

Red Ladder Optimized Learning

Red Ladder Optimized Learning is a private practice psychology service. Fees for our services are covered by most extended health plans. As well, psychological fees may be deductible as a medical expense with Revenue Canada.

We will be glad to discuss this with you.

For more information or to contact us, visit our website at www.redladder.ca, phone us at (204) 88-LEARN (885.3276) or fax us at (204) 489.1748.



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ANXIETY AND LEARNING

One step at a time.



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(204) 88.LEARN or redladder.ca

ANXIETY AND LEARNING

Everyone feels worried from time to time, for example when faced with deadlines, meeting new people, or completing difficult tasks. A small amount of anxiety actually improves performance on many tasks.

However, many people suffer from anxiety problems which reduce the quality of their lives and compromise their academic and occupational performance.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) is diagnosed when an individual worries excessively about more than one circumstance. A child or adult with this disorder experiences free-floating worry most of the time. The worries may be unrealistic and far-fetched, but the person who suffers with GAD fixates on them and cannot get them out of their mind. Physical symptoms can include tenseness in the body, a lump in the throat, trouble falling asleep, and difficulty concentrating. It is very hard for a person with GAD to be still and feel relaxed.

Panic Disorder

In Panic Disorder a person experiences periods of unexpected intense fear and dread, usually accompanied by shortness of breath, dizziness, increased heart rate, trembling and shaking, hot or cold flushes, and a sense of detachment. People experiencing a panic attack may feel like they are "going crazy" or about to die, and may be terrified of losing control.

Social Anxiety Disorder

Social Anxiety Disorder or social phobia is an intense fear of being criticized or evaluated by other people. Individuals with social anxiety are nervous, anxious, and afraid of many social and performance situations. Social phobia is often perceived as shyness in young children. Although those affected by social phobia may express a wish to be sociable, their anxiety about not performing well around others is strong enough that it may undo their best efforts. Their self-consciousness and shyness feels overwhelming and they freeze up when they meet new people, especially those in positions of authority. Because they feel so uncomfortable in social situations, people with this disorder tend to avoid these types of situations.

Other Anxiety Disorders

There are many other forms of anxiety not mentioned in this brochure. For example, specific phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder are considered anxiety disorders. All can have a serious negative impact upon learning and life in general.

Anxiety and Learning

Excessive worry and anxiety can interfere with learning. Anxiety can reduce a person's ability to concentrate and pay attention, to remember, and to retrieve information from memory. Research has clearly shown that the achievement of children with anxiety disorders is less than that of children without anxiety. If anxiety makes socializing difficult, peer relations have the potential to be severely affected. School or work is less interesting and fun for an anxious person.

Evaluation of Anxiety

Evaluation of anxiety can be performed by your doctor, or by a psychologist or psychiatrist. Depending upon the age of the person with anxiety, the nature of his or her worries, and his or her success in school or other parts of life, evaluation may involve interviews with parents, teachers, or others who know the person, as well as a clinical interview with the person himself or herself. Sometimes psychological testing of various kinds is helpful for identifying specifics of the anxiety and directing interventions.

Intervention for Anxiety

Anxiety is treatable. The type of treatment given depends upon the kind of anxiety a person is dealing with, and its severity. Counselling, skills training, family therapy, changes to schooling, as well as medication, can all be considered.

Want to know more?

If you would like to know more about anxiety and children, feel free to call Red Ladder Optimized Learning, or speak to your child's resource teacher, guidance counsellor or with your doctor.

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