Successful Shooting

When you become consistent in the fundamentals, accuracy becomes a product of the mind.

Jay Kidwell, Ph.D. Instinctive Archery Insights

Our Two Minds

Subconscious = Muscle Memory

Conscious = Aiming

TARGET PANIC

Definition

The Conscious over-ride of a Sub-Conscious Muscle Memory function resulting in the breakdown of the shot process.

i.e., a conscious apprehension or anxiety that disrupts the shot process.

What Is The Problem?

During the shot process the Conscious Mind "MISTRUSTS" the Subconscious Mind to execute the shot (Muscle Memory) and consequently, the Conscious Mind tries to control everything.

In ARCHERY, our learning sequence begins with shooting at a TARGET and this is when and how we learn TARGET PANIC

The TARGET is the PANIC

Target Panic is a learned behavior called Classical Conditioning.

Classical Conditioning

When a **Conditioned Stimulus** (**CS**) is paired with and precedes the **Unconditioned Stimulus** (**US**) until the **Conditioned Stimulus** (**CS**) alone is sufficient to elicit a **Conditioned Response** (**CR**).

The Terms

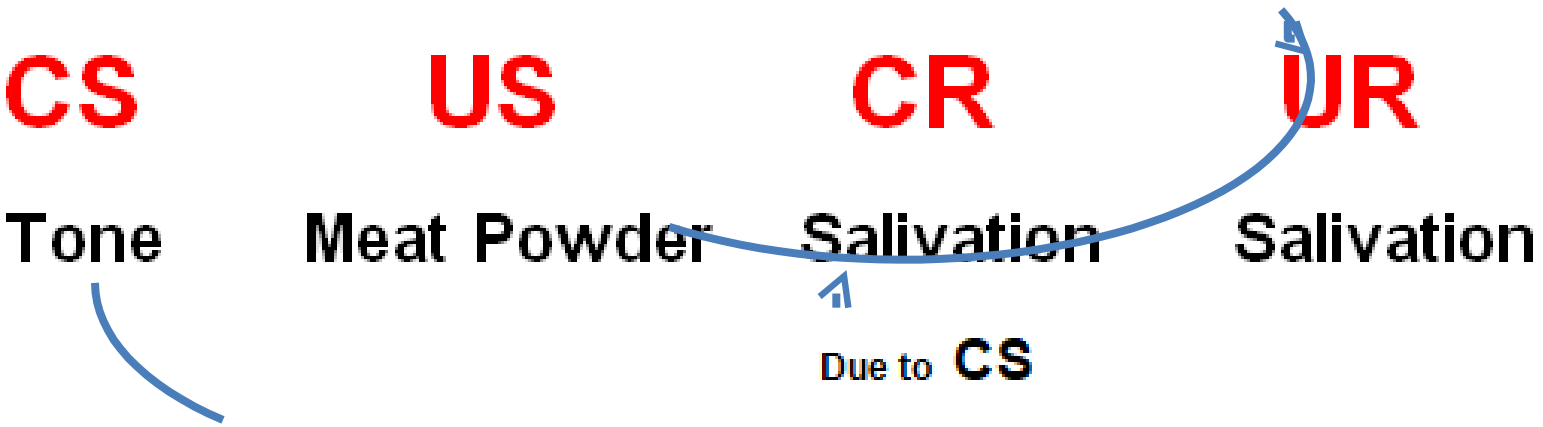
US ….. Unconditioned Stimulus

UR ….. Unconditioned Response

CS ….. Conditioned Stimulus

CR ….. Conditioned Response

Ivan Pavlov, a Russian Psychophysicist, pioneered the study of classical conditioning in his famous experiments with dogs.



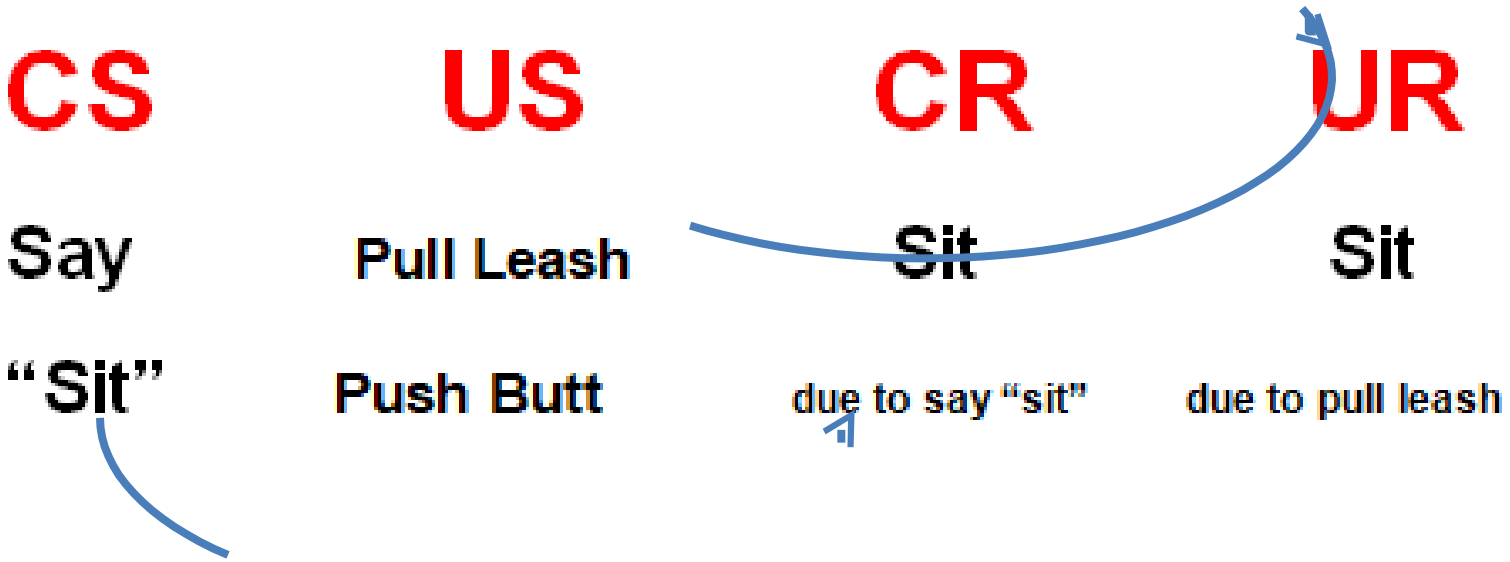
--Once Learning occurs, the CS will cause the CR

LAW of CONTIGUITY

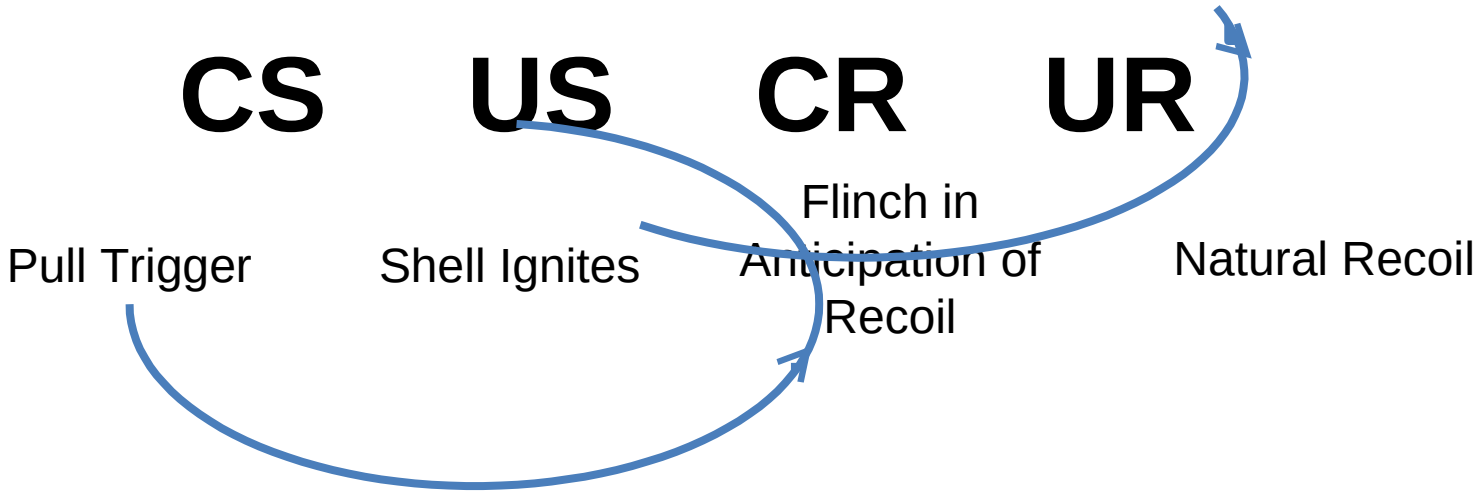
The **CS** must occur **before** the **US** and any two stimuli paired this way in time and space will be seen as classically associated.

Any organism capable of learning can and will be affected by the association of classical conditioning.

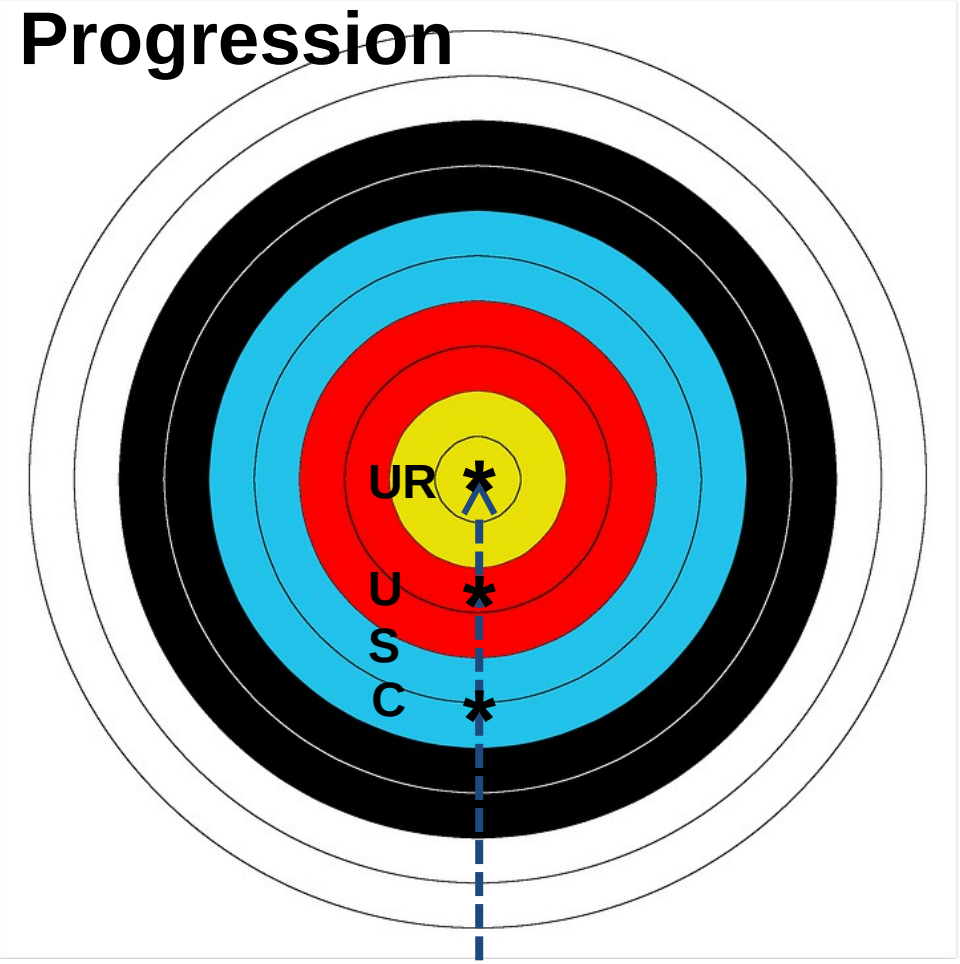
Examples


CS
US
CR
UR
Say
Pull Leash
Sit
Sit
"Sit"
Push Butt
due to say "sit"
due to pull leash

Firearm Shooting



Normal Shooting Progression

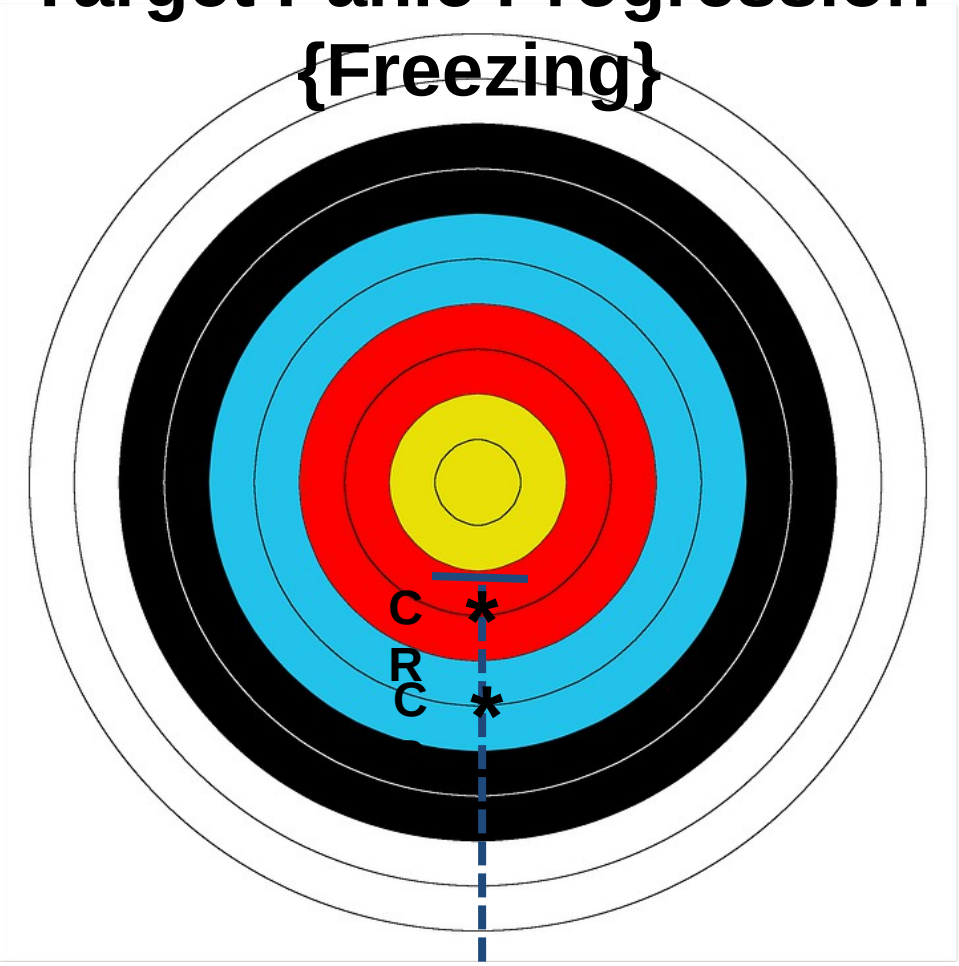


CS = Approach Bullseye

US = Acquire Bullseye

UR = Hold or Release

Target Panic Progression {Freezing}



CS = Approach Bullseye

CR = Premature Hold or Premature Release

Once associations have been learned, the archer experiences a premature hold or release before he or she is able to acquire the bullseye.

Stimulus Confusion

The inability of the Subconscious to distinguish between two strong stimuli.

Examples:

1. Golfer fear of hitting water = ball in the water
2. Pitcher fear of bad pitch = bad pitch
3. Archer fear of bad shot = bad shot

Cure for Stimulus Confusion

"Create a Consistent Focal Point"

Every time you shoot, Imagine that you are shooting at or using the SAME focal point.

Examples: (Imagine)

1. **Orange Stickers**
2. **Red Laser Dot**
3. **Accuracy Button**

100% of your concentration should be on your Focal Point.

Ideomotor Responses

"A physical reaction to a thought"

Examples:

1. Someone Yawns … you yawn.
2. Someone itches … you itch.
3. Picture a cliff … you tingle.
4. Think RELAX … you relax.
5. Think negatively … you tighten-up.

Systematic Desensitization

The use of IMAGERY to reduce anxiety producing stimuli

Examples:

1. **Riding a Roller Coaster**
2. **Giving a speech**
3. **Shooting a Tournament**

…… each time you experience the stimuli you reduce your anxiety through repeated exposure.

IMAGERY can be used effectively to replace actual experiences.

Bringing It All Together

We want to bring together our understanding of:

Classical Conditioning

Stimulus Confusion

Ideomotor Responses

Systematic Desensitization

….. to help us cure Target Panic

Re-Learning Is the Cure for Target Panic

A new stimulus must be placed directly AFTER the old CS, thus causing a new CR and breaking the old association of CS CR. Thus:

CS (CS) ---- US --- (CR) --- UR

HOW TO CURE TARGET PANIC

"Create a new CS (Focal Point) after the old CS"

Example:

Once you reach full draw and are ready to begin the aiming process, create the new FOCAL POINT in your mind and concentrate on that point 100% …. NO OTHER THOUGHT.

…. And do this EVERY TIME

What Changes?

The new Focal Point (CS) allows the Subconscious to create a new (CR) and breaks the old

Target Panic

[CS – CR] association

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Write out your shot process – step by step.

2. Use Imagery to visualize the shot – step by step.

3. Concentrate 100% on your Focal Point with every real or imagined shot.

4. Be aware of your "self-talk" and learn to be positive.