



Anxiety disorders 5: the psychodynamic approach

Module PSYB2

Section C – Individual Differences

3.2.5 anxiety disorders

What we will be learning about

Psychodynamic psychologists differ from other psychologists because they believe our behaviour is driven by psychological forces of which we are unaware. Hidden beneath our surface behaviors and motives are a host of unconscious drives and conflicts that shape our behaviour without us ever consciously realising it. In this topic we will learn how many of the unconscious forces that drive us have their roots in early childhood experiences and how psychodynamic psychologists see anxiety disorders as attempts to deal with fears and conflicts we cannot face up to. It follows from this that the best way to treat such disorders is to dig into the unconscious mind and bring to light what is buried there.

Psychodynamic psychologists developed the original ‘talking cure’ for psychological problems and we shall examine how effective it is in helping people to deal with their anxieties, looking in detail at the issues surrounding investigating the unconscious mind.

What you could be tested on

	A01 – knowledge & understanding	A02 – application, analysis & evaluation	A03 – methods, statistics & ethics (how science works)
You must be able to...	<p>State the main assumptions of the psychodynamic approach to abnormal behaviour (importance of unconscious, importance of childhood, symptoms as attempts to deal with intrapsychic conflict).</p> <p>Outline one or more psychodynamic explanations of phobia & OCD</p> <p>Describe psychoanalysis in the treatment of anxiety disorders.</p>	<p>Analyse case descriptions to identify symbolic features.</p>	<p>Outline the use of projective techniques as a way on investigating mental processes.</p> <p>Define interpretation bias.</p>
You should be able to...	<p>Describe one or more research studies of psychodynamic causes of phobia/OCD and one or more research studies of psychodynamic treatments of phobia/OCD.</p> <p>Outline the link between unconscious processes and specific symptoms of phobia/OCD.</p>	<p>Interpret evidence from studies in terms of what it tells us about psychodynamic theories of anxiety disorders.</p> <p>Assess the psychodynamic view of anxiety disorders in terms of support from evidence, strengths and weaknesses.</p>	<p>Assess psychodynamic research methods in terms of their potential for bias.</p> <p>Suggest ways of reducing bias where evidence requires interpretation.</p>
You could be able to...	<p>Explain the links between the psychodynamic model of abnormality and psychodynamic treatments for it.</p>	<p>Evaluate psychodynamic explanations and treatments for phobias and OCD.</p>	<p>Consider the implications of socio-historical context for psychological theories and evidence.</p>

