

Phobias

Chapter 5
Anxiety disorders

Class Objectives

- ❖ What is a *Phobia*?
- ❖ How are *Phobias* diagnosed?
- ❖ Can *Phobias* be treated?
 - What causes *Phobias*?
 - What Is PTSD?

What is a phobia?

- ❖ A specific phobia is an extreme and

- Significantly interferes with ones ability to function.
- ❖ Phobias are not “normal fears”.

RUN!!!

❏ _____ of the stimuli is necessary to meet the criteria for a phobia.

❏ Most persons with specific phobias recognize that the fears are _____



Diagnosing Phobias

❏ To qualify for a diagnosis of phobic disorders is that the fear must _____

❏ Unlike generalized anxiety, the anxiety is focused on some specific object or situation.

Phobic Disorders

❏ The relief brought about by the avoidance or escape may help maintain the phobia.

- People with phobias often adapt their lives and simply work around it.

The physical symptoms of this type of anxiety are:

- Increased heart rate
- Blood pressure

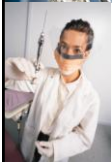
Different types of phobias

DSM IV first defined phobias as a classifiable disorder in 1994 and identified 4 distinct types of phobias.

Types of phobias



☒ Unreasonable fear/avoidance of exposure to blood, injury or possibility of an injection. These are typically the people who _____



☒ People with this type of phobia experience different physiological reactions than other phobias.



Blood-Injury-Injection Phobias

- ❖ This type of phobia runs in families and has a _____
- ❖ This is likely because people who inherit this phobia inherit a strong _____ which causes a drop in the blood pressure and tendency to faint (Anthony, Brown and Barlow, 1997).
- ❖ The average age of onset for this type of phobia is 9.






involve the fear of events in nature, like heights, storms or water.




- ❖ These fears seem to cluster together, so if you fear one situation, you are likely to fear another.
 - Example- If you fear deep water, you are likely to also fear storms
- ❖ The age of onset for this type of phobia is age 7.



Phobias characterized by fear of public transportation or enclosed places are called

Situational phobia

- ❏ Situational phobias tend to emerge in the early to mid-20's and research shows this also runs in families (Curtis, Hill & Lewis, 1990).
- ❏ People with situational phobias never experience a panic attack outside the context of their phobic object/situation.




4. The most common specific phobia in the general population is fear of animals, particularly dogs, snakes, insects and mice (APA, 2005).

- The age of onset is 7, like natural environmental phobias.

Statistics

- ❖ The APA reports that in any given year, 7.8% of American adults have phobias.
- ❖ The sex ratio for specific phobias is 4:1, overwhelmingly female, which is consistent throughout the world (Arrindell et al., 2003).

Characteristics of phobias...
what did you see?



Since people tend to work around their phobias, only the most severe cases tend to seek treatment.

Will I have to live with this forever?

- ☒ _____
- _____
- _____

- ☒ With proper treatment, the vast majority of phobia patients can completely overcome fears and live symptom-free.

Treatment

- ☒ Specific phobias require _____


- ☒ It is crucial that patients are not exposed to too much at once, which could lead to escape and this would only strengthen the phobia.

- ☒ New developments in treatment make it possible to treat many specific phobias in an intensive, one day session participating in exposure exercises with the phobia/situation (Anthony et al., 1997).

Treatments


- ☒ The results are very interesting because in these cases not only does the phobia disappear but the tendency to experience the vaso-vagal response at the sight of blood lessens considerably.

- ☒ It is now clear, based on brain imaging that these treatments change brain



Where do phobias come from?


It was once believed that phobias developed after a traumatic event.
 But this is not always the case (Barlow, 2002).



Where did this come from?

- ❑ Traumatic experiences can result in phobic behavior, _____

- Example
 Many people who have choking phobias have experienced choking at some time. This is one way to develop a phobia.



Developing phobias

- ❑ _____

- Seeing someone else have a traumatic experience is enough to instill a phobia in the watcher. Research examining dental phobia (Ost, 1985) supports this.
- 3. Being warned repeatedly about danger can sometimes produce a phobia, this is referred to as _____

It's all in the breeding...

- Research suggests a strong genetic component to phobias.
 - 31% of first-degree relatives of people with specific phobias also had a phobia, compared to only 11% of first relatives of normal controls.
- This research suggests that relatives were likely to have that exact type of phobia (Frye et al. , 1990).

Is this a learned behavior?

- The fear component of phobia is believed to be acquired through classical conditioning
 - A child who is frightened by a barking dog
 - A child who receives a painful injection
- Evidence shows that many cases of acrophobia, claustrophobia, and blood-injection phobias involve earlier pairings of the phobic object with aversive experiences (Merckelbach et al., 1996).

What's Next?

- (PTSD)-Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
