

Therapies for Anxiety Disorders

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Abstract

Complementary therapies are approaches to healthcare which people use as a complement to conventional care.. They are used in addition to and not instead of seeking medical advice from a doctor or taking prescribed medication.It is high quality scientific evidence of safety and effectiveness to promote health for the whole person in the context ,

Keywords: Therapy, Gestalt, Biofeedback

Humanistic Therapies

1. Person-Centred Therapy

Focuses on an individual's self worth and values. Being valued as a person, without being judged, can help an individual to accept who they are, and reconnect them with themselves.

2. Gestalttherapy

Is a kind of experiential therapy that emphasises personal responsibility and focuses upon the individual's experience in the present moment. The goal is to become aware of what the person doing, how he or she is doing it, and how he or she can change, and at the same time, to learn to accept and value him or herself.

By learning to follow an ongoing process, and to fully experience, accept, and appreciate the complete self, one is free to make more appropriate, spontaneous and creative contact with the environment.

3. Somatic Experiencing

Is a body-awareness approach to trauma developed by Dr. Peter Levine. Somatic experiencing restores self-regulation and returns a sense of aliveness, relaxation and wholeness to traumatized individuals.

4. Biofeedback

Using sensors that measure specific physiological functions—such as heart rate, breathing, and muscle tension—biofeedback teaches you to recognize the body's anxiety response and learn how to control them using relaxation techniques.

5. Hypnosis

Hypnosis is sometimes used in combination with cognitive-behavioral therapy for anxiety. While you're in a state of deep relaxation, the hypnotherapist uses different therapeutic techniques to help you face your fears and look at them in new ways.

Hypnosis -- or hypnotherapy -- uses guided relaxation, intense concentration, and focused attention to achieve a heightened state of awareness that is sometimes called a trance.

Hypnosis is usually considered an aid to psychotherapy (counseling or therapy)

Hypnosis can be used in two ways, as suggestion therapy or for patient analysis.

- Suggestion therapy
- Analysis

OTHER TREATMENT MODALITIES FOR ANXIETY

1. COUNSELING

Psychotherapy is another type of counseling treatment for anxiety disorders. It consists of talking with a trained mental health professional, psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, or other counselor. Sessions may be used to explore the causes of anxiety and possible ways to cope with symptoms.

ANXIETY COUNSELLING

Aims to change the patterns of behaviours, thoughts and beliefs, which trigger anxiety. Desensitisation, which is a slow and gradual process of exposing a person to the trigger that causes anxiety to the point where the fear associated no longer poses a threat, may be used. Education about anxiety is also an important treatment step. Anxiety management techniques are implemented which include challenging of unhelpful thoughts, learning new coping strategies, breathing exercises and relaxation training.

DEPRESSION COUNSELLING

Gives a person the skills and insight to deal with depression from a variety of angles to help prevent depression from coming back. There are many types of therapy available. Three of the more common methods used in depression include cognitive behavioral therapy, interpersonal therapy, and psychodynamic therapy. Often, a blended approach is used.

2. RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

A person who feels anxious most of the time has trouble relaxing, but knowing how to release muscle tension is an important anxiety treatment. Relaxation techniques include:

- Progressive muscle relaxation

- Meditation
- Abdominal breathing
- Isometric relaxation exercises.

Correct breathing Techniques

The physical symptoms of anxiety may be triggered by hyperventilation, which raises oxygen levels and reduces the amount of carbon dioxide in the blood. Carbon dioxide assists in the regulation of the body's reaction to anxiety and panic. A person who suffers from anxiety should learn how to breathe from their diaphragm, rather than their chest, to safeguard against hyperventilation. The key is allowing your belly to expand as you breathe in. You can make sure you are breathing correctly by placing one hand on your lower abdomen and the other on your chest. Correct breathing means your abdomen moves, rather than your chest. It also helps to slow your breathing while feeling anxious. You can also try to hold your breath for a few seconds. This helps to boost carbon dioxide levels in the blood.

Exercise

Exercise is a natural stress buster and anxiety reliever. Research shows that as little as 30 minutes of exercise three to five times a week can provide significant anxiety relief. To achieve the maximum benefit, aim for at least an hour of aerobic exercise on most days.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

A systematic technique of testing and releasing groups of muscles starting from facial muscles and moving down the body to the muscle in the feet in order to gain control over anxiety provoking thoughts and muscle tension.

3. Dietary Adjustments

The mineral magnesium helps muscle tissue to relax and a magnesium deficiency can contribute to anxiety, depression and insomnia. Inadequate intake of vitamin B and calcium can also exacerbate anxiety symptoms. Make sure your daily diet includes foods such as wholegrain cereals, leafy green vegetables and low fat dairy products. Nicotine, caffeine and stimulant drugs (such as those that contain caffeine) trigger your adrenal glands to release adrenaline, which is one of the main stress chemicals. Other foods to avoid include salt and artificial additives, such as preservatives. Choose fresh, unprocessed foods whenever possible.

4. Learning to be Assertive

Being assertive means communicating your needs, wants, feelings, beliefs and opinions to others in a direct and honest manner without intentionally hurting anyone's feelings. A person with an anxiety disorder may have trouble being assertive because they are afraid of conflict or believe they have no right to speak up. However, relating passively to others lowers self-confidence and reinforces anxiety. Learning to behave assertively is central to developing a stronger self-esteem.

5. Building Self-Esteem

People with anxiety disorder often have low self esteem. Feeling worthlessness can make the anxiety worse in many ways. It can trigger a passive style of interacting with others and foster a fear of being judged .

- Feelings of shame and guilt
- Depressed mood
- Difficulties in functioning at school, work or in social situations.

Community support organisations and counselling may help you to cope with these problems.

6. Structured Problem Solving

Some people with anxiety disorders are 'worriers', who fret about a problem rather than actively solve it. Learning how to break down a problem into its various components – and then decide on a course of action – is a valuable skill that can help manage generalised anxiety and depression.

7. Medication

It is important that medications are seen as a short-term measure, rather than the solution to anxiety disorders. Research studies have shown that psychological therapies, such as cognitive behaviour therapy, are much more effective than drugs in managing anxiety disorders in the long term. Your doctor may prescribe a brief course of tranquillisers or antidepressants to help you deal with your symptoms while other treatment options are given a chance to take effect.

Self Treatment for Anxiety

In some cases, anxiety may be treated at home, without a doctor's supervision. However, this may be limited to situations in which the duration of the anxiety is short and the cause is identified and can be eliminated or avoided. There are several exercises and actions that are recommended to cope with this type of anxiety:

- Learn to manage stress in your life. Keep an eye on pressures and deadlines, and commit to taking time away from study or work.
- Learn a variety of relaxation techniques. Information about physical relaxation methods and meditation techniques can be found in book stores and health food shops.
- Practice deep abdominal breathing. This consists of breathing in deeply and slowly through your nose, taking the air right down to your abdomen, and then breathing out slowly and gently through your mouth. Breathing deeply for too long may lead to dizziness from the extra oxygen.
- Learn to replace "negative self talk" with "coping self talk." Make a list of the negative thoughts you have, and write a list of positive, believable thoughts to replace them. Replace negative thoughts with positive ones.
- Picture yourself successfully facing and conquering a specific fear.
- Talk with a person who is supportive.

- Meditate.
- Exercise.
- Take a long, warm bath.
- Rest in a dark room.

Performance Anxiety Treatments

Here are 10 tips to help you overcome your fears and shine on stage, on the field, or at the podium:

- Be prepared: practice, practice, practice.
- Limit caffeine and sugar intake the day of the performance. Eat a sensible meal a few hours before you are to perform so that you have energy and don't get hungry. A low-fat meal including complex carbohydrates -- whole-grain pasta, pizza, or a bean and rice burrito -- is a good choice.
- Shift the focus off of yourself and your fear to the enjoyment you are providing to the spectators. Close your eyes and imagine the audience laughing and cheering, and you feeling good.
- Don't focus on what *could* go wrong. Instead focus on the positive. Visualize your success.
- Avoid thoughts that produce self-doubt.
- Practice controlled breathing, meditation, biofeedback, and other strategies to help you relax and redirect your thoughts when they turn negative. It is best to practice some type of relaxation technique every day, regardless of whether you have a performance, so that the skill is there for you when you need it.
- Take a walk, jump up and down, shake out your muscles, or do whatever feels right to ease your anxious feelings before the performance.
- Connect with your audience -- smile, make eye contact, and think of them as friends.
- Act natural and be yourself.
- Exercise, eat a healthy diet, get adequate sleep, and live a healthy lifestyle.

Keep in mind that stage fright is usually worse before the performance and often goes away once you get started.

Treatment Modalities for Anxiety in Community

- Get out and do something you enjoy, such as going to a funny movie or taking a walk or hike.
- Plan your day. Having too much or too little to do can make you more anxious.
- Keep a diary of your symptoms. Discuss your fears with a good friend. Confiding in others sometimes relieves stress.
- Get involved in social groups, or volunteer to help others. Being alone can make things seem worse than they are.
- Talk with your human resources officer about counseling benefits that may be available through your employee assistance program.
- Check with your insurance company to see what mental health benefits are available.
- Contact your public health department for information on community mental health programs.

Anxiety – Prevention

Although anxiety disorders cannot be prevented, there are ways to reduce your risk and methods to control or lessen symptoms. Recommendations include:

- Reducing caffeine, tea, cola, and chocolate consumption.
- Checking with a doctor or pharmacist before using over-the-counter or herbal remedies to see if they contain chemicals that may contribute to anxiety.
- Exercising regularly.
- Eating healthy foods.
- Keeping a regular sleep pattern.
- Seeking counseling and support after a traumatic or disturbing experience.
- Avoiding alcohol, cannabis.

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