Course: a neuro-cognitive update on the understanding of anxiety disorders

Address: https://asadis.net/en/course/a-neuro-cognitive-update-on-the-understanding-of-anxiety-disorders/

Duration: 2h30

Type of course: Continuing education

Location: Online course

Individual price: $96.00

Overview:
Worry presents itself as preparation. It promises resolution, control, a rehearsal of the worst so nothing can surprise us. Yet the brain, in generating imagined outcomes, widens uncertainty instead of closing it. Stranger still, pathological anxiety is not ordinary anxiety amplified. It follows different cognitive rules, serves different functions, and responds to different interventions.

This training offers an updated, neuroscience-informed framework for understanding and treating generalized anxiety disorder. It moves beyond symptom reduction toward the mechanisms that keep chronic worry alive: cognitive avoidance, metacognitive beliefs, intolerance of uncertainty, and impaired cognitive control. Clinical vignettes and directly applicable exercises anchor each concept in practice.

You will learn to differentiate adaptive worry from pathological worry, using criteria drawn from comparative research on GAD, high worriers, and other anxiety presentations.

The training clarifies how verbal, abstract worry suppresses somatic arousal and becomes negatively reinforced.

You will discover how to elicit and work with positive and negative beliefs about worry.

Intolerance of uncertainty is examined as a cognitive schema, with its prospective and inhibitory dimensions and its measurable link to symptom severity.

You will explore emotion dysregulation through the contrast avoidance model and the role of savoring.

Attentional bias to threat, cognitive control deficits, and the emerging evidence linking chronic anxiety to accelerated cognitive decline are addressed directly.

Concrete tools are provided throughout: worry concretisation, worst-case coping protocols, problem orientation work, and pre-emptive benefit finding during uncertain waiting periods.

The result is a sharper conceptualisation of anxiety within contemporary stress contexts. Assessment becomes more differentiated, case formulation more mechanism-driven, and intervention choices better matched to what actually maintains the disorder. The strategies transfer immediately to individual practice, and remain grounded in current empirical literature.

Learning objectives:

1. Differentiate between adaptive worry and pathological worry
2. Identify at least three cognitive mechanisms that maintain chronic worry in generalized anxiety disorder
3. Identify positive and negative beliefs about worry and explain how they contribute to the maintenance of GAD
4. Explain how intolerance of uncertainty influences emotions and their regulation in GAD clients; Explain how elevated anxiety symptoms contribute to accelerated cognitive decline

Learning material:

A theoretical course illustrated with clinical examples. This course consists of videos of 5 to 15 minutes each. The course PowerPoint is available for download.

Audience: This course is intended for all mental health professionals.

The expert

Dr. Marwa Azab is a neuroscientist, licensed professional counselor, and professor whose work sits at the intersection of affective neuroscience and applied clinical practice. She holds a Ph.D. in Neuroscience and an M.A. in Clinical Psychology, and teaches at California State University, Long Beach and in Stanford University's Continuing Studies program.

Her research and teaching focus on the science of uncertainty, stress, emotion, anxiety, and interoception, examined specifically within the conditions of 21st-century stressors. She is the author of the textbook An Update on Anxiety Disorders: Etiological, Cognitive and Neuroscientific Aspects, which forms the empirical backbone of her clinical trainings on generalized anxiety disorder, worry mechanisms, and intolerance of uncertainty.

Dr. Azab writes the Psychology Today blog Neuroscience in Everyday Life, read by more than 1.5 million people, and translates current research for a wide professional and public audience on social networks @DrMarwaAzab. Her work has been featured on ABC, NBC, NPR, BBC, and in Vogue, and she is a TED

speaker.

Syllabus

PowerPoint
Introduction
Understanding GAD
Anxiety
Generalized Anxiety Disorder
High Worriers vs GAD Patients vs Other Anxiety Patients
Worry
Positive Beliefs About Worry
Poor Problem Orientation
Cognitive Vulnerabilities and Maintaining Mechanisms
GAD and Intolerance of Uncertainty
IU Biases Emotional Experience
Is IU a Cognitive Vulnerability Specific to GAD?
Waiting Well
Negative Beliefs about Worry
Chronic Worry Protects Against Abrupt Shifts
Attentional Bias, Cognitive Control, and Threat Controllability
Etiology and Biology
Etiological Factors: Genetics
Genetic Factors
Environmental & Developmental Factors
Anxiety and Stress
Nervous System Activation and the HPA Axis
Chronic Stress and Hippocampal Damage
Brain and GAD
Conclusion

Evaluation:

To validate the achievement of the learning objectives, a final evaluation in the form of true/false questions is required. It must be completed in order to obtain the certificate of completion.
In addition, an optional self-assessment is offered at the beginning and end of the course, allowing you to measure your progress on the targeted skills.
These evaluations are not graded and are intended primarily to support your professional reflection.

Access timeline: Once registration is confirmed, you (or the learner) may start the training at any time, independently and at your own pace. You can access the training for as long as Asadis as the legal right to diffuse it (typically 10 years).

Questions? Feel free to contact us at *contact@asadis.net*