

Treating Children, Adolescents, and Teens With Anxiety and Depression

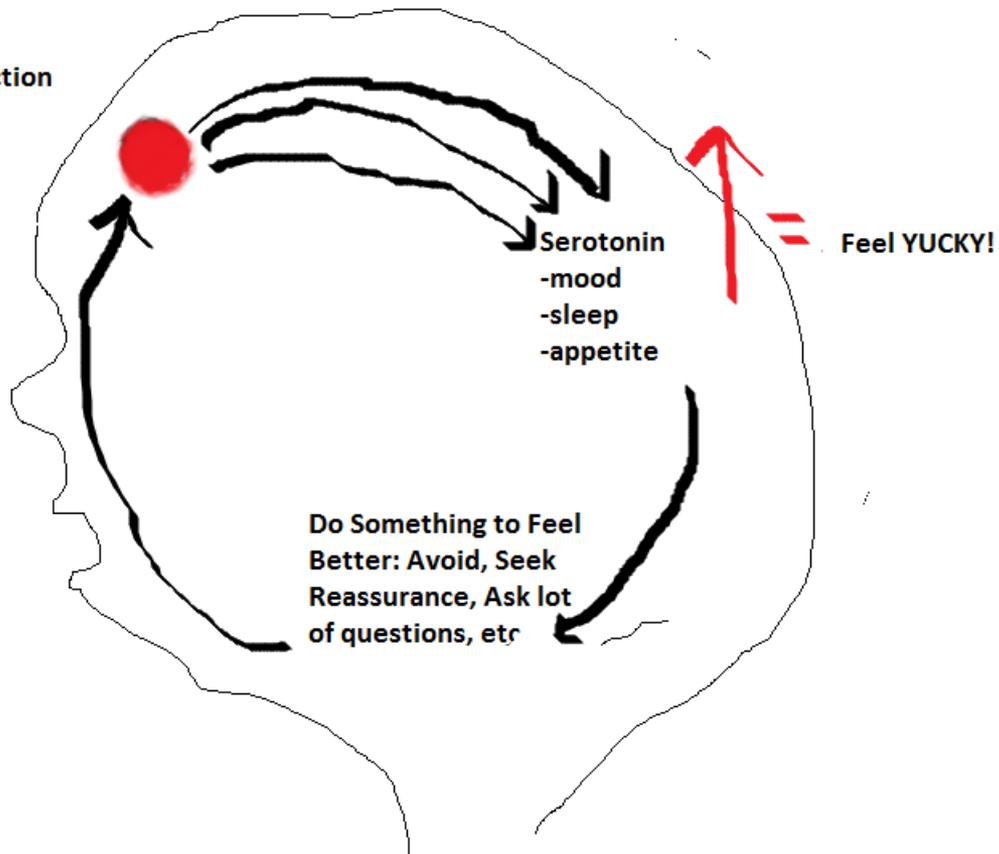
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Why Is This Happening

- Neurobiological
- Talking to the child about anxiety
 - Being afraid isn't the same thing as being in danger
- Explanation of the brain
 - Adolescents, teens and parents
- Caretakers' role in anxiety
 - Parents, grandparents, babysitters, teachers

Error Detection System

Error Detection System



Talking to the child

- Explanations for young children:
worry bully, tomato plants, annoying bug
 - Use toys/puppets to role play talking back with facts not fears.
- Explanation for older kids/teens:
alarm system sending out a false alarm
 - Use facts to turn down the volume of fear
 - Make smarter decisions about the situation

Evidenced Based Treatment

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy with a twist!

- Cognitive
 - embrace suffering
 - stay in the grey
 - choose not to know
- Exposure and Response Prevention
 - start easy
 - work towards more difficult tasks
 - chase after the fear

Other Effective Treatments

- Mindfulness
 - acceptance vs. resistance
- Somatic Management
 - breathing, muscle relaxation
- Exercise
- Family Therapy
 - involve the parents
- Medication-SSRI

Parental Behavior and Anxiety

- Overprotection
- Over control
- Modeling and reinforcing of avoidance
- Rescue from negative outcomes
- Inconsistent rewards/consequences

Involving Parents

- What is not helpful
 - Solving the problem for the child
 - Sharing your anxiety/worry with the child
 - Controlling the situation for the child
 - Rescuing the child from potential suffering

Involving the Parents

- What is helpful
 - Constructive feedback
 - Skill building
 - Sharing stories about doing things even though they feel bad
 - Being courageous yourself
 - Celebrating success

Coaching Through an Exposure

- Do not reassure an anxious child
 - Validate their discomfort
 - Tolerance of discomfort
 - Skill development
- Be a cheerleader
 - Anxiety tolerance
 - anxiety decreases with exposure
- Challenge child to feel worse
 - Look at a spider then touch the spider

Coaching Through An Exposure

- Change the emotion
 - Anger, frustration, resistance give anxiety power
 - Laughter deflates it!
- Rate anxiety level from 1-10
 - 10 = panic attack, 1 = calm
 - Stay with feeling until anxiety decreases 50%
 - Challenge child feel worse and tolerate it some
- Reward hard work!
 - Immediate and connected to goal behavior
 - Affects outcome

Questions?