

Don't Try Harder, Try Different

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Four Basic Fears

Threats to the integrity of:

- *Physical Status

- *Mental Status

- *Social Status

- *Spiritual Status

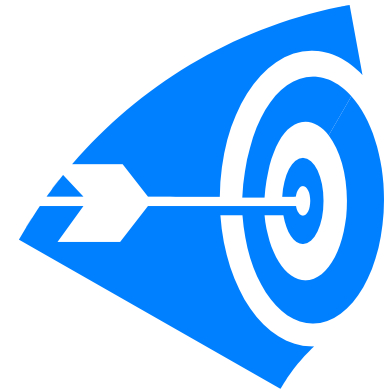
Common Distortions

- **Severity**
 - It will be the worst thing in the world and I will die.
- **Probability**
 - It will definitely happen, no question.
- **Efficacy**
 - I will not be able to handle it.

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Should

- Should
 - When was the last time you used the word *should* to describe something that went well?
 - *Should* is always negative.
 - *Should* is an opinion.
 - What if we made *shoulds* come true?



Can't - vs. -Won't

- If you say that you *can't* do something, then that is exactly what is going to happen.
- If you *can't* do it, then no therapist or medication will ever be able to help you with it.
- *Can't* implies that you lack the ability to do something.
- Stress and Anxiety are not about something you *can't* do, they are about something that you *won't* do.

Practice makes _____

- Practice does not make perfect.
- There is no such thing as perfect.
- Example – Name the perfect appetizer.
- Practice makes *ROUTINE*.
- *Routines* can be modified – some work for you and some do not. The goal of therapy is to modify the ones that are not working for you.

Control is an Illusion

- Control is often attempted through worry.
- Worry serves two functions –
 - If I worry about something hard enough, I can prevent it from happening.
 - If I worry about everything bad that might happen, then I can be prepared for everything bad that might happen, so then I won't need to worry about it anymore.

Specialness

- The rules of the world apply to me differently than they do to the other 6.5 billion people that live on the planet.
- Try these exercises:
 - Today, treat yourself as if you were your very best friend or most cherished loved one.
 - Tomorrow, treat everyone like you would normally treat yourself (or maybe just think it in your head instead).

Neutrality

- From an anxiety perspective, nothing is actually scary or horrible or wonderful or great.
- Everything that anyone is anxious about is actually neutral.
- Elevator example.

Perception

- Everything that people are anxious about is subject to their perception or opinion.

Anxiety in reverse

- Should
- Can't
- Perfect
- Control
- Specialness
- Neutral
- Perception

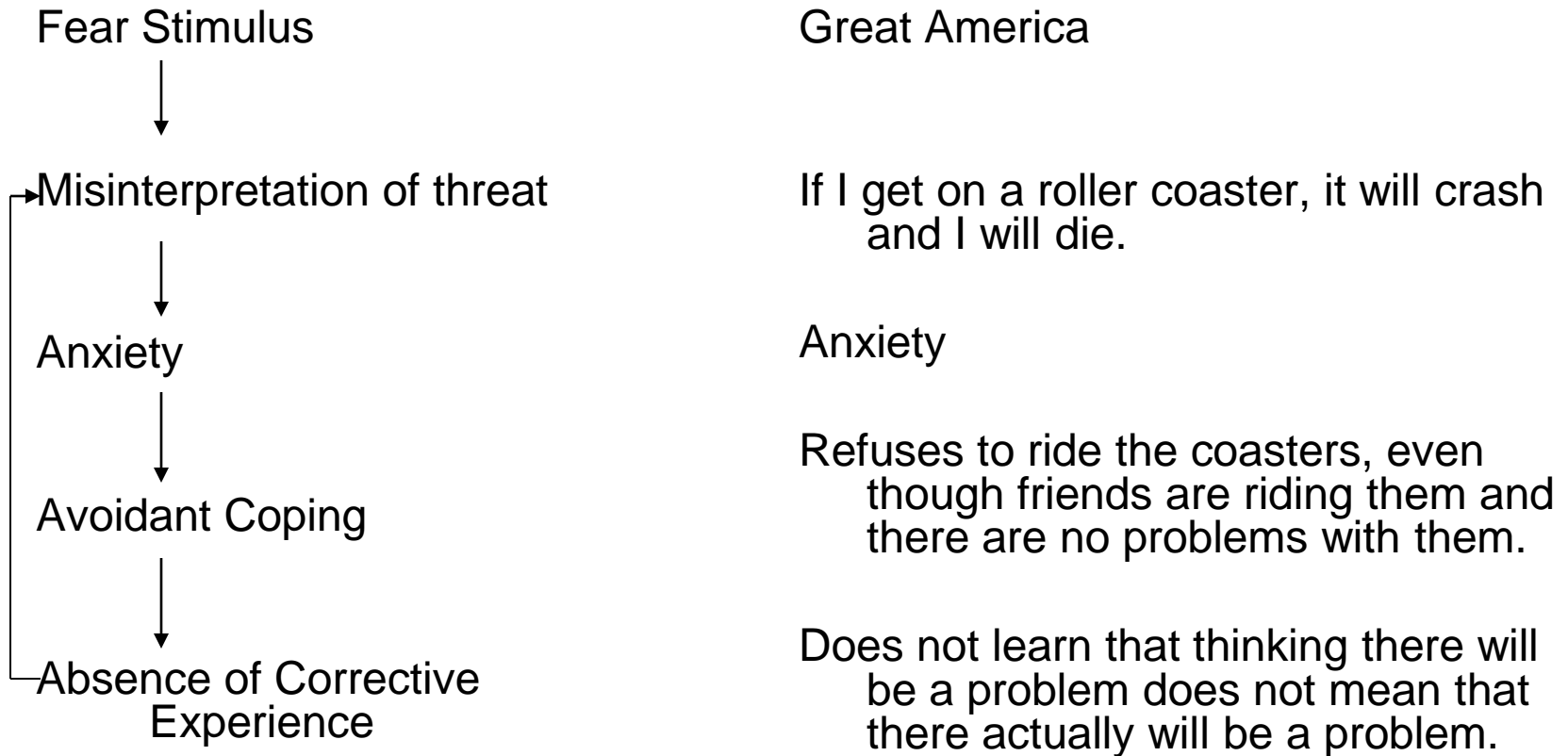
What maintains Stress?

- Avoidance
- Reassurance seeking

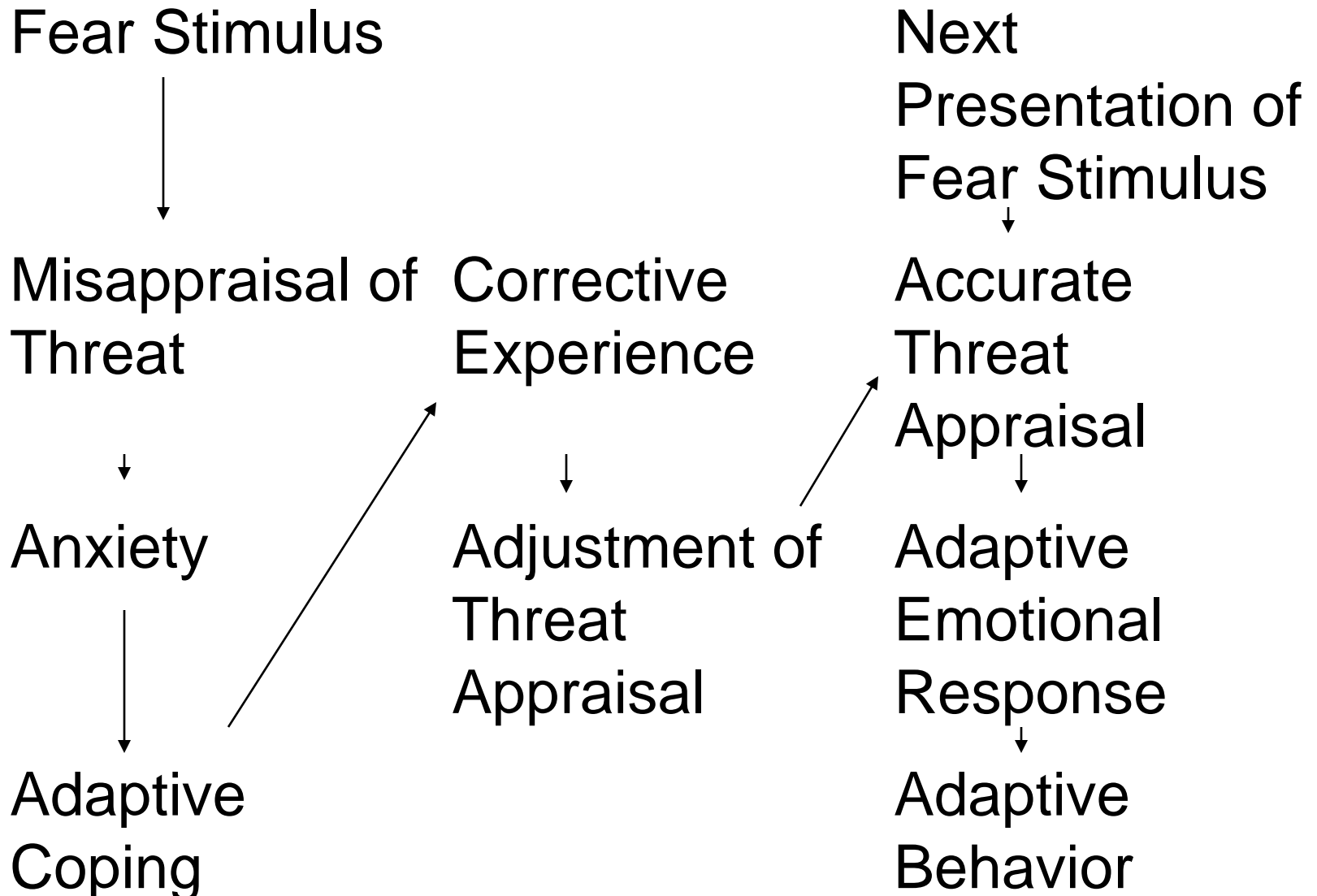
Rewards

- *Short Term* - People with anxiety want to feel good right now, so they do rituals to get that immediate good feeling, or they avoid what it is they are afraid of, or seek a great deal of reassurance.
- *Long Term* - In order to overcome anxiety, you need to practice being anxious right now so that you can learn that you can handle the anxiety. That anxiety will dissipate, therefore allowing you to feel better in the long run.

CBT Model of Stress: Phobia Example



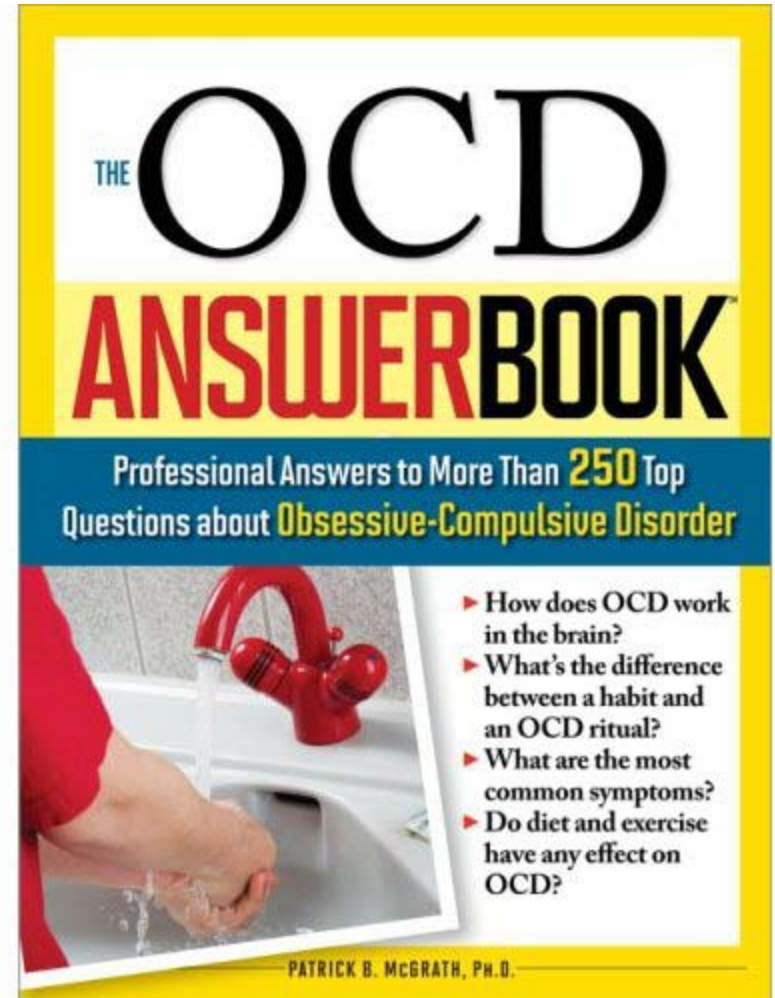
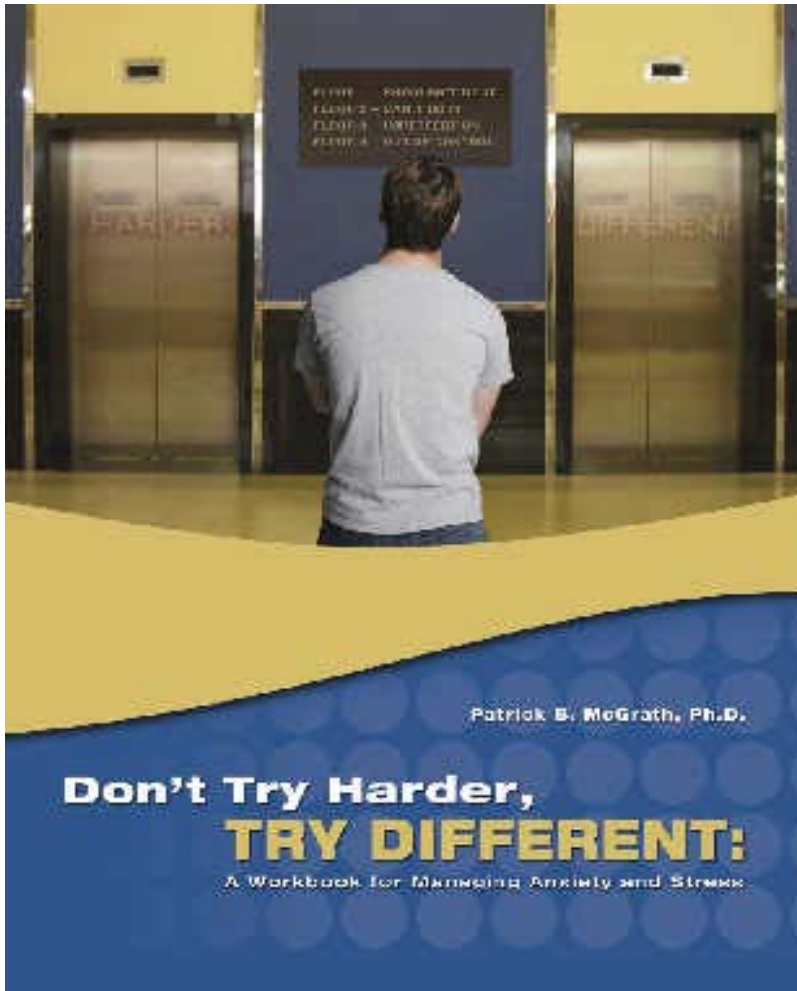
Correction of a Potential Stressor



Exposure and Response Prevention

- Make a list of feared stimuli/situations.
- Arrange stimuli in hierarchical fashion.
- Develop and implement plan of systematic exposure to stimuli/situations, using the hierarchy.
- Goal is to get a person to confront their fears and learn that they can handle the situation.
- The exposure is assisted by the therapist and is never forced on the patient.

Books by Dr. McGrath



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