

# **Internal Autobiographical Mapping and Behavioral Persistence: A Neuroscience-Informed Psychological Model**

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**Abstract:** This paper introduces the Internal Autobiographical Map (IAM) as a structural psychological concept of explaining repetitive human behavioral patterns. It states that behavior is not largely motivated by conscious choice or external circumstances, but is more of well-founded internal processes established by autobiographical experience and especially at an early age. Such experiences are understood by people and slowly converted to inner beliefs, rules of behavior, and identity roles that determine perception, emotional reactions, and decisions throughout life. Based on the ideas of autobiographical memory theory, neuroscience of behavioral prediction, and psychological identity formation, the research clarifies how memory functions as a predictive system that strengthens the already familiar behavioral responses, despite them being maladaptive. The study emphasizes that habitual patterns are maintained by automatic mechanisms and emotional stimulation that is associated with previous experiences. It also highlights how structural awareness and restructuring of these internal structures would be necessary to bring about meaningful behavioral change as opposed to depending on motivation alone. IAM model offers a methodical manner of detecting these patterns and getting to know their cause hence a basis of long-term behavioral change and self-improvement.

**Keywords:** Internal Autobiographical Map, automatic mechanisms, perception, autobiographical memory theory, human behavioral patterns.

## **INTRODUCTION**

When individuals make an effort to change yet end up with the same results in other areas of their lives, it's easy to see how their behaviour might be paradoxical. No matter how much people know about the patterns of behaviour that lead to pain, disappointment, or misery, they nevertheless have a tendency to repeat those behaviours in their relationships, emotional responses, and decision-making. A person may promise himself that he would make different choices in the future, yet he keeps getting back into the same relationships that always end in arguments or emotional disappointment. Repeated issues at work might plague others as well, such as chances to escape responsibility, an insecurity about their own worth, or both [1, 2], [3].

In the field of psychology, this consequence of repeated behaviour raises an important question: is it possible for humans to have the cognitive ability to recognise harmful patterns,

and yet, so much effort is required to bring about long-term change? Psychological studies have looked at this subject using more conventional approaches, focusing on aspects like intrinsic motivation, extrinsic variables, and deliberate decision-making.

People primarily act in accordance with their long-established routines, reinforcement histories, and worldviews, according to a plethora of classical behavioural and cognitive theories. Similarly, cognitive behavioural therapy and other psychological theories hold that disordered beliefs are the root cause of maladaptive emotions and behaviours [4, 5]. These approaches have proven helpful in providing insights and practical intervention tactics, but they seldom address the question of why individuals persist in reliving past experiences even after being made aware of their own thoughts and behaviours.

When people are able to make short-term changes to their habits or behaviour, yet long-term patterns persist in different contexts, it may be a sign that human behaviour is governed by more basic structural principles. According to recent research in autobiographical memory and cognitive science, habitual actions are based on deeper cognitive structures formed in childhood and early adulthood, rather than on more superficial habits or beliefs. When people are young, they are still developing their sense of identity, social relationships, and the world around them [6, 7, 8]. Even though they may not be emotionally or cognitively ready to understand, children at this age are exposed to a lot of new things. So, in order to make sense of complicated or emotionally charged situations, individuals create simpler mental explanations. Over time, these accounts form the bedrock of one's identity and become ingrained in one's autobiographical memory [9], [10], [11].

Over time, these understandings form the foundation of unspoken norms that govern our expectations, emotional reactions, and behavioural choices. Memory is not a static storage structure, but rather an adaptable mechanism that helps with prediction and decision-making, according to research in neuroscience. The brain is always working to maintain psychological stability by making predictions about the future based on previous experiences. People subconsciously repeat familiar patterns because they correspond to their internal dominant patterns, which may be seen as predictive behaviour [12], [13], [14], [15], [16].

Although these frameworks' output isn't always ideal, it might be psychologically sound as it lines up with the internal logic formed in childhood. Consequently, changing behaviour based on deliberate purpose may not always work since mental representations are still impacting how we perceive and behave. The present study puts forward the notion of the Internal

Autobiographical Map against this theoretical background; it is a structural model of psychology that seeks to elucidate how these individual experiences are structured inside the individual to govern behaviour over time. In contrast to most conventional psychological models, which center on the individual's internal experiences and their outward actions, the Internal Autobiographical Map examines the formation of identity via the interpretation of one's own autobiographical events. This model is based on the premise that individuals construct their evolving sense of safety, belonging, responsibility, competence, and interpersonal relationships through internal narratives that they construct in response to formative experiences in childhood [17, [18], [19].

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Hong 2025 et al. [20]** examines how connections between life experiences impact the level of recall for one's own autobiography. In a cued memory exercise, participants were instructed to verbalise the personal experiences that were associated with their own images. To find out how similarities affected recollection, the writers looked at the chronological, geographical, and semantic connections between events that the researchers had conducted in a sequential fashion. Researchers found that when individuals' prior experiences were semantically similar but geographically or temporally distinct, they recalled more non-episodic features. It suggests that when events are well understood and may take place in different places or times, individuals often provide more details to clarify or describe them. Memory for episodic information was unaffected by semantic, geographical, or temporal overlaps between subsequent experiences. The findings imply that one's life narrative, rather than an individual experience, may be encoded with autobiographical memories, and that people can enhance the memory of personally meaningful events by adding additional contextual information to maintain continuity and coherence.

**Agron 2024 et al. [21]** explores the issue of autobiographical memory (AM) in individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and delves into the possible cognitive mechanisms at play. Traditionally, deficits in self-referential and social cognition have been used to characterise the difficulty that individuals with ASD face when trying to remember specific events from their own lives. New research suggests that additional cognitive components may be responsible for these memory issues, even if these descriptions are in line with the social communication issues unique to ASD. In particular, the assessment touches on issues with scene design and the potential for mentally re-creating the precise geographical

setting in which the events occur. It is believed that autobiographical memory recall in typically developing individuals is based on scene creation. The review presents evidence that individuals with ASD may have trouble constructing cohesive spatial scenes based on studies linked to AM memory, time travel, and spatial navigation. In order to better understand the memory processes in ASD, the authors propose that these results should not be only ascribed to social cognitive deficiencies and direct future research in new directions.

**Wever 2023 et al. [22]** Autobiographical memories and the way linked brain networks are engaged in the course of depression in teenagers. Adolescents undergoing functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) scanning reenacted to pleasant and neutral personal memories after retrieving them (N = 69; 17 sad). Each time a memory was recalled, the participants were asked to judge how pleasant and vivid it was. The results showed that even if the intensity of the memory was the same, depressed teenagers evaluated their happy memories as less enjoyable. Using event-related independent component analysis (eICA), researchers have established a broad autobiographical memory network as well as specific subnetworks for positive and neutral memory recall. Including the precuneus, medial prefrontal cortex, posterior cingulate cortex, and temporoparietal junction, this network engaged in self-referential processing. In depressive adolescents, aberrant activity of this network was seen after the recollection of less pleasurable positive experiences. Every therapy intervention aimed at boosting self-esteem and alleviating depression symptoms should focus on helping depressed adolescents who have altered self-referential processing of positive memories relive such events in a different way.

## **METHODOLOGY**

- **Conceptual Framework**

The technique of this research is based on three interconnected scientific fields that provide a comprehensive framework for understanding human behaviour patterns and personal improvement. These include theories of psychological identity creation, neurobiology of behavioural prediction, and autobiographical memory. The theory of autobiographical memory provides insight into how people make sense of and act upon their life events by providing an analysis of how these memories are structured and processed. Neuroscience offers insight into how the brain processes previous experiences and its capacity to direct and anticipate future reactions. Individuals build a solid sense of self via interpreting their experiences and interacting with others; this process is known as psychological identity

formation. When taken together, these domains allow the technique to provide a methodical approach to the formation, maintenance, and alteration of internal psychological patterns.

### **1. Autobiographical Memory Theory**

The theory of autobiographical memory explains how individuals form their sense of themselves and the world around them by the memories they create and the way they organise those memories. When compared to recollection of objective facts, autobiographical memory contains emotionally relevant experiences that shape a person's beliefs, habits of behaviour, and sense of self. In that instance, the formative years of a person's cognitive and emotional frameworks their childhood and adolescence are particularly formative for making sense of their experiences. Perceived memories grow into a person's structured abilities, personal relationships, and sense of safety in their environment. In other words, the tales influence the hopes, emotions, and deeds of the future; in other words, the past is always a part of the present and the decisions that are made.

### **2. Neuroscience of Behavioral Prediction**

The field known as "neuroscience of behavioural prediction" studies how our brains use past experiences to make predictions about and plans for the future. Rather of just responding to events as they happen, the brain is always speculating about what could happen next based on information from memory and experiences. Perception and decision-making are based on expectations generated by neuronal networks in the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex, which compare previous outcomes. Being capacity to foresee future events helps individuals respond quickly to familiar circumstances and keep their mental stability. On the other hand, it suggests that people may be unknowingly perpetuating old habits since their brain is predisposed towards predictable things. Therefore, reaction, decision-making, and emotion are all significantly influenced by acquired habits.

People develop a consistent sense of who they are, what they value, and how they interact with others via a process known as psychological identity development. This is the lifelong process that begins in infancy and continues throughout childhood, adolescence, and maturity, when individuals build their identities by their relationships with others and the experiences they have had. An individual's sense of self is shaped by their upbringing, cultural background, and formative experiences. A person's self-perception is a manifestation of their internal roles, expectations, and behavioural tactics, which they develop throughout time. Each of these

identity systems has the potential to influence interpersonal interactions, emotional responses, and decision-making. In contrast to the pattern of rigid identification that may amplify recurrent behavioural events, a well-developed sense of self provides psychological stability.

- **An Internal Autobiographical Map Structural Model**

Five fundamental elements are identified by the model as constituting human behavioural patterns:

**Core Experience:** An event that occurs during a child's formative years and has a significant impact on their emotional and psychological development is considered a core experience. Rejection, criticism, loss, or excessive responsibility are examples of events that may be emotionally exhausting, confusing, and stressful for children. Because they aren't emotionally and mentally developed enough, kids would have a hard time making sense of the complicated scenarios and might misunderstand what's happening. As a result, the event forms the child's sense of security, belonging, and connections, and it stays with them forever. The foundations of one's identity and one's future perceptions and behaviours are laid by these formative events.

**Rule:** In order to prevent a recurrence of the traumatic event, the mind establishes internalised behavioural guidelines after reaching a decision. These norms are the laws that regulate how we behave and how we show our emotions in terms of psychology. For instance, if a youngster learns that expressing their emotions is fraught with criticism, they may internalise the message and determine that they should never express their feelings. When interacting with others or making a choice, these norms come into play since they are usually unconscious and automatic. They may become limiting after serving their initial protective function, which is to shield the person from danger. Over time, these rigid guidelines may stifle personal growth, authentic expression, and healthy relationships.

**Role:** A person's behavioural technique for maintaining psychological stability and self-rule is their role. In most cases, this position follows the person around and influences how they act in their personal lives, careers, and social circles. Someone who develops the value of pleasing other people all the time, for instance, may find themselves playing the position of carer, mediator, or helper in any given situation. The other person would take on the function of the doer, guardian, or evader. Although these roles initially helped individuals adapt to their environments, they may become rigid patterns that limit their ability to be themselves and express themselves creatively as time passes.

**Scenario:** The interplay between the fundamental experience, conclusion, rule, and role creates a recurrent pattern of life known as a scenario. Adults' perceptions and behaviours are controlled by an internal structure that is engaged automatically when presented with comparable scenarios from the past. Relationships, professional decisions, and emotional reactions become repeated as a consequence. Here, we see an example of how someone who has adopted a position of selflessness might find themselves in situations where their needs are consistently neglected. In most cases, these events are consistent with deeply held ideas, so they seem commonplace and predictable. Over the course of a lifetime, individuals may unconsciously find themselves in similar circumstances, leading them to repeat the same emotional responses and behavioural habits.

## **RESULTS**

The importance of one's worldview and response to different stimuli stems from the fact that children construct their basic reasoning in the early years of life. When individuals are young, their cognitive and emotional capacities are still developing, therefore they have a tendency to oversimplify things. When a youngster experiences emotionally charged events such as criticism, rejection, too high expectations, or lack of attention, he or she tries to make sense of these experiences by forming opinions about himself or other people. Over time, these interpretations solidify into beliefs that shape how people see their own worth, relationships, and safety. These ideas will seem more like permanent personal truths than fleeting interpretations because they are formed at a formative developmental period. Behaviour, emotional reactions, and decision-making are all influenced by these beliefs, which, when internalised, become psychological laws. That is why people's early life experiences provide the groundwork for their adult problem-solving, relationship-building, and opportunity-seizing styles.

### **The Predictive System of Memory**

In addition to its crucial function in storing events as they occur, the human memory is more than merely a passive memory system. Memory, on the other hand, is an active projective system that aids in anticipating and planning for potential future events. In order to anticipate potential future actions, the brain is constantly piecing together information from previous experiences in a way that allows it to recognise patterns. As a means to an end survival and psychological stability the capacity to anticipate and respond swiftly and efficiently to known events is a valuable asset. Still, it's clear from this procedure that individuals often interpret

the here and now through the lens of what has already happened. The brain's familiar emotional and behavioural responses are triggered when it detects that the current circumstance is comparable to previous experiences. This usually occurs automatically and without thinking. So, memories impact how we see the world and the choices we make because they shape our expectations of people, events, and results, which in turn reinforce patterns we established long ago.

### **Predictive Patterns of Behaviour**

When individuals respond consistently to stimuli and use the same learned tactics to handle comparable circumstances, automatic behavioural patterns form. As a result of its bias toward efficiency and predictability, the brain is more prone to rely on previously used answers rather than constantly generating novel ones. The brain stores a response pattern as a worthwhile and believable strategy the moment it is discovered to be effective in addressing a demanding issue. Over time, this approach becomes second nature and is used in a wide range of contexts. As an example, even if the outcomes of being more open will be better, a person who was trained not to argue as a youngster may continue to avoid confrontation as an adult. Due to the unconscious nature of these patterns, individuals may be oblivious to the fact that they exhibit the same behavioural reaction in different contexts. Even if the outcomes aren't always positive, having the capacity to anticipate certain behaviours provides a sense of psychological stability. So, unless individuals are aware of their habits and work to change them, they may persist for a long time.

### **Old Structures Are Maintained by Emotional Triggers**

In order to maintain long-term mental and behavioural habits, emotional stimulation is important. A similarity between the present and an emotionally taxing past circumstance is what sets off the trigger. The brain may continue to interpret the current situation as comparable to the first event and elicit the same emotional reaction, even when there are substantial differences. For instance, if a coworker criticises you, it could bring up feelings of rejection or disapproval from the past. People often resort to the same behavioural skills they used to handle a prior stressful event if these kinds of emotional cues are triggered. Rapid and, more often than not, unconscious, this reaction reinforces previously held internal ideas and standards. Emotional reactions may be intense and time-sensitive, making it difficult to reach rational replies. Hence, emotional cues reinforce preexisting mental models, which in turn prevent the continuation of problematic behaviours.

## **DISCUSSION**

The study shows that people's patterns of behaviour are not primarily influenced by their conscious choices or their quick judgements. Instead, they are significantly affected by the mental makeups that are formed throughout childhood. Based on what little they understand about the world, children form emotional reactions to potentially traumatic experiences. A person's future reaction is shaped by their interpretations, which gradually evolve into their beliefs and behavioural norms. Over time, these internal frameworks become second nature and dictate how individuals respond to various stimuli, including relationships, opportunities, and difficulties. Because these habits stem from irrational thinking rather than logical analysis, it's possible that individuals can't change their behaviour only by wanting to. For this reason, many programs aimed at changing behaviour temporarily or using motivating tactics fail to provide the desired results. Individuals may make strenuous behavioural adjustments without taking into account the deeper structural foundations of behaviour, but they always revert to the tried-and-true patterns that provide psychological comfort to their own belief systems.

A conceptual framework for understanding how identities and behaviours arise is provided by the IAM model. Rather than seeing personality as a collection of characteristics, this model proposes that an individual's sense of self develops as a psychological system as a result of making sense of the events that occur throughout their lives. According to this model, an individual's sense of self develops across time as a result of a cascade of interconnected elements, including formative experiences, interpretations of those experiences, regulations meant to mitigate the impact of painful events, responsibilities and the ways in which these regulations are put into practice, and the situations in which these elements are repeated. By charting these structural features, people will be able to understand where their patterns emerge from and why certain events seem to happen again and again. This concept is based on the idea that early-stage behavioural repeats are not random but rather have an underlying rationale. Understanding this framework may help people see the main processes at work in their thoughts, emotions, and relationships, which in turn can pave the way for more meaningful personal transformation.

Consistency with neuroscientific perspectives that describe the brain as a predictive mechanism is another important learning feature of the study. The brain is always using what has happened in the past to make predictions about what is to come, rather than just reacting to the world around it. By making use of previously learned patterns and associations, the brain

strives to maintain consistency and, as a result, to anticipate and plan for future events. People are able to navigate the environment more efficiently because to this predictive process, but it also reinforces their habits. Even if these reactions are no longer relevant, the brain will automatically activate them when the peculiarities of the current situation are comparable to those in the past. This means that people's brains are so good at anticipating and meeting our expectations that we may unconsciously play out certain familiar scenarios. People with this tendency are more likely to repeat unhealthy patterns of relationship and decision-making or to be abandoned in hostile circumstances. Therefore, even when people are actively trying to change, the anticipating nature of the brain is crucial for maintaining behavioural consistency.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Prime Attention to Patterns of Structural Identity**

In order to avoid addressing the behaviours but rather focusing on the functions of interventions aimed at behavioural transformation, it is necessary to identify and restructure deep identity structures.

- **Relying on Research for Empirical Validation**

Clinical trials and other experimental research methods should be used to experimentally evaluate the Internal Autobiographical Map approach in future studies.

## **CONCLUSION**

The paper confirms that recurrent patterns of human behavior lie in the inner psychological organization based on the initial autobiographical experiences. The structures are formed when individuals process eventually important events and translate them into internalized belief, rules, and role models of behavior that endure over time. Consequently, some people have a tendency to subconsciously re-enact emotions and life scenarios that are similar even when they are consciously willing to change. A model that is used to interpret how these patterns are constructed and sustained is the Internal Autobiographical Map (IAM) model which explains how core experiences are interconnected with behavioral outcomes. The results also point to the importance of memory as a predictive system that strengthens the familiar patterns and the role of the emotional triggers in maintaining the behavioral structures which are already existing. Notably, the research points out that only superficial attempts and sheer force cannot lead to the enduring behavioral change, but greater structural consciousness and

internal psychological systems change. People can start to substitute automatic reactions with more adaptive and planned behaviors by identifying and remaking sense of past experiences. Therefore, the study adds to a deeper knowledge of human behavior and has offered a theoretical foundation of a sustainable personal change by internal restructuring.

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