Applications of social cognitive theory

Where have you seen examples of these principles?

What applications of these principles do you see for your teaching?

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Pearls on **E**ducational **P**rinciples

Social Cognitive Theory

**Pearls on
Educational Principles:**

- Present an influential idea in education

- Suggest examples of its use

- Give an opportunity to apply the idea to your teaching

Principles to Guide Teaching Practice in Medical Education

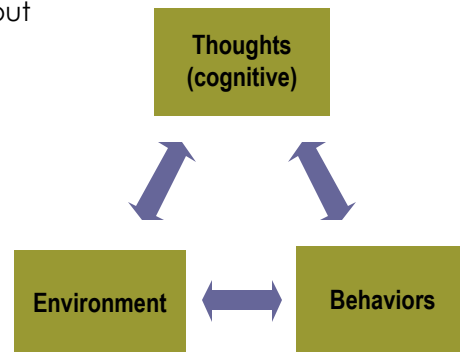# Social Cognitive Theory

as explained by Karen Hauer, MD

The idea:

Social cognitive theory grew out of behaviorism, which suggests that a stimulus response process drives human behavior. That is, the rewards and punishments of prior actions determine future actions. An important limitation of behaviorism is that it focuses only on how the environment (the response to one's actions) shapes behavior. Social learning theory added a cognitive component to this framework to incorporate the importance of humans' thoughts and motivations in driving learning by observation and role modeling. According to social learning theory, the learner observes others to create a mental model of a behavior that can be recalled and applied later. In this way, thoughts are an intermediary between a stimulus and a response as the individual thinks about the environment, makes observations, and sets goals.

Bandura extended the concept of social learning emphasizing three critical elements contributing to learning--cognitive processing, behavior, and the environment-- and called it social cognitive theory. In practice, the individual plans and anticipates (cognitive), acts (behavior) and reflects upon behaviors (cognitive), all in a dynamic, social, interactive environment with role models, norms, values and culture. This theory brings in the importance of human agency in behavior, as humans are uniquely able to be intentional, engage in forethought based on motivations and goals, and reflect during and after events for self-monitoring and self-improvement. Bandura asserts that observing others and modeling their behavior are important learning strategies.

Thoughts (cognitive) — Environment — Behaviors

The examples:

In clinical learning, medical students will learn through observing physicians, modeling their behaviors, forming their own understanding of how the behavior is performed, and reflecting on the outcomes of their own performance.

In individual counseling or public health education, people will be mostly likely to change their behaviors with a multi-pronged program that addresses behaviors, ideas (i.e., media) and the environment (i.e., positive role models in the media)

References:

Bandura A. Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective. Annu. Rev. Psychol. 2001.52:1-26

http://www.learning-theories.com/social-learning-theory-bandura.html