



Busy Analytical Bee

NEWSLETTER December

Welcome to the December edition. This will also be the final edition. It has been an exciting journey over the past 6 and half years to produce the newsletter and I cannot thank everyone enough for reaching out, subscribing and visiting the website. Special thanks to all the previous interviewees. It has been a wonderful experience for myself to disseminate and support the field in a unique way.

This edition I have reviewed the main topics of the year and I also had the wonderful opportunity to interview Leah Hall BCBA. The three term contingency is explained and I celebrate the career of Ryan O'Donnell aka Ryan-O, aka The Daily BA. Check out the study tips, product and events section. Have a wonderful month, and all the best for the new year. Stay safe.

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2020 REVIEW

This year has definitely been memorable. Many people's lives have been turned upside down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of us have been forced to change how we work, shop, socialise, and support our families. Parents have started working from home and home-schooling their children which has drastically changed their life-work-family-home balance. In addition, many leisure activities are now restricted. These things can lead to increase of mental health problems. There is no evidence or understanding about the exact impact COVID-19 has had on mental health as of yet. The financial impact isn't clear either, and previously recessions have been correlated with poor mental health outcomes. People who report feelings of loneliness or entrapment are correlated with having worse physical health outcomes and death and/or suicide (Guardian, 2020). Childline has however reported they have had a 37% increase in phone calls since the pandemic began (BBC).

As a field, we "are generally well equipped with evidence based behavioural intervention strategies for

supporting parents: however, it may also be important to consider the broader context of parent behaviour" (Coyne et al, 2020). Delivering services in this time has been paramount especially with parents of children with special needs. In this paper they discuss the stressors and how to best support parents and highlight that giving advice and strategies in small and achievable doses may be best. They also suggest embedded self-care for parents in line with Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT; [learn more about ACT](#)), with mindfulness and acceptance, valued and committed action and self-compassion. In addition, Szabo et al (2020) discuss "kernels" that can be used to support children in activities delivered by parents in the home. Focusing on behavioural principles. Some games and activities may not be accessible to all children, although the kernels can be embedded into activities to support children. If you want some activity ideas, check out the [Stay at Home: NET edition blog](#) as these are outlined with VB MAPP goals.

In addition, another key event that has dominated this year is the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. This followed the death of a black man, George Floyd in May 2020. This unfortunate event was the catalyst for many demonstrations across America and the UK, and also for many long over due conversations about race and discrimination, and inclusion and equality. Within the field, there is much diversity between our colleagues and peers, our clients and the people we support. In addition, this is a considerable important social issue. The field strives to address socially significant issues and this is a tremendously important one to be addressed. The paper by Matsuda (2020) discussed this in their paper, by first defining Racism, Prejudice, Racial Prejudice and Bias. The authors also discussed how these develop through behavioural principles and reinforcing contingencies. (For a brief over-



From: <https://flc.kr/>

view of this paper and a discussion with a panel that took place in July, visit the [Diversity and Inclusion within ABA blog post](#)).

This has definitely been a year, more than most, that has taught us to be kind to ourselves and others. To reflect on our behaviours and to find ways to support this new change. Hopefully we continue to grow from this year, personally and as a field, in a positive way.

BBC: Newsround, Childline reports 37% increase in contacts from kids aged 11 and under, 2020, July, 17. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/53355529#:~:text=The%20NSPCC's%20counselling%20service%20for,of%20sessions%20before%20lockdown%20began.>

Busy Analytical Bee, Diversity and Inclusion in ABA, 2020, July, 12. Retrieved from: <https://busyanalyticalbee.com/2020/07/12/diversity-and-inclusion-within-aba/>

Coyne, L. W. Gould, E. R., Grimaldi, M., Wilson, K. G., Baffuto, G., & Biglan, A. (2020). First things first: Parents psychological flexibility and self-compassion during Covid-19. Behavior Analysis in Practice, .

The Guardian, Concern for Britons feeling trapped and lonely during lockdown, 2020, April, 19. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/apr/19/concern-britons-feeling-trapped-lonely-during-lockdown-mental-health>

Matsuda, K., Garcia, Y., Catagnus, R., & Ackerlund Brandt, J. (2020). Can Behavior Analysis Help us understand and reduce racism? A review of the current literature. Behavior Analysis in Practice, 13, 336-347. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s40617-020-00411-4>

Szabo, T. G., Richling, S., Embry, D. D., Biglan, A., & Wilson, K. G. (2020). From helpless to hero: Promoting values



From: <https://flic.kr/p/22Gysy5>

-based behavior and positive family interaction in the midst of Covid-19. Behavior Analysis in Practice, 13, 568-576.

STUDY TIPS

Keep reading research to be up-to-date. If you cannot access a online journal library, you can search for free using [Google Scholar](#). Free resources can be identified with links on the right hand side.

EVENTS

Due to COVID-19 large gatherings are still prohibited. You can still collect CEUs and learn at home. I have put together a list of some fantastic online resources, webinars and podcasts, which you can check by clicking [this link](#).

Association of Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) will be hosting a conference in Dublin, Ireland in September 2021. To learn more, visit the [event page](#).

Child Autism UK are delivering courses online. There are a variety of topics including Behaviour Management, Introductory Tutor Training and Social skills and Playdates. [Check out the page](#) for more information and to book your place.

PRODUCTS

This [wish list](#) contains a variety of items that can support teaching self-help skills. This is an important area to support children with, so that they can be more independent and decrease their aversion to some of these self-help tasks.

TERMINOLOGY

Let's look at the Three term contingency, which explains the relationship between the environment and organisms. This three-term contingency is depicted in the diagram below, the Antecedent, Behaviour and Consequence.

Antecedent: A stimulus or environmental event that occurs before the behaviour. This includes Motivating Operations (MO) and Discriminative Stimulus (S^D).

Behaviour: Any response or activity of the organism of interest. Typically, we focus on observable behaviours.

Consequence: This is any stimulus that is added or removed from the environment following the behaviour. This may maintain, increase or reduce the future probability of the behaviour occurring again.



Picture produced by Busy Analytical Bee

Interview

Leah Hall BCBA

In this interview edition I am honoured to invite Leah Hall BCBA of [Lux Consulting](#). I saw her speak at two events last year and found both talks really interesting and insightful. She works in aviation, providing Organisational Behaviour Management (OBM) support. Thank you for joining us, first can you tell us a little bit about yourself and how you became interested in ABA

I found the field of behaviour analysis entirely by accident. I started university as a psychology major interested in behavioural neuroscience but took an intro to behaviour analysis class as an elective – to be fair, I was told it was the same thing as behavioural neuroscience by a well-intentioned academic advisor. It was probably in the first week of that class that I decided the basic principles were the answer to life, the universe, and everything so I changed my major. I had the good fortune of studying at the University of North Texas which had a brilliant non-specialised behaviour analysis programme leading me to appreciate nonlinear analysis and the application of behaviour analytic principles across a variety of settings. Over the next few years, I became a BCaBA, then a BCBA working in clinical practice, mostly with adults with developmental disabilities and behavioural challenges. After a while I started a small consultancy, and this is where I discovered my love for management and behavioural systems analysis, which eventually lead me to OBM. Outside of work I am married to a lovely man; together we have 5 children – all between the ages of 13 and 16 at the moment! I am a yoga junkie and music lover; I love to read and travel, and I have two dogs – including a puppy who is currently the size of a small horse.

Interesting! I had a similar experience myself with how I stumbled upon ABA. Can you tell us a little more about how you got involved in Organisation Behaviour Management (OBM) and, specifically within aviation?

I landed in OBM and aviation through a lot of hustle, a fair amount of good luck, and possibly by stealth. For several years, I'd felt a creeping sense of dread about the fact that our field appeared to be getting less and less diverse over time and newer university programmes seemed to be increasingly autism centric, which makes sense given the sharp rise in demand and available funding for ABA services in the States. I started to really wonder what this could mean for the future of our field so I started to think seriously about expanding my scope of practice. OBM felt like a

natural transition for me, so I contacted a few behaviour analysts already working in the area to ask their advice on how to transition. The messages were pretty consistent: best of luck, but there's really no clear path. So I did my best to read around the subject, find a mentor, and eventually managed to convince someone to hire me on as an associate at a quality consulting company. I loved the work, but they had no idea what to do with a behaviour analyst, and I wasn't entirely sure either.

It was about that time, not long after I moved to the UK, that a friend from Texas put me in touch with a woman she knew, called Sarah, who happened to live down the road from me in England. She thought we might hit it off as friends, so we arranged to meet for a coffee. Sarah is a human factors expert who had been working in aviation; we are both systems thinkers who specialise in 'human' problems and saw that we had complimentary skill sets. Three hours and a couple of coffees later we decided we'd start a business together. It took us a while to figure out what, exactly, we were trying to sell and how best to sell it, but we got there in the end. We do most of our work in aviation, which offers plenty of variety, but we are careful to stay involved in other industries so we are always learning something new.

What a serendipitous encounter! And now you have a successful company together now. From your experience, what advice would you give to Behaviour Analysts looking to move into OBM?

Well, this may sound more like a warning than advice, but nevertheless, it is what I tend to tell people interested in pivoting to OBM.

Several additional tools are needed to consult in organisations, so I would caution behaviour analysts to be aware of the limits of their previous experience and specialisation – those with the most specialised experience may struggle the most to adapt to solving new problems and embracing new ways of working. As the saying goes, "if all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail." For a start, it is helpful to understand typical business operations and the consulting process.

It is a good idea to adopt an attitude of openness and curiosity, and a level of humility not always found in behaviour analysts. Many of us have become quite rigid in the way we

practice and may have (I might suggest), accidentally propagated what appears to be an insular, self-righteous culture. This attitude is incompatible with successful consulting; especially because potential clients will probably not be aware of or even interested in learning about the science underlying our recommendations.

I would encourage immersion in a new industry to gain an understanding of the language and the types of problems available to solve instead of learning only by reading behaviour analytic literature or completing a certificate programme. I found that some of the best literature available from our field was entirely lost on me before I'd spent some time working in organisations. When I revisited the literature after a bit of experience, I found it much more helpful and insightful.

Finally, few roads are paved for aspiring OBM practitioners and there are no established funding sources (that I know of), so don't expect a load of job offers upon advertising your desire to move into OBM – you may very well be the one paving the road at this stage. So, you'll have to create your own opportunities, adopt a humble, learning attitude, and work hard to gain new skills. If that doesn't scare you – please proceed! There's lots to do out here.

I think this will be invaluable advice for many Behaviour Analysts, especially those who may want to move into OBM and are feeling unsure how. What are your hopes for ABA and OBM in the future?

Right now, very few people are aware of the role that human behaviour plays in their organisation, and very few behaviour analysts are immediately prepared to slot in as competent, successful, and impactful OBM consultants; I'd like to see that change. More broadly, I think there are opportunities to improve the reputation of the field as a whole and to increase the number of practitioners who are competent to practice in a wider variety of industries. Fortunately, with the BACB shifting its focus to North America, we are able to reimagine the foundational elements of our field in the UK so that the future looks a bit more promising for those practicing in different industries. I believe we can achieve this, in part, by encouraging greater diversity in terms of accepted scope of practice, practitioners, curricula, and experience. I would also like to see a greater appreciation for the non-technical and professional skills necessary to engage more meaningfully with other professions and disseminate productively. If we can turn out diverse, qualified, well-rounded practitioners and market our capabilities, I think the future of the field could be really exciting.

I think this is important for the field. The many applications are endless and we strive as a field to make a socially significant change in so many ways. I hope that we can nurture this diversity too. Thank you so much for sharing your time with us.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT TEACHING (NET) IDEA

This month's NET idea is role playing 'Doctors and Nurses'. You can use bears or dolls as patients or be the patients yourself. This play activity gives a great opportunity for imaginative play, although may require some props, for instance, stethoscope, empty bottles (medicine) and a toy syringe (play, 7M, 8M). You can incorporate all these instruments, and also body parts, in the play as both tact or receptive targets (LR*: 4c, Tact 7a). These may also work as mand targets. This NET will allow you to work on tact or receptive targets of different actions, sleeping, sneezing, coughing, for example (LR*: 4d, 5b, Tact, 6b, 7d, 10a). Also noun-verb combinations if using bears or dolls to support the play, for instance "baby sleeping" or "bear laughing" (tact 9M). This activity also supports imaginative play development (play 11M). It can also help to decrease anxiety for you client when they visit the doctors, as they are familiar with the instruments and decreases the uncertainty.

Preceding skills reference to the VB-MAPP Assessment tool:

Sundberg, M. L. (2008) Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program: The VB-MAPP. Concord, CA: AVB Press.

*LR: Listener Responding

PEOPLE WHO INSPIRE US

This month I celebrate a well known Behaviour Analyst, Ryan O'Donnell. He is well known for his Daily BA video clips, and his work on many podcasts. He has a Masters in Applied Behaviour Analysis and has held many roles supporting a variety of organisations and ventures. He currently works for High Sierra Industries as a Learning Systems Development Specialist. He works hard to disseminate Behaviour Analysts and interviews many of our colleagues and peers regularly. If you want to learn more [visit his page](#).

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