

UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY

Development of treatments and care over time

Mental health from a historical & philosophical perspective.



HISTORICAL TO MODERN DEFINITION

- **During the medieval period the word anxiety was not used to describe mental states.**
- **Sin, moral failing and demon possessions were used to describe mental distress as divine punishment.**
- **Treatments for madness and anxiety were of a spiritual nature.**
- **This perception began changing with revolutionary figures such as Hippocrates and Galen. (Scull, 2015).**



HOW THE DEFINITION OF 'ANXIETY' DEVELOPED OVER TIME

- Religious perception of mental illness began to change in later with figures such as;
- Hippocrates - 2nd Century BCE
- Galen- Roman emperical era (second century, CE)
- Stoic Philosophers



EARLY MODERN PERIOD: 16TH - 18TH CENTURY.

- In early modern period anxiety became a new phenomenon.
- Important figures such as Thomas Sydenham, English physician George Chyne and Phillippe pinel pioneered humane psychiatric treatment. (Scull, 2015)
- Advocates for mental health and nervous disorders.



CRITICS

Traditionalists, Clerics, conservative Philosophers and religious institute disagreed with the innovations.

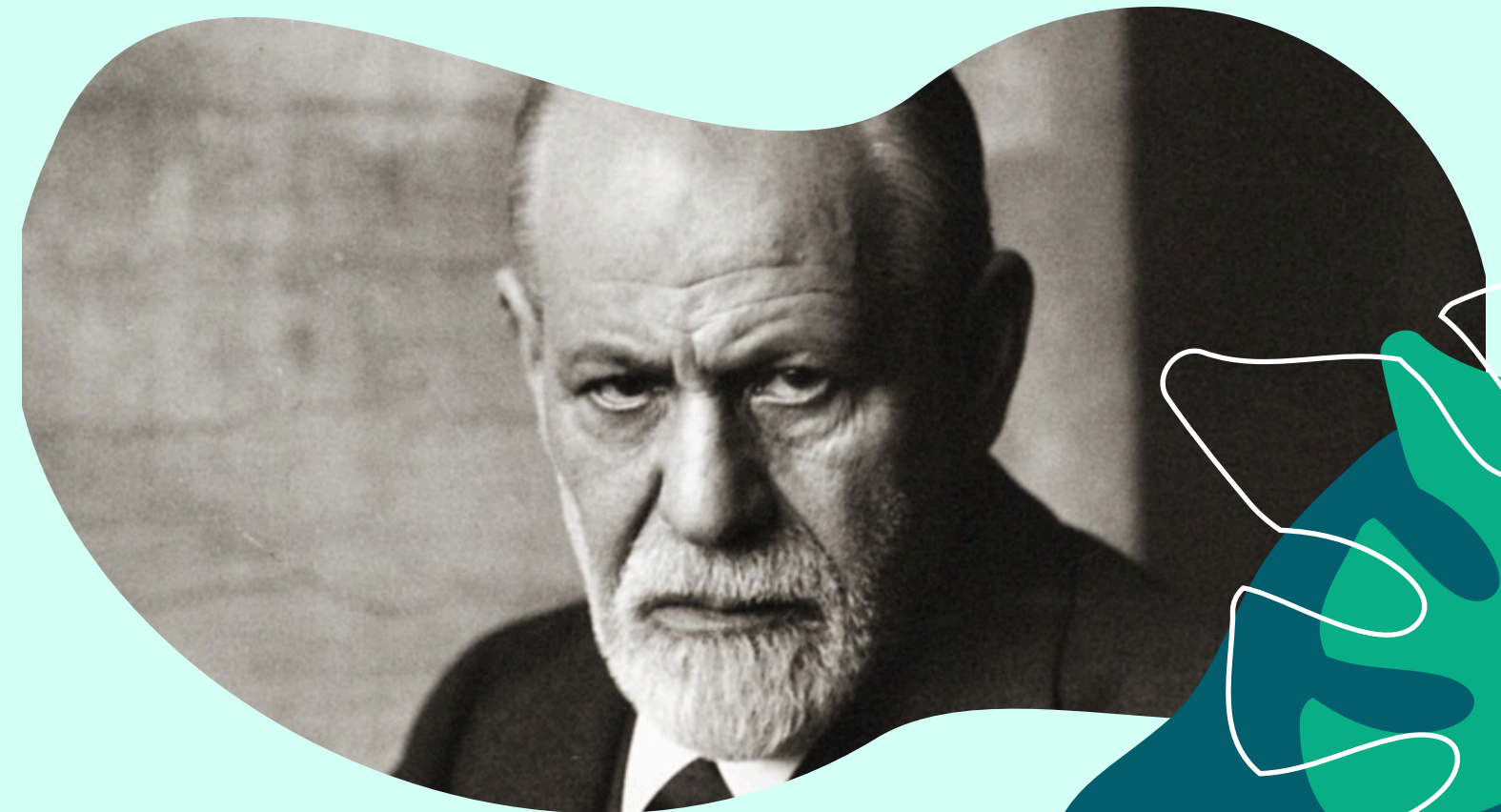


18TH- 20TH CENTURY

By the 19th Century, the rise of Psychiatric terms like neurasthenia began to describing anxiety-like symptoms.

Late 19th Century- early 20th century Sigmond Freud introduced the psychoanalytic approach.

Mid 20th Century Pavlov and Watson contributed Behavioursim.





MODERN MENTAL ILLNESS: DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENTS

Anxiety Disorders

social anxiety disorder

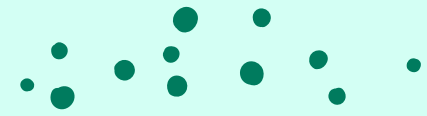
Bipolar Disorder

separation anxiety disorder

The DSM ensures consistent diagnosis of mental illness by Clinicians, Providing a common framework ,allowing for systematic research and data collection.

The DSMIII was earlier known as DSMI in 1980. The 3rd edition was published in 1980 and revised in 1987.

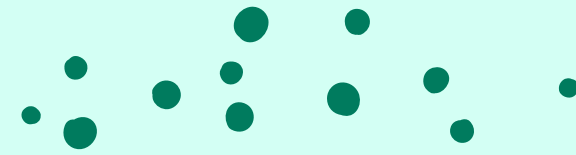
Later editions since has been produced with the latest edition DSM-5-TR in 2022. (Beleboni,et a. 2022)



- Physiological Effects
- Long term effects of stress on the body
- Modern clinical perspectives and treatments.

THE SCIENCE OF ANXIETY





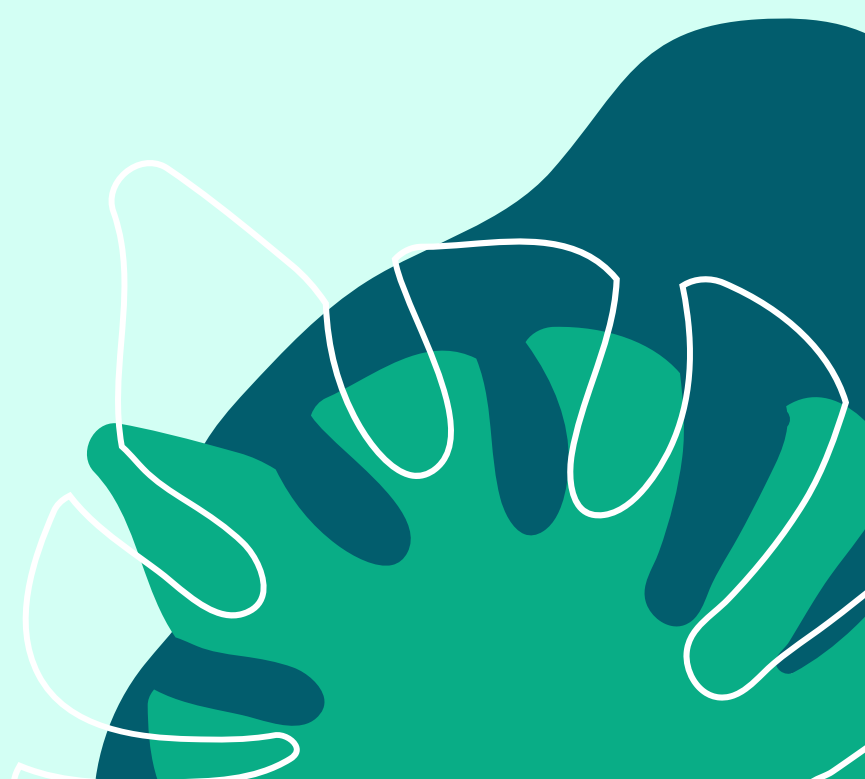
PRESENTATION CONCLUSION

- Historic understanding of mental illness and the progression of interpretation with the integration of science.
- Today's definition of Anxiety
- The importance of continued research and practice of healthy mental wellbeing.



THANK YOU...

presented by Nicole Matthews.





SCRIPT

Introduction:

Topic and subtopic:

Anxiety- The treatment and care of patients developed over time. The changes in social and cultural attitudes, and interdisciplinary practice.

The main body of this presentation with explains the history of the approach to anxiety

Following the physiological effects on the body when experiencing anxiety, followed by my conclusion summarising the main findings during my research.

This topic has a very personal meaning to me... I suffer with anxiety... I found it very interesting for me researching and understanding the history and treatments and most helpful the physiological effects of anxiety.

This presentation is part of a group contribution on the topic of anxiety. I will now present my main findings of the first part of this group presentation.

Main:

During the medieval period, persistent fear or mental agitation was often explained as manifestations of spiritual state.

Sin, moral failing, and demon possessions were used to describe mental distress, as a divine punishment.

With this interpretation treatments for madness or anxiety were of a spiritual nature. Most commonly, prayer, exorcism, confession, and holy relics were used to restore spiritual balance, with the idea that spiritual healing would lead to emotional and mental relief.
(Scull, 2015)

IMPORTANT FIGURES IN LATER CIVILIZATIONS SUCH AS HIPPOCRATES SOUGHT TO EXPLAIN MENTAL DISTRESS AS A NATURAL EFFECT ON THE BODY.

GALEN IN ROMAN ERA DESCRIBING ANXIETY AS MELANCHOLIA AND NERVOUS AGITATION

STOIC PHILOSOPHERS CONSIDERED ANXIETY AS A MORAL WEAKNESS OR IRRATIONAL FEAR, LACKING SELF-DISCIPLINE.

HIPPOCRATES ARGUED THAT MENTAL DISTURBANCES WERE A DIRECT RESULT OF HUMORS IMBALANCES IN THE BLOOD, PHLEGM AND BLACK AND/OR YELLOW BILE.

BLACK AND YELLOW BILE IS LIKENED TO PERSISTENT WORRY OR STRESS, FEARFULNESS, AGITATION, EMOTIONAL VOLATILITY AND IRRITABILITY.

HIPPOCRATES BELIEVED THAT A HEALTHY BALANCE OF THE MIND DEPENDED ON STABILITY OF A PERSON'S PHYSICAL HEALTH, AND AN IMBALANCED HEALTH OR DISRUPTED HEALTH CAUSES A DISTURBANCE OF THE MIND. MENTAL STATES WERE NOT SEPARATE FROM A PERSON'S PHYSICAL HEALTH.

(SCULL, 2015) EXPLAINS HOW HIPPOCRATIC MEDICINE ASSOCIATED FEAR, DISTRESS, AGITATION AND NERVOUSNESS TO DEFICIENCIES OF PARTICULAR HUMOURS. ANXIETY WAS NOT NAMED AT THIS PERIOD BUT CLEARLY DESCRIBED THROUGH SYMPTOMS.

MENTAL ILLNESS WAS NOW UNDERSTOOD AS A PHYSIOLOGICAL DISTURBANCE, EXPRESSED THROUGH EMOTIONS ROOTED IN THE BODY, AND NOT IN THE SOUL, AS BELIEVED IN PREVIOUS CENTURIES AS A DIVINE PUNISHMENT OR SUPERNATURAL EXPLANATIONS.

HIPPOCRATES BELIEVED ANXIOUS STATES WERE NOT TO BE PERCEIVED AS MORAL FAILURE, OR WEAKNESS OF CHARACTER, RATHER IT WAS A SOMATIC PROBLEM.

THIS IMBALANCE IN THE BODY WAS TO BE TREATED WITH THE REGULATION OF BODILY FLUIDS TO BALANCE INTERNAL STATES, AND PATIENTS WERE OFTEN ALSO PRESCRIBED A CHANGE OF ENVIRONMENT, REST AND A HEALTHY DIET, AS ENCOURAGED IN MODERN PRESCRIPTIONS TODAY.

Hippocrates' humoral theory is falsified as we now know today, but his naturalistic framing of anxiety laid out the groundwork for medical models we now know today in diagnosing, treating and revolutionary approach to medical models today.

(Scull, 2015)

In the later period of the 17th century, mental illness took on a new perspective. It began to be seen more as a form of nervous disorder. These new ideas of the time connected the rise of nervousness or anxiety to the culture of thinking more in terms of 'enlightenment'.

Physicians such as Thomas Sydenham late 1600's - early 1700's, English physician and 18th century George Cheyne introducing the English malady- linking lifestyle to nervousness.

Philippe Pinel in France late 1700's- pioneered humane psychiatric treatment. - strongly advocating the idea that mental health and nervous disorders were not merely a religiously prescribed issue but rather had a scientific and secular explanation.

(Scull, 2015)

Traditionalists, clerics, conservative philosophers and religious thinkers pushed back against the medicalisation of spiritual and moral issues, arguing that labelling nervousness purely as a nervous disorder may result in ignoring the spiritual and moral character, challenging beliefs of these new innovators.

The 18th and 19th centuries saw the rise of psychiatry, when anxiety was seen because of industrialization, urban stress, and social change. Terms like 'neurasthenia' describe anxiety-like symptoms such as fatigue and worry, but without clear diagnostic categories. (Taylor, 2001)

Late 19th- early 20th century Freud's psychoanalytic approach to anxiety as a product of the unconscious conflict; the development of classifications of anxiety disorders began.
(Scull, 2015)

By mid-20th Century Pavlov and Watson's Behaviorism explained anxiety as a conditioned response.

Cognitive psychology linked to maladaptive thought patterns.
The evolution of DSM formally categorised anxiety disorders in progressive editions, differentiating between generalised anxiety disorder, phobias and panic disorders. (Taylor, 2001)

The Science:

Science explained the neurological basis of this disruption in the brain, as a result of hyperactivity in the amygdala. The physiological effects of anxiety persist through the autonomic nervous system, particularly on the sympathetic nervous system triggering a fight or flight response. The symptoms of this activation result in increased heart rate, sweating, and rapid breathing. (LeWine, 2024)

In my previous Study Skills assignment, we looked at the role of cortisol in the body and how chronic anxiety is a result of dysregulation of the HPA axis. (the communication pathway between the brain and adrenal glands, a regulation of cortisol releasing hormones).
(Scheinost,. et al, 2013)

Modern clinical perspectives view anxiety disorders from the DSMIII, categorising generalised anxiety disorder (GAD), social anxiety disorder, separation anxiety disorder, panic attacks and phobias. (Beleboni, et al. 2022)

The cognitive and Behavioral model defines anxiety because of maladaptive thought patterns, and the overwhelming attention to bias or threat.

Modern treatments are pharmaceutical drugs including SSR's, benzodiazepines and psychological and cognitive therapies with stress management techniques such as CBT, exposure therapy, mindfulness and sometimes a culmination of both categories. (Newman, et al., 2024)

Conclusion:

In conclusion modern definition of anxiety according to APA dictionary is a characterised emotion by apprehension and somatic symptoms of tension in which individual anticipates impending danger. (APA, 2024)

Other core academic definitions such as explaining anxiety as heterogeneous, separating normal adaptive anxiety from pathological anxiety disorders.
(Foa, et al., 2005)

Anxiety is both adaptive and maladaptive with physiological cognitive and social context shaping how anxiety is defined and treated today. (Robinson, et al., 2013)

Historically, the medieval period interpreted anxiety, madness or melancholia as a spiritual weakness or divine punishment. Ancient Greece linked anxiety to humoral imbalance (Hippocrates) with a sort of tension between the emerging scientific and older religious or moral frameworks and conservative skeptics, Emphasising the importance of understanding physiological effects for effective treatment. 19th and 20th century physiological explanations emerged through science and the innovative contributions of Freud's Psychoanalysis, with modern psychiatry formalised diagnostic categories. (Scull, 2015)

My colleagues will elaborate more on the chronological history of mental illness, important figures, treatments, and how things have changed over time to our understanding of anxiety today.

Thank you for listening.

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AI acknowledgement

I confirm that I have used AI in my assignment.

Prompt: Find pictures of historical figures.

I have also used AI to create the template for my presentation slides.