

BSCAH
British Society of Clinical and Academic Hypnosis

May 9th webinar

Strategies to help with Health Anxiety

Jacky Owens

jackyowens19@gmail.com

Tel. 01347 868626

Health Anxiety

- Brann L., Owens J., Williamson A.(eds:): (2012) *The Handbook of Contemporary Clinical Hypnosis: Theory and Practice*: John Wiley & Sons: Malasia ISBN 978-0-470-68367-5
- Anticipatory, free floating, peri-surgical and procedural etc

Health anxiety is when you spend so much time worrying you're ill, or about getting ill, that it starts to take over your life. It's related to obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD).

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/health-anxiety>

Systems involved in anxiety states

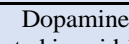

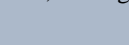
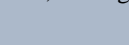



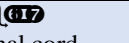
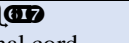
SAM (Sympathetic-adrenal-medullary-axis) and **HPA** (Hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal-axis)

Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI) is the study of the interrelationships of the three body-mind systems that serve as communication networks in the orchestration of homeostasis: the nervous, endocrine, and immune systems

We need to explain to our patients the interplay between thoughts, feelings and behaviour and show them that interrupting a specific thought, behaviour or internal image can lead to changing the feeling

Demonstrating the principles

Some of the Limbic System Structures: all emotion is processed here: the language of this system is imagery

Structure	Function	Substances found in or released by axons - (neurotransmitters)	Effect of substance	Immunological association	
AMYGDALA	are memory centres - can trigger a memory either recent or distant - concerned with mood, feeling & instinct.	Dopamine Concentrated in mid-brain, hypothalamus & limbic system generally	Involved in emotional responses Concerned with subconscious skeletal movement		<i>The Reward Chemical:</i>  hormone, dopamine  associated with pleasurable sensations, along with learning, memory, and more.
HIPPOCAMPUS		Endorphins Concentrated in pituitary, hypothalamus, thalamus & brain stem	Inhibit pain by  May have a role in memory, learning, sexual activity Linked to depression & schizophrenia		<i>The Pain Killer:</i> These hormones  pain reliever, which your body produces in response to stress or discomfort. Levels may also increase when you engage in reward-producing activities such as eating, working out, or having sex.
HYPOTHALAMUS concerned with rage & aggression	A neural endocrine control centre concerned with hunger, thirst, satiety, sleep & other autonomic functions. Acts as a regulator & relays messages to other parts of the brain and is stimulated by the Pituitary to make hormones	 Concentrated in thalamus, hypothalamus, limbic system & spinal cord pathways that relay pain messages	Inhibits pain impulses by suppressing 	Delivers electrical & chemical messages via the blood Controls the output of ACTH	<i>The Love Hormone</i>  oxytocin is essential for childbirth, breastfeeding, and strong parent-child bonding. It can also help promote trust, empathy, and bonding in relationships. Levels generally increase with physical affection.
THALAMUS	Relay station for sensory impulses to the cerebrum from spinal cord brain stem cerebellum & cerebrum Sensory area for pain, temperature, light touch & pressure. Has some memory & emotional function. Secretes enkephalins	Norepinephrine (Noradrenaline) Released at some neuromuscular & neuroglandular junctions, concentrated in the brain stem, also found in cerebral cortex, hypothalamus, cerebellum & spinal cord	May be related to arousal, dreaming and regulation of mood	ACTH impairs the ability of the immune cells to replicate & produce antibodies	
PITUITARY	An endocrine gland & is connected by a neural network to the Hypothalamus - stores & releases hormones e.g. endorphins	Serotonin Found in brain stem, limbic system,	May be involved in inducing sleep	Releases ACTH Stimulates the Adrenal gland to release more than 30 hormones including Cortisol & Adrenaline	<i>The Mood Stabiliser:</i> <u>This hormone</u> and neurotransmitter helps regulate your mood as well as your sleeping, appetite, digestion, learning ability, and memory.
RAPHE NUCLEUS	Releases serotonin	hypothalamus, cerebellum & spinal cord	Sensory perception Temperature regulation Control of mood	Cortisol changes the numbers & function of the white cells	
LOCUS CAERULEUS	Releases noradrenalin	 Sensory nerves, spinal cord pathways and parts of brain associated with pain	Involved in the perception of pain	research suggests that Adrenaline  the activity of natural killer cells	

Anxiety is multi-factorial with biological, psychological and social influences

Some effects of anxiety on the body – there are many more in each category			
Physical	Emotional	Cognitive	Behavioural
breathlessness	crying	amnesia	aggressive
diarrhoea	deflated	difficulty in decision making	clingy
dry mouth	defeated	forgetfulness	drinking (alcohol)
Frequency	depression	frequently changing mind	early always
headache	frightened	hypercritical of self & others	hyperactive
hypertension	helpless	I can't cope	hysterical laughter
indigestion	immobilised	lack of objectivity	illogical
palpitations	insecure	nightmares	insensitive to others
squeaky voice	sad	overestimate abilities	late always
stomach ache	self pity	Putting self down	shout
sweating	upset	suppression of feelings	stuttering
tense muscles	vulnerable	tunnel vision	take pills
wobbly knees	worried	unable to plan	withdrawn

Imagery

The Greek philosopher Aristotle is reported to have written

“A vivid imagination compels the whole body to obey it”

whilst Agrippa (1510) expressed the same concept thus:

“So great a power is there of the soul upon the body, that whichever way the soul imagines and dreams, thither does it lead the body

Lemon

CIS

on first meeting

- The effect: Physical: Emotional: Cognitive: Behaviours
- Imagery skill: Lemon and/or CIS
- Willingness to practice

Simple but effective

Breath techniques

- 5 breath technique
- Diaphragmatic
- Colour breath

Gindes starlight – modified

Number control for anxiety. 5 see - 4 touch - 3 hear- 2 smell -1taste

Anchoring

Induction techniques

Modified Speigel eye roll

Elman

Staircase (Chiassons modified)

Magic carpet

Deepening

Whatever imagery they give me

Beach combing

Garden

Therapy

- Gills tap
- Health Beliefs : Engendering healthy and helpful beliefs

The questionnaire (see below) devised for the Simontons by Malzby (Simonton 1986) is useful in helping patients to identify their health beliefs and then acts as a tool to re-pattern their underlying belief system towards a more helpful one. The questions are listed below.

- Does this belief help me protect my life and health?
 - Does it help me achieve my short-term and long-term goals?
 - Does it help me resolve or avoid my most undesirable conflicts? (whether those conflicts are within myself or with other people)
 - Does it help me feel the way I want to feel?
- and when appropriate, also ask
- Is the belief based on facts?

Emotion

Fear - Sadness

Cancer won't go away and I will die

When they find ovarian cancer it is already too late

Anger

It seems unfair it should happen to me

I don't ever feel ill except when I'm getting the cure

Anger Fear Resignation

Chemo agents are noxious elements - poisons - and I feel like I'm being poisoned – feel ambivalent about the chemo

Healthy Beliefs - Daily affirmations

Cancer can go and I will enjoy life to the full while its going.

I know that every treatment and side effect is defeating the cancer.

I have a significant input in to whatever happens to me

I can and do enjoy good health, understanding that medical treatments necessary

I willingly accept the chemotherapy knowing that is designed to cure the cancer and its side effects are transitory

Emotion

Sadness

Why didn't I come and get this taken care of sooner

I feel I am a burden. Questions of intimacy with husband

Stressed

I just feel that I'm particularly bad at everything

The doctor is not sufficiently relaxed about this illness - he won't let me get on with my life - he needs to see me every six weeks

Healthy Beliefs - Daily affirmations

All treatment and choices I have made and am making are perfect for me.

I am a delight. It is a privilege for everyone to be around me. Intimate times with my husband are deeper, loving and joyful.

Three good things I did today were:-

Fortunately my doctor is diligent in his care of me

Documents accompanying the Power Point Presentation

Imagery assessment tools

Lemon: CIS

Simple but effective techniques

5 breath: Diaphragmatic: Colour: Gindes starlight: 54321

Induction techniques

Magic carpet: Elman: Speigel eye roll: Staircase

Therapy

Gills tap: Health beliefs

Script for recording – Job interview - anxiety