Feeling Anxious?

Module 34
Other Disorders

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

What does anxiety feel like?

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.
  - Affects 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.

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

Will I have to live with this forever?

Obsessive-compulsive & related disorders

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

Obsessions are unwanted, persistent, and intrusive thoughts and repetitive behaviors.

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

What does OCD look like?
Compulsions are repetitive and seemingly purposeful behavior performed in response to uncontrollable urges.

- Or according to a ritualistic or stereotyped set of rules

Compulsions are performed by the person to reduce anxiety.

I just can’t stop myself!!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obsessions</th>
<th>Commonly Associated Compulsions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fear of contamination</td>
<td>Washing, cleaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for symmetry, precise arranging</td>
<td>Ordering, arranging, balancing, straightening until &quot;just right&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwanted sexual or aggressive thoughts or images</td>
<td>Checking, praying, “undoing” actions, asking for reassurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doubts (e.g., gas jets off, doors locked)</td>
<td>Repeated checking behaviors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concerns about throwing away something valuable</td>
<td>Hoarding</td>
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How Can OCD be Treated?

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

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.

Hoarders Disorder

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

Does trauma ever really go away?

Trauma and Stressor-Related Disorders
What is a Traumatic Event?

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.

What is 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.

Symptoms of PTSD

Why Do People Develop PTSD?

One cause of PTSD is the traumatic event itself, but not everyone who experiences the 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.

Why Do People 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