

Applied Psychology

The Diversity of Anxiety Symptoms

Cognitive characteristics include:	Behaviours associated with anxiety include:
• The development of dysfunctional and irrational beliefs about the self, events and the world (e.g., individuals suffering specific phobias develop beliefs that normally harmless stimuli and events may harm them in some way). • The development of information-processing biases – often in ways that exacerbate a sufferer's anxiety (e.g., a pre-conscious tendency to allocate attention to processing potentially threatening stimuli). • Intrusive aversive thoughts that seem uncontrollable and cause distress • Tendencies to interpret and misinterpret ambiguous information as threatening. • Distressing and uncontrollable flashbacks to traumatic events that are experienced by individuals with PTSD.	• Complex and sophisticated avoidance behaviours designed to avoid potentially anxiety-provoking encounters (e.g., staying at home in order to avoid situations that might trigger possible panic attacks). • The development of complex and lengthy rituals that attempt to neutralise the anxiety (e.g., the ritualised process of washing and cleaning in which individuals with OCD contamination fears indulge.).