

## Feeling Anxious?

Module 34  
Other Disorders



## What does anxiety feel like?

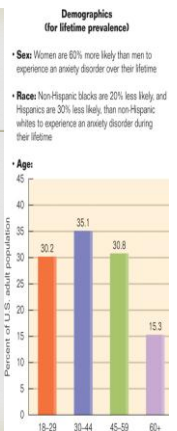
- ❧ Anxiety is a generalized feeling of fear and apprehension that may be related to a situation or object.
- ❧ Anxiety is often accompanied by increased physiological arousal
  - increase heart rate, blood pressure, and respiration

Although there are many anxiety disorders with very different symptoms, they share one common feature.

These are disorders in which anxiety is a characteristic feature or the avoidance of anxiety seems to motivate abnormal behavior.

Anxiety disorders involve clinically significant distress and impairment in daily function:

- ❧ Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD)
- ❧ Phobias
- ❧ Panic disorder
- ❧ Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- ❧ Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)
- ❧ Hoarding Disorder\*
- ❧ Body Dysmorphic Disorder\*
- ❧ Trichotillomania\*
- ❧ Excoriation\*



## Panic Disorder

- ❧ Involves recurrent, sudden onsets of intense apprehension or terror, often without warning and with no specific cause.

-Panic attacks can produce severe palpitations, extreme shortness of breath, chest pains, trembling, dizziness, and feelings of helplessness

## Causes

- ❧ Biological theories suggest that this may stem from problems involving either or both of two neurotransmitters:
  - Norepinephrine and GABA
- ❧ Another theory suggests that individuals misinterpret harmless indicators of physiological arousal as an emergency

# Phobias

Anxiety disorders



What are you  
afraid of?



## What is a phobia?



A specific phobia is an extreme and irrational fear of a specific object or situation.

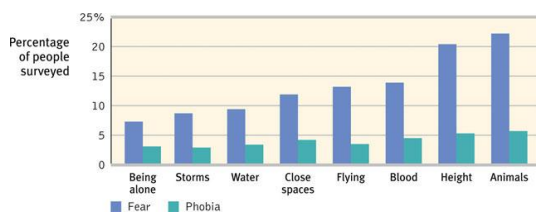
- Significantly interferes with one's ability to function.
- Effects 7.8% of the U.S population (APA, 2005)



Phobias should  
not to be  
confused with  
“normal fears”

## Phobias

Phobias are marked by a persistent and irrational fear of an object or situation that disrupts behavior.



11

Review the following clip  
and identify the behaviors  
most associated with  
phobias



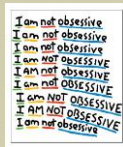
## Will I have to live with this forever?



- Once a phobia develops, it tends to be chronic and last a lifetime, making treatment very important (Anthony, et al., 1997).
- With proper treatment, the vast majority of phobia patients can completely overcome fears and live symptom-free.



## Obsessive-compulsive & related disorders



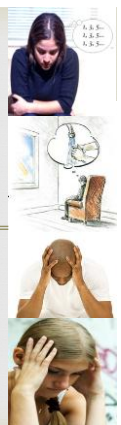
## What does OCD look like?



*Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder* involves unwanted, persistent, and intrusive thoughts and repetitive behaviors.

Obsessions are unwanted thoughts, images or urges that cause distress and interfere with daily life.

These obsessions are usually nonsensical thoughts, images or urges that the individual tries to resist or eliminate.



## I just can't stop myself!!

☞ Compulsions are repetitive and seemingly purposeful behavior performed in response to uncontrollable urges

-Or according to a ritualistic or stereo-typed set of rules

☞ Compulsions are performed by the person to reduce anxiety.



Obsessions	Commonly Associated Compulsions
Fear of contamination	Washing, cleaning
Need for symmetry, precise arranging	Ordering, arranging, balancing, straightening until "just right"
Unwanted sexual or aggressive thoughts or images	Checking, praying, "undoing" actions, asking for reassurance
Doubts (eg, gas jets off, doors locked)	Repeated checking behaviors
Concerns about throwing away something valuable	Hoarding

## How Can OCD be Treated?

- ☞ Medication Therapy
  - Research suggests that medication is effective in treating OCD.



## Hoarding Disorder

People who hoard have an uncontrollable urge to keep items that have no utility or value.



## Causes of Obsessive Disorders

- ☞ There is research which supports the idea that this disorder has both neurological and/or genetic components.
- ☞ The cognitive perspective suggests that individuals with OCD have an inability to turn off negative, intrusive thoughts by ignoring or effectively dismissing them

## Does trauma ever really go away?

Trauma and Stressor-Related Disorders





## What is a Traumatic Event?



## What is PTSD?

PTSD involves exposure to a traumatic event during which one feels fear, helplessness, or horror.

PTSD is an enduring and distressing emotional disorder that follows exposure to a threat.

- This threat causes feelings of severe helplessness or fear

## Symptoms of PTSD

- Re-experiencing of the trauma in some way.
  - Flashbacks occur when the survivor actually relives the event
- Avoidance of places or people that remind you of the trauma.
- Dysfunctional emotional response.
  - Easily startled, irritable and easily angered.

## Why Do People Develop PTSD?

- One cause of PTSD is the traumatic event itself, but not everyone who experiences the a traumatic event develops PTSD.
- Other factors influence the development of this disorder:
  - History of previous traumatic events, such as abuse and psychological disorders
  - Cognitive factors such as perception
  - Genetic predispositions

Some researchers are more interested in the resiliency of those who do not develop PTSD.

## Treating PTSD

- Most clinicians agree that people with PTSD should face the original trauma to develop effective coping procedures to overcome the disorder
  - Imaginal Exposure
  - (VR) Virtual Reality Therapy

