implement your token economy you want to immediately follow each occurrence of the behavior with a token and to not allow yourself to cheat, this is so important. A reinforcer has to be contingent on the behavior occurring in order for it to be effective. If you reinforce yourself and the behavior has not truly occurred then you are cheating yourself out of a behavior change that you yourself wanted in the first place. Stick to the plan exactly as it was designed. I want to conclude with a very important side note. You want to remember to exclude some rewards from your token economy. In other words I want you to incorporate non-contingent positive events in your plan. This means they are not contingent on you doing the behavior. If you take every little thing that you enjoy in your life and you put it in as part of your token economy system, if you do not get enough tokens to get what you want you are really setting yourself up for failure for two reasons. First of all, you are going to get discouraged and when you get discouraged you are going to cheat on your plan because you think at the end of the week, I have been working really hard, but I do not have enough tokens for something that I want and you throw your hands in the air and say, I am going to have my reinforcer anyways, so you set yourself up for cheating your plan and you also set yourself up for failure and disappointment because chances are if you agreed to do this plan and it is something you want to do and you get discouraged because you are not moving along fast enough and you are not getting your tokens then that is when you make it less likely to want to continue with the plan. So, find a few things, at least 3 to 5 things that you enjoy doing, these should be things that are not really high value, but if I asked you the question, "What can't you live without?" and if it is pleasure reading, if it is reading your novel then do not put that on your list because you want to be able to access that irrespective of if you've done the behavior. In other words if you do not do the behavior and you do not get enough tokens to get the reinforcer you still want to have some activities that are available to you so that you do not feel like you have to do absolutely nothing or you have to cheat on your plan. This is just one more step for setting yourself up with success in your plan.