CHAPTER XI: Learning

WHAT IS LEARNING?
❖ A lasting change in behavior or mental processes that results from experience is defined as learning
➢ learning not to respond to the repeated presentation of a stimulus is to create a habit, or habituation
➢ a learned preference for stimuli to which we have been previously exposed is the mere exposure effect
➢ forms of learning such as classical conditioning and operant conditioning, that can be described in terms of stimuli and responses is behavioral learning

THE ESSENTIALS OF CLASSICAL CONDITIONING
**Classical conditioning is a form of behavioral learning in which a previously neutral stimulus, or any stimulus that produces no conditioned response prior to learning, acquires the power to elicit the same innate reflex produced by another stimulus

❖ Acquisition is the initial learning stage in classical conditioning, during which the conditioned response comes to be elicited by the conditioned stimulus
➢ Conditioned stimulus (CS)
■ a previously neutral stimulus that comes to elicit the conditioned response; customarily in a conditioning experiment the neutral stimulus is called a CS
➢ Unconditioned stimulus (UCS)
■ the stimulus that elicits an unconditioned response; no learning
➢ Conditioned response (CR)
■ a response elicited by a previously neutral stimulus that has become associated with the unconditioned stimulus
➢ Unconditioned response (UCR)
■ the response elicited by an unconditioned stimulus without prior learning

❖ Extinction (in classical conditioning) is the weakening of a conditioned response in the absence of an unconditioned stimulus
➢ the reappearance of an extinguished conditioned response after a time delay is called spontaneous recovery

❖ Stimulus generalization is the extension of a learned response to stimuli that are similar to the conditioned stimulus

❖ Stimulus discrimination is a change in response to one stimulus but not to stimuli that are similar

❖ Experimental neurosis is a pattern or erratic behavior resulting from a demanding discrimination learning task, typically one that involves aversive stimuli

❖ Taste-aversion learning is how organisms learn what food to avoid through experience