

## **Working with Strangers: What Affects How a Person Behaves: Nature, Nurture, and Choice**

How a person of any age, culture, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status behaves can be defined by three kinds of influences: their physical state (nature), their experiences (nurture), and how they decide to act (choice):

1. The person's individual physical state: Their bodies
  - a. What did they eat or drink that day?
  - b. Are they on medication or drugs?
  - c. Are they relatively sick or well, physically and mentally?
  - d. Are they tired or well-rested?
  
2. The person's history: Their lifetime experiences
  - a. Were they raised to be happy and successful at life?
  - b. Were they taught to behave a certain way with other people?
  - c. Have they mostly been treated well by other people?
  - d. Have they experienced a pattern of discrimination?
  
3. The person's day: Their most recent experiences
  - a. Are they having a day with lots of mistakes or successes?
  - b. Have they encountered positive or negative people that day?
  - c. Do they have deadlines or other pressures on their time?
  
4. The person's choices: Their ability to control their own behavior
  - a. Are they aware of how their behaviors impact others?
  - b. Do they practice what would be considered polite behavior?
  - c. Do they choose to have a formal or informal style?