AQA Psychology A-level

Option 3: Addiction
Flashcards

Define addiction.

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This is a state characterised by compulsively engaging in rewarding stimuli, despite being aware of potentially adverse consequences associated with their behaviour.

Define psychological dependence.

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This occurs when a drug becomes the focal point of an individual's thoughts, emotions and behaviours, which results in a strong need to use the drug.

List the three types of tolerance.

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- Metabolic tolerance: when enzymes responsible for metabolising a drug do it more efficiently overtime, result in lower concentration of the drug in the body- greater amount of it are therefore needed.
- Learned tolerance: an individual learns to function normally under the influence of the drug, so more of it is needed for them.
- Receptor density: when the density of the receptors the recognise the drug decrease overtime, so fewer of them are stimulated.

How is physical dependence demonstrated.

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An individual is said to be physically dependent if cessation of the use of a drug results in withdrawal symptoms, these symptoms may include nausea, vomiting and insomnia.

How is stress a risk factor in addiction?

How is stress a risk factor in addiction?

Substance abuse is often a method people use to help them deal with stress. It has been proposed by Gelkopf (2002) that some people intentionally use different forms of addictive behaviour as a way to treat the symptoms of stress.

Explain the role of dopamine in addiction.

Explain the role of dopamine in addiction.

The active ingredient in tobacco is nicotine, which can act as a stimulant, making people feel more alert and improving their cognitive function, as well as a relaxant, making people less irritable.

The effects of nicotine disappear within a few minutes, causing a need to continually take in nicotine to get a pleasurable feeling.

How does the learning theory explain addiction?

How does the learning theory explain addiction?

These are explanations that explain behaviour in terms of learning rather than any innate tendencies, physiological or cognitive behaviours. An association is made between a pleasurable feeling and performance of the addictive behaviour, increasing the chances that it will be performed again.

Define cue reactivity.

Define cue reactivity.

This refers to objects and environments associated with a drug or behaviour. These become conditioned stimuli and so people experience greater arousal when exposed to the cues associated with their addiction.

Define partial reinforcement.

Define partial reinforcement.

This refers to the fact that not all behaviours are reinforced, full reinforcement conversely, involves every response being reinforced. An example of this may be behaviour being reinforced every 4th response.

List the four types of cognitive bias associated with gambling addiction.

List the four types of cognitive bias associated with gambling addiction.

Recall bias

Near miss bias

Illusions of control

Gambler's fallacy

Describe aversion therapy as a behavioural intervention.

Define aversion therapy as a behavioural intervention.

This is a form of behavioural treatment that aims to eliminate undesirable behaviours associated with addiction by replacing the pleasant association between exhilaration and addictive behaviour with unpleasant sensations.

Describe covert sensitisation as a behavioural therapy.

Describe covert sensitisation as a behavioural therapy.

This is an alternative behavioural intervention that involves eliminating an undesirable behaviour with an imaginary association between it and something unpleasant, rather than real stimuli like aversion therapy. This is preferred as it does not have the same ethical issues as aversion therapy does.

Describe NRT as a treatment for nicotine addiction.

Describe NRT as a treatment for nicotine addiction.

This is a drug therapy, that involves gradually releasing nicotine into the bloodstream at levels lower than in cigarettes. NRT supplies nicotine addicts with nicotine, but without the harmful chemicals that are in cigarettes, this helps them control their cravings and prevents relapse.

What attitude does Prochaska's model take towards relapse.

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The model has an accepting attitude to relapse, recognising that it is not a sign of failure, but rather an inevitable part of stopping an addiction. This model is more sympathetic and a more realistic model of behavioural change. In fact, this approach to relapse can help change attitudes regarding relapse.

Define variable reinforcement

Define variable reinforcement.

This refers to when a response is reinforced after a number of responses. The delivery of the reinforces is unpredictable, but the number of reinforcements average out eventually at a specific rate

Describe Griffith's study into the cognitive basis for gambling.

Describe Griffith's study into the cognitive basis for gambling addiction.

Griffiths conducted research with 30 regular gamblers and 30 non-regular gamblers playing slot machines. It was found that the regular gamblers demonstrated 11.5% more instances of 'irrational verbalisations', compared to the non-regular gamblers, even though between the two groups there were no observable differences between the number of wins attained. Verbalisations included statements like 'I'm good at playing this machine!'. Griffiths research showed that irrationality and holding cognitive biases are characteristic of problem gamblers.

Define the theory of planned behaviour.

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This refers to how an individual's decision to engage in a particular behaviour can be determined by their intention to engage in that behaviour.. This intention is determined by factors like their behavioural attitude, subjective norms and their perceived behavioural control.

Explain how family influences are a risk factor for addiction.

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Parents may influence addiction by acting as social role models, with children of substance abusers being more likely to abuse themselves.

Explain how peers are a risk factor for addiction.

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This refers to individuals of the same age that possess common values and standards of behaviour. Amongst adolescents, individuals are more likely to befriend fellow smokers or drug users and non-smokers/drug users are more likely to befriend each other. This means that an individual may develop a drug addiction due to members of their social group also having a drug addiction..

Explain how personality is a risk factor for addiction.

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Personality traits commonly associated with addiction were identified by Krueger et al (1998). These traits include impulsivity- behaving without thinking, which is believed to contribute to gambling, alcohol abuse and polysubstance use.