

The Relationship of Behavior and Attitude

Part A.

The following situations describe examples of behaviors and attitudes that are not consistent with each other. Read each one carefully and describe how to lessen the inconsistency.

1. Adolescents drive fast, knowing that doing so is dangerous and illegal.
2. A student who hates psychology class is asked by her teacher to encourage a group of students to take psychology next year. She does speak to the other students.
3. After much investigation, a young man buys a used car for \$4,500. It does not have many of the options he would have liked, but it is all he can afford. Two weeks after his purchase, another car becomes available for the same cost but with more desirable options. He cannot return the car he bought.
4. A young mother thinks of herself as an honest person and tries to raise her children that way. Yet, she writes notes excusing them from school for illnesses when they are not sick.
5. A young man is involved in drugs and belongs to a gang that espouses violence. He falls in love with a girl who is a social worker trying to stop drugs and violence.

Part B.

Reread the situations in part A. Identify the attitude and behavior in the original scenario and place them under Cognitive Dissonance. Reread how you lessened the dissonance in part A, and indicate the new attitude or new behavior under Cognitive Consistency. The first one is done for you. Although examples for both areas (attitude and behavior) are provided, you only need to choose one area to change.

Cognitive Dissonance

Cognitive Consistency

1. Attitude—Fast driving is dangerous and illegal.
Behavior—fast driving

New attitude—Fast driving is not dangerous or illegal.
New behavior—decides to drive slower

2. Attitude

Behavior

New attitude or new behavior?

3. Attitude

Behavior

New attitude or new behavior?

4. Attitude

Behavior

New attitude or new behavior?

5. Attitude

Behavior

New attitude or new behavior?

Part C.

Be sure you are familiar with each of the five situations presented in part A. Answer the questions that follow each alternative. Assume that a state of cognitive consistency has been achieved.

1. The adolescent continues to drive fast.
 - a. Did the attitude or behavior change?
 - b. How has the person resolved his or her cognitive dissonance?
2. Speaking in front of a group changed the student's view of the psychology course.
 - a. Did the attitude or behavior change?
 - b. How did the student change her view about the course?
3. The purchase of a used car caused the young man to think the car he bought was great.
 - a. Did the attitude or behavior change?
 - b. How did he achieve cognitive consistency?
4. The young mother continued to write notes excusing her children from school when they were not ill.
 - a. Did the attitude or behavior change?
 - b. Why did the mother continue to write the notes?
5. His love for his girlfriend made him give up drugs and violence.
 - a. Did the attitude or behavior change?
 - b. How did he resolve his dilemma?

Name _____
Date _____

Part C

Be sure you are familiar with each of the five situations presented in part A. Answer the questions that follow each alternative. Assume that a state of cognitive consistency has been achieved.

1. The adolescent continues to drive fast.
 - a. Did the attitude or behavior change?
 - b. How has the person received his or her attitude this attitude?
2. Speaking in front of a group changed the student's view of the psychology course.
 - a. Did the attitude or behavior change?
 - b. How did the attitude change her view about the course?
3. The purchase of a used car caused the young man to think the car he bought was great.
 - a. Did the attitude or behavior change?
 - b. How did he achieve cognitive consistency?
4. The young mother continued to write notes regarding her children from school when they were not ill.
 - a. Did the attitude or behavior change?
 - b. Why did the mother continue to write the notes?
5. His love for his girlfriend made him give up drugs and violence.
 - a. Did the attitude or behavior change?
 - b. How did he resolve the dilemma?