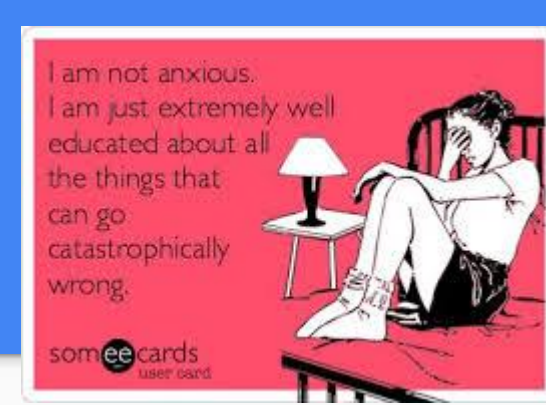
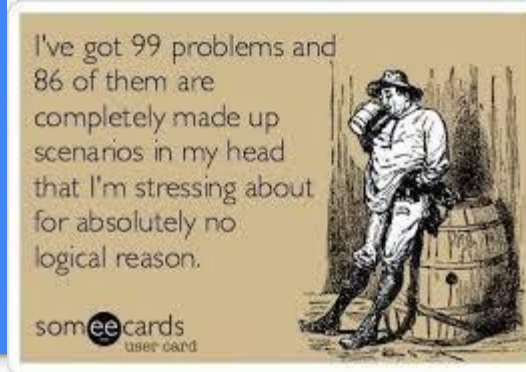


Anxiety Disorders

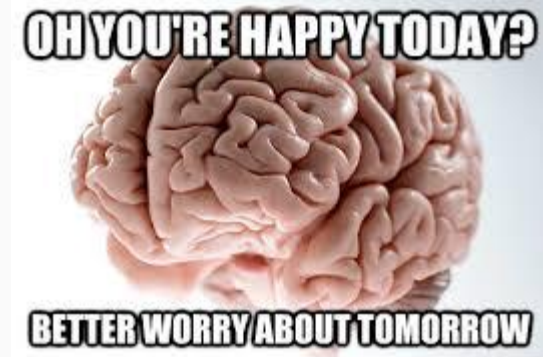
Module 31



Anxiety



- vague feeling of apprehension and nervousness
 - we all feel anxious from time to time
- anxiety disorders differ in that the feelings of anxiousness and nervousness take control and dominate your life, quality of life suffers and unhappiness increases



types of anxiety disorders

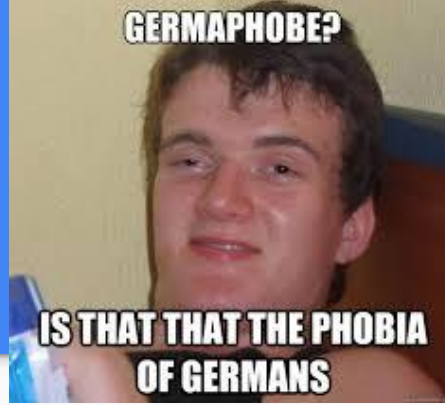
Generalized Anxiety Disorder

- disruptive levels of persistent, unexplained feelings of apprehension and tenseness
- symptoms have to last for a period of time and interfere with life.
 - restless
 - feeling on edge
 - difficulty concentrating or mind going blank
 - irritability
 - muscle tension
 - sleep disturbance
- Must have at least 3
- Sometimes it is accompanied by panic attacks- unexplained terror and fear that something bad will happen

Panic Disorder

- marked by sudden bouts of intense, unexplained panic
- **panic attack**- lasts several minutes, involves choking sensations, shortness of breath, need to flee the situation.
- we all feel panic and many of us have experienced this a few times in our lives
- ONLY a problem if it occurs relatively frequently, thus creating PANIC DISORDER

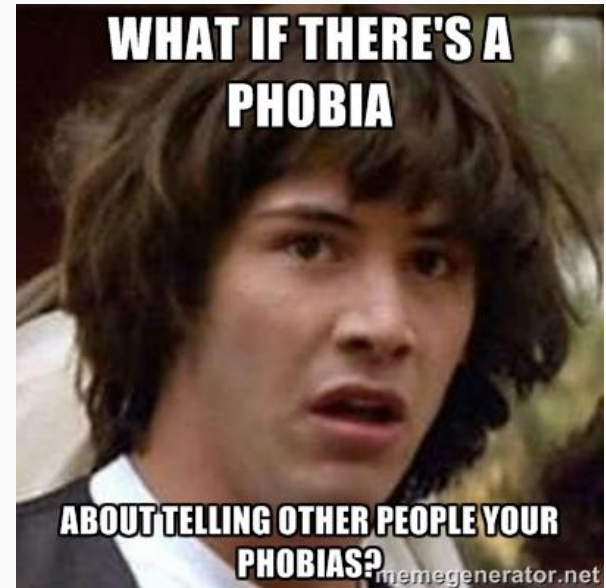
Phobia



- marked by disruptive, irrational fears of objects, activities or situations
- MORE than just a fear.
- Most of us have irrational, non-disruptive fears like snakes, closed in spaces, ladders, etc. MUST disrupt your life.
- considered an anxiety disorder because general feelings of anxiety are focused on an object, activity or situation.

Types of Phobias

- **social phobias-** fears of social situations
 - agoraphobia- fear of situations that one cannot escape
 - *fear of the marketplace*
- **specific phobias-** fear of a specific object



Causes of Anxiety Disorders

Heredity

- some inherit a **predisposition** (likelihood) for developing anxiety disorders
- fearful parents are likely to have fearful children, the specific fear isn't inherited but the tendency to be fearful is.
- 17 genes with connections to anxiety disorder symptoms have been identified

Brain Function

- brains function differently than those without anxiety disorders
- brain scans show more activity in the frontal lobes of people with OCD... because frontal lobe is associated with decision making, this might be part of the problem
- the amygdala (emotional center) also shows differences in people with phobias
- it COULD be that the amygdala causes the intense fear
- anxiety disorders usually respond well to medication

Evolution

- we are likely to fear situations that posed danger to the earliest humans.
- dangerous animals, heights, and storms were problems for early humans
- these fears kept humans safe

Learning factors

Conditioning

- may learn to associate items with things we fear
- unpredictable and uncontrollable bad events can contribute to the conditioning of anxiety

observational learning

- learn to fear things by watching others
- may fear same things parents fear
- Monkeys learned to fear snakes by watching other monkeys avoid situations in which a snake was present

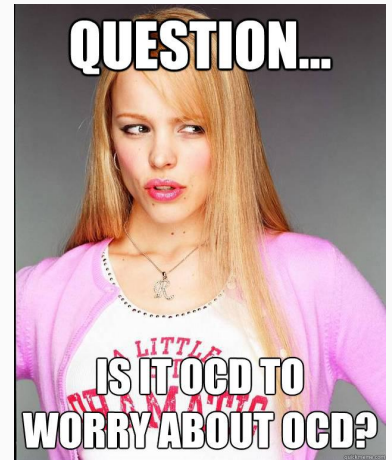
reinforcement

- we associate emotions with actions
- a person with a fear of heights learns to avoid heights, thus avoiding the anxiety associated with it
- a person with a compulsion to wash their hands feels less anxiety when they wash their hands, thus encouraging the compulsive behavior

No longer anxiety disorders

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

- marked by unwanted, repetitive thoughts (obsessions) and actions (compulsions)
- interrupt your daily life in a major way
- No REAL thing like “I’m sooo OCD” or “my OCD is going off right now!”



Common Obsessions & Compulsions

Obsessions

- Contamination
- Pathological doubt
- Somatic
- Need for Symmetry
- Aggressive
- Sexual
- Blasphemous



Compulsions

- Checking
- Washing
- Counting
- Need to ask or confess
- Ordering & Arranging
- Hoarding
- Miscellaneous rituals

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

- characterized by reliving a severely upsetting event in unwanted, recurring memories and dreams
- intense stress is the trigger, and symptoms include nightmares, persistent fear, difficulty relating normally to others, troubling memories of or flashbacks to the traumatic event