

GPS 2/7/18 Dr. Mark A. Reinecke, Ph.D., Northwestern
Little Ways to Keep Calm and Carry On- book

❖ **What is anxiety?**

- Evolutionary and adaptive natural response
- Physiological, cognitive, and behavioral components
- Facilitates response to “perceived” threat
- Cognitive distortions
- Anxious kids are unable to effectively manage stressful situations, experience moods intensely, and have poor regulation
- Anxiety is common
 - 5-18% of kids
 - 80% of adults with anxiety report that symptoms began before age 18
 - Social anxiety impacts 3-18% of kids
 - Anxiety has high levels of comorbidity
 - Often anxiety is the precursor to the associated depression because it causes people to avoid situations that are rewarding
- Parenting and anxiety
 - Mothers- helicopter mothers; visual cliff study where babies learn anxiety or safety by looking at the parent reactions; intrusive involvement in situations with negative effect
 - Fathers- limited risk-taking play behavior, unpredictable, punitive, and explosive
 - Parents should create secure environments where they approach their fears head on

❖ **What do kids worry about?**

- Infants fear separation
- Middle Childhood: social rejection
- Teens fear new experiences and social rejection

❖ **Essence of anxiety:** fearful, anticipation, rumination, vigilance, autonomic arousal (fight or flight response), avoidance

- **Perception** that you can handle the situation decreases anxiety (i.e the possible threat of a suspicious person to you and a police officer is the same- the difference in fear/ anxiety response is that they police officer feels they have the tools to handle/ control the situation)
- **Avoidance-** “if you want to avoid it, you need to approach it” and “what you fear is what you should do”; overcome your natural tendency to avoid

❖ **Where does anxiety come from?**

- 1. Environmental factors

- 2. Genetics
 - Heritability of disorders indicates that much of anxiety is learned
 - Anxiety heritability is 20-40%
 - Other disorders:
 - ◆ Alcohol/ drug dependency is 40-60%
 - ◆ Schizophrenia and bipolar is 60-80%
 - ◆ Autism is 80-100%
- 3. Temperament
 - Shy, inhibited, risk-averse

❖ Reinecke's formula for anxiety in his book

- Anxiety = (Perception of impending threat) * (Perception of impaired coping)
 - In other words what is the threat and can you cope with it?
 - Anxiety comes from an increased estimate of the likelihood of awfulness and increased sense of responsibility in the situation

❖ Perfectionism

- Are you a perfectionist? Do you believe
 - For every problem there is a single best solution?
 - There's always room for improvement?
 - Perfection can and should be pursued no matter the cost?
 - One should expect the best and settle for nothing less?
- Perfect solution does not exist
- Perfectionism is highly correlated with anxiety and depression
- Failure to meet expected standards leads to guilt and stress
- Flexibility and creativity are more important than pursuit of perfection

❖ How to deal with anxiety

- Medication and CBT are very effective treatments
- MASC and PARS rating scales are great clinical measures
- **Cognitive Toolbox**
 - Mood monitoring (fear thermometer)
 - Problem solving
 - Rational disputation (distortions, schema)
 - Adaptive self-statements (talk yourself through situation)
 - Contingency management (efficacy, control)
 - Mindful acceptance
 - Flow with the current fo life
 - Example of going with the tide when you fall out of the raft when white water rafting; if you fight it you will get hurt, but if you roll with the tide you will wash to safety
 - Let the current carry you versus fighting it
 - "By letting go, it all gets done"

➤ **Toolbox of behavioral interventions**

- Develop fear hierarchy
- Relaxation
 - wave hands overhead like at a concert or do ragdoll yoga pose “Gumby” pose
 - These poses help control physiological responses to stress and help people calm down
 - This looks like when athletes on sidelines bounce up and down or shake out their hands to get ready to focus and be calm before playing
 - Good idea to use this before a test/ speech etc.
- Controlled breathing vs. quick deep breaths
- Modeling
 - Do feared task with the student
 - i.e fear of germs- both wie hands on bottom of shoes together
- Systematic desensitization
- Exposure and flooding
- Contingency management (reward brave behavior)
- Self-management

➤ **Kendall’s Components of Effective Treatment**

- Psychoeducation
- Relaxation
- Behavior management (reinforcement)
- Modeling
- Problem solving
- exposure

➤ **Temple Fear Program**

- F- Feeling frightened (Monitor)
- E- Expecting bad things (Cognitions)
- A- Attitudes and actions (Coping)
- R- Results and rewards (Reinforce)

➤ **Kendall’s “Coping Cat”**

- Build rapport
- Identify feelings, distinguish anxiety
- Identify somatic responses (F-Step)
- Parent session
- Relaxation exercises- monitor tension
- Identify thoughts (self-talk) (E-Step)
- Relaxation and cognitive change (A- Step)

- Self-rating performance, reward (R-Step)
- Parent session
- Practice FEAR

❖ **Helping your child/ students**

- Help them deal with intrusive, irrelevant thoughts
- Are they productive and how will they help you?
- Intrusive thoughts are “flying monkeys”
 - In the Wizard of Oz the flying monkeys never actually did anything bad and in the end they rooted for Dorothy, had red lipstick and were actually kind of cute up close. They did not end up being the perceived threat we thought they were the whole movie.’
 - Help them propose new thoughts and memories over the previous scary memories you cannot erase (using CBT)
- Help them challenge their negative thoughts
 - What is the evidence?
 - Is there a different way to look at the situation?
 - So what?...
 - Help them decatastrophize
 - Focus on WHAT can be done now
- Help them “Live Wisely”
 - Judicious use of knowledge
 - Open minded
 - Altruistic and empathetic
 - Compassion
 - Self-reflection
 - Insight
 - Tolerance
 - Awareness of larger issues

❖ **Closing thoughts**

- “There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so”
- William Shakespeare, Hamlet, Act II, Scene II