Name of Student

Name of Professor

Name of Class

Day Month Year

Life Event and Psychological Perspectives

**Introduction**

This paper is aimed at showcasing my understanding about the perspectives of psychology that explain the underlying mechanisms of why an individual thinks and behaves in a certain way. It will be accomplished using a significant life experience that “altered” my way of thinking, feeling and behaving under the headings of four perspectives. In a nutshell, this assignment will enable the reader to understand how our behaviors are changed overtime and what factors *might* cause them to do so. In the end, it will be explained which perspective best explained the change in mental process and behavior.

**Life experience**

My first day in 7th standard marked the most significant day of my student life because I learned a worthy lesson that not only made me think differently but allowed me to alter my behavior in social terms. Mr. Allen Christopher was our ethics teacher. Soon after entering into the class, he referred to Sergio and asked about his name, grades and hobbies. “My name is Sergio; I am an average student; I play basketball and video games” he replied. After listening to this, Mr. Christopher asked him to leave the class instantly. He left all of us in a state of complete shock as Sergio did not said anything bad or *unethical.* His banishment was quite questionable for all of us. Although we disliked his gesture yet could not do or even say anything as we thought of him as an authoritative figure that can ruin our grades if we said something undesirable to him. We all remained silent. On the other hand, Sergio made many attempts to change Mr. Christopher’s mind as it was the first day of class and he did not want to get banished but all futile. We saw him leaving the class with pathetic grins.

After Sergio left the class, Mr. Christopher wrote the first topic on the black board; *Laws and ethics*. He then raised the question; “what do we mean by laws and ethics?” And “why do we develop laws?” Carla reciprocated, “*laws are developed to limit our actions.”* Nadia claimed, “*Laws reduce the power differences between rich and poor.”* Mr. Christopher appreciated the class participation but deemed dissatisfied with their answers and wanted for more view. I encouraged myself and replied, “*Laws are developed to build peace and justice in the society.”* Mr. Christopher liked my claim and nodded his head appreciatively.

He then proposed a question, “Do you think anything wrong has happened to someone a couple of minutes ago?” “Is it justifiable to remove any student from the class even if he did not say something bad?” We all looked at each other and echoed loudly; “Sergio was right, what happened to him was wrong, Sir.” “I admit, my action was not justifiable, I tyrannized an innocent and it was solely my mistake but was it not your duty to support your classmate as he was right?” It is your duty to speak when you see someone doing wrong to others; laws are just phrases if we do not have the will to implement in real lives.In the very next moment, a spell of awkward silence surrounded the class as we were left speechless; we had no satisfactory explanation for what we did. These revolutionary words still reiterate in my mind because this lesson was far beyond the business of grades; it stimulated my cognition; I started thinking in a different way.

**How did it change my thinking, feelings and behavior?**

This experience changed my thinking in a positive sense as previously my thinking was centralized on my own self; I was ego centric and only my personal interests used to shape my behavior. I learned that we should think in a broader way, encapsulating others’ interests and wellbeing too. I developed a pro-social insight and it helped me a lot in future interpersonal development. My feelings, on the other hand, underwent substantial alteration as I felt uncomfortable while observing something wrong and remaining silent. I learned that I must behave and speak in response to such events that threaten others’ will no matter what consequences I might encounter afterwards.

**Analysis of experience using four perspectives of psychology**

In the previous sections, it was explained how a general spell of transformation was created by this event in my thinking, feelings and behavior, in this section, I will explain the underlying motive behind this dramatic change. These explanations include four perspectives:

**Psychodynamic:** this perspective suggests that I developed pro-social orientation because of the *Eros* component of personality as my *Libido* was sex or survival oriented. When my *Id* (self oriented) battled against my *Super Ego* (society oriented), my *Ego* (decision-making component) decided to support super-ego probably because I was at the *Latency Stage* of psychosexual development where we meet new people and come to know that many other perspectives are existent too. I was reluctant to speak against my teacher but felt equally inappropriate and neutralized my conflicts through *rationalizing* that “other classmates are also staying quiet so it is good for me to do the same.” I felt reluctant to help Watson as my *Collective Unconscious* told me to stay silent because speaking up might cause banishment and negative consequences from the authorities. This is how psychodynamic perspective explains my behavior in the current scenario.

**Behavioral perspective** suggests that I learned new behavior under the influence of *classical conditioning* as from the very beginning we associate a *sense of* *credibility (UCR)* with our *parents (UCS)* and education makes us associate the roles of parents and *teachers* *(NS)* because teacher keeps a central place in our childhood personality development after parents and we think of him as an imminently knowledgeable figure. Hence, I unknowingly developed association between *Credibility (CR)* and *teachers (CS).* I *generalized* this association over other situations due to which my perspective changed from self-centered to society-oriented. I would not have paid much attention if any other person would be telling me to develop courage to implement laws instead of Mr. Christopher. I also learned to *discriminate* between the sense of credibility of teacher’s lessons and of other ordinary individuals. If conditioning between teachers and parents is lost (*extinction*), the sense of credibility will affect my newly learned behavior as well (*spontaneous recovery*).

Moving towards operant conditioning, if I would not abide by teachers’ lesson of ethics, I might face *negative consequences* in future i.e., if something negative happens to someone and teacher expects us to stand against it and if we fail, we will have to lose our grades and reputation. Moreover, if helping others develops constructive feelings i.e., sense of usefulness and productivity, we are more likely to help others under the influence of *Thorndike’s Law of Effect*. It must be noted that no proper stimulus schedule is involved in this type of learning and it will be more intrinsic learning than latent and modeling ones.

**Evolutionary perspective** suggests that human beings learn new things that are directly linked to ensuring their survival. I chose to become pro-social because if I consider helping others in their hard times, I can expect others to reciprocate if I encounter similar situations in future. On the other hand, if we remain silent even though we realize the extreme inappropriateness of events, it would not be something good of the society as a whole because society is the system of discrete micro systems. An individual being treated unfairly will affect the order of macro system to a greater degree and in turn such events will threaten our survival when injustice and lawlessness goes uncontrolled. I thought of “speaking up” against subdue actions as a way to ensure the integrity of society and my personal survival at micro level too. It must be noted that threats to survival are not limited to physical terms rather encapsulate psychological, emotional and social ones too. This is how the need of survival and grow bigger shapes our behaviors at unconscious level.

**Sociocultural perspective** presents the most justified explanation behind my thinking, feelings and behavior in the current scenario as it stresses upon the significance of cultural aspects as strong determinants of behavior. There is an equal opportunity that my family environment allows me to help others in hard times and considers it highly appreciable action. Besides this, my religion teaches me to stay helping, just and respect others’ dignity and free will without any discrimination. These familial, religious and cultural aspects have long-lasting impact on our cognition and behaviors and make it easy for us to develop important decisions accordingly. On the other hand, if I belonged to a culture where there is no concept of collectivity and individuals prefer their own interests rather than the wellbeing of whole society, I would not be thinking about changing my thinking, feelings, emotions, perceptions, outlooks, orientations, attitudes and behaviors even after Mr. Christopher’s groundbreaking practical example. It is all about the way our society approves or disapproves certain actions and expects us to carry beliefs in certain ways.