

The Best Evidence-Based Techniques to Treat Anxiety, Panic, OCD, Phobias & PTSD

Patrick McGrath, PhD

COURSE PROGRAM

OBJECTIVES

- Explain anxiety as a behavioral problem and not just a thought problem
- Resolve avoidance and reassurance seeking, the two main culprits in maintaining an anxiety disorder
- Implement a cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) treatment plan as your best option for treating anxiety disorder
- Apply the most empirically validated treatment for all anxiety disorders—exposure and response prevention (ERP)
- Integrate ERP in a traditional outpatient setting
- Develop specific treatment plans for panic, OCD and social phobia

OUTLINE

Empirically-Validated Treatments for Anxiety Disorders

- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP)

Behaviours that Maintain Anxiety Disorders

- Avoidance behaviors
- Reassurance seeking
- Short-term relief vs. Long-term functioning
- Distraction

Introducing CBT and ERP to Clients

- “Don’t Try Harder, Try Different” principles
- How to integrate ERP into weekly therapy sessions

Developing CBT and ERP Treatment Plans

- Treatment goals
- Making a Hierarchy of Fears
- Worksheets to use in your practice

Treatment of Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

- Turning worries into exposures (making thoughts into behaviours)
- Paradoxical interventions

Session Treatment for Panic Disorders/Agoraphobia

- CBT
- Interoceptive exposures
- Running in place
- Breathing through a straw
- Hyperventilating
- In vivo exposures for agoraphobia
- Going to places without a safe person
- Driving outside of a safe zone

Treatment of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

- CBT
- In vivo exposures for OCD
- Contamination
- Symmetry
- Scrupulosity
- Harm
- Perfectionism
- Hoarding

Treatment of Social Phobia and Specific Phobias

- In vivo exposures
- Reading in front of others
- Writing in front of others
- Eating in front of others
- Speeches
- Small talk
- Internal vs. External focus

Treatment of Specific Phobias

- In vivo exposures
- Heights
- Flying
- Driving
- Animals
- Virtual reality

Treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

- Prolonged exposure
- In vivo exposure
- Smells
- Colors
- Time of day
- Virtual reality

Case Presentations—How and why ERP worked and did not work