ESTABLISHMENT OF NONDELUSIONAL RESPONSES
IN A SOCIALLY WITHDRAWN
CHRONIC SCHIZOPHRENIC¹

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Multiple treatment interventions including instructions, modelling, timeout, avoidance of repetition, and reinforcement were successful in establishing factual answers to personal background questions in a withdrawn and socially unresponsive chronic schizophrenic. The subject had previously persisted in giving only delusional responses to these questions. A multiple-baseline design across verbal replies to personal background questions demonstrated that the changes in behavior were brought about by the treatment interventions. During baseline, the subject was reinforced for any response to four questions. The experimental interventions were then introduced for the first question and moved sequentially to an additional question when the subject's responses reached the criterion of at least 80% correct for two consecutive sessions. Introduction of the experimental interventions produced an increase from a baseline level of zero to at least 80% correct for each question. The use of the token reinforcement procedure was faded out after the subject was able to answer all four questions correctly at least 80% of the time for two consecutive sessions. Fading of the token reinforcement procedure was accomplished by using increasingly intermittent schedules of token reinforcement during the last seven sessions. In the final session, no tokens were used to reinforce the subject's responding. Nine-, ten-, and 12-month followup interviews were conducted to evaluate the maintenance of treatment gains. Maintenance was found to be complete at the nine- and 10-month followups, but at the 12-month followup interview, the subject answered one question incorrectly. This study replicates an investigation previously reported in this journal.

DESCRIPTORS: social behavior, delusional behavior, attending behavior, delusional speech, multiple baseline, chronic schizophrenics

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