

Anxiety Disorders

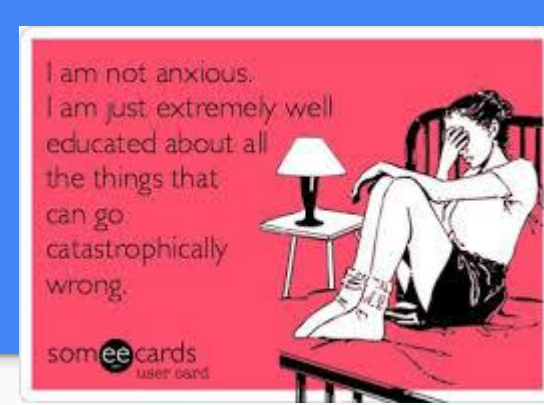
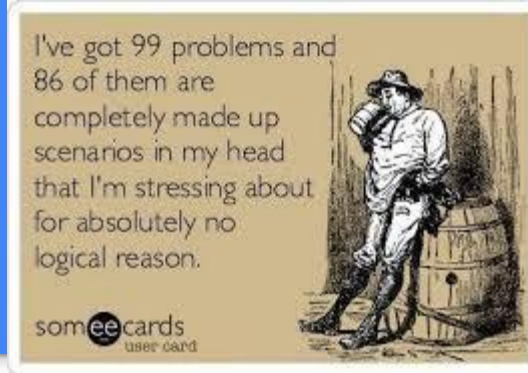
Module 31



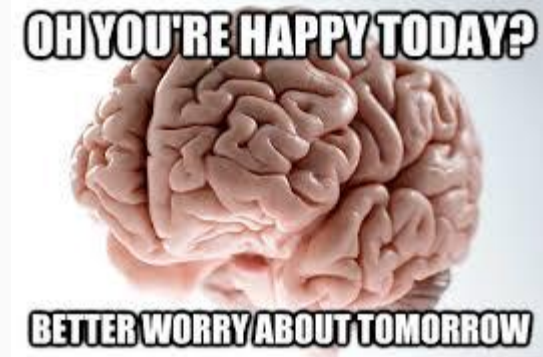
stand up for true, stay seated for false

- people fear snakes more often than cars because evolution ingrained in us the belief that snakes pose a greater danger to our lives
 - true
- Children have been shown to be smart enough to know when their parents have irrational fears and NOT learn those fears from their parents
 - false
- identical twins who are raised in different families can have similar phobias
 - true
- only people with obsessive-compulsive disorder experience obsessive thoughts and compulsive behavior
 - false
- Problems with anxiety and mood are easy to detect and diagnose
 - false

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

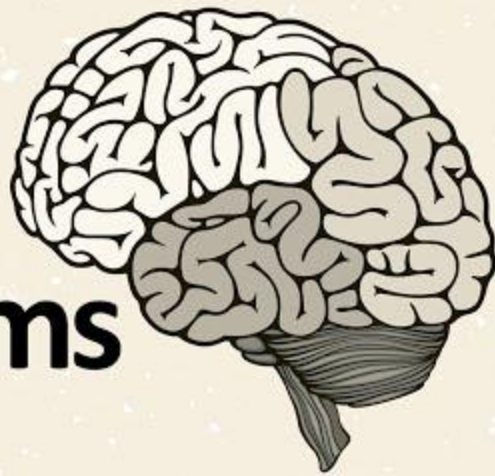


types of anxiety disorders

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

GAD **symptoms**

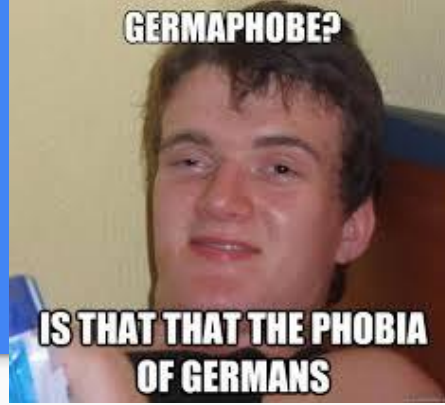


Panic Disorder

- marked by sudden bouts of intense, unexplained panic, caused by a fear of having a panic attack and not being able to escape
- **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



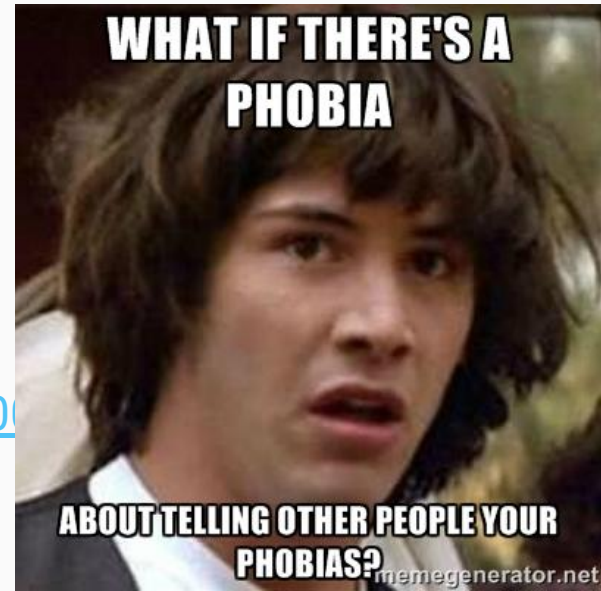
- marked by disruptive, irrational fears of objects, activities or situations
- MORE than just a fear.
- Most of us have irrational, non-disruptive fears like snakes, closed in spaces, ladders, etc. MUST disrupt your life.
- considered an anxiety disorder because general feelings of anxiety are focused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



Types of Phobias

- **social phobias-** fears of social situations, now called **social anxiety disorder**
 - agoraphobia- fear of situations that one cannot escape
 - *fear of the marketplace*
- **specific phobias-** fear of a specific object

<http://www.nfl.com/videos/nfl-films-presents/0ap2000Presents-Horsin-around-with-Eric-Berry>



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

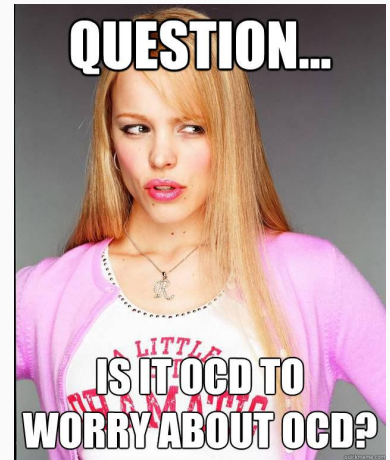
reinforcement

- 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!”
- Now falls under “obsessive-compulsive related disorders”



Common Obsessions & Compulsions

Obsessions

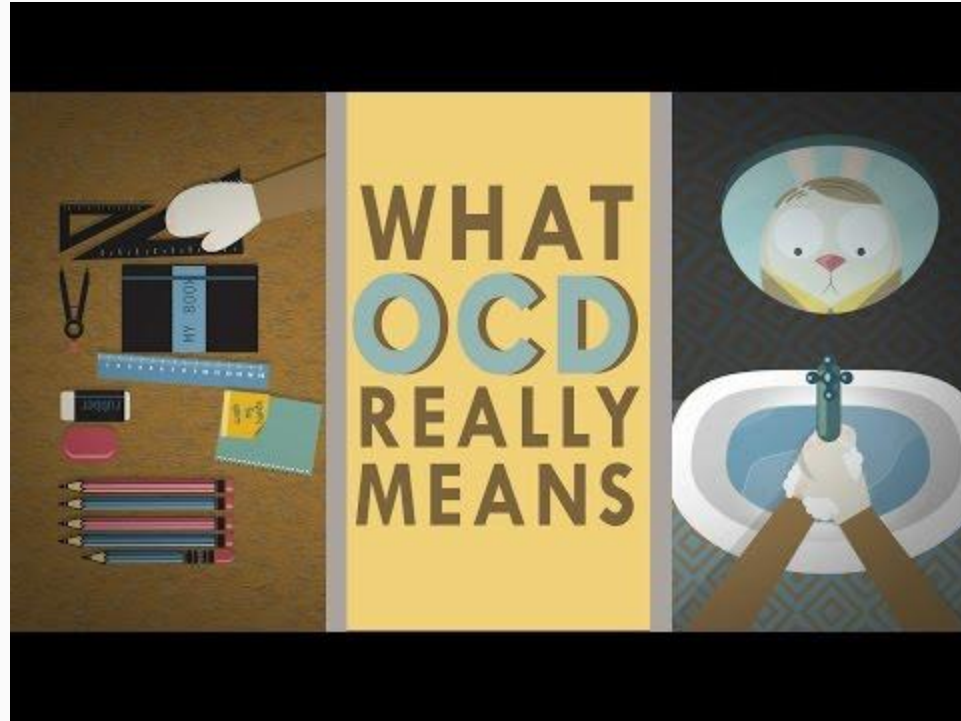
- Contamination
- Pathological doubt
- Somatic
- Need for Symmetry
- Aggressive
- Sexual
- Blasphemous



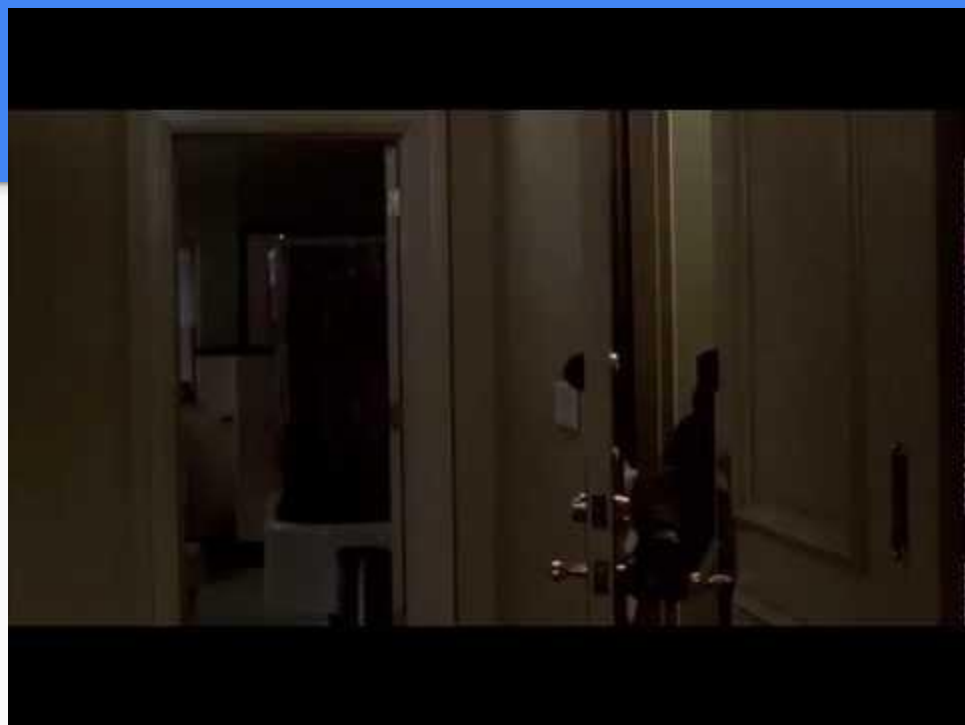
Compulsions

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

Myths about OCD







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, must exist for 30+ days
- Same symptoms up to 30 days is **acute stress disorder**

Falls under “trauma and stress related disorders”