Feeling nervous?

Chapter 4: Anxiety Disorders

Class Objectives:

- What is Anxiety?
- How are anxiety, fear and panic similar? Different?
- What is an Anxiety Disorder
- What is Generalized Anxiety Disorder?

What is Anxiety?

As college students, you have probably experienced anxiety... How would you describe it?
True or False?

There is only one type of anxiety disorder.

Women and men are affected by anxiety disorders at the same rates.

Anxiety disorders often occur with other illnesses.
Anxiety disorders are part of your personality. They can't be changed.

Anxiety disorders are rare.

Most people successfully take control of the symptoms of anxiety disorders by sheer willpower and personal strength.
Does anxiety serve a purpose?

When does anxiety strike?

Research has shown that people perform better when they are anxious (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908).

When does it become too much anxiety?

Unlike the “good” anxiety, can too much anxiety hinder your performance?

When we begin to examine “anxiety disorders” we’re talking about
Anxiety Disorders

These are disorders in which anxiety is a characteristic feature or the

Anxiety disorders involve

- Generalized anxiety disorder
- Phobias
- Panic disorder
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder

These are just some of the Anxiety Disorders we will discuss.

Are anxiety and fear the same?

- No, fear and anxiety sometimes look alike, but they are not the same.

  Fear is an __________________________ to current danger with the desire to escape the situation (Barlow, Brown et al, 1994).

  Fear activates our (autonomic nervous system) “Fight or Flight response” for emergency reactions.
“OK, try not to panic!!”

Fear is closely associate with panic which is a sudden ____________

When panic is experienced, the intense fear and discomfort can produce a number of physical symptoms.

Panic Attacks

Panic attacks are often mistaken for heart attacks due to ____________

2.4 million American adults experience a panic attack each year ____________

Does anxiety live inside my genes?

Biological Contributions to Anxiety and Panic
Genetic Vulnerability

There is increasing evidence that suggests that we...

Is there a single “anxiety” gene that is responsible?

As with almost all psychological disorders,

Is my BRAIN to blame?! such as depleted levels of GABA.
Could my environment make me anxious?

- Research suggests that our ___ circuits, making you more or less susceptible to developing anxiety disorders (Francis et al., 2002).

- Stressful life events can also trigger our biological and psychological vulnerabilities to anxieties.

GAD

- (GAD) is associated with “perfectionists and worrywarts.”

- GAD is accompanied by symptoms of tenseness, irritability and restlessness

Diagnosing GAD

- To meet criteria for this disorder the persistent, excessive worry must be present for at least 6 months.
How can we assess this disorder?

Screening tools for GAD

GAD Screening Quiz

- Do you feel irritable or easily angered frequently?
- Do you have difficulty controlling your worries or anxieties?
- Do you feel restless or keyed up or own edge much of the time?
- Do you have headaches and/or other aches and pains for no apparent reason?
- Do you have difficulty falling or staying asleep?
- Does your worrying interfere with your normal routines, work or school, and/or social activities?

The Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)-7 scale

Score of 8 or higher suggests a possible anxiety disorder

Remember, screening tools are used to determine if a disorder MAY be present...they are not diagnostic instruments.

“Do you worry excessively about minor things?”

respond “yes” to this question, compared to only 50% of persons with other anxiety disorders

- This difference is statistically significant.

Can Children have GAD?

- Yes, but children usually fixate on and only need one physical symptom for diagnosis and.
Who do we see with GAD?

- Approximately 4% of population meet criteria for diagnosis during a 1 year period (Blazer, et al., 1991).

- However, relatively few people seek treatment for this disorder, as compared to those with panic disorder.

- Clinics report that only 10% of clients meet criteria because GAD patients tend to seek treatment with general practitioner.

Why does Grandma look SO anxious?

Why are the elderly likely to have GAD?

- High concerns regarding failing health, loss of control and lack of meaningful functions.

- Research has found GAD to be found:
Barrett et al. (1996) found that psychological treatments with children who suffer with GAD are very effective. 95% of children after this treatment no longer met criteria for GAD. A six-year follow-up supported this therapy evidenced by 85.7% still not meeting criteria for diagnosis (Barrett et al., 2001).

What’s Next?

Phobias 😊