

Outline

Use Neuroscience in the Treatment of Anxiety

**Positives:** We know more about anxiety-based disorders than any other disorders  
Science gives explanations, evidence, authority, destigmatizes difficulties  
**Concerns:** It can be difficult to explain, answer questions  
Clients may feel a lack of responsibility  
Oversimplification is inevitable

Enhancing Engagement in Treatment

Don't neglect the therapeutic relationship!  
Address the challenges of anxious clients  
Remember that strategies are effortful  
Guide the process using client's goals  
Maintain motivation

Neuroplasticity

Define Neuroplasticity in everyday language  
Therapy is about creating a new self  
"Rewiring" as an accessible concept for change  
Re-consolidation: the modification of emotional memories

Identify Two Neural Pathways to Anxiety

Amygdala – bottom-up triggering of emotion, physicality of anxiety  
Cortex – top-down emotion generation based in cognition  
Explain the two pathways to clients  
How anxiety is initiated in each pathway and how pathways influence each other

Client Friendly Explanations

Use illustrations to create concrete understanding  
Fight/flight/freeze responses  
The "language of the amygdala"  
Anxiety and the cortex  
Help clients recognize the two pathways to anxiety

Neuroplasticity in the Amygdala (Essential for all Anxiety Disorders, PTSD, OCD, Depression)

Sleep and the amygdala  
The influence of exercise  
Breathing techniques to reduce activation  
Relaxation, meditation, and yoga to modify responses  
Exposure as opportunities for the amygdala to learn  
Combatting avoidance

When anxiety indicates that the amygdala can learn new responses  
Push through anxiety to change the amygdala

Neuroplasticity in the Cortex (Essential for GAD, SAD, OCD, PTSD, Depression)

"Survival of the busiest" principle—strengthen or weaken specific circuitry  
The healthy (adaptive) use of worry in the cortex  
"You can't erase: You must replace."  
Recognize and modify the impact of uncertainty  
Training correct uses of distraction  
Left hemisphere techniques- cognitive defusion, coping thoughts, fighting anticipation  
Right hemisphere techniques – imagery, music  
Mindfulness and anxiety resistances

Neuroplasticity and Medications for Anxiety Disorders, OCD, PTSD, Depression

Medication's effects in the rewiring process  
The myth of the chemical imbalance  
The danger of sedating the brain with benzodiazepines  
Promoting neuroplasticity with SSRIs, SNRIs  
The effectiveness of CBT and meds

Move Beyond Diagnostic Categories to Focus on Anxiety Pathways

Anxiety is a component of many diagnoses (depression, substance abuse, etc.)  
Amygdala- and cortex-based techniques help in other disorders  
Targeting brain-based symptoms rather than disorders  
Worry, obsessions, rumination respond to similar cortex-based techniques  
Panic, phobic responses, and compulsions respond to amygdala-based techniques

Research, Risks and Limitations

- Empirical versus clinical and anecdotal evidence
- Clinical considerations for specific clients and settings
- Efficacy of particular interventions may vary

Objectives

1. Ascertain the underlying neurological processes that impact anxious symptoms for clients.
2. Develop client engagement in treatment using personalized goals and attending to the therapeutic relationship.
3. Evaluate the differences between amygdala-based and cortex-based anxiety symptoms and identify how these symptoms inform treatment interventions.
4. Communicate strategies for calming and training the amygdala in order to alleviate symptoms of anxiety.
5. Implement methods for teaching clients to retrain the cortex so that anxiety is resisted rather than exacerbated.
6. Analyze how psychotropic medication impacts neuroplasticity in the brain; identify related treatment implications.

**Target Audience:** Social Workers ▪ Psychologists ▪ Counselors ▪ Marriage and Family Therapists ▪ Case Managers  
Addiction Counselors ▪ Therapists ▪ Nurses ▪ Occupational Therapists ▪ Occupational Therapy Assistants  
Speech-Language Therapists ▪ Other Mental Health Professionals

FREE Worksheets

Identifying Anxiety-Igniting Thoughts

By Catherine Pittman, Ph.D. HSPP

FREE Worksheets

Identifying Anxiety-Igniting Thoughts

A practical tool for helping clients recognize their anxiety

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Rewire the Anxious Brain

Neuroscience-Informed Treatment of Anxiety, Panic and Worry

Arlington, TX

Monday, February 11, 2019

Plano, TX

Tuesday, February 12, 2019

Shreveport, LA

Wednesday, February 13, 2019

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Rewire the Anxious Brain

Neuroscience-Informed Treatment of Anxiety, Panic and Worry

Featuring neuroscience and anxiety expert,  
Marwa Azab, Ph.D.

• Apply brain-based strategies for Panic, Social Anxiety, OCD, GAD and PTSD

• Understand the difference between cortex-based and amygdala-based anxiety

• Motivate clients and calm the anxious brain using the power of neuroplasticity

• Increase client engagement by focusing on changing the brain - not simply decreasing anxiety

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Details Inside



# Rewire the Anxious Brain

## Neuroscience-Informed Treatment of Anxiety, Panic and Worry

Join neuroscience and anxiety expert, Marwa Azab, Ph.D., and learn her keys for successful anxiety treatment. Dr. Azab integrates brain-based strategies for calming the anxious mind with client communication techniques that motivate change in your clients. Marwa’s approach promotes adherence to treatment and strengthens the therapeutic alliance - which is essential when working with anxious, worried, traumatized, or obsessive clients.

Dr. Azab will give you proven tools and techniques to:

- Identify and treat the roots of anxiety in both the amygdala and the cortex
- Explain “the language of the amygdala” in an accessible, straight forward way
- Identify how the cortex contributes to anxiety, and empower clients with strategies to resist anxiety-igniting cognitions

Register today for this transformational workshop and put the power of neuroplasticity to work for you and your anxious clients!

### Speaker

**Marwa Azab, Ph.D.,** teaches for the Psychology and Human Development departments at Cal State University, Long Beach, (CSULB). She has also taught for the Biology department at University of California, Irvine (UCI). Marwa studied psychology for many years and completed a masters in Counseling. She has facilitated many groups such as anger management, stress management, interpersonal communication and many others for patients suffering from a variety of mental disorders. After many years of addressing human behaviors from a psychological perspective, she realized that there were blind spots that needed to be satiated from complementary fields. Thus, she completed a PhD. in Biological Sciences with emphasis on Neuroscience. Marwa started life coaching utilizing an interdisciplinary approach that intersects psychology, biology and genetics.

Marwa is a sought after international public speaker who is invited to speak on a variety of interdisciplinary topics, including three TEDx talks. She recently published her first book titled, “Anxiety Disorders: New Science on Mind-Body Connections and Healing” and blogs for Psychology Today, her blog is called “Neuroscience in Everyday Life”. You can connect with her on her Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/DrMarwaAzab](http://www.facebook.com/DrMarwaAzab).

Speaker Disclosures:

Financial: Marwa Azab has an employment relationship with Cal State University, Long Beach. She receives a speaking honorarium from PESI, Inc.

Non-financial: Marwa Azab writes a blog for Psychology Today called “Neuroscience in Everyday Life.”

**BECOME CERTIFIED!**



This course counts toward the educational hours required for certification or Recertification as a Certified Clinical Anxiety Treatment Professional (CCATP).

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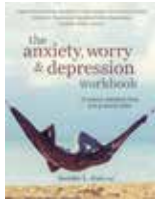
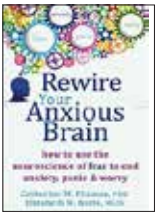
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*How to Use the Neuroscience of Fear to End Anxiety, Panic, and Worry*

By Catherine Pittman, Ph.D., HSPP & Elizabeth M. Karle, MLIS

Do you ever wonder what is happening inside your brain when you feel anxious, panicked, and worried? In *Rewire Your Anxious Brain*, psychologist Catherine Pittman and author Elizabeth Karle offer a unique, evidence-based solution to overcoming anxiety based in cutting-edge neuroscience and research.

#### The Anxiety, Worry & Depression Workbook

*65 Exercises, Worksheets & Tips to Improve Mood and Feel Better*

By Jennifer L. Abel, Ph.D.

Jennifer Abel, PhD, has compiled **an interactive workbook** that will help you tame anxiety, worry and depression. Backed with science and over 25 years of clinical experience, this easy-to-use guide is full of **practical, proven worksheets, self-monitoring forms, exercises and scripts** for you to start changing your habits, and start changing your life.

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**LOUISIANA SOCIAL WORKERS:** This program was approved for 6.25 (Clinical) contact hours of continuing education credit by the National Association of Social Workers, Louisiana Chapter as authorized by the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners.

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