Kahlai Cummins-Thorne °Psychology°

**Why we want things we don't need whilst Others are Satisfied with the bare Minimum**



# When researching why some people are satisfied easier than others I came across many other questions I needed to figure out in order to fully grasp the concept of what I was asking. Some of these questions are as followed: why do we want things? what controls our likes and dislikes? why is it easier to give into our wants? what role does classical conditioning play in controlling our wants? what exactly is the Detroit effect, classical conditioning ?and what experiments were undergone in order to prove these concepts? All these and many more questions alike have helped significantly in giving me the answer to my initial question.

 First things first, we must understand when answering such a question is, why do we want things? (Things we don't need). I have learned that our wants are shaped by our likes, dislikes, and surroundings. Our likes and dislikes however can be altered by many means. While learning how our likes and dislikes are influenced. I learned that classical conditioning (first discovered by Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov) is a significant contributing factor and why we want and act as we do. I learned of watsons and Rayner's Little Albert experiment. For the experiment they took a 9 month old and for a series of weeks studied the infant’s responses to various stimulus. They presented the child with various neutral stimuli. One of which was a white rat toy,for the few weeks they showed the infant the rat while slamming a loud hammer behind the child causing the baby to cry and cry. After so many times the baby would cry every time he was presented the white rat even when they didn't slam the hammer,this is what is known as the unconditioned response. While the fear of the loud noise was induced by what is called the unconditioned stimulus. These results helped prove that Ivan pavlov's theory of classical conditioning does indeed apply to humans. Another study I came across implicates the Diderot effect. The Diderot effect entails that when receiving or acquiring anything of higher quality and demand, the initial surrounding and items may be deemed inadequate and or of lesser quality enticing you into a pattern of consumption in order to maintain higher standards. This effect was established on behalf of French philosopher Denis Diderot once a poor man of low stature suddenly placed into a higher position, containing a higher salary, and more respect due to this the man was gifted a beautiful expensive Scarlet robe. In returning home the man suddenly felt underwhelmed. Everything was no longer good enough for him to feel as content. The man taking action on this unfulfillment caused a sad spiral into a pattern of consumption rendering the man's new wealth almost pointless. When looking at patterns of consumption and factors of classical conditioning we must then also consider the brain's role in this whole thing. I found out that the prefrontal cortex is responsible for regulating anxiety and making decisions. With in the prefrontal cortex lies our lymbic system containing parts such as amygdala (an emotional regulator),the hippocampus, hypothalamus, and thalamus. These parts in particular play a large role in our emotions and how we perceive things based on these emotions. The hippocampus and the hypothalamus are both responsible for sending information to the amygdala. The amygdala processes emotions such as fear.The hypothalamus processes emotions such as sexual desire,pleasure,aggression and anger,while the hippocampus acts as memory processing center. These parts interact with one another when emotional ties are present in order to make emotions and sense of the received stimulus. Our thalamus than interacts with the rest of the lymbic system converting the information received into urges. When an unconditioned stimuli is present they can cause an overwhelming sense (urge). This urge interacting with our emotions often leads to us giving into our urges due to it being the path of least resistance (easiest option). These factors play a large role in why some people give in to there wants constantly and are never satisfied. Factors such as our Heredity,needs,social interaction,interest and expectations,these also all have effect on our emotions and perspectives.

 Between my research and results I have concluded that many variables influence our perspectives,likes,dislikes,which than they influence our wants. When wants and urges occur I have found that when, people whose perspectives are influenced predominantly by the left side of the brain, are logical thinkers who often prioritize and do well in textbook situations. These people are more prone to approaching their wants and urges rationally,often leading into the dismissal of the wants/urge,as they are typically aware it's not needed to live happily.Emotions hold less influence over these people. On the other hand however those whose perspectives and influenced predominantly by the right side of the brain are known to be overly emotional,dramatic,enticed easily,chaotic and are often better in social situations. These people however are the ones who allow their emotions to take over and will typically do whatever is needed to reduce or remove their urges causing quick emotional responses with little to no logic behind the response. These responses often create a temporary sense of satisfaction causing our emotions to want more and more of these stimuli;With out logic,no matter the consequence. In my results the older generations/elderly were mainly influenced by the left side of their brains causing them to be happy with much less. Where as the teenagers and kids I interviewed, grew up in a more emotional,materialistic generation causing many of them to give into their wants and urges with little limitations predominantly relying on their right side of the brain.