

**Psychology of Everyday**  
**Prof. Braj Bhushan**  
**Dr. Alok Bajpai**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur**

**Lecture - 04**  
**Understanding Day to Day Behavior - II**

So, welcome again and let us continue about what we were talking about this whole connection. So, I remember one thing in a democracy what Carlin used to say is a state of mitigated war that you always need an enemy to fight against.

If you do not have a real enemy at the border, it will keep shrinking in towards yourself from between countries, between states, between cities, between if there is nobody finally at home and if nobody at home also then you will create a shadow enemy. That means your mind continuously needs a threat.

Threat.

Because that is how probably the brain trains itself.

So, the modern.

Are you suggesting that this is perhaps some kind of a preparatory mechanism

Absolutely.

We are conditioned to it.

Yes.

But we also prepare ourselves so, that in case situations similar to this comes.

Right.

In the coming few days.

Right.

Then we are ready to encounter that.

So, the modern scientific understanding, neuroscientific understanding is that whatever goes into your head is processed with your previous memories with the previous conditioning, in with the instantaneous need of the brain. And then depending on that your primary the cortex with this feature extraction if sound signal goes the feature extraction, visual signal happens only after your internal existing instantaneous state of the mind is decided that means if you are irritated even a flower would irritate you. Flower is a flower what feature extraction can you do. Flower is a beautiful thing right sometimes a beautiful face can irritate you.

Because you will see only what your mind wants to you to see and this happens in 200-500 milliseconds, then there is another wave in 500 milliseconds the unconscious mind really sends to the conscious mind. There is a frames of reality which keep coming and the conscious mind is just weaving a story out of it causing action.

So, say for example, if I have unfavorable bias attitudinal bias.

Yes.

Towards some section of the community.

Right.

If, I am bombarded with negative feedback about my neighbouring country.

Yes.

If, I am told how bad you as an individual has been to my family and therefore, to me.

Yes.

These things would remain with me.

Unless you really consciously work to remove them.

No I am not trying to consciously remove.

Yeah.

You get rid of this.

Yes.

So, I live with these stories.

Yes.

So, these things are now part of my mental state.

Yeah, larger your scheme of things.

And the moment the new scenario comes in.

Right.

Somebody who belongs to the segment for which I have an unfavorable bias.

Yes.

Either a community member, a nation or as an individual then my anger gets triggered.

Yeah it will; obviously, trigger see also when we talk of logic and rationality. I think they are two different things; logic it may be it may be very very logical, but totally flawed argument maybe logical.

No, what I was saying is that say for example, I am told through different kind of stories.

Right.

How bad my adversary has been.

Right.

How bad my neighboring country has been.

Right.

I do not have a personal experience of that.

Right.

So, no first-hand experience; its all collections of stories which is now put into my.

That is your that is brain network which has learned this way.

And then some scenario comes in.

Now, let me add to this what you are saying is fine. Suppose a community has certain way of wearing a dress. And my mind has been trained that they are not good or bad and they have done this and for example, it is so, mysterious actually. Now your brain knows and how does it know they are bad? We have been told who is bad? This person why is this person this and not the other person because it this is like this. Next time-suppose that person comes to you without any of those symbols which characterize him. Would your mind is still feel unless you are told?

The answer is probably no.

Yes.

Because.

So, it is that unconscious.

Exactly.

So, we are why we that is what I am saying when we talk about rationality, I do not I think Freud was totally right when he said we are not rational beings we are rationalizing beings.

So, if the same set of person the same person comes without any symbol of his community against which I harbor a negativism chances are that I would keep talking.

Those associations will not get activated.

Not get activated.

And the moment you put suddenly your mind so, the that. So, sir this is how flimsy the whole thing is this whole process of aggression and gaps and on the basis of which you fight are actually so, flimsy and so, illusionary. Because 99 genes are shared by all human race, illnesses are shared all communities have schizophrenia all communities of diabetes there is no difference. All eat drink move the hand which has come to us from

millions of years I have if I hold this, this is not something which I have learned this movement and that my hand will go on like this has come to me from millions of years.

Exactly.

Everybody does it this is irrespective of community.

So, it is only the again as you said about the action being the last thing or social psychology being the last thing, but the basic one. So, I think is the external frameworks which. So, the here comes in the social thing these are external frameworks, which have gone in and trained my mind only they will trigger it. The big question is can we train our mind to not respond to this.

Psychologist still would say know that there is a possibility that if you have been conditioned there is a possibility of deconditioning and then further reconditioning.

Yeah.

Either say you can do it in the clinic or even with know self-practice also to a greater extent this can be achieved.

Yeah, I think there is more proof of all these flimsiness which I am talking with the fragility of the whole thing. If a person is going on a highway in the night and somebody he knows it may be dangerous, in India there is lot of dangerous highways is not it. And naturally there is some scare and you see a police car going in front of you with just the beacon light, immediately there is some confidence which and you will try to keep your car.

Very close to it right.

Yeah.

The same police man in society people are so, scared off. If somebody asked the general.

Yeah.

Average person to go and please talk to that policeman chances are they will not go and do. So, both are actually ridiculous situations.

So, this was the same person the whole scenario changes.

Yeah.

In medicine if you fall ill you go to the hospital you will not look at what community or doctor you are looking at it you just want to get treated. Right which doctor in the world would say I would not treat a person with this community. If they do it then they should not stop doing medicine. But same doctor when getting into a political discussion may be totally antagonized.

Or even say if I have a lower order of pain or the problem that I am experiencing I would still not try to rethink about the course of treatment that you are providing me.

Yes.

But if I am in severe pain.

Yes.

Then I will not look at.

Absolutely.

What remedies you are suggesting.

Absolutely.

I will immediately jump at that.

Absolutely.

So, whether choice for the police van at the highway.

Absolutely.

Choice of medication in a dire situation.

Right. So, that brings me to two important things one; that means, we will be talking about the normalcy and all; that means, all aggression is not abnormal. All aggression is not illness.

Yeah.

All aggression has a detailed behavioral process to it, in which points can be identified where things can be altered. And, if one Gandhi can do it then lot of people can do it. All aggression may not be intent full. Right because then it the intent brings in whether it has to be dealt with mental health system or legal system.

For example, it is our country's case Nirbhaya case, right there was a huge aggression. And, I was discussing with one of the filmmakers I said these type of murders and rapes and they happen in society is not that films they are creating it, but film sometimes they give them very very crude imagery. So, immature mind or a person who is super ego is not very strong those images have already affected. So, when he does a crime he gets into that scene.

So, he already has a story.

He already has a story.

Which gets activated.

Which gets he wants to do that story right. So, although he did not agree, but see the amount of violence which they did with this girl. So, it was absolutely pathological.

That is absolutely.

I think they were almost like psychotic. And in full senses nobody would do all these, even if they wanted to sexually abuse her. Why be so cruel to her?

And so, the law took its own course luckily law took its own course and punishment and all, because sometimes this plea of mental illness is a severe encore.

Yeah.

Right.

So, when I am saying psychotic I do not mean they were psychotic like mentally ill it was.

It was a behavior which.

Which is also near.

(Refer Time: 11:39).

Near psychotic behavior, but not psychosis.

So; obviously, they had to be.

So, lot some aggression murders, domestic violence is punished. Now, domestic violence is also handled in psychiatric clinic by psychologists and psychiatrists.

But again now psychologist they argue based on the kind of data that they have generated. That a larger percentage of domestic violence if I am if I remember correctly its closer to 37 percent or so, are those acts again the story you have seen those stories in your life in the formative years say like an abusive relationship between the parents. And when I grow up those stories are already imprinted on my mind. And those stories have a chance of getting reactivated translated into action when I enact those storylines.

And therefore, as a say for instance, if I have seen an abusive relationship between my own parents my father physically abusing my mother. And I have seen it as a growing boy the imagery is imprinted.

Right.

And when I become a man, I there is a great likelihood that I enact the same father which is imprinted in me and similarly if I am growing daughter, then I have seen my wife I have seen my mother accepting it.

Right.

And then when I grow my likelihood of accepting it also increases and this research interestingly shows.

These research interestingly show that large percentage of women.

They considered this to be legitimate.

Right right.

So; that means, the story.

Is affecting both.

Right.

The sufferer as well as the perpetrator.

Right right.

But on the contrary for some people it may be totally reverse.

It got to be.

Yes yes. So, now, that is the interesting part.

Because in those where the behavior is absolutely opposite, that is very caring for the wife never doing all these, going with the other extreme. Maybe this is a the super ego has evolved.

Differently.

Differently.

Differently yes.

Right.

Yeah.

Or then all the girl who says that I will not suffer.

That is very interesting what you have pointed out because I am getting convinced day by day that Freud what he was talking was much far ahead of his time. Because that is what neuroscience is saying now neuroscience is right now what it is saying you heard of this well-being clinics all over. So, now, the current understanding is a right from the point of conception when the neuronal cells start forming in the first six days of cortex from there till first 3-4 years is such a crucial period because the amount of warmth love the care is giving will form a healthy networks. The more disturbed environment which

you see, even if you are not conscious about it will affect your basic survival networks and that anxiety that aggression would have already been.

And that is what Freud was saying and then while growing the critical periods when environment will challenge you, you will challenge environment you have two what Erikson also used to say basic trust.

Yeah.

Versus mistrust all of you can find out a Erikson.

Introductory psychology course will give you know the.

Yeah yeah.

Details of all these theories. So, Erikson always say basic trust independence. So, your brain never stops growing, but your basic formation of how what you are is formed till about 1820 when the pruning is happening and prefrontal cortex which is the source of all inhibition and judgment and develops around 1920 not before that.

So; that means, when we ask kids whether you are telling a lie why did you do this its wrong; they cannot think because they prefrontal cortex is not developed, but when Freud was saying that all your adulthood story has been written in your childhood, I think he was absolutely fit. This is what we are neuroscience telling us and what Erikson was saying we have forward an Erickson, we do not apply him in the Erikson gave conflicting situations for each age group. That admits your contradictory thought process your mind has to evolve and move on. It just cannot go on in a flimsy right. So, if such is the case, then psychology will have to probably revise and revise that if the conditioning is so, important then why not make adults healthy. So, that at least in those first 2-3 years of the kid they can remain quiet.

But anyway it will never happened because then the whole drama of theatre of the world will stop. But this criminal thing is very important because court I think decides on the basis of intent of.

Yeah.

Right, but. So, I think court must also be thinking that when somebody suddenly hit somebody in anger whether that is the murder or somebody who plans and kills that is a murder? But.

Because basically you a discourse between the act and the motive behind it.

Motive behind it.

But legal part of course, we will not talk about.

Yeah, but the thin line between the law and mental health.

Yeah that is true.

So, how do you decide that this person is mentally ill? So, I think when you were talking about this in clinical situations at least, is that the whole scenario of the aggression has to be considered not just the act.

Yeah.

Right you want us to see whether there have been incidents like this in the past, if there are if they are very frequent then; obviously, as you said what has been the upbringing. The question is who has the time to do all these, but what triggers what you call the ABC of behavior. Antecedent behavior consequence lot of kids who are very aggressive especially kids who have ADHD and autism and conduct problems there you do ABC. So, what you do is you have to check the antecedents or look at the behavioral reinforcement often there is a behavioral reinforcement. Especially at homes when kids get aggressive, half the time they end up getting what they want.

Also an interesting way of reinforcement that we see in families say like I have been very aggressive in demanding something in my family and a small growing child say my son growing in the family observes me.

No.

And later on he uses similar kind of words, actions everything when he demands certain things from his own mother.

Right.

And when my child is imitating me either my wife or say my mother or others in the adults in the family they say [FL].

Right.

Now, this is a very direct kind of a reinforcement.

Right.

Where you are making a child realize.

Right.

That this is a positive feed you have been able to successfully imitate you are.

Right.

Idol.

That brings me to another point what you said as it some people may agree may not agree, but I think sitting in India we should talk about it because we are talking about psychology of everyday life. One of the biggest problem in this country is the gender biases we have, now this reinforcement is the psychology behind the gender bias how it perpetrates, it this connects everything.

This connects how your brain is conditioned in you early years, this connects how your teaching in the behavior which you have seen affects your behavior, this connects whether you have consciously thought of it and reason over it or you continue to work through your conditioning.

A boy and a girl are normally brought up equally in most families till 10-11 when the puberty happens and then suddenly something changes girls are being controlled too much, they have being taught the social norms too much.

Social norms.

Their every decision has to be scrutinized, mothers most mothers and I have no I am not saying it in the sense of any derogatory thing, but they have a bias towards male boys. So, when while he cries why are you crying like a girl and everything is bend, they will

they are brought up like kings. Now this king when he grows up. This king has a problem. He will expect the same behavior from his wife which an independent young girl would not agree to.

So, that I think one of the now girls were not financially independent, now they are earning too much money. Why would they tolerate? They would not want to become servants what the mother was. So, this boy has seen a woman serving father, serving himself he expects the same thing unconsciously unless he has worked on it, unless he has gone over and above it.

So, connecting to the storyline that you had talked about; so, I have the stories I pick those stories and I enact in my life.

Yes.

And those who want to change the storyline will have to do it deliberately.

Right.

What psychologists will say deconditioning.

Right.

Or and reconditioning.

And it has a very very large social ramification, I call it I have devised this word freeze or kill. This lot of women abuse which is going on. So, I was thinking and I was talking to some young girls and I was thinking that one to one, one male to one girl male cannot do much unless they some gang or something. What happens is that the when the girls are growing up in our households, their every decision is so, much governed by others that they start having lack of confidence in their own decision making. Right nobody leaves them free to do what they want like boys are often left even boys can get abused similar in similar situation where parents are getting too much.

There is nothing right or wrong in it, but it is not working as simple as that lot of gaps are because of this. So, when this girls; obviously, they have to step out for career for this and that when they step out in the first time they are assaulted whether its verbally,

within marriage outside marriage physically in that first instance the story which you are telling, the story is not that let me give back.

Right? Because let me give back means that you have been taking your own decisions and bearing it. Instead of retaliating and responding I think their mind freezes, because the mind has never on one go taken decision.

Are you suggesting that in our parenting style,

Yes.

If we make certain revisions.

Yes.

There is a possibility.

Yes.

That the next generation of girl child or even the male child for that sake.

Yes.

They would be able to take proactive measures.

Yes.

To defend themselves.

Yes.

And to take very strong reactive measures.

Absolutely.

To defend themselves.

Absolutely.

If such a case arise.

Absolutely. So, we can create a word here.

I think the masculinization of females and feminization of males.

Males.

Males, male children should be allowed to be more emotional. Lot of the and I will tell you one source of aggression, you would know it as the moment I said there is a very very derogatory look when a male cries.

[FL].

[FL] What do you think if you suppress your tears where will it go? It will all turn to aggression.

I must tell the viewer's know that there are interesting studies in psychology suggesting that men take the liberty of crying too much after a particular age.

Yes for 50.

After 50.

And previously they are know debarred from doing it.

Yeah.

Saying that this is a womanly kind of an act.

The brain becomes more fluid after that.

Maybe they get too dependent on their wives or mothers or whatever so, but. So, if the male is allowed to express emotion freely and females are allowed to take their decisions and why not we allow them to suffer the stress of taking a decision? But that is the thing which would make them strong.

So coming back to our original discussion on aggression, then is it that the there would be a course correction in some way that disproportionate kind of an aggressive outbursts. Like road rage and other kind of aggressions they would get challenged.

Yes.

Because the party which is made to suffer will also retaliate.

Yes.

And, thereby gradually know society will make a course correction, wherein we will have a relatively you know considerably low number of such episodes.

Absolutely.

And, even in those episodes where it happens, the intensity would perhaps get checked.

Right.

And to your suggesting that there can be a long term measure where in the child rearing practice itself undergoes a change.

It has to.

And over a period of time the generation will change.

So, nature may have competition, but the competition will kill us. Competition between lesser number of people is healthy. Competition between huge number of people is very unhealthy one. The second is empathy unless you teach empathy it not going to work.

I will give an example, the example is this month is autism awareness.

Week.

Month or something.

So, there was a mother who was giving a talk yesterday and she her elder son also had younger son had. So, she said most parents become very very self-centered, our society is becoming very very self-centered isn't it.

Yeah that is true.

India was known for sharing and this and that and people used to take care in a village there was a mentally retarded person he would be everybody's son now that is gone. So, said who will take care after us and that all parents think autistic child. And then you leave it on the younger brother or parents are not going to live forever. So, I just came to

my mind and I suggested, that this thing will only go if we teach empathy to the normal kids studying with that autistic kids.

In inclusive schools for example, if there is a group of 10 people right and there is one autistic kids why should they keep him at the edge rather than he should be the tenth of the group. So, out of those 9-10 kids somebody will go and open a factory or something. So, when he will employ 10 people he will employ this person also. So, his peer group should be the one who will take care of his life.

And, this kind of inclusion cannot be only with respect to certain kind of disorders or anomaly.

Normally.

Even otherwise.

Otherwise otherwise.

Otherwise also.

So, I think our schooling also has to undergo change.

So, even the viewpoint that we began with know the minority versus the.

Yes.

Majority view yes. So, minority already gets taken care of because there is an inclusive mechanic.

Absolutely.

So, there is nothing called minority or majority.

Ok.

Everybody is included in the same bracket.

Absolutely. So, I think there are ways by which these things can be handled.

But I must now thank you because we began with something as angry as anger [laughter], but the discourse that we took it did cover a lot of things.

Yes.

And we not only restricted ourselves to the discussion on anger rather we moved on know from one to the other, wherever we saw that there was a connecting link.

Yes

So, thank you so, much.

Thanks.