

Breaking Barriers: Personal, Academic and Community

An innovative approach to virtual
widening participation summer
schools

Welcome & Introduction

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The Context

- Kent has a history of running successful summer schools for students from our pre-entry widening participation cohorts.
- The Covid-19 pandemic challenged us to reimagine this provision for the virtual environment.
- The Breaking Barriers Summer Schools developed out of the four elements identified by Bandura as key to developing self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977).
- To improve the sector's understanding on the impact of summer schools, we've been funded by independent charity TASO (The Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education) to gather causal evidence on the outcomes of this intervention through a randomised controlled trial (RCT). Reported findings are due in Spring 2022.

Past
performance

Verbal
persuasion

Vicarious
experience

Physiological
and emotional
states

Why self-efficacy?

- Students' self-efficacy has been linked to their academic performance, persistence and educational trajectories (Gore, 2006)
- It is a variable that can be altered through interventions, so by changing our pedagogical approach we can ensure that students are supported to reach their potential.
- This is particularly the case for those who have experienced social or economic disadvantage (Mozely et al, 2020).



Day 1: Personal Barriers

Aim: To identify personal barriers that students may or may not be aware of and to build confidence in order to challenge them.

The Approach: Exploring Happiness

Introduction: Use of BSL to lead into discussions about what a “barrier” may be

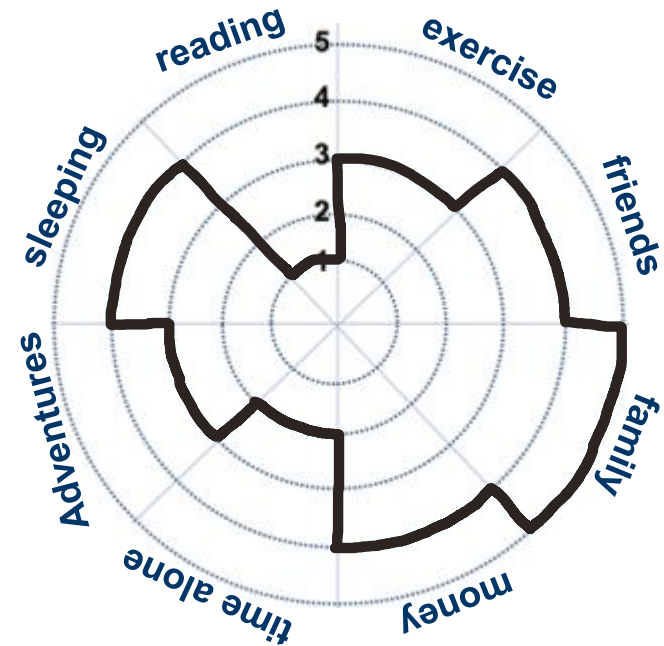
Video: What does happiness mean to you?

physical wellbeing; relationships; knowing yourself;
balancing commitments and acts of kindness.

Activity: Use categories to complete Wheel of Life

Debate: “People can choose to be happy”

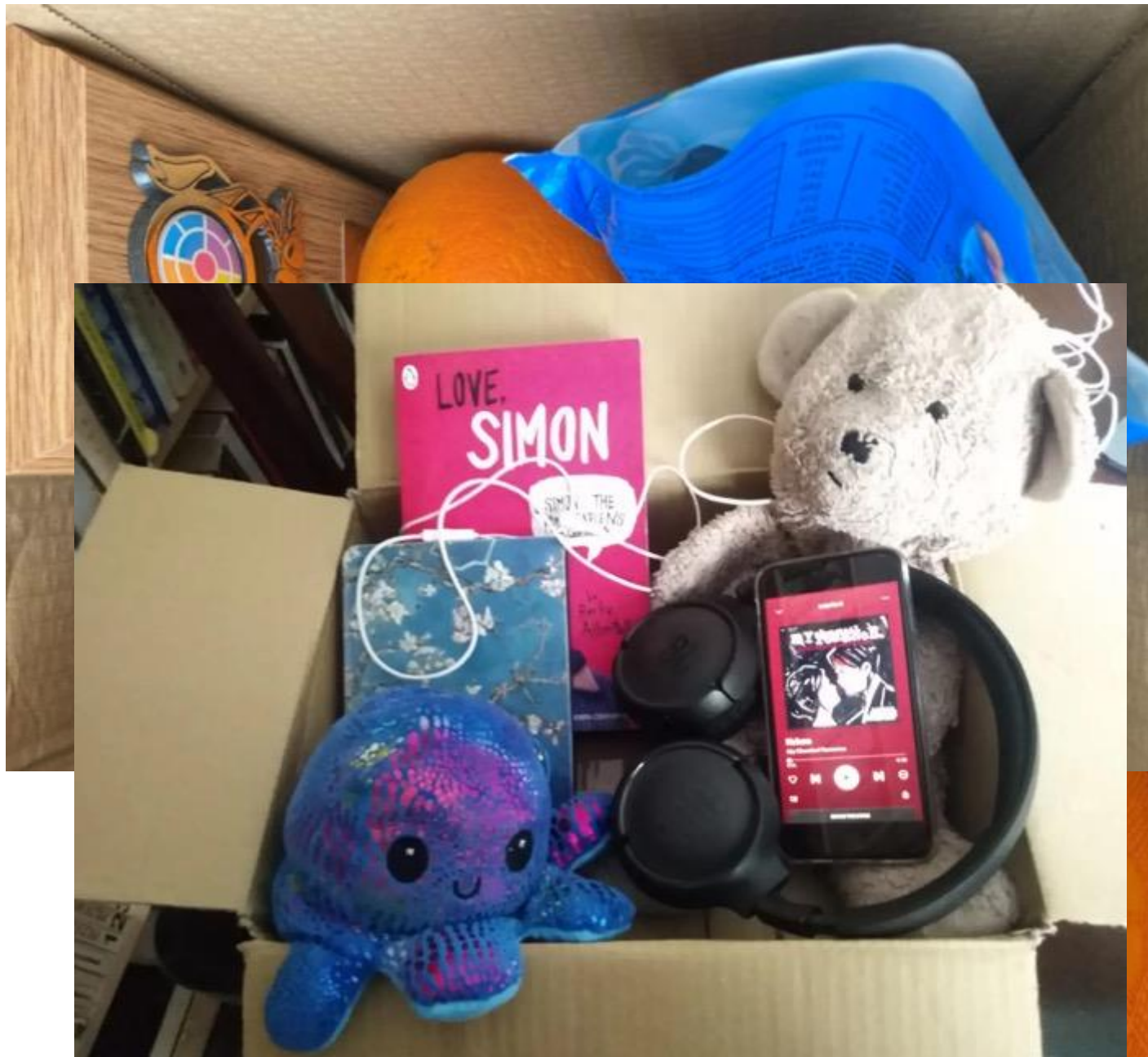
The Wheel of Life



Guest Speaker: Art of Brilliance

Activity: Happiness Toolkit





My necklace that my grandma passed down to me



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Outcomes

We provided three different outlooks on happiness:

1. Happiness Video (Five Senses);
2. Structured Debate;
3. Art of Brilliance Talk.

Using this, students were able to reflect about what happiness meant to them individually in order to identify areas to "improve" using the wheel of life activity.

Students then made happiness toolkits inspired by the activities. An aim to travel "full circle" with using their newly identified personal barriers as a motivation to grow their sunflower seeds in the final session.

"You might have barriers that you face everyday but now I know [how] to solve them" - participant



Day 2: Academic Barriers

Aim: To encourage students to think deeply about their own academic strengths and preferences. To introduce students to HE learning as more interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary. To introduce students to research as a part of the HE environment.

1. Introduction – exploring how subjects link, overlap and might work together.
2. Academic taster – exploring the big questions.
3. Reverse Funding Panel
4. Submission of their own responses to a big question.



Day 2: Outcomes

1. Vicarious Experience (through academics and ambassadors)
2. Past Performance (through participating in activities and forming their own opinions)
3. Verbal Persuasion (through clear messaging about academic success)

In seeing the projects pitched to them, and meeting academics in the taster sessions, participants also developed confidence and strategies to help them with their projects in day 3 and 4.

“I liked the pitches and debates as I saw how everyone else wanted to express their ideas and opinions.” - Participant



Day 3: Community Barriers

Aim: To use the ideas of self-knowledge and personal barriers to firstly identify and then to address specific needs of the student's own communities. They were encouraged to use research/academic questioning to confront these issues and come up with solutions.

1. Introduction – What is the central question and how to break it down?
2. How to identify their own communities?
3. Independent/mentor-group work
4. Submission of their research, pitches and final creative 'artefact' to the digital time-capsule



What kind of space might address the issues raised by the pandemic?

What do we mean by 'communities'?

*"How can we make
our communities
better places in the
wake of COVID-19?"*

What does the community need?

How has COVID-19 affected your community?

What were the categories and why?

- Space to socialise
- Space to learn
- Space to exercise
- Space to find help

Be AMBITIOUS! | Be LOCAL! | Be SPECIFIC!



Spaces to Socialise



Sustainable Community Food Truck

Abstract

This project aims to create a sustainably developed food truck, which will invite different cultures and generations together, in a celebration of diversity and inclusion. With support and funding by the local community, this scheme will not only address loneliness and mental health issues further devastated by the outbreak of Covid-19 but will also tackle future issues of climate change through the running of an eco-friendly food truck. In addition, this idea will enable communities to better develop their understanding and knowledge of issues that may personally affect them or those around them, with an aim of cultivating a greater sense of compassion in the local community.

Aims of the Project

Inclusion: Connect with other members of the community and celebrate diversity

Education: Encourage a greater understanding and learning of local and national issues, different cultures and different perspectives

Sustainability: Promote and foster environmental, futuristic approaches to impending issues of climate change

Connect: Develop greater relationships and bonds between members of the local community



Introducing ...

SNACKS AND GIGGLES

The Location

Photos taken from TripAdvisor



Has a large car park, and beer garden, and with a real fire.

Possible Timeline

This is Hard to determine as you would have to buy the pub, however once the transaction is complete it would not take much to get it up and running initially as it already has a bar, kitchen, loos etc. I would suggest 6 months for some light renovations if it were determined they were needed by the community.

Cost

To buy the Pub you may need around £60,000 and then any renovations that were required a possible further £10,000. These figures may change.

Nothing to wear.
up-cycled fashion made for the community by the community

My funding pitch! We need your help!

People of colour community

HOME Groups Members Blog Causes About Us Contact Blank Forum

Log In

People of colour community

helping a community stay connected

www.kent.ac.uk

My Community idea:

"Our Secret Garden"

What is this community project about?



Due to the pandemic and the lockdowns following that, many of us couldn't connect or communicate with our friends and families, leaving us alone and isolated. My main aim for this community project is to give people the space and the opportunity to reconnect again and for people to find help and support.

I wanted to do this by embracing nature and creating a park or a garden area that's surrounded by trees, flowers, birds, a gazebo in the centre where people can get together and talk. Being surrounded by nature is great for your mental health and studies found that it helps relax one's mind. I was inspired by the book 'The Secret Garden' as it brings so much imagination to the reader and freedom, this idea of escaping into this magical place away from your worries. This is also the reason why I wanted to name this project 'our secret garden' however the name should be chosen by the community as it's the community that would use it.

Ideas and Aims for this community project:

The aims of this community project are centered around 4 things:

- Giving people the space to socialize- organizing events where people can go together, for example, at a barbecue party, or organizing events where people can raise money for charities or giving people the space to have a picnic or celebrate events like Christmas or Easter.

Spaces to Learn

Pitch: To build a new and improved sports centre in the centre of Dover

I would like to build a new and improved sports centre, over the site of the previously demolished facility in Dover. For at least two years, the one listed sports centre in Dover has been gone and missing from the town's picture. There have been attempts since to build a sports centre in the nearby Whitfield, which to have an extent worked, but not addressed Dover's community barriers, especially during lockdown.

Ever since the first lockdown hit back in early 2020, Dover was one of the worst affected towns in Kent during the pandemic, almost becoming a ghost town to an extent. Since then, the town has economically and socially recovered as things have reopened. However, there has been a notable constant, an open space of nothing, wedged between St. James development and the CBE.



The people of Dover need an easily accessible location and route to keep track of their fitness, which I believe this location for a sports centre would offer, as the previous one here offered so well. The sports centre's main element of course would be primarily for exercise, however, could also very easily incorporate social elements. The centre would be parallel to a main road as well as be surrounded by the St. James retail park as well as a Premier Inn. Not only does the sports centre being located here help residents for fitness accessibility, but also hopefully attract more customers to other local businesses.

Implementing Cycle Paths in the Local Area

Encouraging people to exercise in the park

Map



- The map above suggests where I believe cycle paths should be implemented.
- A path along the canal would be great as it allows for beautiful and peaceful scenery.
- A path through the woods would give young children a chance to safely explore their local area, and a path along the road would be very useful for people commuting to the nearest town.

Mobile App Design

For Fighting For Mental Health's 'Positive Vibes'

App Icon



Positive Vibes

Creating a Safe Space for Young People Struggling with Mental Health

About this project...

This project is designed to help those aged under 25 who are struggling with mental health and give them support as well as a space to socialise with others who are having the same struggles. It is aimed to be a safe space for the people to go to once a week, as well as access to resources and chats with volunteers on an app made specifically for our members.

This idea is linked to my Service Learning Project that I have been doing which there is more information about on the next slide.

How does my Service Learning Project link with...

As part of my BSCP programme at South Kent, all students must complete 50 hours of community service (this involves researching about our area). My group have decided to help those struggling with mental health, which includes the 'Positive Vibes' and look at other options.



Two ping pong tables, that will have two paddles that students will use to hit the ball to the person they're playing with. Each table will have 4 ping pong balls.

How will it incorporate the other elements?

1. Socialise
2. Get Help

My space equally considers the social and exercise aspect as ping-pong is generally played by two individuals and those two people can connect and develop a friendship through playing ping-pong together.

Ping-pong is a physical sport that is considered a form of exercise. So people in the local community who participate in playing ping-pong will also be exercising.

Other things to consider?

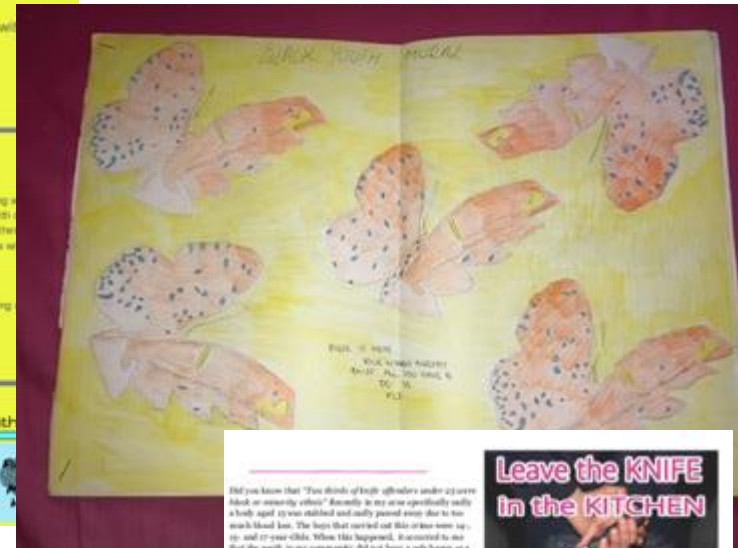
There is a long-term space. Younger people and other members of the community will use the ping-pong table and equipment. I will know that exercise and socialising barriers are being broken by seeing people connecting with others and seeing people exercise by playing ping-pong matches for hours. The creative within space will not negatively affect any other feature of our business activities. It will be called Ping-pong party because it sounds like it's a fun and entertaining space which will encourage people to play and socialise in it.



How will the design of the space address the core principle?



Spaces to Find Help



Did you know that "Two thirds of knife offences under 25 were linked to 'minority ethnic'." Recently in my area specifically within a body aged 15 was stabbed and sadly passed away due to two weeks blood loss. The boy that carried out this crime was 16, 17 and 17-year-olds. When this happened, it occurred to me that the youth in my community did not have a safe haven or a place where they could ask for help and find support. The reason I specified by using the youth club towards people of colour is because in addition "Black people were over 5 times as likely to be arrested as white people - these were 30 arrests for every 1,000 black people, and 60 arrests for every 1,000 white people". If we can tackle the problem, starting from a young age maybe these statistics could be reduced.



My aim for this youth club is to allow young people to enter the youth club and be able to talk about their struggles and to ask for help where needed. There is a lot of harm crime among the youth if they had a place where they could speak to someone about it then it could really help. They can turn their anger and frustration into something else by having like a sport competition within the youth club for example. The youth club should reduce the number of young people on the streets.

Spaces to Exercise

Social Elements

Aim: To replicate some of the social elements of an in-person summer school – allowing participants to ‘be the student’, learn about Uni Life and get to know the ambassadors in a more informal way.

1. Society intro & tasters.
2. Escape room challenge and group dinner.
3. Task Master Challenge.
4. Final Celebration Event.

often in subject areas that are those you study at school.	on things people may not
Development of teamwork and problem-solving skills through group activities.	Escape room task - communication Team social - increase confidence with the rest of the group.



Parents and Carers

Aim: To engage parents, carers and supporters in the summer school journey to support participants. For parents and carers to gain knowledge of HE.

1. Pre-event info evening.
2. Breaking Barriers ambassador talk.
3. Final celebration.
4. Follow-up feedback photos.

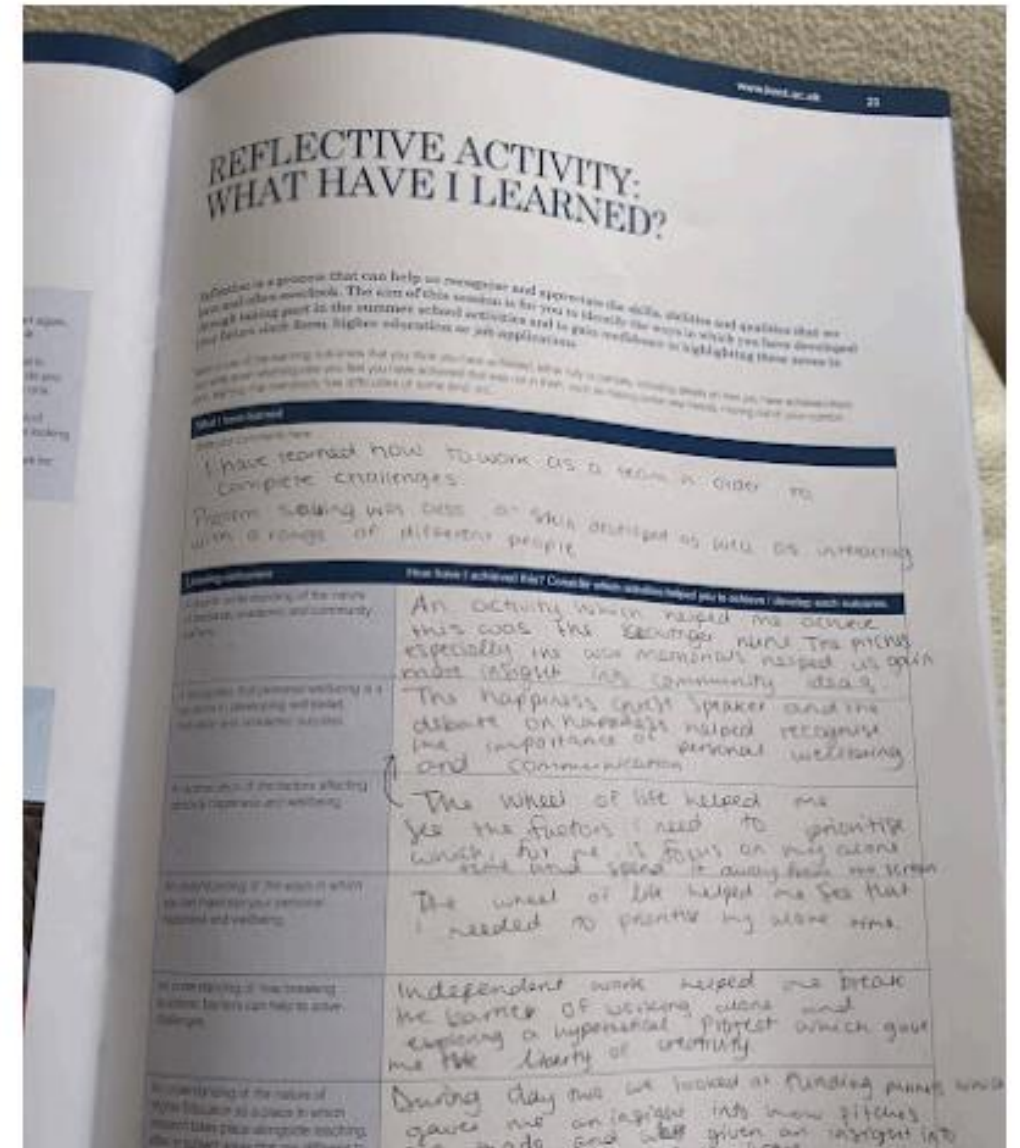
“Yes, I think it has given her more confidence speaking with the ambassadors and receiving positive feedback on her ideas and her work. This has given her the boost to seriously consider A levels and university away from home.” – Parent

“Her confidence was boosted in participating in group activities and discussions.” - Parent



Reflections

- Students' were asked to reflect on each of the summer school learning outcomes and consider how they achieved that outcome.
- Their reflections demonstrated that our pedagogical approach had enabled students to develop their understanding of the ways to maximise their personal wellbeing as well as learning more about the HE environment.
- Many of their comments centred around moving out of their comfort zone and increasing in confidence.



What I have learned

Write your comments here.

I have learned ways to be more positive about myself, my life,
and the future.
I have learned how to create a good pitch.
I have built my confidence & moved out my comfort zone

What I have learned

Write your comments here.

I have learned about communicating with new people and I have
stepped out of my comfort zone meeting new people. I have also
gained confidence in working independently.

Next Steps

- Investigate the differences between Year 10 and Year 12 student scores
- Consider how we can now translate this online model to effective in-person summer schools
- To embed the 4th element of Bandura's theory (physiological and emotional states) into other outreach activities



References

- Gore, P. (2006) Academic self-efficacy as a predictor of College Outcomes : Two Incremental Validity Studies Journal of Career Assessment 14 (1) pp 92 -115.
- Mozely, H. D'Silva, R. Curtis, S. (2020) Enhancing self-efficacy through life skills workshops Widening Participation and Life-Long Learning 22 (3) pp 64-87.
- Bandura, A. (1977) Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioural change. Psychological Review 84 (2): 191-215.





Questions

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