Anxiety and Self-Care

ALWAYS, BUT ESPECIALLY NOW.

Objectives

- Define anxiety
- Contributing factors of anxiety
- Anxiety in the here and now
  - Why is this topic important?
- Incorporating healthy habits
- When to seek professional help
- Gratitude in our lives
- Questions

What is Anxiety?

You might notice ...

- Edginess or restlessness
- Tiring easily; more fatigued than usual
- Impaired concentration or feeling as though the mind goes blank
- Irritability (which may or may not be observable to others)
- Increased muscle aches or tension
- Difficulty sleeping (due to trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, restlessness at night, or unsatisfying sleep)

A feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease, typically about an imminent event or something with an uncertain outcome” – Google

or sometimes just

“A change in behavior”

Common Emotions

- Anxious
- Sad v.s. Depressed
- Scared
- Angry
- Confused
- Overwhelmed
- Bored
- Guilty
- Lonely

- Restless
- Annoyed
- Fatigued
- Ashamed
- Irritable
Targeting Physical Feelings

Intentionally recreate physical sensations of anxiety
- Shake head for 30 sec
- Place head b/w legs for 30 sec & lift head
- Run in place for 1 min
- Spin in chair for 1 min
- Breathe through straw for 2 mins
- Hold breath for 30 sec
- Stare at light for 1 min, then read paragraph

Who has anxiety?

Everyone!

Some Numbers...

- From 2006 – 2014 there was a 37.2% increase in emergency room visits related to Anxiety
- In 2019, 11.2% of the U.S. adults reported “regularly having feelings of worry, nervousness, or anxiety”
- Women (23.4%) are nearly twice as likely to be diagnosed with anxiety disorders than men (14.3%)

Anxiety by age (2019):
- 13-18 years old – 31.4% - 32.3%
- 19-29 years old – 22.3%
- 30-44 year old – 22.7%
- 45-59 years old – 20.6%
- 60+ years old – 9%

Anxiety by race (2019):
- White Americans – 8.6%
- African Americans – 4.9%
- Asian Americans – 2.4%
- Hispanics – 5.8 percent

Contributing Factors

- Personal health
- Family health
- Income loss
- Access to healthcare/medication
- Isolation
- Inability to work/change in work conditions
- Stigma related to “high-risk” population
- Domestic violence
- Sharing space with others
A Look At 2020

In the News

“COVID-19-Era Isolation Is Making Dangerous Eating Disorders Worse”

“Google searches for ‘panic attack,’ 'anxiety attack' hit all-time high during coronavirus pandemic”

“Americans' anxiety peaked early in pandemic, according to analysis”

“The fourth wave of COVID is mental health disorder”

Work from home burnout: Americans are experiencing added stress, anxiety”

Information Blitz!

Cognitive Biases

- Heuristics and mental short cuts!
  - Representative – Stereotypes
  - Affect – Your emotional brain
  - Availability – Influence of mass media
Targeting Physical Feelings

1. Progressive Muscle Relaxation
2. Deep Breathing
3. 5 senses

When to Get Professional Help

Top items for consideration:
- Level of Distress!
- Longevity of symptoms

How can you recognize distress?
- Refuses to go to school or trouble concentrating in class
- Seems unusually gloomy/pessimistic
- Asks for a lot of reassurances
- Becomes upset if reassurances are considered inadequate
- Seems irritable & angry (out of frustration with self or because so sleep-deprived)
- Asks 'what if' questions & answering them 2+ times doesn’t seem to calm child
- Is excessively self-critical
- Avoids participating in activities
- Talks about suicide or says wishes he/she were never born
- Fears are significantly interfering with family life/social life

Where to Get Help:

- National Alliance Mental Illness
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Admin
- National Institute of Mental Health

- Baptist Behavioral Health
  - (904) 202-7900: crisis line for guidance and assistance with identifying needs for services
Gratitude is Good

- Practicing gratitude improves your physical and mental health
  - fMRI scans show increased engagement in the medial prefrontal cortex of the brains of participants who practiced gratitude regularly
- Gratitude is a four-part experience:
  - What we notice in our lives for which we can be grateful
  - How we think about why we have been given those things
  - How we feel about the things we have been given
  - What we do in turn

Mindfulness, Now and Forever

- Practicing mindfulness is proven to reduce stress
- Stay in the present, keep yourself focused on what’s important
- How do the presenters practice mindfulness?

References

For a complete list of references, please refer to the original source materials.

Resources

- Progressive muscle relaxation videos Aubrey likes to use with her pediatric patients; helpful for adults as well!
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9x3t81NW3w
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IowVZIxeo-Q