



BLAME

**The Excuses Clients Make for Not
Exercising and Solutions to Retrain
Their Behaviors**

Agenda

- **BLAME AND ATTRIBUTIONS**
- **Workshop Client BLAME**
- **BLAME Retraining w/ Clients**
- **Review the Research**

The perceived cause of failure (or what they blame) may be more important than the actual cause.

Weiner, B. (2010). The development of an attribution-based theory of motivation: A history of ideas. *Educational Psychologist*, 45(1), 28-36.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520903433596>

BLAME – Inter / Intra personal

Bernard Weiner's attribution theory states that people ascribe reasons for why they or others succeed or fail at a particular event or endeavor.

Weiner, B. (1985). An attributional theory of achievement motivation and emotion. *Psychological Review*, 92(4), 548-573. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org>

BLAME = ATTRIBUTIONS

Who is your favorite sports team?

Think about your reactions for when they WIN or LOSE?

- **“WE WON!!!”**
- **“THEY LOST...”**

What excuses do our clients tend to blame that keep them from regular exercise?

- Time
- Work
- Kids
- Energy
- Don't want to sweat
- Or mess hair up
- COVID-19
- Germs
- Not too bulky
- My dog gets in the way when exercise at home and misses me when I go to the gym ...wtf
- Cant say no to anything (except the gym)
- SM, Netflix, gaming, etc. and got sucked in
- Pain
- Digestive issues
- Exercise makes me eat more
- Let me lose weight first...
- I left my scrunchy at home
- Forgot shoes/clothes/
- Im too lazy

PROBLEM STATEMENT

“The specific problem in the fitness community is that many clients lack the motivation to adhere to exercise – and they tend to BLAME reasons that have nothing to do with themselves.”

Richey, R. F. (2019). The perceptions of certified personal trainers on the value of attributional retraining: A case study. Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest, LLC.

What excuses do you blame on your client's lack of exercise adherence?

- What am I missing that cant motivate them
- My client isn't doing it for themselves but for others
- I have a trainer, so you cant hold me accountable *buying their fitness without the effort
- Lack of family and social support
- Time management problems
- Don't stick with it long enough to get results
- Not a strong enough WHY
 - Fear of success (sabotage)
 - Partner doesn't feel comfort with progress
 - I cannot afford it
 - Fear of failure
 - Not confident
 - It just another thing I HAVE to do...

PROTECTING OUR EGO

“Individuals attribute their perceived reasons for failing to exercise regularly toward external causes to protect their egos and feel better about themselves and minimize accountability by blaming external circumstances .”

Richey, R. F. (2019). The perceptions of certified personal trainers on the value of attributional retraining: A case study. Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest, LLC.

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory states that people ascribe reasons for why they or others succeed or fail at a particular event or endeavor (Weiner, 1985).

Locus of Control

Internal

External

Controllability

Controllable

Not Controllable

Stability

Stable (circumstances will always be this way)

Unstable (circumstances will change)

Causal Attributions

Internal

External

Unstable

Effort

Luck

Stable

Ability

Difficulty

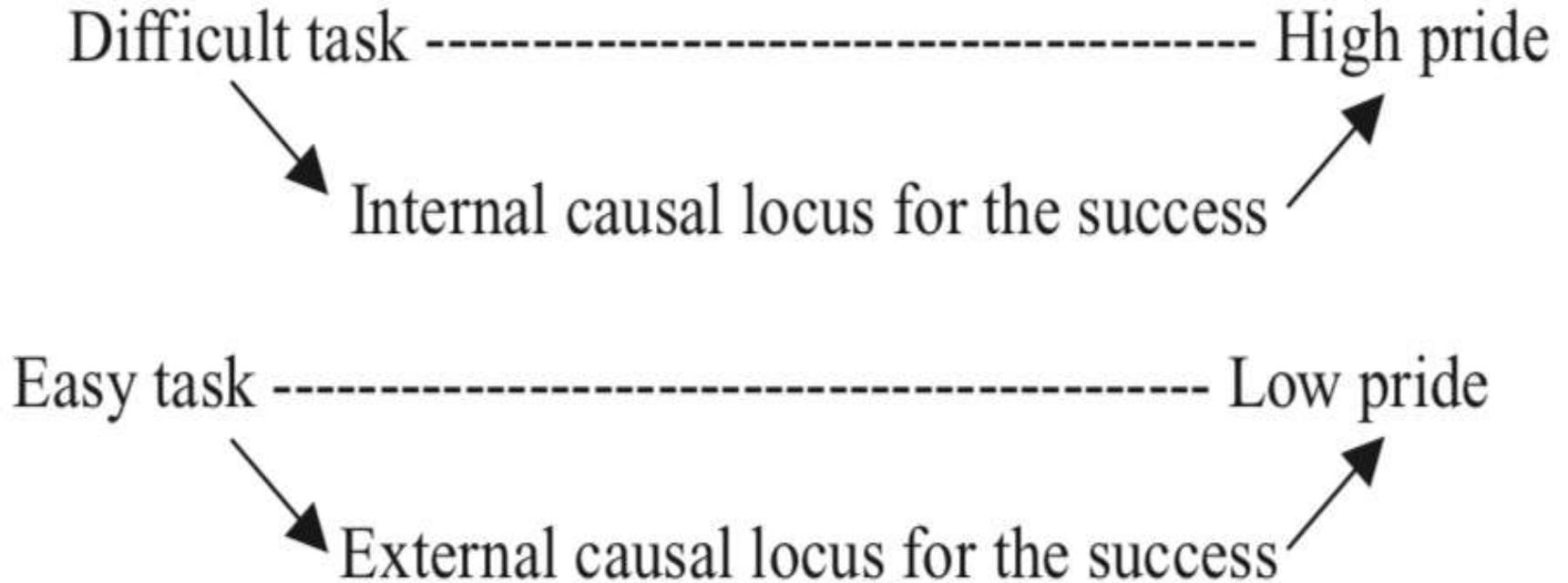
LOCUS

		INTERNAL LOCUS		EXTERNAL LOCUS	
		Controllable	Uncontrollable	Controllable	Uncontrollable
STABILITY	Stable	Effort – often long term	Aptitude or Ability (considered by many to be innate and unchangeable)	- Client cannot control or influence change to the external causes	Difficulty of process to reach goal
	Unstable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skills - Knowledge - Strategy - Temporary effort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Short-term - Injury - Health - Mood (?) - Weather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Client CAN control or influence change to external causes - Guilt / shame - PRIDE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chance - Luck - Deity intervention(?)

RETRAINING BLAME

Retraining BLAME is a practical means of providing a perspective shift that clients often need to begin reframing and actualizing goals.

Pride Based on Difficulty



ATTRIBUTIONAL RETRAINING PROCESS

1. *Causal search activation*
2. *Attributional induction stage*
3. *Consolidation phase*
4. *Supportive phase*

1. CASUAL SEARCH ACTIVATION

Causal search activation

asks students to attribute blame (causes)
for achievement failure.

2. Attributional Induction Stage

Attributional induction stage

Provide one of the following scenarios to use with their clients that address unique combinations of blame (causal attributions) and determinates of AR.

Scenario 1

A man works in finance and entertains clients 2-3 nights per week and travels a lot for business. His schedule leads to drinking too much, eating poorly, and doesn't allow him time to exercise.

(Internal or external)

(Stable or unstable)

(Controllable or uncontrollable)

Scenario 2

Since I've been in this relationship, I stopped exercising and going to the gym and have gained 20lbs. My fiancé doesn't say so, but s/he prefers I stay home to be together rather than go to the gym. We are both sedentary, and we eat takeout regularly and often late at night.

(Internal or external)

(Stable or unstable)

(Controllable or uncontrollable)

Scenario 3

Female in her 20s who just went through a breakup. She is insecure about her body and believes that may play a role in her break up. She is unfamiliar with exercise and what do and because of her insecurities feels uncomfortable working out in front or around other people at the gym.

(Internal or external)

(Stable or unstable)

(Controllable or uncontrollable)

Scenario 4

A 67-yo male who loves playing golf. His physician told him to start exercising to help manage his blood pressure and his weight. He does not live near a fitness facility.

(Internal or external)

(Stable or unstable)

(Controllable or uncontrollable)

3. Consolidation Phase

Consolidation phase

Have your clients deconstruct, analyze, & then discuss the scenarios before having them apply the principles *back to their own circumstances*.

(adapted from the work of Nickel and Spink, 2010)

4. Supportive Phase

Supportive phase provides motivational strategies to support clients to engage in unsupervised exercise along with detailed and clear exercise programming is essential.

Supportive Phase

What are your suggestions for client support?

- Trainerize (with evolution nutrition)
- Facebook groups
- Hashtags – postings
- Short blogs
- Accountability challenge
- stickers!!
- Research what to do where they will be
- Texting
- Text groups
- Free pizza
- Video messages
- Marc Polo
- Recognition postcards (possible hand written)
- Ask them what will be helpful***
- \$
- Social media sites
- NASM Edge App.
- Apps.
- Emails
- Mail mail
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Supportive Phase Feedback

- Detailed and clear exercise programming
- Use of apps to design programs and increase communication, adherence, and support.
- Be open to feedback – and request it.
- Regular emails or text to check-in with clients throughout the week.
- Appropriate exercise programming
- Planning for events or races
- Conversations about reassessing priorities.

Research Question 1

How do certified personal trainer perceptions of attributional retraining impact client motivation?

Themes	Frequency	Percent
1. CPTs admit they could do better at AR implementation.	11	92
1. CPTs would have made changes if they were to do it again.	11	92
Note. N = 12.		

Research Question 2

How does attributional retraining impact the level of motivation for personal training clients?

Themes	Frequency	Percent
1. Clients focused more on an internal locus of control.	11	92
1. Perceived client experience was highly beneficial.	12	100
1. Participants recommend other CPTs learn and apply AR with their training clients.	12	100

Research Question 3

How does attributional retraining contribute to improved client experience and adherence?

Themes	Frequency	Percent
1. Support strategies implemented	12	100
1. Increased effort	12	100
1. Successful retraining	12	100
Note. N = 12.		

Additional Findings

Additional Findings		
Themes	Frequency	Percent
1. CPTs perceived that clients attribute barriers to fitness-related success (BFRS) to uncontrollable external factors.	12	100
1. CPTs perceived clients' limiting factors to exercise is controllable.	12	100
Note. N = 12.		

FINAL TAKEAWAYS

- BE CAREFUL WITH CLIENT'S FEELINGS
- BE FIRM WITH YOUR FOCUS ON EFFORT AND STRATEGY (and change as needed)
- BE DILIGENT WITH YOUR SUPPORT

BLAME

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