



## What is Schizophrenia?

Module 33

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Schizophrenia is a psychotic disorder that is one of the most extreme of all psychological disorders.



It is also one of the most misunderstood of all psychological disorders!

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## Who has Schizophrenia?



- ☞ A middle-aged man walks the streets of New York with aluminum foil under his hat, so the Martians can't read his mind.
- ☞ A young woman sits in her college classroom and hears the voice of God telling her she is a vile and disgusting person.
- ☞ You try to strike up a conversation with the supermarket bagger, but he stares at you vacantly and will say only one or two words in a flat, monotone voice.



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# Schizophrenia



☞ A Psychotic Disorder that is characterized disorganized thinking, disturbed perceptions, and inappropriate emotions and actions.

-Effecting 1% of the population about 2 million Americans each year (Ho et al., 2003).

☞ Schizophrenia is a devastating brain disorder that impacts almost every area of functioning.

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# Positive Symptoms of Schizophrenia



☞ Positive symptoms refer to the addition of what is typical.

☞ Not to be confused with happy

☞ Disorganized thinking refers to the unusual, sometimes bizarre thought processes

☞ Hallucinations, delusions, racing thoughts

☞ Disorders of movement

☞ Unusual mannerisms, body movements, and facial expressions.

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# Did you hear that?!



*Hallucinations* are also positive symptoms of schizophrenia that are evidence of perceptual disturbance.

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*Hallucinations* are disturbed sensory perceptions that occur without external stimulus. Causing people to hear, see, taste, touch or smell what others do not.

-Auditory hallucinations are the most common.

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## Positive symptoms



☞ Delusions are a false, unshakable belief.

-This symptom involves disorder of thought content and beliefs that are misrepresentations of reality.

☞ "That streetlight is sending me secret messages"

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## Disordered Movement

The individual may repeat certain motions over and over.

☞ In extreme cases, Catatonia can occur.

-This is a state of immobility and unresponsiveness that lasts for long periods of time

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# Negative symptoms



☞ These symptoms the absence of typical functions:

- flat affect: the display of little or no emotion
- social withdrawal
- behavioral deficits
- the loss or decrease of normal functions.

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# What Causes Schizophrenia?



☞ The more genes you share, the more likely you will develop schizophrenia.

☞ You have the greatest chance (48%) of having schizophrenia if your identical twin does.

☞ If both of your parents have schizophrenia you have a 46% chance of developing the disorder

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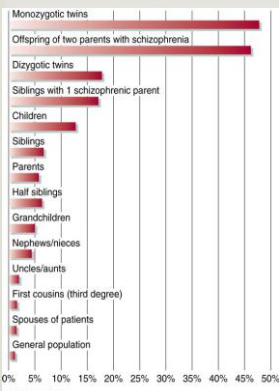
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# Genetic Risk of Developing Schizophrenia

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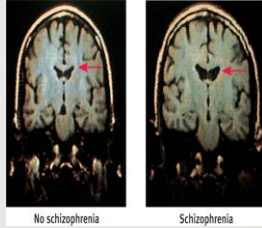
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## Genetic Factors



☞ But not all identical twins share a diagnosis of schizophrenia, so genes cannot be the whole story.

☞ Brains of identical twins, one with schizophrenia and the other without.



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There is NO cure and even with treatment people with schizophrenia are likely to experience life-long difficulties.

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## Feeling Anxious?



Module 34  
Other Disorders



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## 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

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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.

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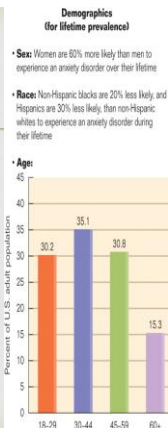
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Anxiety disorders involve clinically significant distress and impairment in daily function:

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




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## 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

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## 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

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## Phobias

Anxiety disorders



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# What are you afraid of?



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## What is a phobia?



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

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

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Phobias should not to be confused with "normal fears"

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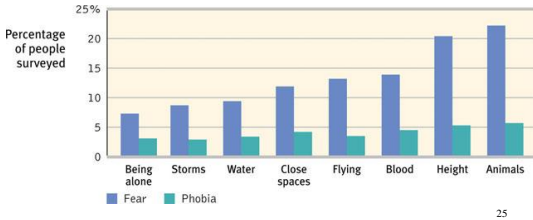
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## Phobias

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




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




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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.

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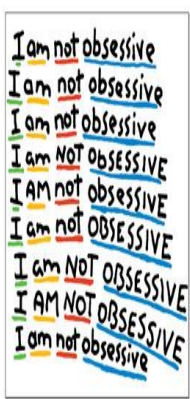
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## Obsessive-Compulsive & Related Disorders

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What does OCD look like?



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

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*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.

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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.




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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

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## How Can OCD be Treated?

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

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## Hoarding Disorder

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

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## 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

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# Does trauma ever really go away?

— *Ω* —

Trauma and Stressor-Related Disorders



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# What is a Traumatic Event?

— *Ω* —



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# What is PTSD?

— *Ω* —

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

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

- This threat causes feelings of severe helplessness or fear

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## 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.

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## 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

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☞

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

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# 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



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