

# **ANXIETY DISORDERS AND PHOBIAS ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT**

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## **Maintenance of anxiety reactions**

- Mowrer's two-factor theory:
  - aversive responses to feared stimuli
  - negative reinforcement through avoidance and anxiety reduction
- Clark's model of panic
  - selective attention
  - avoidance of feared situations
  - safety behaviours
- Cognitive model:
  - core beliefs
  - meta-cognitions

## **DSM-IV categories of anxiety disorders**

- Specific phobias
- Agoraphobia
- Panic disorder
- Generalized anxiety disorder
- Social phobia
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

## **Co-morbidity and DSM-IV categories**

### **Between anxiety and other disorder categories**

- 60% of individuals with one DSM-IV diagnosis also meet criteria for another
- 83% of those with Generalised Anxiety disorder met criteria for at least one other disorder
- Rates of co-morbidity between anxiety disorders and other disorders vary between 46% and 93%

### **Between different anxiety disorders**

- High rates of co-morbidity are observed between different DSM-IV anxiety disorders
- Strong links have been found between diagnosis of anxiety disorders and hypochondriasis, somatization and other problems such as substance abuse
- Reasons for co-morbidity are difficult to interpret, especially with regard to whether they are clinical or artificial

### **General assessment scheme**

- Clinical interview
- Behavioural assessment, e.g.
  - Self-report / self-monitoring
  - Diaries, self-ratings
  - Subjective units of distress / fear thermometer
- Structured psychometric assessment, e.g.
  - Beck Anxiety Inventory, State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, Hospital Anxiety & Depression Scale, Fear Survey Schedule
- Physiological indicators (less frequently used)
  - Heart rate, Respiratory rate, EMG, GSR
- Medical background information

### **Behaviour therapies for anxiety problems**

- Flooding
- Relaxation training
- Systematic desensitization
- Graded exposure
- Stress inoculation
- Assertiveness training
- Anxiety Management Training (AMT)