

TRI-STATE WEBINAR SERIES

Motivating Learner Participation with The 7 Steps to Earning Instructional Control (Part 2 of 3)

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Tri-State Autism Spectrum Disorder Webinar Series



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Presenter Information

- Robert Schramm, MA, BCBA: Lead Supervising Behavior Analyst for Knospe-ABA GmbH, based in Germany.



- Supported the education of over 1000 children with ASD.
- Works in the homes and schools of children using family and current staff for daily implementation of ABA/VB programs
- Successfully meeting or working toward instructional control criteria with over 95% of cases without the need for traditional escape extinction procedures in teaching.

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Previous Learner Objectives

Part One: ABA/VB and Inst. Control

1. Identify the characteristics of a Verbal Behavior based ABA program.
2. Compare DTT with ABA and ABA/VB
3. Define instructional control and escape extinction.
4. Current standard of care regarding instructional control.
5. Identify alternatives to escape extinction.

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Learner Objectives

Part Two: Learning how to teach "The 7 Steps to Earning Instructional Control. Steps 1-6

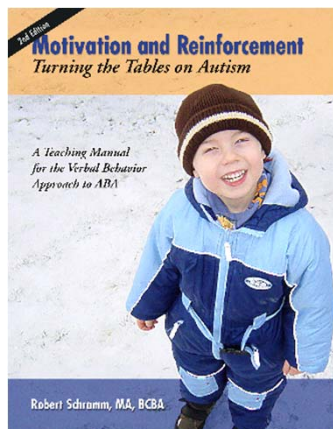
1. Reinforcer Control.
2. The principle of Pairing
3. "Saying what you mean, meaning what you say"
4. Positive vs. Negative Reinforcement.
5. An ever-increasing Variable Ratio of Reinforcement.
6. Priorities, Priorities, Priorities.

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The 7 Steps To Earning Instructional Control

- A detailed approach to organizing your teaching environment so that you can earn cooperation and motivated participation from your client/student without the need for physically manipulating the child through escape extinction.
- The 7 Steps are detailed in the books...

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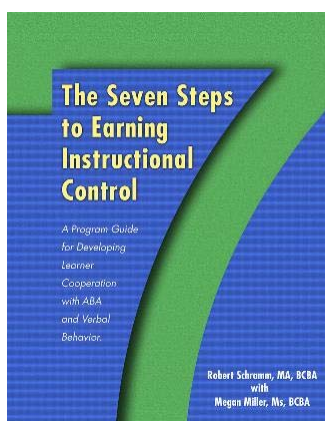


**“Motivation and Reinforcement:
Turning the Tables on Autism”**

**A Teaching Manual for the Verbal
Behavior Approach to ABA.**

www.lulu.com/spotlight/Schramm

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For a More Detailed View

**“The Seven Steps to Earning
Instructional Control”**

By Robert Schramm

With

Megan Miller

www.lulu.com/spotlight/Schramm

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Notes about the 7 Steps

- The 7 Steps is a clear and detailed way to earn instructional control without traditional escape extinction.
- It is useful not only because you can use it successfully but because you can teach it easily and assess others use of it.
- For the program to work, you need to be able to fully obtain the principles outlined in all 7 Steps. Not following a single step could give the child a path to unearned reinforcement and a way to avoid improved cooperation.
- Today we will be detailing steps 1-6.
- These are the steps that make sure that you or the people you train are making the learning environment the preferred activity and destination for your client/student.

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Step 1. Reinforcer Control

- Show your child that you are the one in control of the things he wants to hold or play with and that you will decide if, or for how long, he can have them.
 - **Deals with:** Comprehensive control of all reinforcing items before teaching allows you to be a „giver“ and not a „taker“ during teaching.

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Reinforcer control

- When the child is already in escape mode, is not the time to worry about reinforcer control. You have to have it set up before you start teaching.
- For younger clients/students, put reinforcers in boxes, cabinets, drawers
- Put reinforcers out of reach but in sight like on shelves higher on the wall.
- For older clients/students you might need to lock things in closets or rooms that can only be accessed when appropriately participating.
- When you have control of reinforcement, you have control of motivation. (Language, cleanup, give and take).

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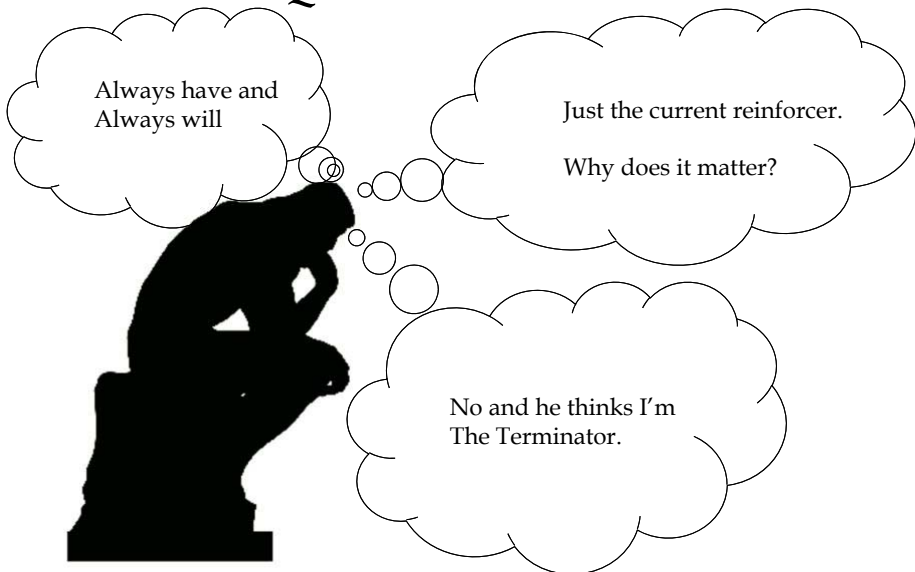
Polling Question 1

Do I currently keep caring control over all of the reinforcers available in my teaching environment.

- A. Yes, I always have and it helps.
- B. No, I just keep control over the item he is working for.
- C. No, but, if I am holding him into my teaching setting does it really matter?
- D. No, and I think I am becoming a generalized punisher because of it.

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Poll Question #1 Feedback



Always have and Always will

Just the current reinforcer.
Why does it matter?

No and he thinks I'm The Terminator.

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Step 2. Pair yourself with Reinforcement

- Show your child that you are fun. Make every interaction you have with him an enjoyable experience so that he will want to follow your directions to earn more time sharing these experiences with you.
- **Deals with:** Comprehensive pairing of the teaching setting and teacher with reinforcement designed to increase the value of teaching beyond that of escape.

Pairing

- The value of any two items that are paired together will begin to rub off on each other. Neutral items paired with positive ones will become more positive. Neutral items paired with negative ones will become more negative.
- To Pair, let the child lead your play.
- Play with what they want to play, the way they want to play with it.
- Instructions are not pairing, watch things like, try this, or look at this.
- Instead use lots of demonstrative language such as, I love this, your holding the blue car, I'm jumping, I'm jumping instead.

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Pairing

- Pairing should never be less than 75% of your total interactions with the child if you want to keep your interaction worth the 25% of the time you are asking for effort from them.
- Pairing should be mixed into everything you do and often your reinforcement can just be a return to pairing.
- You can never do too much pairing because you can never have too good of a relationship with your client/student.
- Pairing Examples: (Swings, TV)

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Pairing:

- It is best to pair with items that are...
 - Consumable – the child uses it and needs more. (Bubbles, food).
 - Easy to control – you don't have to take the item back when done. (TV, music).
 - The child cannot enjoy by themselves. (Social games such as chase and tickles, or spinny tops the child cannot spin alone).
- Pairing with toys takes special consideration.

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Steps 1 and 2 in practice Video

- The following is a short video of my teaching efforts related to steps 1 and 2.
- Notice the environment has been cleared of all access to outside reinforcement and is under interventionist control.
- Notice that when the child tries to escape, I don't advise them to hold the child in but rather to let the child go and to take back control of the reinforcer.
- Notice that children will still try to maintain their previous freedom with toys but that following through with the reinforcement can quickly change their willingness to adjust.

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Step 3: Contingency

- Show your child that you can be trusted. Always say what you mean and mean what you say. If you instruct your child to do something, do not allow him access to reinforcement unless he has complied with your request. This step allows for prompting him to completion if necessary.
- **Deals with:** Carefully selecting your SD's in all situations and following through with the appropriate consequences is key to earning trust and instructional control.

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Step 3 means...

- No giving in on instructions!
- If you say it, they do it.
- Don't ask your child to do things they can't do.
- Know the difference between a question and a direction.
- If you can't follow through or think you will give in, don't give the instruction to begin with.
- I teach families that if they give in after giving an instruction and your child refuses one time, you will have to go through 10 more trials before you earn back that trust that you will follow through.

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Step 4: The Power of Positive Reinforcement

- Show your child that following your directions is beneficial and the best way to obtain what he wants. Give your child easy directions as often as possible and then reinforce his decisions to participate by following them with good experiences.
- **Deals with:** “Fading in” of instructions with continuous schedule of positive reinforcement. Avoiding the use of negative reinforcement where possible.

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Positive vs. Negative Reinforcement

- Positive is the adding of something to the environment after a behavior that increases the likelihood of that behavior in similar circumstances in the future.
- Negative is the subtraction of something from the environment after a behavior that increases the likelihood of that behavior in similar circumstances in the future.
- Why does this matter?
 - It is not about adding or subtracting
 - It is about who is the giver or “good” or who is the “aversive” to be avoided.

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Polling Question 2

Are Positive words of praise a meaningful reinforcer?

- A. Sure, everyone likes praise
- B. Nope, not for the clients I work with.
- C. Sometimes, it depends on the client/student.
- D. Why is C usually the best answer?

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Poll Question #2 Feedback

No way, Jose!

Who's a good boy?

It depends

Hint: It depends.

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Praise as a Reinforcer

- Whether or not praise currently works as a reinforcer will be dependent on the child.
- Quite often praise as a reinforcer is really masking negative reinforcement
- If you want praise to be reinforcing, you have to pair it with other known reinforcers.
- Don't praise first then reinforce.
- Always reinforce and add praise on top.
- Not a bad idea to use Behavior specific praise when you can.

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Step 5. Build an increasing VR schedule

- Provide consistent reinforcement. In the early stages of earning instructional control with your child, reinforce after each positive response. Eventually change to an ever-increasing variable ratio of reinforcement.
- **Deals With:** Slowly thinning the variable ratio of reinforcement over time allows for more responding to occur for less reinforcement.

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Increasing VR Ratio Video

- Josephine was 9 and verbal repertoire was 100% imitative.
- Always watched TV and would tantrum when it was off.
- Always had her pacifier unless she was sleeping or eating.
- Video is of her first consultation using The 7 Steps to Earning Instructional Control.
- Watch as we start to increase the VR in just two days.
- First instructions are motor imitation with physical prompts.
- By day two, we had her first non imitative verbal responding (Tacts).

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Step 6. Priorities are everything.

- Demonstrate that you know your child's priorities, as well as, your own.
- **Deals with:** Use differentiated reinforcement levels depending on response quality and make reinforcement decisions based on the current priorities of your program.

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Keep a Reinforcement Hierarchy

- Identify in order (to the best of your ability) the client/students strongest motivators across Food, Drink, Items, and Activities.
- Update this shifting preference list often.
- Use stronger reinforcers when you see better quality and surprisingly good responding.

- Build a large number of reinforcing teaching settings and shift back and forth among these settings whenever you have time to teach.

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Know Your Priorities

- At any one time your child might be doing something that would be a correct answer but might also be doing something that would be considered an inappropriate behavior. Make sure everyone knows the priorities of the program so that you are all responding the same way in these situations.

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Polling Question 3

Which of the 6 Steps detailed in today's presentation have you not been using effectively in your teaching?

- A. Step 1 Reinforcer control in teaching setting
- B. Step 2 Pairing teaching setting with **R**
- C. Step 3 Being Contingent with instructions
- D. Step 4 Using Positive rather than negative **R**
- E. Step 5 Thinning out to a VR-ratio of **R**
- F. Step 6 Understanding Priorities in teaching

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Poll Question #3 Feedback

I'm the Boss of the Reinforcement

Pairing anyone?

I ask it, you answer it,
I say it, you do it.

Can I add something fun
for that?

Let's thin this out a bit.

Your priorities are my
priorities.

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Conclusion

- ABA/VB is designed to make learning a motivated activity rather than a captive one.
- Using escape extinction, in general, goes against this goal.
- The “7 Steps” offer a way to earn instructional control without using traditional escape extinction.
- On a continuum of services, it would be hard to argue that the “7 steps” are not less restrictive than escape extinction and therefore if likely to be successful, it would be preferable.

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Resources

- Robert’s YouTube Page:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/knospeaba/videos>
- Knopse-ABA (Robert’s clinic in Germany)
<http://knospe-aba.com/cms/us/>

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References

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THANK YOU!

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See you for Part 3



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