

***The Cipani
Behavioral Classification System
For Children and Adolescents***

***Diagnostic Manual
(3rd edition)***

***Ennio Cipani, Ph.D.
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*The Cipani Behavioral Classification System (BCS) for Children and Adolescents:
Diagnostic Manual (3rd edition)*

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Additionally, it is incumbent upon the user to become fully apprised of the entire manual (i.e., all categories within the four major functions) before using it professionally. For users who are nascent learners with respect to an analysis of behavioral function, it is also recommended that they consult the first four chapters in the Cipani (2018a) text before diagnosing the function of problem behavior.

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Authors' Biographies

Ennio Cipani, Ph.D. is the author of *Functional Behavioral Assessment, Diagnosis and Treatment: A Complete System for Education and Mental Health Settings, 3rd edition* which was **ranked #1** in the 10 best behavioral psychology textbooks by wiki.ezvid.com (May, 2020, also #1 in their 2018 rankings). He has dealt with a variety of behavior problems and children with developmental and mental disabilities over his five-decade practitioner career (1973-2020). He embodied “a psychologist who makes house calls” (Cipani, 2004²) by conducting assessment and intervention activities in natural environments, i.e., homes and classrooms. He provided “on the spot” training for direct line people to engage in a parenting or teaching management repertoire that produced clinically significant changes in undesirable child behavior, chronicled in his writings (Cipani, 2004; Cipani, 2018a). For comments and inquiries, he can be contacted at ennioc26@hotmail.com .

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² See pages 12-16, *Punishment on Trial* (Cipani, 2004) for delineation of this model and cases; free download of book at, <http://teachpsych.org/Resources/Documents/otrp/resources/cipani09.pdf>

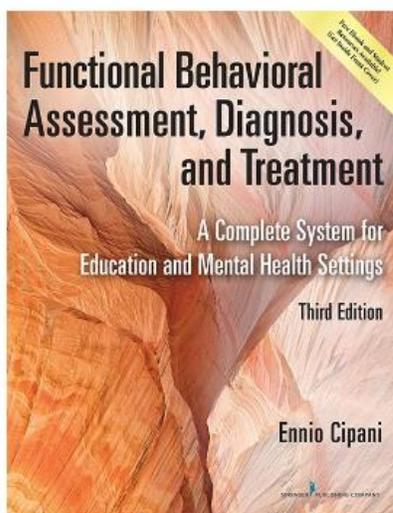
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For Faculty Instructors

Dr. Alessandra Cipani and I (E.C.) are making this material free through this pdf (and you have permission to copy and distribute freely to others). Hopefully, that allows you and other faculty to provide this invaluable resource to future practitioners, without incurring costs to your students. You have permission to either post a copy to your online course shell for students to download, or email it to them. Also, please feel free to share copies of this diagnostic manual with all students in your program, obviously with consent of your program director. You have permission to post this pdf to any site that would allow your students to access a copy of this pdf. We feel that even if this manual is not used specifically for a core course, it is extremely useful for all students. Students in education and human service fields should possess a copy when they are enrolled in their practicum, field work or internships.

You should also encourage your students to study the “Essential Terms to Know” material in the front part of the manual as a prerequisite to studying the diagnostic classification system. The underlying framework for this system may be new to some or many of your students. Acquiring an understanding of these basic terms will help them make better sense of the material in this diagnostic manual.

You might want to consider adopting the very popular text below for a much greater in-depth treatment of the *Cipani Behavioral Classification System*, particularly if you are teaching a course involving behavioral assessment.



[Functional Behavioral Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment, Third Edition: A Complete System for Education and Mental Health Settings: Cipani PhD, Ennio: 9780826170323: Amazon.com: Books](#)

This textbook was **ranked #1** in the 10 best behavioral psychology textbooks by wiki.ezvid.com (May, 2020, as well as in 2018). [The 10 Best Behavioral Psychology Textbooks \(amazon.com\)](#)

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Cipani Behavioral Classification System (BCS) ***Categories***

1. Direct Access (DA 1.0)

- [DA 1.1: Immediate sensory stimuli](#)
- [DA 1.2: Tangible reinforcers](#)

2. Socially Mediated Access (SMA 2.0)

- [SMA 2.1: Adult attention](#)
- [SMA 2.2: Peer attention](#)
- [SMA 2.3: Tangible reinforcers](#)

3. Direct Escape (DE 3.0)

- [DE 3.1: Unpleasant social situations](#)
- [DE 3.2: Lengthy tasks/chores/assignments](#)
- [DE 3.3: Difficult tasks/chores/assignments](#)
- [DE 3.4: Aversive physical stimuli/events](#)

4. Socially Mediated Escape (SME 4.0)

- [SME 4.1: Unpleasant social situations](#)
- [SME 4.2: Lengthy tasks/chores/assignments](#)
- [SME 4.3: Difficult tasks/chores/assignments](#)
- [SME 4.4: Aversive physical stimuli/events](#)

Proper citation when using categories for reports³

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³Cipani, E., & Cipani, A. (2021). *The Cipani Behavioral Classification System for children and adolescents: Diagnostic manual* (3rd edition). Visalia, Ca: Cipani & Associates

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Introduction

The Cipani Behavioral Classification System (BCS)

- The ***Cipani Behavioral Classification System (BCS)*** is a *pioneering function-based* classification system for categorizing problem behaviors in education and mental health settings (Cipani, 2018a; Cipani & Cipani, 2017).
- The ***Cipani BCS*** provides a standard framework for identifying functions of problem behavior. This unique diagnostic classification system identifies the four basic (operant) behavior functions (originally specified in Cipani, 1990, 1994). It then derives 13 different function-based categories within those four major functions (originally specified in Cipani & Schock, 2007; 2011).
- Using the ***Cipani BCS***, a function-based treatment can be derived for a selected diagnostic category (see Cipani, 2018a for function-based treatments).
- Personnel who conduct Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs) would use this system of classification in their reports as a mechanism for conveying the function (environmental purpose) of problem behavior. It can also be used in any assessment where problem behaviors constitute a portion of the referral question(s). Of course, using it professionally (i.e., reports, etc.) entails the person have the relevant credentials, licenses, authorizations to practice in an educational, medical, or human service facility/agency.
- It provides a stark contrast with symptom-based classification systems that categorize different topographies of behavior as the unit for categorizing behavioral phenomenon (see Cipani, 2014 for more detail).
- This third edition diagnostic manual covers the analysis of child and adolescent problem behaviors in school and non-school settings (e.g., home residence). Hence, it is suited for licensed and credentialed personnel who deal with such contexts. It has replaced the prior edition's assessment methodology (Cipani & Cipani, 2017) with a trial-based assessment of a variety of antecedent motivating conditions (Section III).

Why is the Cipani BCS Needed?

Currently, hypotheses about the environmental function of problem behavior reported in FBAs and other reports are idiosyncratic, sometimes not even adhering to an environmental operant framework. For example, claiming the function of problem

behavior is manipulation⁴ has appeared in FBA reports. Yet, such a putative function does not even adhere to the theoretical principles of contextual environmental explanations. A common uniform set of possible functions that is derived from environment-behavior relations is needed.

It is also the case that use of “behavioral terminology” in a written report can mask poorly conceived assessment activities and capricious hypothesis selection. For example, in some FBAs, a well-sounding hypothesis of “escape” is sometimes offered as the function for a target problem behavior. Such a contention may dupe a naïve person into trusting that a function has been meticulously identified (since it sounds behavioral?). Yet, such a hypothesis is troubling in its ambiguity and connotes very little information: escape from what? The only broad area that apparently has been ruled out are all access functions! In the Cipani BCS model, there are eight distinct escape functions! Consequently, use of this diagnostic system will allow the written FBAs to become more precise with respect to the Motivating Condition (MC) that is “driving” the function.

In summary, the ***Cipani BCS*** provides a standardized classification system for selecting a hypothesis about the function(s) of problem behavior for FBAs. Within four major categories, it presents 13 possible functions. Assessment activities are more expertly guided by cognizance of a number of potential diverse functions, with assessment becoming an evolving process.

Clinical Utility

The principal utility of any classification system should be the straightforward path from diagnostic category to the subsequent selection of differential effective treatments. For example, an intervention for a behavior maintained by escape from instruction due to task difficulty will be markedly different from an intervention derived for a behavior maintained by adult/staff attention. Therefore, two separate and distinct intervention plans should follow. This is an important point for practitioners. The use of this function-based classification system guides such a derivation of differing intervention plans as a result of classifying behavioral function⁵.

If function does not determine differential interventions, one would simply select an intervention based on some other characteristic, e.g., behavioral interventions ostensibly appropriate for children with ADHD. Unfortunately, diagnostic categories derived from traditional classification systems such as the DSM have not been shown to have any utility with respect to behavioral treatment selection. One does not prescribe a specific

⁴ All socially mediated operant behavior can be construed as “manipulating” the social environment, i.e., operant behavior “operates” on the social and physical environment.

⁵ Since this material represents a diagnostic manual, treatment is not covered. The reader is enjoined to examine chapter 4 of the Cipani (2018a) text and Schock, Clay, & Cipani (1998).

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contingency procedure because a child is diagnosed with ADHD (as opposed to some other mental disorder). A particular contingency should be prescribed when such a procedure affects the existing behavior-environment relations, irrespective of the putative DSM diagnosis. Hence, using the DSM classification system is of little benefit in determining a behavioral treatment to address a referred problem, e.g., a particular child's non-compliance. In contrast, functionally derived interventions have been proven over the past several decades to yield effective treatment of problem behavior (see issues of major journals, such as the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, over the past several decades for such studies; also see reviews by Beavers, Iwata, Lerman, 2013; Hanley, Iwata, & McCord, 2003).

An additional corollary of a functional approach to the classification of problem behavior is that problem behaviors occurring at an unacceptable rate (or dangerous form) are not viewed as symptomatic of a disorder (Cipani, 2014). Rather such behaviors are understood as functional given their contextual basis (as an example of such a contextual approach, a short You Tube narrated presentation by Ennio Cipani on a behavior-analytic formulation of childhood aggression is freely available; go to the following: https://youtu.be/qtgokxRcU_w).

Accuracy of Category Selection

The selection of a hypothesized function is derived from the assessment data that is collected regarding behavior and environmental variables. Hence, the accuracy of a particular selected diagnostic classification is dependent on the accuracy and type of assessment evidence obtained for any particular case. In this diagnostic manual, trial-based assessments are presented for each function (see Section III). The use of a criterion-referenced approach makes concerns about measurement of vague entities irrelevant⁶. One would select a function based on a target problem behavior(s) being reliably evoked under a particular antecedent Motivating Condition. Concurrently, the removal of such an antecedent condition would result in such behavior disappearing.

The **Cipani BCS** is theoretically sound as it is procured from the four major functions of operant behavior (the following nomenclature are the terms used in Cipani & Schock, 2007, 2011 and initially established by Cipani, 1990, 1994): (a) SMA or Socially Mediated Access, (b) DA or Direct Access, (c) SME or Socially Mediated Escape, and (d) DE or Direct Escape. From these four major categories of behavioral function, the **Cipani BCS** derives 13 sub-categories or specific functions under these primary generic functions. Each of the classifications under a given major category share all the characteristics of that category, except for the specific stimuli that are involved in the particular function.

⁶ See Cipani 2018a for additional assessment procedures based on an experimental analysis that can be used to verify function

For example, the major category of SMA involves the following: under a Motivating Condition (MC) involving a sufficient state of deprivation with respect to an item/activity/event, the problem behavior(s) is effective in producing the desired event relative to other behaviors. This characteristic is shared amongst all three of the categories within the SMA function. The distinction between these three categories (2.1, 2.2, and 2.3) is the type of item or activity that is in a deprived (i.e., desired) state for that person. In the case of 2.1, it is the absence of adult attention. In the case of 2.2, it is the absence of peer attention. In the case of 2.3, it is the absence of a specific tangible item/activity/event. Subsequently the environmental outcome of the functional behavior also differs as a result of these slight differences in the MC.

The other three major categories of functions have the same relationship to the classifications within their domain. If the characteristics of each major category serve as an operational definition, then the classifications derived from each, which follow the same operational definitions, are also content valid.

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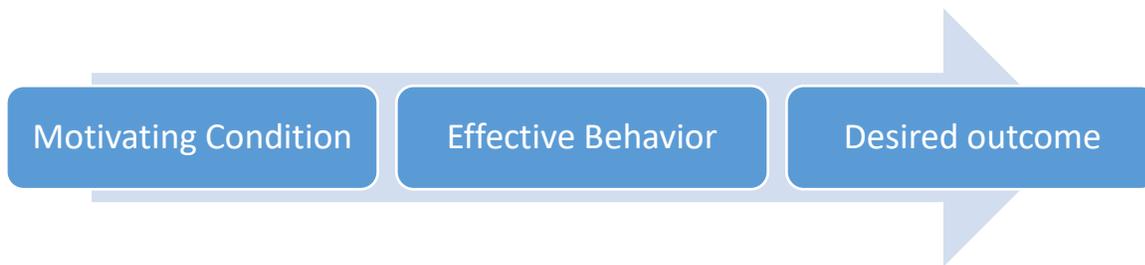
Essential Terms to Know

- **Access function** (A.K.A. positive reinforcement function) – behavior produces a desired item or event under a sufficient state of deprivation that makes such a behavior functional (under that deprivation condition). The environmental outcome of the behavior is to “access/obtain” an item, activity or event. For example, a child’s crying during a grocery trip for several minutes leads his parent to finally accede to the child’s demand to place the fancy chocolate milk in the cart.
- **Escape function** (A.K.A. negative reinforcement function) – behavior terminates (or postpones) a sufficiently aversive activity or event, which makes such a behavior functional (under that aversive condition). The environmental outcome of the behavior is to “escape” an existing undesired activity or event (or impending in the case of avoidance). For example, a child’s crying for several minutes when asked to “Go potty” leads her parent to stop making such a demand to use the toilet. Hence, sitting on the toilet seat is avoided (unfortunately, she may urinate in her pants shortly thereafter).
- **Socially Mediated function** – the reinforcer (i.e., desired outcome) is produced through the behavior of another person. This can occur for both access and escape functions. For example, a child’s crying for several minutes leads his parent to give him the special prize inside the cereal box.
- **Direct function** (A.K.A. automatic reinforcement function) – reinforcer (i.e., desired outcome) is produced through the behavior’s explicit contact with the physical environment. This can occur for both access and escape functions. For example, when asked to “Go potty,” child runs outside and hides (direct avoidance of having to sit on the toilet seat).
- **Motivating Condition⁷ (MC) for access functions** – an absence of the desired item, activity or event (including sensations such as auditory, visual, etc.) at that point in time creates a sufficient state (condition) of deprivation. Such a condition creates the following two effects: (a) such items, activities, or events become more valued (i.e., desired) at that time (relative to other events or escape from aversive events) and (b) behaviors that have historically produced such become more probable at that point in time (Cipani, 2018a; Cipani & Schock, 2011; Laraway, Snyckerski, Michael, & Poling, 2003; Michael 1993, 2007). The MC (i.e., sufficient state of deprivation) is the “**driving force**” behind a prevailing access function. For example, a child’s crying during a grocery trip for several minutes is an effective behavior during shopping trips for obtaining a desired item, particularly when an initial request for such is denied.

⁷ Termed an Establishing Operation (EO) in behavior analysis literature (antecedent event to behavior)
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- **Motivating Condition⁸ (MC) for escape functions** – The presence (or impending presentation) of an aversive (non-preferred) item, activity or event for the individual *at that point in time* creates a *sufficient* state (condition) of aversion. Such a condition creates the following two effects: (a) termination/removal of the ongoing aversive condition becomes more valued at that point in time (relative to other present or impending aversive events or access to desired items/activities) and (b) behaviors that have been historically effective in terminating (or avoiding) such become more probable at that point in time (Cipani, 2018a; Cipani & Schock, 2011; Michael 1993, 2007). The MC (i.e., sufficient state of aversion) is the “**driving force**” behind an operational escape function. For example, being asked to “go potty” sets up an aversive condition for this child (e.g., fears toilet seat). This antecedent condition then makes behaviors that have been historically successful at avoiding such a task (sitting on toilet seat) very likely.

Figure 1: Behavioral Function



- **Behavioral function** – a behavioral function (see Figure 1) is a reliable, temporally proximate, behavior⁹-environment relationship that produces an outcome that abolishes or abates the relevant MC at that point in time. The specific behavior(s) that produces such an outcome is also historically more efficient/effective than other behaviors at doing so. Such functional behaviors produce the relevant outcome quicker and/or more often than other behaviors (see examples in Section I tables).

A common mistake is the assumption that the socially mediated event that occurs immediately after the behavior dictates the function. For example, adult attention and proximity are endemic to all socially mediated functions. Hence, the occurrence of social attention and close proximity following a behavior can often just correlate with the true function, but not act in a causal manner. The “true”

⁸ Termed an Establishing Operation (EO) in behavior analysis literature (antecedent event to behavior)

⁹ Such a definition of behavior should actually be a class of behaviors that act in a similar fashion on the environment, i.e., produce the designated function under a given MC

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function is determined by the consequent event that abolishes or abates the given MC at that time (“driving force”).

- For additional reading material on the four major behavioral functions and the role of motivation, you are encouraged to study the first chapter in my text, which can be found on the book’s Amazon web page (Cipani, 2018a).

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**Section I: Diagnostic Categories of the
*Cipani Behavioral Classification System*¹⁰**

¹⁰ For additional training material accompanying this manual, go to <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WT623M4MwPo0f4-Ffew3a1kQ7UCb0K0l/view?usp=sharing>

Direct Access (DA) 1.0: Two Categories

- DA 1.1 Immediate sensory stimuli
- DA 1.2 Tangible reinforcers

Direct Access (DA) functions involve behavior that effectively and efficiently produces a desired item, activity, or a specific sensation (e.g., auditory, visual, kinesthetic, etc.). The activity or item in the physical environment is contacted and obtained *directly* by the individual's behavior. Such an item or activity is sufficiently deprived at that particular point in time to be of great value (in relation to other possible reinforcers); hence, an MC exists for such an item/event. The Direct Access function contrasts with the other type of access function, i.e., Socially Mediated Access (in which the behavior produces the desired item or event by causing another person to provide it).

Table 1: Examples of DA functions

MC	Behavior	Desired effect of behavior
Desires potato chips	Goes to cupboard and retrieves item	Gets potato chips
Desires specific auditory effect while in shower	Sings in shower	Sounds produced (which are reinforcing at that time)
Desires to play on swing	Runs out of classroom and jumps on swing, no one impedes such behavior	Gets to play on swing unencumbered for 15 minutes (until satiated for this activity, then comes back into classroom)

The three examples in Table 1 illustrate that the terminal result of each behavior (see second column) is the immediate direct contact with the desired item or activity (third column). In the first example, the chain of behaviors leads to consumption of the desired item, i.e., potato chips. In example two, the singing in the shower produces a desired auditory event. In the last example, a chain of behaviors results in the individual's engagement in the desired play activity.

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- **DA 1.1: Immediate sensory stimuli¹¹.**

Under a relevant Motivating Condition (MC), the problem behavior(s) is effective in directly (i.e., without social mediation) producing the desired sensory event immediately. Such sensory effects can include visual, auditory, gustatory, tactile, and olfactory stimuli/events. These behaviors constitute a management problem due to the following: (a) the continuous repetitive aspect of behavior, (b) unacceptable frequency of such incidents, and/or (c) the occurrence of such stereotypic behavior in settings where it interferes with more appropriate or required behaviors, e.g., during instruction.

Motivating Condition. An absence of a particular (desired) sensation at that point in time creates a sufficient state of deprivation that generates the following two effects: (a) obtaining such a sensory event becomes more valued (relative to access to other possible reinforcing events or escape from aversive events) and (b) such a stereotypic display produces the desired sensation immediately and for the length of time it occurs.

Effectiveness and efficiency. The form of the stereotypic behavior is reliably effective/efficient at immediately producing the desired sensory event under the MC.

Table 2: Examples of immediate sensory stimuli function

MC	Behavior	Result on desired outcome	Future likelihood of behavior (under MC)
1:35 pm; Desires a specific auditory sensory event	1:35 pm; Puts cupped hand to ear and hums into hand	Produces auditory stimulus	Form of self-stimulatory behavior becomes more refined & proficient

¹¹ In studying this diagnostic manual for the first time, it would be wise to first review all the other functions that have great commonality. This classification, DA 1.1 Immediate Sensory Stimuli, is a unique function since the nature of the MC and the outcome of behavior are both unobservable (but inferred). Our recommendation is that it is easier to understand examples that have shared characteristics first and then study a unique example such as DA 1.1.

12:05 pm; Desires a specific kinesthetic sensory event	12:05 pm; Rocks back & forth	Produces unique sensation	Such a movement will occur in the future, under MC
8:07 am; Desires a specific visual sensory event	8:07 am; Throws mud against wall and sees it go <i>splat!</i>	Throwing mud produces unique visual result	Throwing mud will be more likely when mud is available (after a rain) since it produces the desired visual effect

All of the examples in Table 2 depict a behavior that immediately produces the desired sensation, whether it is auditory, kinesthetic, or visual. Many ritualistic behaviors can be maintained by their sensory effects, and/or the visual effects created in the physical environment, e.g., frequently arranging chairs in a specific fashion (sometimes with respect to very inconspicuous aspects of each chair).

Diagnostic indicators for immediate sensory stimuli function. Problem repetitive stereotypic behavior occurs

- When the absence of contacting the particular sensory stimulus has been of sufficient length
- During times when individual is unsupervised and is thereby able to engage in repetitive behavior unencumbered by adults, staff, etc.

Cases to read in Cipani (2018a): Talking is good; Voices make me laugh, I like to bang Plexiglas; Kissing and sex

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DA 1.2: Tangible reinforcers

Under a relevant Motivating Condition (MC), problem behavior(s) is effective in directly (without social mediation) producing the desired item, activity, event (i.e., tangible reinforcer). Such items can include food, drink, particular food or drink items, individual or group activities such as games, sports, dances, social conversation and interaction, phone use, computer use, weekend outings, time with friends, etc. Realize that tangible reinforcers (desired items/events) can often be idiosyncratic with respect to each individual. For example, reading a non-fiction book, at certain times is a highly desired activity for some people, while for other people it constitutes an undesirable activity (i.e., sets up avoidance or escape conditions).

Motivating Condition. An absence of a particular (desired) item, activity, or event for the individual at that point in time creates a sufficient state of deprivation with respect to the item, event, or activity. The following two effects result: (a) the item, activity, or event becomes more valued (relative to access to other events or escape from aversive events) and (b) behaviors that have historically produced such become more probable at that point in time.

Effectiveness and efficiency. Problem behavior(s) is more effective/efficient and reliable than other behaviors at producing the tangible reinforcer under the MC. In this category, behaviors that involve taking the preferred item, activity or event directly are functional, e.g., grabbing/taking a desired item or activity without authorization, pilfering a desired item without permission, etc.

Table 3: Learning to skim off the top!

MC	Effective Behavior	Result on desired outcome	Future likelihood of behavior (under MC)
11:25 am; Wants an extra piece of chocolate cake	Asks parent for extra piece	Told "No" (ineffective)	Less likely
11:43 am; Still wants an extra piece of chocolate cake	Waits for parent to leave kitchen, devours top piece quickly	Obvious, eats cake	Pilfering desired item in a stealth manner more likely when told "No"

When the individual depicted in Table 3 wants an extra piece of cake, if asking for one is of no avail, what else might work? Behold, acquiring such in a clandestine manner is effective (see last row). This stealthy approach produces the desired item directly and becomes functional when this child's request is denied.

Diagnostic indicators for tangible reinforcer function. Problem target behaviors (which have been historically effective at getting desired event) become very probable when

- Individual requests or demands a desired tangible reinforcer and is told to wait
- Individual desires a preferred desired tangible reinforcer and the item is temporarily unavailable (and/or is told “No”)
- Individual desires a preferred item and is given a different item or alternate activity (e.g., redirected)
- Others (classmates, peers, siblings) get the desired tangible reinforcer and s/he does not
- Individual does not get enough of the desired tangible reinforcer (e.g., wanted two cookies and got only one, finished the item and wanted more)
- Individual does not get a sufficient amount of time with the desired activity (e.g., wanted a half hour of computer time and got only 10 minutes, and is told to transition to a less desired activity)

Cases to read in Cipani (2018a): Breakfast is down the corner

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Socially Mediated Access (SMA) 2.0: Three Categories

- SMA 2.1 Adult attention
- SMA 2.2 Peer attention
- SMA 2.3 Tangible reinforcers

Socially Mediated Access (SMA) functions involve behavior that effectively and efficiently produces a desired item or event (through someone's acting on such behavior). Such an item or activity is sufficiently deprived at that particular point in time to be of value (relative to other possible reinforcers); hence, an MC exists for such items/events. All three examples in Table 4, despite having different behavioral topographies, have the same ultimate outcome, i.e., getting potato chips from someone, under a given MC.

Table 4: Examples of SMA functions

MC	Behavior	Desired effect of behavior
Desires potato chips	Asks for potato chips	Gets item
Desires potato chips	Makes rude request, "Give me the \$\$\$%% chips!"	Gets item
Desires potato chips	Hits self	Gets item

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SMA 2.1: Adult attention

Under a relevant Motivating Condition (MC), problem behavior(s) is effective in producing desired adult attention relative to other behaviors. Such adult attention can be in the form of vocal comments and interaction, as well as non-vocal behaviors including eye contact, gestures, physical contact, and/or close proximity.

Motivating Condition. An absence of adult attention for the individual *at that point in time* creates a *sufficient* state of deprivation with respect to adult attention. The following two effects result: (a) adult attention becomes more valued (relative to access to other possible events or escape from aversive events) and (b) behaviors that have historically produced such attention become more probable at that point in time.

Effectiveness and efficiency. Problem behavior(s) is more effective/efficient and reliable than other behaviors at producing adult attention under the MC. Additionally, a person(s) who has a history of producing attention (under the specific MC) for such problem behavior(s) is present.

Table 5: Crying works

MC	Behavior	Result on desired outcome	Future likelihood of behavior (under MC)
11:30 am; Parent is playing with his sister, desires parent's attention	11:30 am; "Mommy, come here."	Parent continues playing with his sister	Less likely
	11:43 am; Starts crying in a whimper	Ignored, continues playing with daughter	Less likely
	11:45 am; Crying continues but louder, as if in pain	Parent comes over "Billy what is the matter?" and engages with him	Crying at a certain decibel level becomes more probable, whimpering softly is less likely

Why is this child desirous of his parent's attention at 11:30 AM? Because the parent is playing with his sister, and attention is not readily available for him (see Table 5). Hence, he will start engaging in behaviors that have in the past recruited parental attention. The child first appropriately requests attention, but such is not effective. The same result (or lack thereof) occurs when he starts crying and whimpering a short time later (see second row). However, louder crying at 11:45 is effective in getting his mother to leave his sister and come over to him (Billy). If this loud crying becomes effective relative to the other behaviors over time, one can expect him to resort (much sooner) to loud crying.

Diagnostic indicators for adult attention function. Problem target behaviors (which have been historically effective at getting attention) become very probable when

- Individual requests or demands adult attention and is told to wait (or something similar)
- Individual desires attention and the adult is unavailable for such (e.g., adult is on the phone, doing another task, etc.)
- An adult withdraws attention from them and/or attends to others (classmates, peers, other siblings)

Special note. Adult attention and close physical proximity will always be consequent to problem behavior for all socially mediated functions, i.e., SMA and SME functions. The desired result is only achieved via social (human) mediation. Hence, an adult's presence/attention is intrinsic to such functions. But the worth of "pure" attention at that point in time, relative to the other potential MC's (e.g., the desire for a particular toy) would be of lesser value. Hence, the function of the behavior is not simply adult attention; rather it is the access to a tangible reinforcer (or for SME functions, the termination of the aversive state). Therefore, a diagnosis of SME 2.1: adult attention is not correct. The function that is the "driving force" in these circumstances is the category whose MC is producing the greatest influence at that point in time.

Cases to read in Cipani (2018a): I want your attention now! A pinch here, a pinch there, I will kill myself, Will steal for social attention

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SMA 2.2: Peer attention

Under a relevant Motivating Condition (MC), problem behavior(s) is effective in producing desired peer attention relative to other behaviors. Such peer attention can be in the form of vocal comments and interaction, as well as non-vocal behaviors including eye contact, gestures, physical contact, and/or close continued affiliation with a particular person or a group of people.

Motivating Condition. An absence of peer attention for the individual *at that point in time* creates a *sufficient* state of deprivation with respect to peer attention. This condition produces the following two effects: (a) a specific peer's (or group's) attention becomes more valued (relative to access to other events or escape from aversive events) and (b) behaviors that have historically produced the desired peer attention become more probable at that point in time

Effectiveness and efficiency. Problem behavior(s) is more effective/efficient and reliable than other behaviors at producing peer attention under the MC. Additionally, a peer(s) who has a history of producing attention for target problem behaviors is present (peer is discriminative for providing attention for such behaviors).

Table 6: Getting group respect by being disrespectful

<i>MC</i>	<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Result on desired outcome</i>	<i>Future likelihood of behavior (under MC)</i>
10:00 am; Peer attention desired. Such becomes available with teacher's request, "Bob, can you go sit down?"	10:00 am; "I don't want to sit down. You sit down if you like it so much!"	Peers observe such an interaction	Very likely (when it recruits attention and future "respect" from classmates)

With a request from the teacher to sit down, this individual makes a derogatory comment (Table 6). Such a comment not only accesses peer attention at that time, but may also produce a level of "respect" amongst other individuals (e.g., "Boy, Bob is pretty tough!").

Diagnostic indicator for peer attention function. Problem target behaviors (which have been historically effective at getting peer attention) become very probable when

- Certain classmates, friends, or peers are nearby (or can be contacted later as to the behavioral incident).

Cases to read in Cipani (2018a): Everyone loves a clown (except the teacher)

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SMA 2.3: Tangible reinforcers

Under a relevant Motivating Condition (MC), problem behavior(s) is effective in producing a desired item, activity, event (i.e., tangible reinforcer) through the action of someone else, i.e., social mediation. Such items can include food, drink, a particular food or drink, as well as individual or group activities (e.g., games, sports, dances, social events, phone use, computer use, weekend outings, and time with friends). Realize that tangible reinforcers can often be idiosyncratic with respect to each individual. For example, reading a non-fiction book, at certain times is a highly desired activity for some people. In contrast, for other people, it constitutes an undesirable aversive activity.

Motivating Condition. An absence of a particular (desired) item, activity, or event for the individual at that point in time creates a sufficient state of deprivation with respect to that item, event, or activity. The following two effects result: (a) the specific item, activity, or event becomes more valued (relative to access to other events or escape from aversive events) and (b) behaviors that have historically produced such become more probable at that point in time.

Effectiveness and efficiency. Problem behavior(s) is more effective/efficient and reliable than other behaviors at producing the tangible reinforcer under the MC. Additionally, a person(s) who has a history of producing that specific tangible reinforcer for such problem target behaviors is present.

Table 7: If you don't succeed, keep trying

MC	Behavior	Result on desired outcome	Future likelihood of behavior (under MC)
2:15 pm; Desires time on the computer	2:15 pm; Asks parent, "Can I get on the computer?"	Ineffective, told, "You will have to wait until 3 PM!"	
	2:35 pm; Waited for 20 minutes	Ignored, no computer	

(Desires computer even more!)	2:36 pm; Asks again	Told that he needs to wait a little bit longer	
	Begins teasing sister at 2:36 for a few minutes	Eventually let on computer to re-direct his “energies”	Teasing becomes more likely

Under the Motivating Condition (i.e., desiring time on the computer), the child makes two requests (Table 7), which fall on an unreceptive parent. Note that the child did manage to wait 20 minutes, but such desirable behavior was not effective in procuring computer access (2nd row). However, bothering his sister for several minutes was sufficient to get his parent to relent and allow him to get on the computer, to circumvent further teasing. Such an *undesirable demand form* is the way to go in this circumstance, and the parent will become discriminative for reinforcement of such behavior.

Diagnostic indicators for tangible reinforcer function. Problem target behaviors (which have been historically effective at getting tangible reinforcer) become very probable

- When the individual requests or demands a desired tangible reinforcer and is told to wait, or is told “No”
- When the individual desires a preferred item and is given a different item or alternate activity (e.g., redirected)
- When others (classmates, peers, siblings) get the desired tangible reinforcer and s/he does not
- When the individual does not get enough of the desired tangible reinforcer (e.g., wanted two cookies and got only one, and wanted more) or a sufficient amount of time on activity (e.g., wanted a half hour of computer time and got only 10 minutes)

Cases to read in Cipani (2018a): Elopement, I don’t like what I am wearing, He likes to be restrained

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Direct Escape (DE) 3.0 Four Categories

- DE 3.1 Unpleasant social situations
- DE 3.2 Lengthy tasks/chores/assignments
- DE 3.3 Difficult tasks/chores/assignments
- DE 3.4 Aversive physical stimuli/events

Direct escape (DE) functions involve behavior that effectively and efficiently directly terminates or avoids an aversive (undesired) activity, event, or stimulus item. Such an activity is sufficiently aversive at that particular point in time for escape (from such) to have value (relative to other possible aversive conditions). Hence, a MC exists when such activities/events/items are present or impending. All three examples in Table 8 have the same function, i.e., getting out of exercises during PE.

Table 8: Examples of DE functions

MC	Behavior	Desired effect of behavior
Time to begin strenuous exercising in PE class, following preferred activity	Hides in bathroom	Avoids exercises for some period of time
Asked to begin strenuous exercising in PE class	Runs out of gymnasium	Avoids exercises for some period of time
Asked to begin jumping jacks in PE class	After doing a few jumping jacks, stops and sits down	Directly terminates involvement for some period of time

Direct escape behaviors do not produce their effects via someone else terminating (or postponing) the aversive events or situations. The individual's escape or avoidance of aversive situations results directly from the action or behavior itself. Hence, behaviors that entail leaving the area are often the behavioral mechanism for such escape functions. Note that the three examples in Table 8 all demonstrate that engagement with the activity is immediately halted with the displayed behavior. Contrast this behavior-reinforcer relationship with SME 4.0 functions, in which the form of behavior is irrelevant. With SME functions, the social environment determines what form of behavior results in the removal of the aversive condition or situation.

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DE 3.1: Unpleasant social situations

Under a relevant Motivating Condition (MC), problem behavior(s) is effective in terminating or avoiding unpleasant social situations directly. Such examples can include walking away and/or leaving the social situation, or not physically approaching the social situation (avoidance). The following are some examples of this type of aversive MC: simple adult requests or commands, criticism, adult disapproval statements, certain peer or adult social interactions, having an argument, having a large number of people in room, having just a few or no people in a room, lengthy conversations, and threatened or implemented punishment consequences for behavior (e.g., removal to time-out, removal of privileges, fines involving points, etc.).

Motivating Condition. The presence (or impending presentation) of an unpleasant social situation for the individual at that point in time creates a sufficient state of aversion. The following two effects result: (a) termination/removal of the situation becomes more valued (relative to escape from other aversive events or access to desired items/activities) and (b) behaviors that have been historically effective in directly terminating (or avoiding) such become more probable at that point in time.

Effectiveness and efficiency. Problem behavior(s) is more effective/efficient and reliable than other behaviors at terminating the aversive social situation. Such direct escape behaviors, e.g., leaving the area when unencumbered by anyone, directly terminate the aversive social condition.

Table 9: I will just leave

MC	Behavior	Result on desired outcome	Future likelihood of behavior (under MC)
1:20 pm; Criticized for drawing a house that did not have a roof	1:20 pm; "I will not draw anymore if you do not like my art work!"	Not effective, teacher continues criticism, saying, "You need to put a roof on the house."	
	1:21 pm; Leaves class	Leaving area directly terminates further criticism	More likely in the future if such behavior is left unfettered

In Table 9, note that leaving the area directly terminates any further teacher reflection on the student's work (escape function). Additionally, such behavior, i.e., student leaving the classroom, also sets up an aversive condition for the teacher. Consequently, the teacher will be less likely to criticize this student's work in the future because of its potential result (student leaving the class). Hence, such behavior can also involve an avoidance function, by making teacher criticism less likely in the future.

Diagnostic indicators for unpleasant social situation function. Problem target behaviors (which have been historically effective at terminating the aversive social situation) become very probable when the

- Individual is presented with a social or task demand (i.e., problems in compliance to simple adult/teacher instructions)
- Individual is in circumstance that involves following the rules of a game or play activity
- Individual is criticized or corrected during instructional task or chore
- Individual receives social disapproval from an adult, sibling, or peer (for their behavior, manner of dress, way they talk, etc.)?
- Individual receives a negative consequence for their behavior or is threatened/warned with one (e.g., is told they will lose some free time after lunch for some behavior)
- Individual is interacting with certain peers or instructional staff members
- Individual is in a social situation with too many people
- Individual is in a social situation with novel people
- Individual is in a social situation with a member(s) of the opposite gender
- Individual is in an argument with a peer/friend/other
- Individual is in a novel social situation or setting

Cases to read in Cipani (2018a): Running away from the facility

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DE 3.2: Lengthy tasks/chores/assignments

Under a relevant Motivating Condition (MC), problem behavior(s) is effective in directly terminating, or avoiding lengthy tasks, chores or instructional assignments. Such behavioral topographies can include walking away, turning away, etc. Lengthy tasks and/or assignments are often endemic in the practice of presenting more work to an individual contingent upon finishing their initial assigned work (see the case of the Wacky Contingencies, chapter 3, Cipani, 2018a). This is often the circumstance where an instructional session lasts for a fixed period. Consequently, completing work early results in more of the same, not a transfer to a more preferred activity. Providing more non-preferred work only increases the aversive element of the instructional condition at that point in time.

Motivating Condition. The presence (or impending presentation) of a task, chore or instructional assignment for the individual *at that point in time* creates a *sufficient* state of aversion. The following two effects result: (a) termination of the task, chore or assignment becomes more valued (relative to escape from other aversive events or access to desired items/activities) and (b) behaviors that have historically produced such a removal of the aversive event become more probable at that point in time.

Effectiveness and efficiency. Problem behavior(s) is more effective/efficient and reliable than other behaviors at terminating lengthy aversive tasks, chores, or assignments. Such direct escape behaviors, e.g., leaving the area when unencumbered by anyone, directly terminate the instructional condition.

Table 10: Running out of classroom

MC	Behavior	Result on desired outcome	Future likelihood of behavior (under MC)
8:45 am; Math period begins, assignment- 25 fractions	8:45 am; Student works for about 12 minutes, finishes work	Not effective, given more problems to do	
	8:57 am; Gets halfway through new	Complaining not effective, just told to get back to work	

	assignment & complains about the amount of work		
	9:12 am; After continuing to work, runs out of classroom	Effective, terminates engagement at that point	Such unauthorized leaving of area (often called “running”) is more likely

In the example depicted in Table 10, unfortunately, completing the first assignment results in getting more! Hence, task engagement does not produce a more preferred activity. Instead, it results in more of the same. Therefore, another behavior may be required for such a stimulus change. Regrettably, running out of the classroom immediately results in disengagement with materials for some period of time¹².

Diagnostic indicators for lengthy task, chore, or assignment function. Problem target behaviors (which have been historically effective at terminating the aversive task, chore, or assignment) become very probable when the

- Individual is presented with instruction, seatwork, or an instructional activity that is relatively lengthy for them (e.g., one hour in length when their current duration for active engagement is 10 minutes)
- Individual is presented with a non-academic task or chore that is relatively lengthy for them (e.g., one hour in length when their current duration for active engagement is 10 minutes)

Special note: Unique to this function category of DE 3.2 is the stipulation that the aversive condition is the length of the instructional session or work period (implying that the individual can perform the task accurately and fluently). Hence a diagnosis of escape from difficult instruction should be ruled out first.

Cases to read in Cipani (2018a): I need a break, Making many beds

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¹² When such an escape behavior becomes frequent, a referral for a serious management problem will often result.

DE 3.3: Difficult tasks/chores/assignments

Under a relevant Motivating Condition (MC), problem behavior(s) is effective in directly terminating, or postponing/avoiding difficult tasks, chores or instructional assignments. Such examples can include walking away, turning away, stopping engagement with the task, leaving the classroom unauthorized, etc. Tasks, chores, and/or assignments that constitute a difficult condition (and hence aversive) are determined individually. If a hypothetical individual's reading level is at beginning 2nd grade, but he is required to read 5th grade materials, an instructional mismatch (Cipani, 2018a, 2018b, 2018c) ensues. This makes such a condition aversive; hence escape and avoidance behaviors become functional.

Motivating Condition. The presence (or impending presentation) of a difficult task, chore or instructional assignment for the individual *at that point in time* creates a *sufficient* state of aversion. The following two effects result: (a) termination of the task, chore or assignment becomes more valued (relative to escape from other aversive events or access to desired items/activities) and (b) behaviors that have historically produced such a removal of the aversive event become more probable at that point in time.

Effectiveness and efficiency. Problem behavior(s) is more effective/efficient and reliable than other behaviors at terminating difficult tasks, chores, or assignments. Such direct escape behaviors, e.g., leaving the area when unencumbered by anyone, directly terminate the instructional condition.

Table 11: Too difficult

MC	Behavior	Result on desired outcome	Future likelihood of behavior (under MC)
10:10 am; Presented with difficult math assignment	10:10 am; "I cannot do this?"	Not effective	

	10:12 am; Walks out of classroom	Effective immediately, postponement of work depends on how quickly student is returned to classroom ¹³	If there is no effort to bring student back (for whatever reason), such behavior is likely in future under difficult math work
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When this student is presented with difficult math seat work, the verbal request to have the assignment changed is ineffective (Table 11). Hence such comments are less likely in the future. However, leaving the classroom does produce the desired effect without further ado: immediate termination of work assignment. Hopefully, if such behavior persists over time, particularly with respect to this curriculum area, the task difficulty issue will be addressed.

Diagnostic indicators for difficult task, chore, or assignment function. Problem target behaviors (which have been historically effective at terminating the aversive task, chore, or assignment) become very probable when the

- Individual is presented with instruction, seatwork, or an instructional activity that is relatively difficult for them (lacks prerequisites or skill in its entirety)
- Individual is presented with a non-academic task that is relatively difficult for them (lacks prerequisites or skill in its entirety)

Cases to read in Cipani (2018a): Instructional mismatch

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¹³ Of course, the solution to this type of function is to address the instructional mismatch

DE 3.4: Aversive physical stimuli/events

Under a relevant Motivating Condition (MC), problem behavior(s) is effective in directly terminating, or postponing aversive physical stimuli. Such examples can include walking away, not approaching feared stimulus, etc. Such aversive physical stimuli¹⁴ can include any items or events (non-social aspect of an event) that produce avoidance behavior (engender a “fear” reaction when confronted with such). Sensations such as visual, auditory, gustatory, etc. can also be stimuli that generate escape or avoidance behavior. Obviously, what is aversive to one individual may not be to someone else. For example, a warm room to some is a cool room (temperature wise) to others. Hence, the selection of the aversive stimulus should be made by examining anecdotally the individual’s response to certain stimuli. When a physical stimulus generates escape and/or avoidance behavior, select this category.

Motivating Condition. The presence (or impending presentation) of an aversive physical stimulus for the individual *at that point in time* creates a *sufficient* state of aversion. The following two effects are the result: (a) termination/removal of the aversive stimuli becomes more valued (relative to escape from other aversive events or access to desired items/activities) and (b) behaviors that have been historically effective in terminating (or avoiding) such aversive physical stimuli become more probable at that point in time.

Effectiveness and efficiency. Problem behavior(s) is more effective/efficient and reliable than other behaviors at terminating aversive physical stimuli.

Table 12: Ripping up shirt

MC	Behavior	Result on desired outcome	Future likelihood of behavior (under MC)
7:59 am; Staff put a shirt on student that does not fit well (but not discernible to them)	8:09 am; Cries for several minutes and tries to take shirt off	Not effective	

¹⁴ Prior three categories involve social stimuli as the antecedent MC

	8:16; Runs to bathroom in class area and tears off shirt	No more unfitted shirt! Immediate loss of attire. Must be given another shirt.	Hopefully, some other behavior that communicates to staff the student's need will be developed!
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If this student does not have the verbal skills to communicate to others that this particular shirt creates an aversive condition, such extreme behaviors may be the only manner of getting out of the shirt. Note in Table 12 that crying and mild attempts to take the shirt off were only met by staff interventions to keep the shirt on the student. Hence, leaving the area so that he could remove the shirt unencumbered becomes the only viable alternative.

Diagnostic indicator for aversive physical stimuli/events. Problem behaviors (which have been historically effective at terminating aversive physical stimulus become very probable when the

- Individual encounters certain stimulus items (e.g., stairwell), events (e.g., rain outside with loud thunderstorms) or activities (e.g., having to go in a boat)

Cases to read in Cipani (2018a): Nude clients

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Socially Mediated Escape (SME) 4.0: Four Categories

- SME 4.1 Unpleasant social situations
- SME 4.2 Lengthy tasks/chores/assignments
- SME 4.3 Difficult tasks/chores/assignments
- SME 4.4 Aversive physical stimuli/events

Socially Mediated Escape (SME) functions involve behavior that effectively and efficiently terminates or avoids an aversive (undesired) activity or event through someone acting on such behavior. Such an activity is sufficiently aversive at that particular point in time for escape from such to have value (relative to other possible aversive conditions); hence, an MC becomes operational for such activities/events. All three examples in Table 13, despite having different behavioral topographies, have the same function, i.e., getting away from an unpleasant social situation with the aid of someone, under a given MC.

Table 13: Examples of SME functions

MC	Behavior	Desired effect of behavior
Asked to begin strenuous exercising in PE class	Complains	Teacher provides an alternate activity; individual gets out of doing strenuous exercises
Asked to begin strenuous exercising in PE class	After doing two jumping jacks, individual makes rude comment, "Take your jumping jacks and \$##%!"	Gets sent to the principal's office for the remainder of the period
Asked to begin running around track in PE class	Hits self a number of times in the face	Teacher stops individual from hitting self, moves them away from activity (terminates exercise)

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SME 4.1: Unpleasant social situations

Under a relevant Motivating Condition (MC), problem behavior(s) is effective in terminating, or avoiding unpleasant social situations through the actions of someone else, i.e., social mediation. The following are some examples of this type of aversive MC: simple adult requests or commands, criticism, adult disapproval statements, certain peer or adult social interactions, having an argument, having a large number of people in room, having just a few people in a room, lengthy conversations, and threatened or implemented punishment consequences for behavior (e.g., removal to time-out, removal of privileges, fines involving points, etc.).

Motivating Condition. The presence (or impending presentation) of an unpleasant social situation for the individual *at that point in time* creates a *sufficient* state of aversion. The following two effects result: (a) termination/removal of the situation becomes more valued (relative to escape from other aversive events or access to desired items/activities) and (b) behaviors that have been historically effective in terminating (or avoiding) such become more probable at that point in time.

Effectiveness and efficiency. Problem behavior(s) is more effective/efficient and reliable than other behaviors at terminating the aversive social situation. Additionally, a person(s) who has a history of producing escape from that situation (under the specific MC) for such problem behaviors is present.

Table 14: Do you want me to kick you?

MC	Behavior	Result on desired outcome	Future likelihood of behavior (under MC)
3:00 pm; Parent requests, "Please pick up your clothes."	3:00; "Not now"	Not effective, demand repeated	
	3:00 pm; "#%^\$#\$, No!"	Not effective, parent issues more stern command	
	3:01 pm; Kicks parent's leg	Parent says he will deal with child later, clothes stay on floor	More likely the next time

Labeling this child as oppositional (as if naming the phenomenon is useful) does not reveal the functional arrangement between severe forms of opposition and escaping or avoiding a parental demand to engage in compliance (Table 14). While complaining, “Not now” does not work, kicking the parent’s leg is effective in removing the demand. Such an extreme reaction over time will become a functional mechanism to reduce the frequency of parental requests to perform even a simple chore. After all, who wants to be kicked, when one can avoid such! “Why bother,” becomes the mantra for the parent.

Diagnostic indicators for unpleasant social situation function. Problem behaviors (which have been historically effective at terminating the aversive situation) become very probable when the

- Individual is presented with a social or task demand (i.e., problems in compliance to simple adult/teacher instructions)
- Individual is in circumstance that involves following the rules of a game or play activity
- Individual is criticized or corrected during instructional task or chore
- Individual receives social disapproval from an adult, sibling, or peer (for their behavior, manner of dress, way they talk, etc.)
- Individual receives a negative consequence for their behavior or is threatened/warned with one (e.g., is told they will lose some free time after lunch for some behavior)
- Individual is interacting with certain peers or instructional staff members
- Individual is in a social situation with too many people
- Individual is in a social situation with novel people
- Individual is in a social situation with a member(s) of the opposite gender
- Individual is in an argument with a peer/friend/other
- Individual is in a novel social situation or setting

Cases to read in Cipani (2018a): Spinning, Shut up and leave me alone

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SME 4.2: Lengthy tasks/chores/assignments

Under a relevant Motivating Condition (MC), problem behavior(s) is effective in terminating, or postponing/avoiding lengthy tasks, chores or instructional assignments by the actions of someone else, i.e., social mediation. Lengthy tasks and/or assignments are often reflected in the practice of presenting more work to an individual contingent upon finishing their initial assigned work (see the case of the Wacky Contingencies, chapter 3, Cipani, 2018a). This is often the circumstance where an instructional session lasts for a fixed period. Providing more non-preferred work contingent upon completion only increases the aversive element of the instructional condition at that point in time.

Motivating Condition. The presence (or impending presentation) of a task, chore or instructional assignment for the individual *at that point in time* creates a *sufficient* state of aversion. The following two effects result: (a) termination of the task, chore or assignment becomes more valued (relative to escape from other aversive events or access to desired items/activities) and (b) behaviors that have historically produced such a removal of the aversive event become more probable at that point in time.

Effectiveness and efficiency. Problem behavior(s) is more effective/efficient and reliable than other behaviors at terminating lengthy aversive tasks, chores, or assignments. Additionally, a person(s) who has a history of producing escape from that instructional condition for such problem behaviors is present.

Table 15: Finish your work, get more!

MC	Behavior	Result on desired outcome	Future likelihood of behavior (under MC)
8:45 am; Math period begins, assignment to complete 25 fraction problems	8:45 am; Individual finishes all 25 problems	Not effective; Given an additional assignment	
	9:18 am; About halfway through this assignment, complains	Complaining only results in being told to go back to the desk and finish	

	9:22 am; Angrily throws pencil on floor- told to go sit in counselor's office	Effective, ends math assignment at that point	Such disruptive behavior more likely, especially since doing some amount of work is ineffectual
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When completing the assigned work results in getting more (see Table 15), disruptive behavior at 9:22 succeeds in getting the individual kicked out of class (sans math assignment)! It is important to note that this individual worked for some period of time (almost half an hour). Yet a change to a more preferred instructional task (or other activity) was not the outcome! One should conclude that disruptive behaviors seem to be the manner in which relatively lengthy assignments are ceased in this hypothetical class.

Diagnostic indicators for lengthy task, chore, or assignment function. Problem target behaviors (which have been historically effective at terminating the aversive task, chore, or assignment) become very probable

- When the individual is presented with instruction, seatwork, or an instructional activity that is relatively lengthy for them (e.g., one hour in length when their current duration for active engagement is 10 minutes)
- When the individual is presented with a non-academic task that is relatively lengthy for them (e.g., one hour in length when their current duration for active engagement is 10 minutes)

Special note: Unique to this function category of SME 4.2 is the stipulation that the aversive condition is the length of the instructional session, e.g., seatwork, lecture, etc., (implying that the individual can perform the task accurately and fluently). Hence, a diagnosis of escape from difficult instruction should be ruled out first.

Cases to read in Cipani (2018a): I'm bored, Going Gandhi, Enough is enough. Also read article on this function in Communique (Cipani, 2018c)

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SME 4.3: Difficult tasks/chores/assignments

Under a relevant Motivating Condition (MC), problem behavior(s) is effective in terminating, or postponing/avoiding difficult tasks, chores or instructional assignments by the actions of someone else, i.e., social mediation. Tasks, chores, and/or assignments that constitute a difficult condition (and hence aversive) are determined individually. If a hypothetical individual's reading level is at beginning 2nd grade, but he is required to read 5th grade materials, an instructional mismatch (Cipani, 2018a, 2018b, 2018c) ensues. This makes such a condition aversive: hence escape and avoidance behaviors become functional.

Motivating Condition. The presence (or impending presentation) of a difficult task, chore or instructional assignment for the individual *at that point in time* creates a *sufficient* state of aversion. The following two effects result: (a) termination of the task, chore or assignment becomes more valued (relative to escape from other aversive events or access to desired items/activities) and (b) behaviors that have historically produced such a removal of the aversive event become more probable at that point in time.

Effectiveness and efficiency. Problem behavior(s) is more effective/efficient and reliable than other behaviors at terminating difficult tasks, chores, or assignments. There is also the presence of person(s) who has a history of terminating difficult tasks/chores or instructional assignments for such behaviors. Such removal can be either in the form of removal of instruction (but then test for SME 4.2) or the provision of easier material or assignments.

Table 16: Difficulty is the factor

MC	Behavior	Result on desired outcome	Future likelihood of behavior (under MC)
10:10 am; Present difficult math seat assignment	10:10 am; "I cannot do this?"	Not effective	
	10:12 am; "This is really hard? How do you expect me to do this?"	Not effective	

	10:17 am; Puts a big X across the paper and throws it on the floor	Is given a different, easier assignment after some admonishment	Verbal complaints do not work; do something more belligerent
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In the first and second rows of Table 16, the student makes two verbal requests to have the assignment changed. Both are ineffective. Hence, such comments are less likely in the future. However, marking up the paper and throwing it on the floor does produce an easier task assignment. As is evident from these scenarios, the individual is more likely to engage in a more demonstrative protest when faced with such difficult work in the future. Unfortunately, such behaviors are very adaptive in obtaining a removal of the difficult assignment and procuring less difficult work.

Diagnostic indicators for difficult task, chore, or assignment function. Problem target behaviors (which have been historically effective at terminating the aversive task, chore, or assignment) become very probable

- When the individual is presented with instruction, seatwork, or an instructional activity that is relatively difficult for them (lacks prerequisites or skill in its entirety)
- When the individual is presented with a non-academic task that is relatively difficult for them (lacks prerequisites or skill in its entirety)

Cases to read in Cipani (2018a): Self-injury. Also read article on this function in *Communique* (Cipani, 2018c)

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SME 4.4: Aversive physical stimuli/events

Under a relevant Motivating Condition (MC), problem behavior(s) is effective in terminating, or postponing/avoiding aversive physical stimuli by the actions of someone else, i.e., social mediation. Such aversive physical stimuli¹⁵ can include any items or events (non-social aspect of an event) that produce avoidance behavior (engender a “fear” reaction when confronted with such). Sensations such as visual, auditory, gustatory, etc. can also be stimuli that generate escape or avoidance behavior. Obviously, what is aversive to one individual may not be to someone else. When a physical stimulus generates escape or avoidance behavior, select this category.

Motivating Condition. The presence (or impending presentation) of an aversive stimulus for the individual *at that point in time* creates a *sufficient* state of aversion. The following two effects are the result: (a) termination/removal of the aversive stimuli becomes more valued (relative to escape from other aversive events or access to desired items/activities) and (b) behaviors that have been historically effective in terminating (or avoiding) such aversive physical stimuli become more probable at that point in time.

Effectiveness and efficiency. Problem behavior(s) is more effective/efficient and reliable than other behaviors at terminating aversive physical stimuli. Additionally, a person(s) who has a history of producing escape from that physical stimulus for such problem target behaviors is present.

Table 17: No Pool, please!

MC	Behavior	Result on desired outcome	Future likelihood of behavior (under MC)
2:49 pm; Told to get into pool	2:09 pm; Waves hand indicating “No”	Not effective	
	2:15 pm; Hits staff person who is trying to mildly escort	Effective, staff person leaves him alone	Hitting someone when they approach to coax you into

¹⁵ Prior three categories involve social stimuli as the antecedent MC

	him into the lower end of pool		the pool will become more likely
--	--------------------------------	--	----------------------------------

In Table 17, the individual's trepidation and anxiety over the demand to get into the pool at 2:49 reveals the MC: fear of getting into the pool (**Note:** check individual's swimming capability). The individual's failure to comply is not a function of the social demand (unpleasant social situation)! It is the desire to not get into or near the pool, whether it is demanded or not. Hence, this classification of SME 4.4 best suits the explanation for hitting staff persons who attempt to guide him into the water.

Diagnostic indicator for aversive physical stimuli/events. Problem target behaviors (which have been historically effective at terminating aversive physical stimulus become very probable when the

- Individual encounters certain stimulus items (e.g., stairwell), events (e.g., rain outside with loud thunderstorms) or activities (e.g., having to go in a boat)

Cases to read in Cipani (2018a): Here's something you cannot ignore

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Section II: Practice Case Illustrations

The following hypothetical case presentations provide information regarding an individual exhibiting problem behavior(s). Identify the function as one of the 13 categories, and/or answer questions posed in the case.

- Case 1: Johnny, who has severe intellectual disabilities and is in a wheelchair, hits himself several times a day. He is unable to communicate his needs by vocal speech. Classroom staff claim he is able to use picture icons to communicate (about 15 picture icons on a picture array). During several observation sessions, you have never seen him use his picture icons for any requesting (or protesting for that matter). But you have observed the following scenario twice during your observation. When he hit himself, the classroom staff told him to, “Stop doing that,” which was unsuccessful in abating the behavior at that point. Sometime thereafter, while he is still sporadically engaged in hitting himself, someone brought him his juice bottle to drink and his hitting stops pretty quickly. When he is finished drinking the juice, he drops the bottle on his tray and seems content.
- Case 2: In the prior case of Johnny and the self-injurious problem behavior, why would an SMA 2.3 function (tangible reinforcer) probably not be operable if his pointing to the picture of the juice bottle was reliably effective at immediately procuring the juice bottle from staff?
- Case 3: Susan, a junior high student in a general education class yells, “This is stupid!” The teacher reprimands her in front of the other students. Your involvement has occurred because of this type of behavior and other similar disrespectful comments to the teacher. The teacher reports these types of comments occur several times a week (data from recall, not actual frequency counts at the time of occurrence). You have witnessed that when she needs the teacher’s help or attention, she calls out and the teacher comes to her readily. If SMA 2.1 is not relevant for this scenario, what other Socially Mediated access function might such derogatory comments signify? How do you think classmates react when Susan makes this comment?
- Case 4: Let’s postulate that these rude and disrespectful comments that Susan exhibits several times a week serve as an escape from difficult task/assignments. What has to subsequently happen to Susan (when making a rude remark)? What would be the antecedent MC?
- Case 5: You have been referred a case involving a student, Brian, who has severe intellectual disabilities. He is referred because he pinches staff. Pinching occurs reliably when he is physically guided to comply with a self-care task (that Brian cannot do). Such pinching results in the termination of the physical guidance and task demand 50% of the time. When Brian is physically guided for other tasks that he is

more capable of performing most of the steps, pinching rarely occurs. Which of the following three categories is most likely the function: SMA 2.1, DE 3.3 or SME 4.3? Detail the rationale for your answer.

- Case 6: Tamika, a four-year-old child, screams when she is told she will have to wait awhile before she can go outside to play. If screaming is functional, what does it eventually produce via adult mediation of the screaming? What is the MC?
- Case 7: If screaming is functional in the above scenario with Tamika, what would we know about her pleading with an adult to go outside when told she has to wait? What behavior becomes more probable when she is told to wait? Why?
- Case 8: Roberto is a special education student who receives his math content in the general education class. Roberto cannot add or subtract, but everyday his assignment in math period involves fourth grade math problems (as specified in the IEP). The fourth-grade teacher wants to discuss the appropriateness of his inclusion program during math as a result of a host of disruptive behaviors that end in Roberto being sent back early to special day class. What function would appear to be operable in this scenario?
- Case 9: What would the above scenario look like (how would it be different) if Roberto's disruptive behavior constitutes an SME 4.2: lengthy tasks, chores, or assignments? What would the data show as far as Roberto's ability to perform the general education class assignments?
- Case 10: Bob, a junior high student in a general education PE class, is reported to have frequent complaints about an upset stomach, as well as other somatic complaints. The result is that he is sent to the nurse's office 2-3 times per week for the last several weeks. His stay in the nurse's office usually overlaps the PE period. These somatic complaints were reported to surface around the same time period that several boys in the PE class began calling Bob names (when the PE teacher was busy with other students). If such an antecedent context is the case, what classification best fits the function of Bob's somatic complaints?
- Case 11: Fred is a nine-year-old child diagnosed with an intellectual disability. He has been referred for reportedly running out of class 1-2 times per day. Once he is out of the class, he proceeds to jump on the playground swing and begins playing. The school is required to supervise him at all times; thus, a paraprofessional staff person must be outside to ensure his safety. Teaching staff have surmised he does this for their negative attention. Consequently, they have stopped pleading with him to go back to his class. They simply wait for him to decide to return to the class. Despite the lack of attention, he continues to play on the equipment during these incidents, unencumbered by staff or other children. What possible Direct Access function may be at play?

Answers

- Case 1 answer is: SMA 2.3: tangible reinforcer.

The key information leading to this selected function is the following: (a) reliable relation between problem behavior and hypothesized reinforcer (juice), (b) behavior seems to be more effective than other behaviors at procuring juice, and (c) the MC seems to be a desire for juice at those times because following the procurement of juice the behavior stops and he drinks the juice provided by someone (hence socially mediated).

Note that even though a staff member provides attention when he hits himself, it has nothing to do with the MC operable at that time. Since he is unable to get juice on his own (possibly due to being in a wheelchair), he must engage in a behavior that obtains juice via staff mediation.

- Case 2 answer is:

If you observed Johnny using his communication system to get juice, and such a communicative behavior was effective, then an alternate (and less painful) behavior is available for reinforcement with juice. If such a desirable communication response is effective and efficient (i.e., gets juice fairly readily, without great delay), then that behavior will become highly probable under the MC for tangible reinforcer. Hitting oneself would become less functional; hence less frequent in occurrence when a desire for juice is present (unless it serves another different function).

One note of caution; you should make sure you actually see the student use the communication board to request juice. It is often the case that a claim of a student's proficiency with an alternate communication system is not a currently realized skill. This can be particularly true in that the conditions of training the student to point to the picture of juice are sometimes quite dissimilar from those where the spontaneous need to request juice is present.

Also, if staff or adults are less efficient or are much less consistent with providing juice when he uses this method in contrast to hitting himself, than such a desirable alternative is not as effective as its undesirable counterpart. Hence, hitting will still occur because of its more straightforward relationship with obtaining juice when desired.

- Case 3 answer is: SMA 2.2: peer attention.

Particularly with students in junior high school and above, peer attention and approval become more precious. Hence, conditions in which such is available make the behaviors that recruit peer attention become more likely.

The following factors point to an SMA 2.2 classification: (a) reliable relation between behavior and hypothesized reinforcer (peer attention), (b) behavior seems to be more effective than other behaviors at procuring peer attention and (c) the MC seems to be a desire for peer attention when it is not currently realized, but is available.

- Case 4 answer is: SME 4.2: lengthy tasks, chores, or assignments.
If the SME 4.3: difficult tasks, chores, or assignments category accurately captures the function, then staff would mediate such disrespectful comments and behavior by removing the difficult task or material. The removal of difficult material could be in the form of sending Susan somewhere such as the principal's office, thus terminating the task. But this would also be the case for other functions, particularly SME 4.2: lengthy tasks, chores, or assignments.

The difference would be that such behavior would occur primarily to task difficulty as the MC rather than just tasks of any difficulty level. Given that the curriculum material in most classrooms usually does not vary significantly with respect to grade level across days or weeks, additional testing would be needed to ascertain putative function. The difficulty of the material as the MC would be established by testing the effect of presenting very easy material (see chapter 2 in Cipani, 2018a). If a differential result occurs between easy and current (difficult) tasks, one can confirm that the removal of tasks is a function of task difficulty, and not simply the presence of any task¹⁶.

- Case 5 answer is: SME 4.3: difficult tasks, chores, or assignments
Since the pinching alters the willingness of the staff to carry out the physical guidance (a reduction of 50% of the opportunities to perform this task), it is a Socially Mediated Escape function. It is not a Direct Escape function! A DE function behavior probably occurred in the genesis of the current problem. The student probably learned to ignore staff requests to proceed to the bathroom when it was time for this activity. However, it would have been rendered less effective when staff began guiding Brian to the toilet. So, it would be necessary to respond to the guidance in a manner that makes that intervention less fruitful. But which SME function is most suitable?

The answer lies in the information that the target behavior, pinching, occurs to a task that Brian cannot do. In addition, pinching does not occur when guidance is provided for easier tasks (for him). Hence the paramount MC is one of difficulty of the task or chore; therefore SME 4.3: difficult tasks, chores, or assignments.

- Case 6 answer is: SMA 2.3: tangible reinforcers
In simple terms, Tamika is not able to wait for an indefinite period of time to go play outside. Hence, screaming occurs to the MC for SMA 2.3. Screaming probably has a

¹⁶ I believe that this is often referred to as the “can’t versus won’t” dichotomy,

history of being an effective and efficient manner of getting outside quicker than if she were to just wait. This does not imply that screaming produces quicker access 100% of the time! It just requires that getting outside early is contingent on screaming some percentage of the time. Simply releasing her in close temporal proximity to the screaming (or at the end of a lengthier bout) would produce such a function.

- Case 7 answer is:

If pleading occurred in the past, it was probably ineffective and underwent extinction. Screaming produces a much better “track record.” Hence, Tamika resorts to screaming (and not to pleading) when there is great desire on her part to go play outside immediately.

- Case 8: answer is: SME 4.3; difficult tasks, chores, or assignments

While such a scenario plays out often across many classrooms, the putative function is fairly clear: SME 4.3; difficult tasks, chores, or assignments. If such is the case, presenting seatwork that is one grade level below as a test should verify such a contention.

The following factors point to this classification: (a) reliable relation between behavior and termination of difficult material (being sent back to special education program would probably result in work that is less of a mismatch), (b) behavior seems to be more effective than other behaviors at being dismissed from general education class (hence socially mediated) and (c) the MC would seem to be the difficulty of the material when compared to the material the student receives in special education class.

- Case 9 answer is:

If the target behavior was the result of lengthy task assignments in the mainstream class, two pieces of evidence would be critical to such a contention. First, Roberto would be capable of performing the tasks assigned in the general education class. This could be ascertained by examining standardized test scores in addition to placing a contingency on accuracy and fluency on a probe test day that presents the typical seatwork assignments. For example, provide just a small sample of the assignment and designate access to a preferred event immediately after completion (to maximize his motivation to succeed), if done accurately and fluently. If Roberto is able to achieve this contingency, it would lend support to a SME 4.2. If the opposite is true, i.e., he is unable to perform at mastery levels, then SME 4.3 would be more pertinent classification of function.

- Case 10 answer is: SME 4.1: unpleasant social situation

The somatic complaints occur in the context of an aversive MC involving “bullying” within a social context. The escape function involving somatic complaints occurs when teaching staff sending Bob to the nurse’s office. The anecdotal report that he often stays there until PE class is over illustrates that this Socially Mediated Escape function

removes his contact with the aversive event: PE class (which has become aversive due to the potential for bullying incidents).

- Case 11 answer is: DA 1.2: tangible reinforcers.

This hypothetical case illustrates a common fallacy. As a result of the behavior producing a management and supervision issue, staff members are required to attend to such behavior by being in close proximity to the student when he leaves the classroom. Staff may also admonish him as he heads out the door. They erroneously conclude that this behavior is the result of its ability to recruit staff attention. Hence, they have decided to simply wait for him to come back inside, of his own accord. I guess this is the equivalent of teaching-on-demand; whenever Fred is ready to enter the instructional program, teaching will ensue. He seems to be the one in charge of deciding when it is a suitable time.

The mistake in this case is not recognizing that such behavior directly contacts the desired tangible reinforcer, playground equipment and solitary play activities. The most suitable diagnostic category is DA 1.2: tangible reinforcers. The key information leading to this selected function is the following: (a) reliable relation between behavior and hypothesized reinforcer (outside play activities), (b) behavior seems to be more effective than other behaviors at procuring such and (c) the MC seems to be a desire for that activity at those times because of its direct relationship with the behavioral chain of leaving the classroom.

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Section III: Assessment Procedures¹⁷

Instructions: Select particular assessment items which test for a hypothesized function, e.g., adult attention, tangible reinforcer, etc. In school settings, these assessment procedures may require advance consent of an IEP team (even if such consent was obtained in prior years). In non-school settings, informed consent should be obtained prior to conducting test trials. Behavioral objectives found in Appendix C are derived from these assessment procedures.

The specific test trial procedures (and data recording)¹⁸ are conducted by the direct line personnel or parent/caretaker (if in non-school setting). Administer the test procedures as delineated, collecting a minimum number of trials needed to achieve stability of data. If the target behavior (or precursor if designated) occurs during the designated interval, score that trial as a “+.” A sample data sheet with hypothetical data is filled in at the end of this section.

The test trial ends when either the target behavior occurs, or the interval elapses without the target behavior occurring. **Also, as a matter of safety, if the target problem behavior poses some danger to the individual (e.g., self-injurious behavior) or others (e.g., physical aggression), select a precursor behavior in which to end the trial and provide reinforcer.** Precursor behavior is also referred to as target behavior in the material that follows.

For permission to copy material in Section III for reports, see statement in Appendix C

*Appendix B
Cipani Home
Behavioral Interview
Form*

*Appendix C
Cipani Behavioral
Classification System
Function-based
Behavioral Objectives*

¹⁷ See Appendix B for Cipani Home Behavioral Interview Form

¹⁸ Test trial procedures are derived from each function’s diagnostic indicators found in Section I

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Attention function:¹⁹

○ Assessment Procedures: wait:

When the natural opportunity presents itself (i.e., individual requests attention), tell ____ (name) to “Wait,” and do not provide attention for the next 10 minutes (select a value such as one, two, or five minutes if desiring short-term assessment benchmarks). Trial ends when either the target behavior occurs or the “wait period” elapses. Then provide attention at either point.

○ Assessment Procedures: unavailable

When the natural opportunity presents itself (i.e., individual desires attention), do not provide attention for the next 10 minutes (select a value such as one, two, or five minutes if desiring short-term assessment benchmarks). Trial ends when either the target behavior occurs or the “wait period” elapses. Then provide attention at either point.

○ Assessment Procedures: provide to other – school settings

Begin by providing attention to ____ (name) and then withdraw your attention and provide such to another student. Do not provide attention to ____ (name) for the next 10 minutes (select a value such as one, two, or five minutes if desiring short-term assessment benchmarks). Trial ends when either the target behavior occurs or the “wait period” elapses. Then provide attention at either point.

○ Assessment Procedures: provide to others- non-school settings

Begin by providing attention to ____ (name) and then withdraw your attention and provide such to another child. Do not provide attention to ____ (name) for the next 10 minutes (select a value such as one, two, or five minutes if desiring short-term assessment benchmarks). Trial ends when either the target behavior occurs or the “wait period” elapses. Then provide attention at either point.

○ Assessment Procedures: peer attention

Observe the individual during times when other favored peers or classmates (school setting) are present. Collect data on the frequency of inappropriate target behaviors and contrast this obtained rate with the rate of such behaviors when those classmates/peers are not in vicinity or area.

¹⁹ Please make sure attention is not superficially involved, as a means to an end to get something, or get away from something undesired, aversive. See chapter 1 in Cipani (2018a).

Tangible reinforcer function- consumable items:

○ Assessment Procedures: wait

When the natural opportunity presents itself (i.e., individual requests consumable item), tell ____ (name) to “Wait.” Do not provide item for the next 10 minutes (select a value such as one, two, or five minutes if desiring short-term assessment benchmarks). Trial ends when either the target behavior occurs or the “wait period” elapses. Then provide desired item at either point.

○ Assessment Procedures: told “No”

When the natural opportunity presents itself (i.e., individual desires and requests consumable item), tell ____ (name) that it is not available, e.g., “No, you cannot have it now.” Do not provide item for the next 10 minutes (select a value such as one, two, or five minutes if desiring short-term assessment benchmarks). Trial ends when either the target behavior occurs or the “wait period” elapses. Then provide desired item at either point.

○ Assessment Procedures: different item

When the natural opportunity presents itself (i.e., individual desires a preferred consumable item), give them a different item and say, “Here have this instead.” Do not provide desired item for the next 10 minutes (select a value such as one, two, or five minutes if desiring short-term assessment benchmarks). Trial ends when either the target behavior occurs or the “wait period” elapses. Then provide desired item at either point.

○ Assessment Procedures: others

When the natural opportunity presents itself, provide the desired item to other individuals first. Do not provide item to ____ (name) for the next ____ minutes (select a value such as one, two, or five minutes if desiring short-term assessment benchmarks). Trial ends when either the target behavior occurs or the “wait period” elapses. Then provide desired item at either point.

○ Assessment Procedures: not enough

When the natural opportunity presents itself (i.e., individual desires consumable item), provide only a small amount of the item. Do not provide additional amount for the next 10 minutes (select a value such as one, two, or five minutes if desiring short-term assessment benchmarks). Trial ends when either the target behavior occurs or the “wait period” elapses. Then provide a sufficient amount of item (as is usual) at either point.

Tangible reinforcer function- non-consumable items or activities/events:

- Assessment Procedures: wait

When the natural opportunity presents itself (i.e., individual requests event or activity), tell ____ (name) to “Wait.” Do not provide desired activity for the next 10 minutes (select a value such as one, two, or five minutes if desiring short-term assessment benchmarks). Trial ends when either the target behavior occurs or the “wait period” elapses. Then provide desired item or activity/event at either point.

- Assessment Procedures: told “No”

When the natural opportunity presents itself (i.e., individual desires activity or event), tell ____ (name) that the event is not available, e.g., “No, you cannot have it now.” Do not provide desired activity for the next 10 minutes (select a value such as one, two, or five minutes if desiring short-term assessment benchmarks). Trial ends when either the target behavior occurs or the “wait period” elapses. Then provide desired activity/event at either point.

- Assessment Procedures: alternate activity

When the natural opportunity presents itself (i.e., individual desires activity or event), direct ____ (name) to an alternate activity. Do not provide preferred activity for the next 10 minutes (select a value such as one, two, or five minutes if desiring short-term assessment benchmarks). Trial ends when either the target behavior occurs or the interval elapses. Then provide desired activity/event at either point t.

- Assessment Procedures: others

When the natural opportunity presents itself (i.e., individual desires activity or event), provide the activity to another individual while ____ (name) is told to wait his/her turn for the next ____ minutes (select a value such as one, two, or five minutes if desiring short-term assessment benchmarks). Trial ends when either the target behavior occurs or the interval elapses. Then provide desired activity/event at either point to.

- Assessment Procedures: sufficient amount

When the natural opportunity presents itself (i.e., individual desires activity or event), provide the activity for a short duration and then remove the activity for the next 10 minutes (select a value such as one, two, or five minutes if desiring short-term assessment benchmarks). Trial ends when either the target behavior occurs or the interval elapses. Then provide desired activity/event at either point.

Sensory stimuli function:

- Assessment Procedures: when the natural opportunity presents itself (i.e., student begins to engage in stereotypic repetitive behavior during instructional condition), tell ____ (name) to wait until authorized break time (select a value such as one, two, or five minutes if desiring short-term assessment benchmarks).

Trial ends if the individual continues or engages in the stereotypic behavior or the “wait period” elapses without the stereotypic behavior. Then provide the break time with authorized access to stereotypic or ritualistic behavior(ss).

- Depending on the form of the stereotypic behavior, provide the individual with the opportunity to engage in the behavior (unless form is unsafe, etc.) by leaving him/her alone for a five-minute period. Conduct this observation several times. If the behavior occurs while left alone, it is most probably a DA 1.1 function.

Unpleasant social situations function:

- Assessment Procedures: simple request

Present _____ (name) with a request or demand to engage in a brief action, i.e., compliance to a simple request (Note: task request is not academic or instructionally-related demand or a daily chore at home, see other categories). If compliance occurs in the absence of the target behavior within a reasonable duration, the trial ends. If the target behavior occurs, terminate the request (“Okay, you do not have to ____.”)

- Assessment Procedures: follow rules

Engage _____ (name) in a game that s/he has played before with others where there are specific rules to follow. Designate whether the target behavior occurs when _____ (name) must endure a stipulated rule that is not to his/her advantage. Record up to three such incidents per game activity. End the game when the target behavior occurs or if the game proceeds without a behavioral incident.

- Assessment Procedures: criticize or correct behavior

Present _____ (name) with a written or other task that s/he can do (can be some task that is endemic to their everyday curriculum). Identify a part of the individual’s completed task that has a minor error, and point such out to _____ (name). Designate whether the target behavior occurs when _____ (name) must endure such a critique for the following duration, _____. Subsequent to the time elapsing or the target behavior occurring, provide positive feedback for some aspect of the task or chore that was done adequately.

- Assessment Procedures: criticize chore

Present _____ (name) with a task/chore in the home setting that _____ (name) can do. Identify a part of the individual’s completed task that has a minor error, and point such out to _____ (name). Designate whether the target behavior occurs when _____ (name) must endure such a critique for the following duration, _____. Subsequent to the time elapsing or the target behavior occurring, provide positive feedback for some aspect that was done adequately.

- Assessment Procedures: social disapproval

In the course of the day, identify when an adult provides a negative or disapproving comment to _____ (name). Designate whether the target behavior occurs when _____

(name) must endure such a critique for the following duration, _____. Subsequent to the time elapsing or the target behavior occurring, provide positive feedback for some aspect of their behavior that was appropriate.

- Assessment Procedures: disapproval from classmate

In the course of the day, identify when non-adult persons (e.g., classmates, peers, siblings or friends) provide a negative or disapproving comment to _____ (name). Designate whether the target behavior occurs when _____ (name) must endure such a critique for the following duration, _____. Subsequent to the time elapsing or the target behavior occurring, the adult should provide positive feedback for some aspect of their behavior that was appropriate (and allow them to leave the area if desired).

- Assessment Procedures: consequence

In the course of the day, identify when _____ (name) receives a negative consequence for some behavior(s) they are engaged in. Designate whether the target behavior occurs when _____ (name) must endure such a negative consequence (or threat) for the following duration, _____. Subsequent to the time elapsing or the target behavior occurring, remove such a consequence or threat and provide positive feedback for some aspect of their behavior that was appropriate.

- Assessment Procedures: peer interaction

In the course of the day, identify when certain peers/friends or instructional staff are in proximity to _____ (name). Designate whether the target behavior occurs when _____ (name) remains in such a social condition for the following duration, _____. Subsequent to the time elapsing or the target behavior occurring, remove _____ (name) from the social condition if s/he so desires.

- Assessment Procedures: too many people

In the course of the school day or other setting, identify when there are too many people in proximity to _____ (name). Designate whether the target behavior occurs when _____ (name) remains in such a social condition for the following duration: _____. Subsequent to the time elapsing or the target behavior occurring, remove _____ (name) from the crowded condition if s/he so desires.

- Assessment Procedures: novel people

In the course of the school day or other setting, identify when there are novel people in proximity to _____ (name). Designate whether the target behavior occurs when _____ (name) remains in such a social condition for the following duration: _____. Subsequent to the time elapsing or the target behavior occurring, remove _____ (name) from that condition if s/he so desires.

- Assessment Procedures: opposite gender

In the course of the day, identify when there are members of the opposite gender in proximity to _____ (name). Designate whether the target behavior occurs when _____

(name) remains in such a social condition for the following duration: _____.
Subsequent to the time elapsing or the target behavior occurring, remove _____ (name) from that condition if s/he so desires.

- Assessment Procedures: argument

In the course of the school day or other setting, identify when a peer or close friend is in an argument with _____ (name). Designate whether the target behavior occurs when _____ (name) remains in the argument for the following duration: _____.
Subsequent to the time elapsing or the target behavior occurring, terminate the argument by directing each party to a different task or situation.

- Assessment Procedures: novel situations

In the course of the school day or other setting, identify when _____ (name) is in a novel social situation or setting. Designate whether the target behavior occurs when _____ (name) remains in such a social condition for the following period of time: _____.
Subsequent to the time elapsing or the target behavior occurring, remove _____ (name) from the social condition if s/he so desires.

Lengthy tasks, instructional sessions, or chores function:

- Assessment Procedures: instruction

Present a five-to-ten-minute short assignment (one that is a grade level below current achievement level in content area) to the student/child. Upon finishing, immediately present (without any break) another short assignment. Continue this pattern until the target behavior(s) occurs or the time for the academic period has elapsed. Terminate instruction at either point.

- Assessment Procedures: chore

Request the child to perform a recurring task/chore (e.g., clean up room, put away toys, etc.) at the usual time. End the trial when the task is either completed or the target problem behavior occurs.

Difficult tasks, instructions, chores function:

- Assessment Procedures: instruction

Present the difficult assignment/material to the student. Designate whether the target problem behavior occurs, or if a request for help or alternate assignment is made (and provide such) within 10 minutes of presenting the assignment. The task should only last a maximum of 10 minutes to ensure that problem behaviors are not a response to a lengthy task (since the concern is difficulty, not length). It would also be important to demonstrate that such problem behavior does not occur in the same session length when the content is below the individual's current level (see chapter 2 of Cipani (2018a) text for explanation of this comparison).

Aversive physical stimuli (i.e., fear provoking stimuli that is regularly encountered²⁰)

○ Assessment Procedures:

With parental consent, present the feared item until the target behavior(s) occurs (remove feared item/activity at that point) or the time to discontinue item engagement or activity elapses.

²⁰ Make sure that the target item or event is one that actually does not cause harm. Further, such an item or activity is commonly handled by other students of similar age. This type of objective is relevant for specific anxiety/phobias.

Sample filled out form

Category of function: Tangible reinforcer

Objective:

- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) does not get a sufficient amount of time with the desired activity ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: screaming, yelling, hitting toys, and/or kicking the air while lying face-down, but will wait patiently up to 2 minutes before getting continued access to the event or activity from an adult in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).

Interval Length: 2 minutes (short-term objective)

Assessment Procedures: When ____ (name) desired a favored activity, he was provided the activity for a short duration. The activity was then removed for the next two minutes. The trial ended when any of the target behaviors occurred, i.e., screaming, yelling, hitting toys, and/or kicking the air while lying face-down. A minus sign (-) was entered for that trial. The trial also ended if the two-minute interval elapsed without the occurrence of any of the target behaviors, with a plus sign (+) recorded for that trial. The desired activity was then provided for either phenomenon. The data form below depicts five trials of data collection.

Trial	1	2	3	4	5
Date/Time	3/26 9:10 am	3/30 9:25 am	4/4 12:40 pm	4/4 10:10 am	4/5 10:00 am
Record + or -	-	-	+	-	+

Percentage occurrence of delaying/waiting for item: 40% (this would then be selected as an objective)

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Appendix A: When in Doubt

Some cases can be difficult to “decode” the function(s) of the referred problem behaviors. In this Appendix, “When in doubt,” I (E.C.) present some hypotheses that should be examined first when dealing with the following problem areas. In my clinical experience (dating back to 1973), it is often the case that such problem behaviors are maintained because of the stated function described herein. Of course, one would want to observe if the evidence lends support to these putative functions. But when in doubt, consider these suggestions.



Ennio with daughter Alessandra at NASP 2019

Stereotypic/ritualistic behavior

Probable Category Function: DA 1.1: Immediate sensory stimuli function

Motivating Condition: desire to experience a particular sensory effect (and often in the absence of other stimuli that are of value)

Repetitive stereotypic behaviors often reflect a DA 1.1 function. If these behaviors occur reliably in the absence of a social context, then the behavior’s direct and immediate production of the sensory event is often the controlling variable. In fact, such forms of repetitive behaviors were historically referred to as self-stimulatory behaviors. If the repetitive stereotypic behavior is sensory reinforced, it should occur when people are absent²¹.

Problems with siblings

Probable Category Function: SMA 2.3: Tangible reinforcer function

Motivating Condition: desires a specific item that sibling has (s/he has ____, I want that ____).

²¹ Stereotypic behavior can also occur in the presence of people if its occurrence has not been historically inhibited in their presence.

Sibling rivalry? Problem behaviors between siblings such as arguing, verbal threats, verbally abusive behavior, physical aggression, crying, screaming, and/or tantrums can often represent an SMA 2.3 function. One sibling has something the other wants, and getting that item or activity becomes “priority one” at that point in time. Hence, behaviors that are effective at getting the desired item from the other sibling become likely.

How do tantrums, aggression, etc. work to obtain the item? Tantrums, crying and arguing at an extreme intensity level are well suited to “force” the parent to intervene. Parental mediation often translates into their providing the item to the target child, or one of similar nature, thus ending the undesirable sibling interaction.

In some circumstances the child’s undesirable behavior is socially mediated by their sibling. Suppose the sibling without the tangible item hits the other, who may be younger or physically inferior. Contingent on such an aggressive behavior (and unable to retaliate effectively), the item is dropped and then retrieved by the aggressor.

Special circumstance: Arguments between siblings about topics unrelated to tangible reinforcers (e.g., “Mom said I was best” or “You are wrong about baseball”) probably represent a peer attention function (SMA 2.2). These sibling arguments are maintained by the responding of the other person. Getting the “last word” in the discussion is the desired reinforcer.

Disrespect to teachers/staff at school (older students)

Probable Category Function: SMA 2.2: Peer attention

Motivating Condition: desire for peer attention, approval status

Peer attention, particularly at the adolescent ages, exerts a powerful influence on student behavior. The class clown phenomenon is well known. Students who display “clownish, goofy” behaviors often gain the attention of fellow students in the class. Hence, peer attention is most often the explanation for such displays. Unless the frequency of such incidents becomes unusually high and/or disruptive, such students are not often referred for intervention.

Unfortunately, a more perverse, disruptive form of behavior can evolve in school settings, under the same peer maintained functional relationship. Special education classes that are comprised of students who have been diagnosed with emotional disorders/ behavior disorders can provide the ecosystem. Many of these students have been removed from their general education classes due to severe disruptive and verbally and/or physically aggressive behavior. Their public display of profanity and disrespect to school staff, particularly in the presence of their fellow classmates, provides attention from a select peer group for such incidents.

While such incidents of verbal disrespect may occur to a classroom staff request/instruction, the MC is not the staff request. The primary driving force is that such a request provides the condition (not the motivating variable) for peer group attention (an access function). Therefore, publicly disrespecting school staff, under many types of circumstances, provides the basis for peer reinforcement²².

Acts of bullying at school (or elsewhere)

Probable Category Function: SMA 2.2: Peer attention

Motivating Condition: absence of peer attention until act occurs, then attention, approval, status, and other social reinforcers from the peer group is obtained (can be delayed).

Consider that such intimidating incidents are often public displays for many to see, and reporting the incident back to peers whose attention/admiration is desired often occurs. Fights at school in front of onlookers also involves the same function: peer attention/approval.

Disrespect to teachers/staff at school (younger students)

Probable Category Function: SME 4.1: Unpleasant social situation

Motivating Condition: presentation of a simple request/demand (i.e., compliance situation)

In younger students, it is rare that disrespectful behavior is driven by one's desire for peer attention. In fact, in many elementary school classrooms, peer attention is often produced by appropriate academic and social behavior (how things change with age!). Incidents of disrespect from a few students can more often be attributed to an escape function involving simple compliance situations (SME 4.1). Such students may have a history of non-compliance to adult instructions in general.

Problem behaviors with parents in home setting

Probable Category Function: SME 4.1: Unpleasant social situation

Motivating Condition: presentation of a request (i.e., compliance situation)

²² Please consult chapter 2 in Cipani, 2018a for specifics in verifying this function

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Overwhelmingly, most behavior problems in home environments are tied to parental requests to engage in some behavior, i.e., a compliance situation. Even severe problem behaviors can be traced to a simple adult request, e.g., “Turn down the TV!” When an individual’s mild non-compliance is ineffective at avoiding the demand, the parent repeats the demand more vociferously. This increased intensity may further exacerbate the individual’s oppositional behavior, involving more vehement protesting and overt verbal defiance, and in some cases, aggression toward property and people. Such severe reactions have been historically effective in getting their parents to relent in their current and/or future demands. When such forms of aggressive behavior are reliably effective at producing a withdrawal of the demand, the individual is now labeled an aggressive child. But aggression had its “start” in the failure of more innocuous forms of protest being ineffective.

Special note: Leaving the area can also occur as an effective response to commands/requests. Such a behavior serves a DE 3.1 function, in that engagement in the task or compliance to the request is directly avoided (by leaving the area). However, the more prevalent form of escape behavior (in my experience) is socially mediated via the parent’s behavior, i.e., withdrawing their request contingent on mild to extreme forms of oppositional behavior.

Problem behaviors with parents in home setting

Probable Category Function: SME 4.1: Unpleasant social situation (or diagnose DE 3.1 if leaving the house is the behavior that occurs to threatened punishment)

Motivating Condition: threat or actual implementation of a consequence

A parent’s threat to punish, e.g., “You cannot go to Bobby’s house this weekend because you skipped school,” can generate mild to severe reactions from their child. The forms of severe reactions that occur subsequently can entail both verbal abuse and/or physical aggression (towards people or property).

The same also holds true for oppositional reactions to the actual conduct of the punishing consequence. How many times have you heard parents report time-out does not work? Here is an empirical fact (a plethora of studies since the late 1960s exist): Time-out works, if the child is reliably and immediately removed from either the functional reinforcer or preferred activities. However, parents who report time-out does not work often fall prey to child behaviors that effectively escape such a contingency. These “time-out escape” behaviors can be somewhat innocuous, e.g., pleading and/or promising not to engage in another incident. Nevertheless, they are reliably effective in deterring their parent from enforcing the consequence. When such mild behaviors become ineffective over time, the child’s strong desire to continue to escape or avoid time-out may require a more vigorous

response. The result of these new effective, but severe, escape behaviors is to deter the reliability of this contingency. When a contingency is not reliably established, it fails to alter behavior.

Problem behaviors with parents in home setting

Probable Category Function: SMA 2.3: Tangible reinforcer function

Motivating Condition: desires a specific item/event/activity

For some children and adolescents, being denied something they request (e.g., “Can I have a piece of pie?”) can produce drastic reactions. Of course, such drastic behaviors have been historically effective in getting the parent to relent to their demands. As is the case with other functions, when innocuous forms of behavior prove ineffective, more severe reactions to such parental behaviors will occur. Simply asking for a piece of pie (before dinner) never results in getting pie. In contrast, having a ten-minute tantrum is 65% effective. Over time, this child will resort to tantrums much more quickly when he is denied a piece of pie (or anything else). More often than not, the child ends up with the piece of pie!

Problems during seatwork or instructional conditions- behaviors such as running away, leaving the classroom, i.e., behaviors that terminate the student’s participation in the instructional condition without any staff mediation of such

Probable Category Function: DE 3.2 or DE 3.3

Motivating Condition: presence of either lengthy or difficult content material

Instructional conditions can become aversive to an individual when the material is either too difficult (given the person’s current level of capability) or too lengthy (both functions are well explained in Section I). If the student is leaving or running out of the classroom during instructional conditions, or going to an area away from their seat, suspect that such behaviors may serve a Direct Escape function.

Problems during seatwork or instructional conditions

Probable Category Function: SME 4.2 or SME 4.3

Motivating Condition: presence of either lengthy or difficult content material

During instructional conditions, wager that problem behaviors are often the result of the imposition of the aversive MC's mentioned above. Extreme oppositional behaviors are often socially mediated in that a more permanent form of task removal is achieved by the student being sent somewhere else (e.g., principal's office, counseling). Of course, when such behaviors result in suspension from school, the removal of the instructional materials is of greater duration.

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Appendix B: Cipani Home Behavioral Interview Form

The *Cipani Home Behavioral Interview Form* stems from the *Cipani EO School Behavioral Interview Form* (see chapter 2, Cipani, 2018a), and is used for interviewing parents and/or caretakers of the child. The questions on this form identify the circumstances where a child may have major problem behaviors and difficulty in the home environment. These circumstances involve the Motivating Conditions contained in the following behavioral functions: access to attention or tangible reinforcers, and escape from tasks/chores or unpleasant social situations.

This behavioral interview model is divergent from other formats used for collecting information. The initial focus is on identifying the motivative circumstances and situations that seem to create problems for the child²³. The user then probes the interviewee for the specific form of problem behaviors that occur to each of those circumstances.

Instructions for Use:

- The Cipani Home Behavioral Interview Form is used to identify the circumstances where a child has major problem behaviors and difficulty (from a possible list of circumstances, i.e., Motivating Conditions).
- Read each item to a respondent who is familiar with the child (i.e., parent, caretaker, etc.). Each individual item is prefaced by inquiring if the child has extreme difficulty when (then fill in item question). For example, you might pose the following question: *“Does ____ have difficulty handling a situation where s/he requests or demands a desired consumable item (e.g., chips) and is told to wait?”* If you feel the respondent is not quite sure of the intent of the item, provide a hypothetical example, e.g., *“Would ____ have difficulty accepting you saying “Wait until ____” when s/he asks for a cookie?”*
- Do not alter this form in any manner!
- A rating scale of 1 (i.e., child shows no difficulty handling the circumstance) through 10 (i.e., child shows major and severe problem behaviors to the circumstance) is used for each item. Ask the respondent to rate each circumstance with a scale point from 1-10, with respect to the particular child's ability to handle that circumstance, using the extreme descriptors as anchors.

²³ Do not start by asking the person to delineate the child's problem behaviors! Inquire about situations that are “difficult” (i.e., problematic), and then derive the behaviors that occur specifically to those situations. For a thorough understanding of why this interview format is necessary, the user is encouraged to read chapters 1, 2, and 3 of my text (Cipani, 2018a).

- The rating scale score given by the respondent to each item is recorded in the column delineated, “rating”
- In the second column, the occurrence/prevalence of such a circumstance for that child is estimated by the respondent as being one of the following: occurs hourly (H), occurs daily (D), or occurs weekly (W). Record the appropriate letter in the second column, to examine how often the child confronts such a situation/circumstance. Inquire with the following question for each item, “How often does this situation occur? Hourly, Daily, Weekly? You are not inquiring about how often the behavior occurs; rather how often the particular situation arises, e.g., “How often is s/he told to wait when s/he asks for a soda.”
- For any item where the scale score obtained was greater than 6, inquire about the manner in which the child responds to that particular circumstance²⁴.
- Consult Section III of this manual to determine which in-vivo tests should be conducted prior to diagnosing a behavioral function. **One should not simply ascribe a behavioral function on interview information alone!**

²⁴ For example, ask the respondent, “What does the child do that creates a significant management problem and disruption when this circumstance occurs?” This information identifies the behaviors that often occur to the Motivating Condition.

Cipani Home Behavioral Interview Form²⁵

Does the child have extreme difficulty ...

Rating (1-10)	H D W	Adult Attention
		when s/he requests or demands adult attention and is told to wait, or attention is unavailable at that time?
		when an adult withdraws attention from the child and/or attends to others (siblings, visitors)?

Rating (1-10)	H D W	Tangible -consumable
		when s/he requests or demands a desired consumable item and is told to wait, or is told "No"?
		when s/he desires a preferred consumable item and is given a different item?
		when others (siblings) get the consumable item and s/he does not?
		when s/he does not get enough of the consumable item (e.g., wanted two cookies and got only one)?

Rating (1-10)	H D W	Tangible EO-activity, event
		when s/he requests or demands a desired event or activity and is told to wait, or is told "No."?
		when s/he desires a preferred activity or event and is directed to an alternate activity (e.g., "Here, have this instead")?
		when others (e.g., siblings) get the desired activity or event and they do not?
		when s/he does not get a sufficient amount of time with the desired activity (e.g., wanted a half hour of computer time and got only 10 minutes)?

Rating (1-10)	H,D,W	Task or Chore EO
		when s/he is presented with a directive to complete a chore or task, such as "Brush your teeth" or "Clean up your room," or has to engage in a daily routine (e.g., "Get ready for school")?

²⁵ Permission to attach interview form to reports granted for the following; *Cipani Home Behavioral Interview Form* contained in Cipani, E., & Cipani, A. (2021). *The Cipani Behavioral Classification System for children and adolescents: diagnostic manual* (3rd edition). Visalia, Ca: Cipani & Associates © Cipani & Associates (2021). Permission granted to distribute as a free pdf to all (see copyright on 2nd page for delineation of parameters for electronic distribution)

Does the child have extreme difficulty

Rating (1-10)	H,D,W	Unpleasant Social Situation EO
		when s/he is presented with a simple request or demand (i.e., problems in compliance to simple parental instructions) such as "Pick up your backpack and put it in your room?"
		when s/he is in circumstances that involve following the rules of a game or play activity?
		when s/he is criticized or corrected during a task or chore?
		when s/he receives social disapproval from a parent/adult (for their behavior, manner of dress, way they talk, etc.)?
		when s/he receives a negative consequence for their behavior or is threatened/warned with one from a parent/adult (e.g., is told they will lose some computer time after dinner for some prior behavior)?
		when s/he is interacting with certain siblings?
		when s/he is in social situations with too many people?
		when s/he is in social situations with novel people or situations?
		when s/he is in social situations with a member(s) of the opposite gender?
		when s/he is in an argument with a sibling/peer/friend/other?

Does the child engage in

Rating (1-10)	H,D,W	Stereotypic or Ritualistic Behavior
		stereotypic or ritualistic behavior irrespective of context? If so, delineate what form(s) such take.

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Appendix C

Cipani Behavioral Classification System Function-based Behavioral Objectives²⁶

[User Instructions](#)

[Access Functions: Waiting for.....](#)

Attention

Tangible reinforcer (consumable)

Tangible reinforcer (non-consumable)

Immediate sensory stimuli

[Escape Functions: Tolerating](#)

Unpleasant social situations

Lengthy task, instruction, assignment

Difficult task, instruction, assignment

Aversive physical stimuli

You have permission to use these objectives (as well as assessment procedures in Section III) in reports and program plans, either in direct quotes or by rephrasing content. To credit us as the original source, please attach an electronic copy of the pdf manual for any reader of your report or material to view and also add the following citation in referencing the selected objectives in your report:

Cipani & Cipani (2021); see attached pdf for original source

²⁶ Collect data from Section III test trials before selecting objectives

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User instructions

The user should be familiar with the previous material in this manual prior to using this Appendix.

Appendix C contains function-based behavioral objectives. For the objectives involving access functions, the target is to develop the individual's ability to wait patiently²⁷ for an acceptable length of time before getting a desired item or event (i.e., to delay). For the objectives involving escape functions, the target is to develop the individual's ability to tolerate a non-preferred activity or event for an acceptable length of time before being allowed to escape such (i.e., to persevere). The default time limit for most objectives is set at ten minutes. This value can be changed to reflect short-term objectives, e.g., three minutes, etc.

- Each behavioral objective requires the user to delineate the specific problem behaviors that occur as a reaction to the specific condition/circumstance identified. Therefore, one does not simply list all of the problem behaviors that the individual displays²⁸. Such a practice disregards the possibility that multiple functions for various behaviors may be existent.
- Section III of this manual delineates the specific test procedures for the objectives contained herein. Hence, the data from conducting a number of test trials would reveal whether a given objective is relevant for an individual.
- It might be prudent to prioritize the assessment process in terms of which test items warrant initial assessment consideration. You can accomplish this by using the behavioral interview form in Appendix B for home (non-school) settings, or using the form for school settings found in Cipani (2018a), in chapter 2.
- It is quite possible that an individual can have several different objectives from different functions, e.g., two objectives relevant to tangible reinforcer function and one objective selected to address escape from aversive physical stimuli.

²⁷ Waiting patiently and tolerating (for escape function objectives) are not observable behaviors, but should suffice for the alternative behavior to produce reinforcement, as defined by the absence of the target problem behavior.

²⁸ For example, if the following item is at problematic levels; "When ____ (name) requests or demands adult attention (or help) and is told to wait," only the target or precursor behaviors that are in response to that circumstance are listed.

Access Functions

Behavioral objectives for adult attention function:²⁹

- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) requests or demands adult attention (or help) and is told to “wait,” ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____, but will *wait patiently up to 10 minutes before getting attention, in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities)*.
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) desires attention and the adult is unavailable, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *wait patiently up to 10 minutes before getting attention, in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities)*.
- By ____ (date), when an adult withdraws attention from ____ (name) and/or attends to others (e.g., classmates, peers, in school settings), ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *wait patiently up to 10 minutes before getting attention, in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities)*.
- By ____ (date), when an adult withdraws attention from ____ (name) and/or attends to others (e.g., friends, siblings in non-school settings), ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *wait patiently up to 10 minutes before getting attention, in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities)*.

Behavioral objective for peer attention function:

- By ____ (date), when peers or certain classmates are present, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ for the following duration _____ (designate part of the school day, or class period(s), etc.) across five observations of at least 20 minutes.

Behavioral objectives for tangible reinforcer function- consumable items:

- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) requests or demands a desired consumable item and is told to wait, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *wait patiently up to 10 minutes, before getting item from an adult, in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities)*.

²⁹ If immediate access is acceptable, each objective can be altered slightly to stipulate the behavior(s) that will be allowed to immediately access item or activity.

- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) desires a preferred consumable item and the item is temporarily unavailable (and/or is told “No”), ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *wait patiently up to 10 minutes before getting item from an adult*, in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) desires a preferred consumable item and is given a different item (e.g., “Here, have this instead.”), ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *wait patiently up to 10 minutes before getting item from an adult*, in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when others (classmates, peers, siblings, etc.) get the consumable item and s/he does not, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *wait patiently up to 10 minutes before getting item from an adult*, in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) does not get enough of the consumable item, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *wait patiently up to 10 minutes before getting item from an adult*, in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).

Behavioral objectives for tangible reinforcer function- non-consumable items or activities/events:

- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) requests or demands a preferred event or activity and is told to wait, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *wait patiently up to 10 minutes before getting access to the event or activity from an adult* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) desires a preferred event or activity and such is temporarily unavailable (and/or is told “No”), ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *wait patiently up to 10 minutes before getting access to the event or activity from an adult* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) desires a preferred activity or event and is directed to an alternate activity, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *wait patiently up to 10 minutes before getting access to the event or activity from an adult* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when others (peers) get the desired activity or event and the individual does not, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *wait patiently up to 10 minutes before getting access to the event or activity from an adult* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).

- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) does not get a sufficient amount of time with the desired activity ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *wait patiently up to 10 minutes before getting continued access to the event or activity from an adult* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).

Behavioral objectives for immediate sensory stimuli function

- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) engages in the following target stereotypic or ritualistic behavior, _____ during non-instructional conditions, and is told to stop engaging in such behavior, ____ (name) will *not display the target stereotypic behavior, but will desist engaging in such behavior for up to 10 minutes* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) engages in the following target stereotypic or ritualistic behavior, _____ during instructional conditions, and is told to stop engaging in such behavior, ____ (name) will *not display the target stereotypic behavior, but will desist engaging in such behavior for up to 10 minutes* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).

Escape Functions

Behavioral objectives for unpleasant social situations function:³⁰

- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) is presented with any social or task demand³¹, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *comply with the request in a reasonable time frame*, in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) is in circumstances that involve following the rules of a game or play activity, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *follow the rules for the length of the game* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) is criticized or corrected during an instructional task or chore, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors:

³⁰ If immediate escape is acceptable, each objective can be altered slightly to stipulate the behaviors that will be allowed to immediately escape aversive condition.

³¹This objective is for failure to follow simple directions; not for instructional/teaching conditions;

_____ but will *tolerate and accept such criticism* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).

- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) is criticized or corrected during a non-academic chore, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *tolerate and accept such criticism* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) receives social disapproval from an instructional staff person or caretaker (for their behavior), ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *tolerate and accept such disapproval* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) receives a disapproving comment(s) from a classmate, sibling, friend or peer (for their behavior, manner of dress, way they talk, etc.), ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *tolerate and accept such disapproval or leave the area* five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) receives a negative consequence for their behavior from an adult or is threatened/warned with one, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *tolerate and accept such a consequence* in five/five trials.
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) is interacting with certain peers or instructional staff members, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *engage in acceptable social behavior* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) is in social situations with too many people, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *tolerate and accept such a condition for up to 10 minutes or leave the area if allowed* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) is in social situations with novel people, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *tolerate and accept such a condition for up to 10 minutes or leave the area if allowed* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) is in social situations with a member(s) of the opposite gender, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *tolerate and accept such a situation for up to 10 minutes or leave the area if allowed* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).

- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) is in an argument with a peer/friend/other, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *tolerate and engage in an appropriate manner of conversation for up to 10 minutes or leave the area* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) is in novel social situations or settings, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *tolerate and accept such a condition for up to 10 minutes or leave the area if allowed* in five/five trials (i.e., opportunities).

Behavioral objectives for lengthy tasks, instructional sessions, or chores function:

- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) is presented with instruction, seat work, or an instructional activity that is relatively lengthy, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *persist in the activity for up to __ minutes* in five consecutive opportunities.
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) is presented with a chore at home that is relatively lengthy ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____ but will *persist in the chore for up to __ minutes* in five consecutive opportunities.

Behavioral objectives for difficult tasks, instructions, chores function:

- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) is presented with instruction, seatwork or an instructional activity that is relatively difficult (lacks prerequisites or skill in its entirety) for him/her, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____, and will instead *ask for help, or request an alternate assignment*, in five consecutive opportunities.
- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) is presented a non- instructional activity that is relatively difficult (lacks prerequisites or skill in its entirety) for him/her, ____ (name) will not engage in the following inappropriate target behaviors: _____, and will instead *ask for help, or request an alternate assignment*, in five consecutive opportunities.

Behavioral objectives for aversive physical stimuli (i.e., fear provoking stimuli that are regularly encountered³²):

- By ____ (date), when ____ (name) is presented with the following stimulus item or condition _____ (identify something s/he is fearful or afraid of), _____ (name) will not engage in the following escape and/or avoidance behaviors: _____ but will *engage or be in presence of the feared item/activity for up to ____ minutes* in five consecutive opportunities.

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³² Make sure that the target item or event is one that actually does not cause harm. Further, such an item or activity is commonly handled by other students of similar age. This type of objective is relevant for specific anxiety/phobias.