

Contributing Factors to Anxiety Disorders: A Neural-Biological Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Anxiety is a prominent and changing mental disorder existing in past, present, and future-day society. It includes constant, sudden, and lasting fear which fills the body and becomes a significant problem for many individuals. Ranging from young to old, poor to rich; anxiety is present in any individual who finds substantial fear within a certain topic or issue. Various contributing factors such as genetic, environmental, and lifestyle influences shape the way a person experiences and copes with anxiety. This mental disorder can be devastating for many due to the direct correlation between life experience and the internal system that controls emotion and mood. A neural-biological perspective to anxiety highlights exactly how the journey of anxiety travels through the brain and links mental health to physical behavior. This determines how intensely a certain individual may experience anxiety, as well as what specific types can prompt a sense of survival mode through the brain. Various treatment methods for anxiety include lessening or complete mitigation of anxiety. Efficiently, anxiety problems can be resolved if an individual understands the link between influences of anxiety to human behavior. These specific links within anxiety prove to aid quality of mental health, physical wellbeing, neural processes, and overall lifestyle.

Introduction

Anxiety is commonly one of the most prominent mental disorders present in modern day society. More frequently around the globe, patients will walk into a counseling center with an increased prodrome of anxiety. The disorder is defined as feeling uneasy or nervous towards a certain issue, becoming a serious threat to the mental peace of an individual. Although anxiety is a broad subject with a wealth to discover, the framework of all relevant anxiety disorders are developed differently through genetics, human, an environmental lifestyle. The mental disorder can exist in several forms, the most common being Generalized-Anxiety Disorder, Panic Anxiety Disorder, Social Anxiety Disorder, Phobia Disorder, and Separation Anxiety Disorder (National Institute of Mental Health, 2024). Each of the listed performs uniquely to a person diagnosed with anxiety, as all internal and external influences make an appearance in determining the intensity of anxiety effects. Genetics, lifestyle choices, and treatment methods also play a significant role in shaping one's journey with anxiety (Kendler et al., 2012). Individuality is the key factor in controlling the effects of anxiety disorders, as the lack of knowledge on the direct connection between environmental influences and human behavior by mental disorder causes a gap in successfully understanding anxiety as a whole. Each individual is unique, with a distinct background and personal experience that influences what comes of their mental health and state of mind.

Anxiety is subjective, and is actively present across the world at high rates. About 301 million people in 2023 possessed a type of anxiety disorder, and that number alone has increased by 55% from 1990 to 2019 (Javaid et al., 2023). Anxiety is more prevalent in high-income, economically developed nations such as Europe, the Americas, and parts of Asia. In 2023, Portugal possessed 8,671 cases of anxiety for every 100,000 persons, Brazil possessed 7,993 cases of anxiety for every 100,000 persons, and China possessed 47.8 million total cases for their country. These statistics have stayed stable or had a slight increase over the past 3 decades, because of the multiple factors and

influences present in each nation. The broad spectrum of anxiety is influenced by global burden, as well as the differentiation of cultural, environmental, and emotional lifestyle between nations. Anxiety disorders can form and interpret human behavior, depending on how intense the influence of a specific environment is on the human brain.

The United States is currently in a position of high economic power and obtains a well-developed society, placing it at the top of high anxiety-diagnosed nations. A lifestyle consisting of frequent alcohol/drug use, regular fast food consumption, and overburdening stress from work plays a significant role in increasing anxiety (Penn State Harrisburg, 2024). A study conducted in 2017 by the University of California and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences focuses on the external behavioral aspect of individuals diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. This study shows specifically the effect of properly mitigating anxiety with primary care, being a lifestyle choice that decreases the intensity of anxiety ramifications (Roy-Bryne, 2017). By providing this external aid, an individual with anxiety will more likely possess a stronger emotional state than the individual with no primary care. Not being seen under primary care can detriment the emotional state of an individual diagnosed with anxiety, causing differing human reactions and behaviors between individuals. Anxiety can be more intense for those with poor lifestyle choices.

Another study conducted in Bethesda, Maryland focuses on the external influences of cognition, task, and emotion on anxiety disorders (National Institute of Health of Health Clinical Center, 2023). The study concluded that performing a more demanding task will be better on anxiety stress using the cognitive part of the brain. Being in an environment with heavily positive external influence will allow pragmatic decisions and behavior to be made. The importance of influences and activity on the human brain determine the effect of anxiety, and the behavior that results from the stress and buildup.

Understanding the influence and neurobiology behind anxiety disorders will determine one's journey while overcoming it. The complications that appear while facing anxiety symptoms are those that are important to understand, and deciphering various genetics, lifestyle choices, and treatments that cause anxiety, create an individual experience. Its knowledge and connection is significant in the study of anxiety and physiological disorders, and its basic understanding to victims of anxiety will greatly benefit their lifestyle choices influencing their mental health.

Methodology

The study of anxiety is complex, as there are various factors to account for when finding why anxiety effects occur. The primary purpose of this research review was to discover the origin of anxiety in an individual; and how internal and external influences determine the intensity of human behavior in anxiety. This research also focuses on traumatic grief that results from anxiety, sculpting the journey an individual overcomes when diagnosed with the disorder. The research review done in this study was conducted as a secondary literature review, using primary case studies and secondary reference sources. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to understand the connection between anxiety, influences, and behaviors, allowing this gap in knowledge to be sealed. Using the data collected by various sources and literatures, it is concluded that factors such as genetics, lifestyle, and treatment will influence the intensity of anxiety for an individual, as well as how they will behave in a given environment. Along with this, the study highlights how important the different levels of anxiety trauma are for an individual's mental health during their lifetime. Throughout this research, no physical tools or materials were used to conduct the study. The exploration is primarily based on online primary and secondary sources. No ethical considerations should be observed using this research.

Origin of Anxiety

The disorder commonly referred to as "Anxiety" is broad and dates far back in human development. It was first brought upon in many minor cultures 5000 years ago, depicted through symbols and scriptures (Heston-Davis, 2023). Although, 2000 years ago in the Greco-Roman world is when it was seen as more of an issue. Symptoms of anxiety

were commonly considered uncontrollable physical problems. Post Greco-Roman understanding of anxiety, the mental disorder was given various names. In the 1600's, Melancholia represented a broad variety of several anxiety symptoms. In the 1700's, Panophobia took the name for anxiety symptoms, described as an intense fear that would come onto a person with no reason. By the late 1800's, it was referred to as Neurasthenia, also defined as several anxiety disorders under one umbrella. The early 20th century is when the world began to pay more attention to the harm of anxiety, seeing how it can become a burden on typical human lifestyle. A more apparent discovery in this generation shows how anxiety could be treated, using medications like natural treatment or prescribed treatment. This has huge pragmatic influence over dealing with anxiety, as opposed to past techniques dealing with it. Most of the time, handling anxiety wasn't sophisticated. Instead philosophers would influence individuals with anxiety to fix their inner negative thoughts provoking anxiety rather than figuring out what influences cause negative thoughts and feelings. Overall, the term and mental disorder of anxiety has come a long way in the past centuries, constantly changing and possessing everlasting controversy.

An anxiety disorder can be defined as a persistent feeling of fear or dread, affecting human lifestyle choices and behavior. The escalation of anxiety within an individual's mind is influenced by the environment they are within. The combination of poor job performance, inadequate friends and family relationships, ailing health conditions, deficit financial standing, or paranoia can cause life stress prompting anxiety to occur (National Institute of Health of Health Clinical Center, 2023). Due to the individuality of anxiety, it can occur to be long-term or short-term. For some it can be harder to overcome the disorder compared to others. The main cause of anxiety disorders can overpower mental peace within the brain, being considered more intensely effective than occasional stress. Generally genetics, exposure to negative lifestyle, family anxiety history, and lack of treatment serve as risk factors which impact and cause anxiety to occur. Anxiety disorder is another step past occasional stress, allowing daunting symptoms such as restlessness and constant fatigue, difficulty in concentration, struggle in controlling feelings, headaches, muscle aches, various pains, and sleep problems to pertain (Cleveland Clinic, 2024).

Various Types of Anxiety Disorders

Anxiety is broad, and cannot be defined as one "disorder". There are numerous anxiety disorders all influenced by different life stresses possessing different symptoms. The most common although, as well as discussed in this research are Generalized-Anxiety Disorder, Panic-Anxiety Disorder, Social-Anxiety Disorder, Phobia-Anxiety Disorder, and Separation-Anxiety Disorder (Synergy Health Programs, 2021). Each serves differently within the mind of an individual, causing a unique reaction to the unique spiral of fear present in the human brain (National Institute of Health of Health Clinical Center, 2023).

Generalized-Anxiety Disorder

Typically, anxiety is caused by a tenacious feeling of fear influenced by environmental surroundings affecting the emotions and behaviors of human lifestyle. Generalized-Anxiety Disorder defines just that, and serves as a longer more traumatic version of stress. Many of those who possess this type of disorder tend to feel a struggle in controlling their emotions, impacting their ability to think with concentration and feel at ease with surrounding stress. Many side symptoms include restlessness and constant fatigue, feeling irritated, sleep problems, headaches, muscle ache and continuous pains. Generalized-Anxiety Disorder cannot be taken lightly, and as time progresses and conditions start to worsen it can have an even more negative effect on human behavior.

Panic-Anxiety Disorder

Panic attacks are a big part of panic disorder, defining what it means to have panic-anxiety disorder. (Hewitt, 2021). Individuals with this condition tend to feel periods of intense fear and irritation often, messing with both their mental and physical peace of mind. A common behavior that results for individuals is that many people with panic disorder will spend more time preventing future panic attacks rather than find the cause, impacting their lifestyle choices. This usually results in change of setting, situation, or actions. Symptoms include feelings of racing heart, chest pain, loss of mental and physical control, sweating, hyperventilating, trembling, and feeling trapped within the mind.

Social-Anxiety Disorder

Anxiety based on social situation and interaction with other individuals cause different levels of social-anxiety disorder. The condition results when there is a present and intense fear of being judged by people. Social interactions are filled with dread and terror, becoming a concern in any place of work, school, or daily activity. This disorder is also heavily reliant on the environment, cuing anxiety signals to the brain on the basis of social distress. Many side symptoms and behaviors include visible sweating, trembling, blushing, stomachaches, concealed body language, rigid posture, lack of eye contact or communication, pounding heart, and intense self-consciousness.

Phobia-Related Disorders

According to the Urban Dictionary (2017), a phobia is an extreme fear. Phobias tend to cause intense terror for a specific topic, becoming a greater threat to mental health compared to a regular fear. (Marwood, 2017). Phobia-Related Disorders are one of the most diverse anxiety disorders of all, due to its endless and distinct influences. Various common examples of phobia-related disorders include zoophobia (fear of animals), claustrophobia (fear of little spaces), and trypanophobia (fear of needles). Many factors contribute to phobia-related disorders, as each serves a different purpose and effect on human behavior. The most common symptoms that result from phobias are taking irrational steps to avoid being in a situation with a phobia-related fear, excessively worrying, and having immediate intense anxiety once coming in contact with a phobia.

Separation-Anxiety Disorder

Children and those at a young age tend to have the strongest sense of separation-anxiety. Due to close familial or intimate bonds, many individuals will feel intense fear when not in close proximity to someone they trust and feel safe with. Separation-Anxiety Disorder can happen at different levels, some more intense than others. In some cases, there are dangerous risks that come out separation-anxiety. Some symptoms include feeling shy and embarrassed in public gatherings, only being clingy with people they feel fond with.



Figure 1. The 5 Types of Anxiety Disorders . Source: Retreat Behavioral Health, 2021. Description: This image aids both the reader's and researcher's understanding in the 5 prominent anxiety disorders. Each is specific to how it is defined and how to determine if an individual possesses traits of several anxiety-disorders. Listed are Generalized-Anxiety Disorder, Social Anxiety Disorder, Separation Anxiety Disorder, Phobia-Related Disorder, and Panic-Anxiety Disorder.

How to Diagnose Anxiety

Diagnosing anxiety should be done by licensed mental health specialists, as they are the individuals who understand anxiety in depth. Many psychiatrists, psychologists, or licensed clinical social workers have the knowledge to diagnose several mental disorders and disorders, whereas self-diagnosis isn't sustainable. Through diagnosis, a mental health specialist may do a physical examination finding connections between medication and anxiety, order blood or urine tests, ask questions about family history, use psychological questionnaires to find links to anxiety, or use a mental health manual to check for anxiety (Mayo Clinic, 2017). Although, there are still many signs that may provoke anxiety that an individual can see for themselves. If an individual feels possible symptoms from an anxiety disorder, is it recommended to speak to a mental health specialist (NYU Langone Health, n.d.).

Influences of Anxiety Disorder

Due to anxiety disorders being so diverse, there are plenty of internal and external factors that influence the level of intensity it can reach. The importance of influences must be emphasized, as they are the reason for why people act and feel the way they do. Disorders are discovered to regularly be affected by ancestral genetics, environmental surroundings, and everyday lifestyle (Piotrowski et al., 2021). The types of decisions one may make has its impact on their physical and mental wellbeing. It is crucial to see the connection between internal and external influences to the development of an anxiety disorder.

Genetic Influences

A certain individual's genetics will determine the vulnerability they have to specific life-stressing events. Family history tends to influence a person's ability to obtain any disorder, due to the genetics and traits of anxiety being passed down through generational lines. Whether it be a bear attack or financial issue, genetics determine within the amygdala what is considered "a threat" for the individual and how it should be resolved. The ancestral history that codes specific traits cause the brain to react in a way that could be harsh or dramatic, prompting anxiety. Having genetics that align with neural processes that occur for individuals with anxiety are what alter biological and psychological changes in the mind over time. As negative environmental influences and obstructive lifestyle choices take control over one's actions, the DNA methylation will change and alter brain structure. Too much brain structure alteration produces a change in protein function, allowing the disorder to form and be more commonly established down generations. The greater anxiety does damage to the brain's emotional structure, the greater the symptoms will occur; resulting in more mental health and everyday lifestyle damage. Age as a part of genetics serves an important purpose in exhibiting how much the brain and limbic system have developed. Any past experiences or recurring sensitive thoughts can provoke the fight-flight-freeze response if the individual feels vulnerable towards it. Chemical imbalances may also occur and provoke anxiety. Any minor or major changes towards neurotransmitters or hormones specific to anxiety such as norepinephrine, dopamine, serotonin, or gamma-aminobutyric acid, will contribute to the genetic factor and influence on anxiety disorders. The change in brain structure and function is what gets passed down through ancestry, making an individual with strong family history with anxiety more vulnerable to it.

Environmental Influences

The environment an individual is surrounded by will completely affect their exposure to anxiety. Symptoms of anxiety can start at a young age, if they are exposed to sensitive life events and cannot process it naturally. If a person grows up in a well-developed and financially secure community, they are more prone to suffering anxiety if they are under financial stress later on; due to not being exposed to low-income nature in childhood years. (Mental Health Foundation, 2023). As the individual grows they become adjusted to their surrounding environment, finding their comforts and discomforts present in an environment. The earlier a person develops signs of anxiety, the worse it can grow over time and chip away at their lifetime mental peace and sanity. Most anxiety symptoms will stay stable unless action is taken. Any negative life events that are considered sensitive and seen as a threat to the brain will trigger anxiety as a response. These events can emotionally impact the brain's sense of protection, taking only the littlest bit of negativity to cloud mental peace. A few instances include car accidents, physical assault, job insecurity, work or school stress, abuse or harassment, divorce, or other mental disorders. Childhood trauma serves as another important factor influencing anxiety. Negative events that occur at an early age tend to have long-lasting effects and control over mental state of mind. These events change the brain development of an individual as they grow, having an intense effect on memory, emotion regulation, and fight-flight-freeze response. Being isolated from society allows the brain to feel negative and insufficient, increasing anxiety results. There are endless isolated risk factors that determine the level of anxiety, a few being unemployment, being single, being from a minority ethnic community, being in the LGBTQIA+ community, or living alone. Having limited social contact causes various insecurities and cutoffs from society, impacting the way an individual thinks of themselves. It can also go the other way, and societal pressures can be a reason for anxiety to increase in one's mind. Feeling the need to meet cultural, societal, academic, or familial expectations can provoke lasting stress; clouding their judgment and making that their only focus. Not meeting the expectation one sets for themselves may feel appalling, being seen as a threat to the human brain and triggering anxiety response. Even one or a combination of these various environmental factors will greatly and tragically alter the various thoughts in one's mind. A build-up on anxiety-inducing events will cause a temporary increase in symptoms, until it becomes a part of one's lifestyle. The social environment will alter anxiety through biological changes and psychological changes.

Lifestyle Influence

Even the smallest of daily decisions have a significant impact on human mental health. Simple everyday behaviors will alter the individual's sense of self and peace of mind (Velten et al., 2014). Little physical activity, lack of critical thinking, excessive smoking, overconsuming alcoholic beverages, not fitting within the one's calculated BMI (being underweight or overweight), little to no sleep, poor diet, and not giving time to oneself to focus on mental health are all minor lifestyle choices that can significantly shape one's way of feeling. The way each of these poor lifestyle habits drastically impact physical health and exposure to health problems, can also be equally as negative on emotional feelings. Many individuals feel distressed through anxiety disorders because these immature habits cloud clarity within the mind, pushing more and more negative actions and thoughts towards the limbic system. The cycle seems endless; with poor lifestyle choices comes poor mental health, and with poor mental health comes poor sleep diet and physical activity (Furber, 2023). Lifestyle influence in anxiety makes more of an apparent impact later on in adulthood (Khaw et al., 2008), as compared to genetics and environment which start earlier on. Each lifestyle decision made will push the mind to feel a certain emotion with it. The unhealthier one's body feels, the unhealthier one's mind will become. Knowing how specific lifestyle choices and unhealthy habits obscure content mental health can help an individual know how to prevent such harsh anxiety symptoms. Finding the root cause ensures a healthier and happier life.

What Goes on in the Brain

Generally, anxiety is performed in the limbic system of the brain. This area controls the emotions, feelings, and behaviors that result from anxiety or any situation brought upon an individual. Structures in the frontal lobe and the limbic system work together to process and understand any trauma effects that result from anxiety (Martin et al., 2013). Traditionally, the human body will switch to a sense of survival mode when it feels under a certain threat. Many anxiety-inducing stresses are seen as a threat to the body, triggering such impetuous responses that alter human behavior so drastically. As a person experiences certain events or situations, if they find intense sensitivity to it it will come as a shock to their amygdala. The amygdala is a small structure found in the limbic system that expresses emotions such as fear, defensive behaviors, or aggression. Once the event has been processed through the amygdala and is found to be "sensitive", neurotransmitters send a signal to the hippocampus (Therapy in a Nutshell, 2021). The hippocampus is a structure also found in the limbic system that controls hypothalamus stress-response (Ghasemi et al., 2021). Neurotransmitters send electron signals down the neuron axon, allowing neurons to release a neurotransmitter. The neurotransmitter of a presynaptic neuron binds to the receptor present in the postsynaptic neuron. Then the presynaptic neuron will trace back a few molecules and the process will repeat for every electron signal required throughout the brain. (Harvard Medical School, 2022). With this system, the event from the amygdala will transfer to the hippocampus, triggering a response to the adrenal gland. When the hippocampus finds the event sensitive, the adrenal gland will start to produce hormones that prompt the fight-flight-freeze response. The hippocampus plays a very important role in anxiety. These 3 different responses are what occur when the brain feels they are in "a survival sense of mind" (University of Toledo, 2024). The adrenal gland may send a signal to the central core (communication center between brain structures) to either fight off the threat, flee the threat, or even freeze and shut off any senses. This all depends on the intensity of the event as well as the prior influences that resulted. This simple yet complex system that releases anxiety is life-changing for some, controlling other brain and body systems and altering lifestyle decisions.

NEUROTRANSMITTER

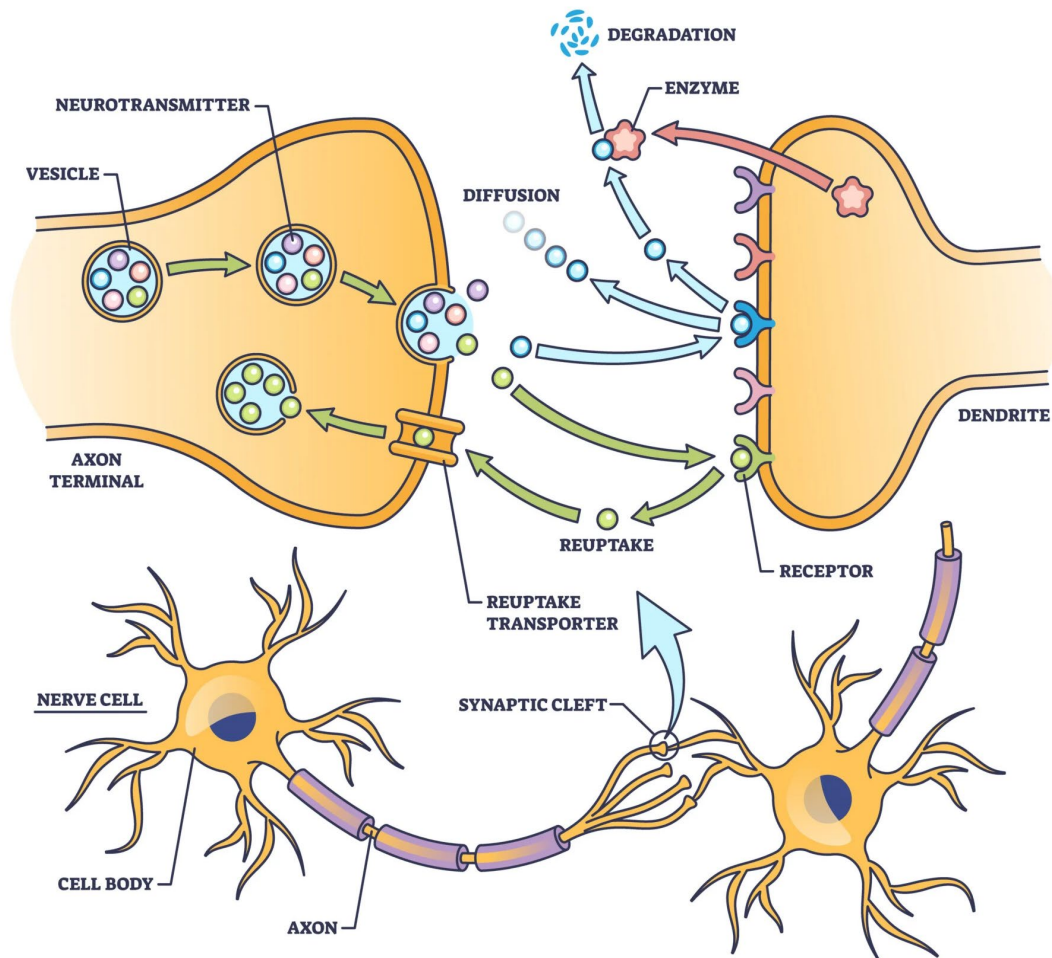


Figure 2. Neurotransmitter. Source: Guy-Evans, 2023. Description: This diagram explains how neurotransmitters travel from neuron to neuron, simply creating connections between the presynaptic neuron and postsynaptic neuron, using electron signals and the process of diffusion and reuptake. The process of neurotransmission is used in all parts of the brain.

The Limbic System Anxiety in the Brain

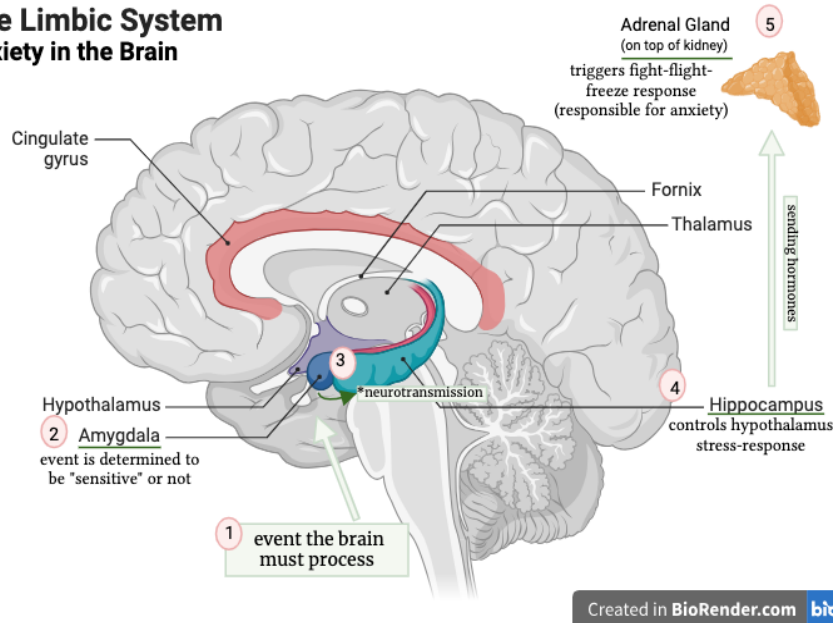


Figure 3. The Limbic System: Anxiety in the Brain. Source: Diya Gupta (created with Biorender.com), 2024. Description: The diagram shows how one sensitive event is processed through the brain, going through each of the brain structures that eventually lead to anxiety. The event is first introduced to the amygdala, and determined to be “a threat” or not. Then through neurotransmission, electron signals will travel to the hippocampus, which then sends specific hormones to the adrenal gland. This process is depicted to be more simplified than it is.

Traumatic Grief in Anxiety

The more anxiety occurs in the brain, the more detrimental it can be for a person lifelong. Having severe anxiety can cause both physical and mental health to deteriorate (Porrey, 2023). If left untreated, the disorder can turn into chronic health problems that fully affect the physical health of an individual. Severe anxiety is when the brain often shifts to a sense of threat, only having the common goal of keeping the mind and body safe. Usually this results at a high level of impact, if on a scale from mild to severe. Although this is healthy brain behavior, it will cause serious negative effects on the physical behavior a human portrays. This problem can interrupt daily functioning, struggling to handle load, and making life seem less enjoyable. There is also a strong link between having anxiety and increased suicide attempts. A study done in 2010 showed that 70% of individuals who have attempted suicide possess anxiety disorder, being the main cause for such drastic and harsh consequences (Nepon et al., 2011). Using multivariate regression models, a common connection between various types of anxiety disorders and levels of suicide attempts was significantly high; prompting the seriousness of anxiety. The constant fear and negative mood prevalent in individuals with anxiety can cause feelings of worthlessness, prompting drastic measures. The study emphasizes how brutal having anxiety is for an individual, completely affecting their thoughts and actions. Human behavior stems from the level of anxiety and intensity of influences on the human mind. It is crucial for an individual to know how their influence will affect their behavior.

Effective Treatments

The biggest development across the history of anxiety is that there are now several treatments that can be used to ease the disorder. The 20th century brought upon the use of antidepressants, psychotherapy, and lifestyle choices as

effective techniques honing anxiety disorders. These civilized methods of dealing with anxiety allow for individuals to be more open with it, as opposed to before when individuals with anxiety hid their disorder due to not wanting to seem “mentally diseased”. Without using either natural methods or more artificial treatments, the effect of anxiety will not weaken. Although influences hold great power over the journey of anxiety in one’s mind, certain influences are uncontrollable. Therefore, treatments must come into play to ease anxiety to a low enough level.

Antidepressants

Antidepressants serve as a short-term solution to anxiety disorders, lowering the feeling of negative thoughts and threats an individual may experience. Anxiety is considered a depressant, causing the mind to think more negatively and lower positive mood and emotion. Antidepressants reverse that feeling that occurs in the brain, and boosts levels of serotonin and noradrenaline throughout the brain circulation (NHS Inform, 2024). They will also disrupt any lasting pain present within the brain. The drug includes options such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI), serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor (SNRI), noradrenaline and specific serotonergic antidepressants (NASSAs), or tricyclic antidepressants (TCAs); which tend to ease anxiety symptoms the quickest and most effective (Mayo Clinic, 2017). Many individuals with anxiety use antidepressants as it is the simplest method to reduce symptoms, simply using an external substance to change the brain chemistry. Taking antidepressants is usually through tablets, and are typically prescribed by healthcare advisors. An individual should not be taking antidepressants unless administered by a healthcare provider. Side effects should typically occur 7-14 days after starting the antidepressant, and if it doesn't follow that pattern an individual should consult their healthcare provider. Many common side effects include feeling agitated, stomach aches, diarrhea, dizziness, headaches, loss of appetite, dry mouth, weight gain, excessive sweating, or constipation. Antidepressants should also not be taken with alcohol, illegal drugs, St John’s Wort, ibuprofen, or other antidepressants; as they may seriously worsen symptoms and exacerbate health conditions. There are definitely pros and cons to using antidepressants; pros being that it’s the simplest way to alter brain chemistry and prevent anxiety while cons being the various side effects it provides. An individual with anxiety and a licensed mental health specialist should go over the impact antidepressants will have over the type of anxiety, before making a decision to use it as one of the various treatments strengthening the brain to anxiety.

Psychotherapy

Psychotherapy uses psychological counseling to talk individuals with anxiety through their problems, rather than bottling up their feelings (Mayo Clinic, 2017). Using psychotherapy ensures symptoms improve periodically, as well as gradually managing a person's worries (National Institute of Mental Health, 2024). Psychotherapy can improve anxiety symptoms by maintaining daily function and improving life enjoyment, through one-on-one consultation. One brilliant feature of psychotherapy is finding alternate solutions to deal with stress that occurs from anxiety, for example many patients in therapy will write their feelings in a book to get it on paper rather than cloud their thoughts. Effective activities like this allow individuals to feel their feelings and get it out before it can grow dim in the human brain. It can also be used alongside other treatments to ease anxiety, as it is mostly natural and only requires cognitive behavioral therapy. Many benefits result from psychotherapy, such as identifying coping methods for stress, examining social interactions and cues, applying mindfulness, tracking emotions, creating safety-plans for possible consequences, and most importantly becoming aware of how their feelings affect them. When thinking about using psychotherapy as a treatment method for anxiety, an individual should consider personal characteristics they desire in a therapist. Having a therapist specifically designed to fit specific needs and desires will ensure faster and more effective results. Talking openly and comfortably to a trusted therapist with credentials, approaches, experiences, goals, confidentiality, and medication options that fit your criteria is crucial for psychotherapy to be efficient. One con to psychotherapy is whether or not a person feels safe confiding in another person, but this kind of trust and relationship must be built between an individual and their therapist. A study published in 2022 shows how effective psychotherapy has been for

individuals suffering anxiety. By using Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) on a young man with Generalized-Anxiety Disorder (GAD), many anxiety-prompted feelings decided to ease and become more positive (Garner & Stuart, 2023). A therapeutic and honest relationship between the man and his therapist whilst using resources to manage anxiety, helped this individual increase his resistance to anxiety. The case overall provides valuable insight into how psychotherapy can change the life of an individual, providing them more opportunity to reduce anxiety exposure. Psychotherapy offers great recovery methods that lower the frequency of experiencing anxiety, benefiting a patient in numerous ways.

Lifestyle Choices

Lifestyle choices are a huge influence of anxiety, but can also serve as treatment. Quality lifestyle choices lead to optimistic mental health. Staying physically active, sleeping well, using relaxation, eating healthy and nutritious, avoiding alcohol or drugs, and abstaining from smoking are all simple ways to improve mental health almost instantly (Mayo Clinic, 2017). By keeping a balanced diet, not only does your physical health feel stronger but so does your mental health. Usually a nutritious diet will contain vitamins that produce serotonin and dopamine in the brain, naturally reversing the actions of anxiety depressing the brain (Murphy, 2023). Some common nutrients to add to one's diet would be omega 3 fatty acids, antioxidants, complex carbohydrates, magnesium-rich foods, common vitamins, water and probiotics; which will enrich the brain and boost happy hormone levels. Controlled levels of sugars, processed foods, and caffeine can also help decrease levels of anxiety. Having fit physical exercise provides many benefits to mental peace and anxiety prevention. Staying actively fit can release endorphins that naturally kill pain that results from anxiety. It can also reduce stress hormones filled throughout the body, and increase social interaction essential for resisting feelings of isolation. Most importantly, staying fit allows the body to be physically healthy and therefore mentally optimistic as well. Lack of proper sleep is a leading factor to anxiety, due to its ability to cause problems in an individual's day to day life. Having healthy and regular sleep patterns can be done by improving sleep education, learning to find a more relaxed state of mind, meditation, deep breathing, and progressive muscle relaxation. Each of these techniques improve a person's ability to sleep, giving them time to rest their mind and wake up feeling refreshed. Managing stress also helps, and each person has their own unique way of managing workload stress. Having a balanced life from social to work to person is important in keeping one's life organized. Learning to achieve manageable workload, time management, setting professional boundaries, taking time out for self care, keeping up with social responsibilities and relationships, and learning to say no are all good ways to manage life and stress balance. Ensuring a thriving but comfortable social life also gives individuals the opportunity to combat social isolation, a possible factor influencing anxiety. Having meaningful relationships in life gives a person some sense of self and connection. Most importantly, an individual should feel connected with their mind and body. Healthy lifestyle choices ensure that one's emotional and physical state of mind work together to provide the best for an individual. If there is a lack of mind-body connection, some daily practices to improve that include yoga, tai chi, and mindfulness. Each can accurately and efficiently improve positivity to travel from mind to body. Lifestyle choices serve as an important natural treatment that targets a main influence of anxiety. By bettering the daily decisions one might make, they can lower their anxiety stress significantly and enhance their overall well-being.



Figure 4. 7 Lifestyle Changes to Help with Anxiety. Source: Sarah, n.d.. Description: The image emphasizes the 7 most important lifestyle changes one can make if they are seeking lesser-intense anxiety. Doing enjoyable activities, sleeping well, keeping in touch and maintaining relations, avoiding alcohol and drugs, eating a nutritious diet, exercising, and managing stress are all valuable techniques that can send euphoria throughout the brain.

Results

Influences in anxiety serve a huge importance when it comes to how intense a specific disorder will be. The combination of genetic, environmental, and lifestyle influences produce meaningful effects on how one tackles anxiety, due to its ability to completely change an individual's life. The choices humans make all come from the mind, and when the mind is clouded with fear and threat; it has a serious effect on how influential and successful a treatment will be. It can also determine how an individual will act with anxiety. Patients with anxiety tend to be more nervous and flighty, as a result of their mental behavior taking control over their physical behavior. It is usually evident to society when a person cannot control their emotions, due to it being severely poor and damaging their ability to act sophisticated. In emphasis, this research proved and provided great insight into how the brain processes anxiety-triggering events, how prior influences will change the basis and type of anxiety an individual experiences, and what kinds of methods can prevent frequent anxiety and aid living life to the fullest.

Conclusion

To conclude, anxiety is vast and cannot be comprehended the fullest due to it changing ever-so frequently. There are various aspects that play a significant role in the history of anxiety, such as what kinds of anxiety-disorders are prevalent in humans, what kinds of influences determine the type of anxiety and how intense it is, the complex neurobiological system and how it causes anxiety to spiral, and effective treatments that ease but not completely eliminate the mental condition. Certain key takeaways from this research should include how much of an effect anxiety can have on an individual; how it becomes a part of one's life and can alter it drastically.

It is recommended that an individual suffering anxiety or witnessing another person suffer anxiety should look at their situation from a bird's eye view; try and figure out what possible life experience has brought them to their level and influenced their behavior towards themselves or others. Along with this, a licensed medical specialist can help guide one through their anxiety journey. An individual must understand their own experience and journey in

order to make an impact, as well as the right decisions. Anxiety is subjective and constantly growing amongst our people and land, reaching extraordinary levels and being the prominent mental disorder for coming generations.

Limitations

The main aim of this research is to understand the direct connection between anxiety influences and human behavior as a result. This literature review uses a combination of secondary reference sources and primary case studies to qualitatively support several claims throughout the paper. The details of this research depict the entire journey of anxiety through the human brain, emphasizing how important the external world is to the internal system and mind. A main takeaway from this study is to show the result anxiety has on various lives and people, as it can severely change how one lives their life. With constant fear and dread within, living comfortably becomes difficult for many. This research can be used to understand the origin and root connection of how anxiety occurs, which comes from prior influences and factors prompting the disorder. The qualitative and quantitative data used to support this paper provides an in-depth insight on the process and effect of anxiety.

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