

Anxiety in the Black Community

Topaz Sampson, MD
Array Behavioral Care

April 15, 2021



Central East (HHS Region 3)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

MHTTC Purpose

The MHTTC Network vision is to unify science, education and service to transform lives through evidence-based and promising treatment and recovery practices in a recovery-oriented system of care.

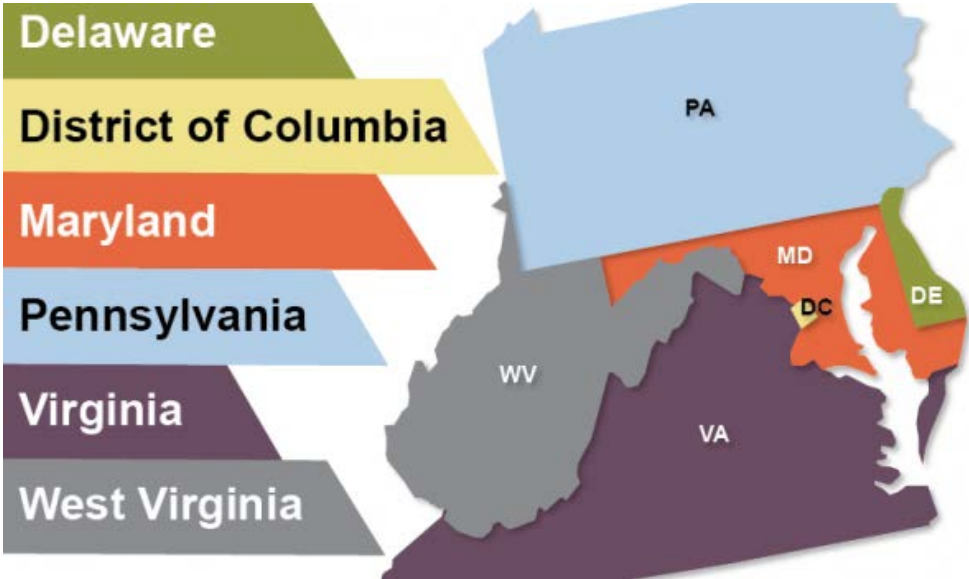


Central East MHTTC Goals

Funded by SAMHSA to:

- **Accelerate** the adoption and implementation of mental health related evidence-based practices
- **Heighten** the awareness, knowledge, and skills of the behavioral health workforce
- **Foster** alliances among culturally diverse practitioners, researchers, policy makers, family members, and consumers
- **Ensure** the availability and delivery of publicly available, free of charge, training and technical assistance

Central East Region 3



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Anxiety in the Black Community

Topaz Sampson, MD
Secretary, Black Psychiatrists of America

Health Equity Webinar Series

April 15, 2021


Moderator:
Annelle B. Primm, MD, MPH
Black Psychiatrists of America, Council of Elders

COVID-19: Unprecedented Disaster

- Disproportionate impact on Black and other marginalized communities with disparate levels of exposure, illness, death, and unemployment superimposed on layers of pre-existing inequities
- Distancing from loved ones, including those who are sick and dying, intensifies stress and despair
- Rise in substance use, depression, and anxiety

Today's Program

- Special thanks to the Danya Institute for its support of this fourth of several webinars in the Black Psychiatrists of America Health Equity Series
- Today's program features Topaz Sampson, MD, Secretary of the Black Psychiatrists of America



Anxiety in the Black Community

By: Topaz Sampson, MD

Objectives

- Define the types of Anxiety Disorders
- Identify the signs and symptoms of Anxiety Disorders
- Discuss Pharmacologic treatment
- Discuss Non-pharmacologic treatment

The Facts about Anxiety

- Anxiety is a normal reaction to stress
- Alerts us to danger, helps us prepare and pay attention
- “Fight or Flight”



The Facts about Anxiety cont.'d

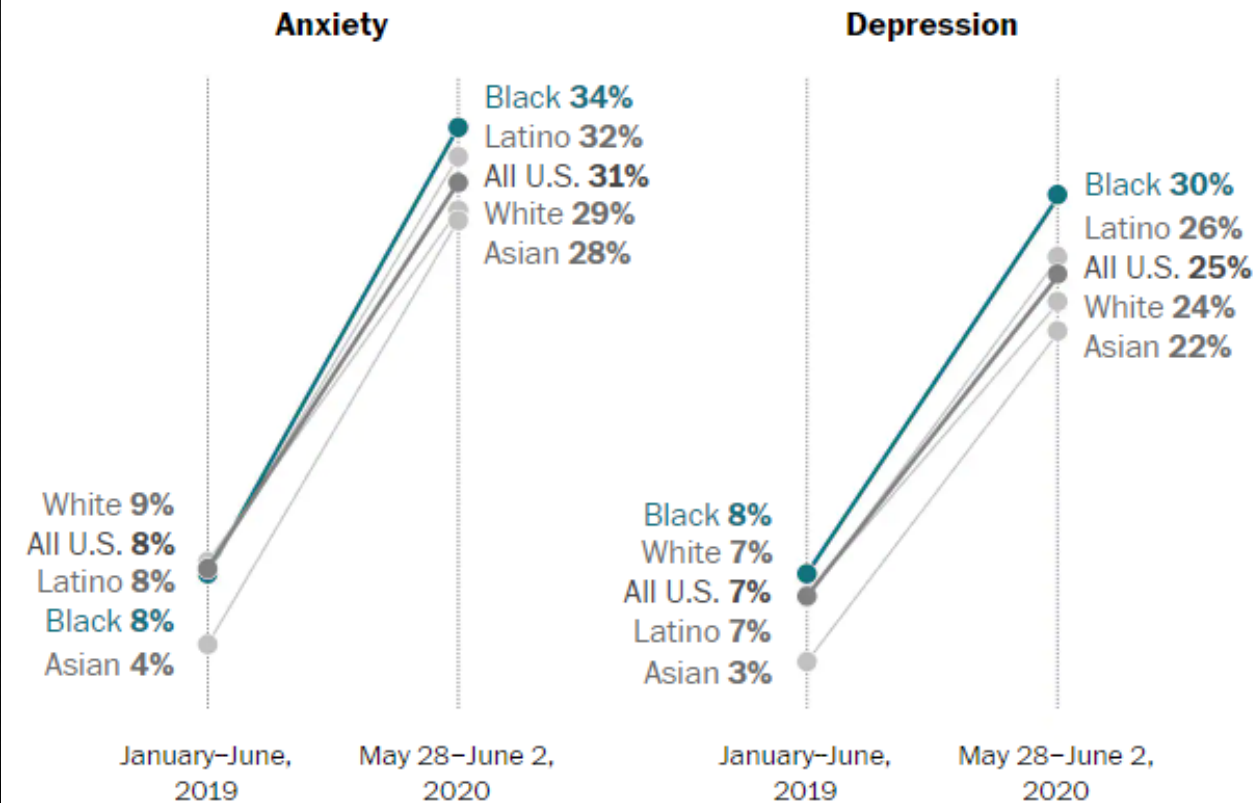


- **Anxiety becomes disordered** when it becomes excessive fear
- **Anxiety Disorders** interfere with work, school and relationships
- Anxiety Disorders are the **MOST COMMON** mental disorder
- Affects more than 25 million Americans
- Affect 30% of adults during some part of their lives

The Facts about Anxiety in the Black Community

Anxiety and depression symptoms have more than tripled since 2019, with black Americans shouldering the heaviest burden

Percent screening positive for anxiety or depression



Types of Anxiety Disorders

- Specific Phobia: 7-9%
- Social Anxiety Disorder: 7%
- Panic Disorder: 2-3%
- Agoraphobia: 2%
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder: 2%
- Separation Anxiety Disorder: 1-2%



Which Anxiety Disorder is most common in **Black Community**?

- A) Specific Phobia
- B) Social Anxiety
- C) Panic Disorder
- D) Agoraphobia
- E) Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- F) Separation Anxiety

Anxiety Disorders: Specific Phobia

- A specific phobia is excessive and persistent **fear of a specific object, situation or activity**
- People know their fear is excessive, but they can't overcome it
- People may go extreme lengths to avoid what they fear ie **fear of flying or spiders**



Anxiety Disorders: **Social Anxiety**



- A person with social anxiety disorder has significant anxiety and discomfort about being:
 - **Embarrassed, humiliated, rejected or looked down in social interactions**
- People with this disorder will avoid the situation
- Common examples are: **public speaking, meeting new people, dining in public**
- Must cause problems with daily functioning for at least **6 mos.**

Discrimination and social anxiety disorder among African-Americans, Caribbean blacks, and non-Hispanic whites

Debra Siegel Levine ¹, Joseph A Himle, Jamie M Abelson, Niki Matusko, Nikhil Dhawan, Robert Joseph Taylor


Affiliations + expand

PMID: 24566508 DOI: [10.1097/NMD.0000000000000099](https://doi.org/10.1097/NMD.0000000000000099)


Abstract

The present study investigated the relationship between discrimination and social anxiety disorder (SAD) in a sample of African-Americans, Caribbean blacks, and non-Hispanic whites using the National Survey of American Life, the most comprehensive study of psychopathology among American blacks to date (N = 6082). Previous work has highlighted a strong association between discrimination and mental health symptoms (Keith, Lincoln, Taylor, and Jackson [Sex Roles 62:48-59,]; Kessler, Mickelson, and Williams [J Health Soc Behav 40:208-230, 1999]; Soto, Dawson-Andoh, and BeLue [J Anxiety Disord 25:258-265,]). However, few studies have examined the effects of particular types of discrimination on specific anxiety disorders or among different black subgroups. **In this study, logistic regression analyses indicated that everyday but not major experiences of discrimination are associated with SAD for African-Americans, Caribbean blacks, and non-Hispanic whites.** This study adds to the extant literature by demonstrating that specific types of discrimination may be uniquely associated with SAD for different ethnic/racial groups.


The Relationship Between Social Anxiety and Internalized Racism in Black Young Adults

Kline, Emily A., MA  | Warner, Carrie Masia, PhD | Grapin, Sally L., PhD | Reyes-Portillo, Jazmin A., PhD | Bixter, Michael T., PhD | Cunningham, DeVante J., MPH, MA | Mahmud, Farah, MS | Singh, Tanya, MA | Weeks, Cody, MA


Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy DOI: 10.1891/JCPSY-D-20-00030


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
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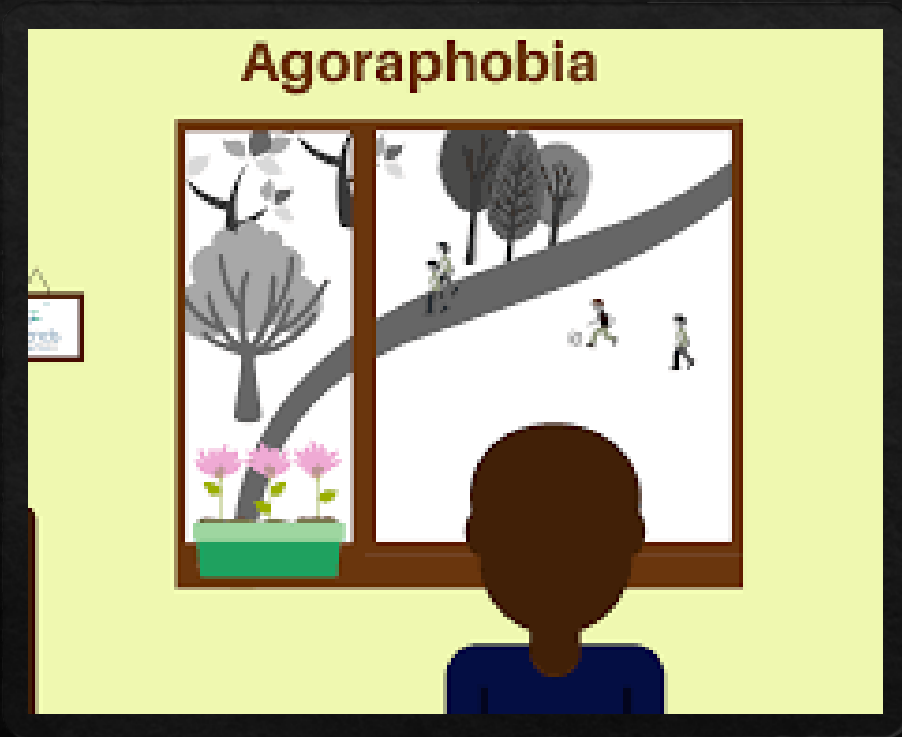
The study examined the relationships between social anxiety (SA), generalized anxiety (GA), and depression with racial microaggressions and internalized racism (IR) among Black young adults. Given SA's core features, we expected it to have a unique association with IR, and to moderate the connection between racial microaggressions and IR. Participants were 182 Black university students who completed measures of SA, GA, depressive symptoms, racial microaggressions, and IR. **Linear regression models indicated that IR was a significant predictor of SA, but not GA or depression.** Racial microaggressions were only positively associated with depressive symptoms. SA and racial microaggressions each predicted IR, but no interaction was found. Black young adults with elevated concerns of others' evaluation may be more prone to accepting negative stereotypes about one's racial group.

Anxiety Disorders: **Panic Disorder**

- The core symptom of panic disorder is **recurring panic attacks**
- Panic attack- an sudden overwhelming combination of physical and psychological distress



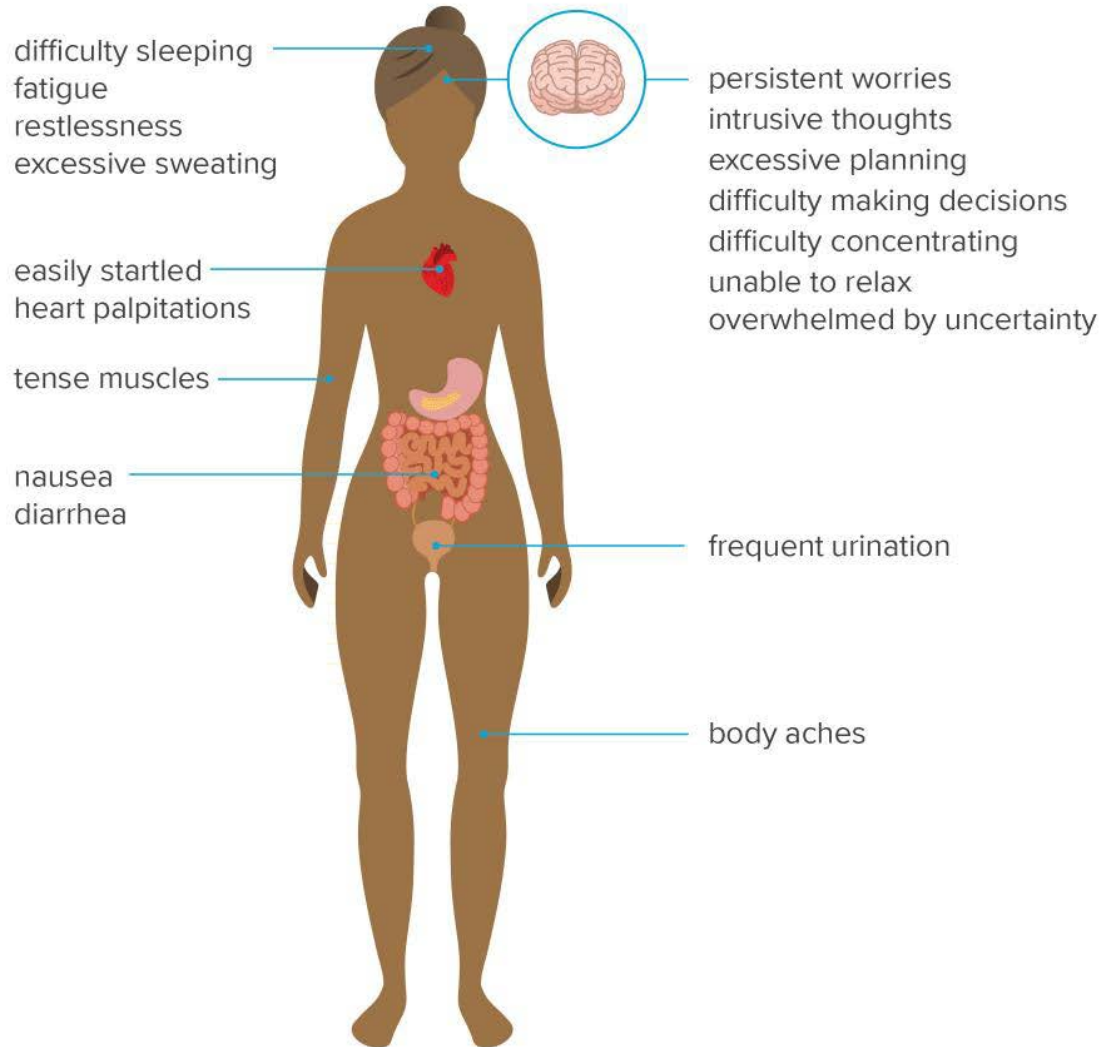
Anxiety Disorders: **Agoraphobia**



- Agoraphobia is fear of being in situations **where escape may be difficult**
- A person with agoraphobia experiences fear in **2 or more** of the following situations:
 - Using public transportation
 - Being in open spaces
 - Being in enclosed spaces
 - Standing in line or being in a crowd
 - Being outside the home alone
- Untreated agoraphobia may become **so serious a person may not leave house**

Effects on the Body

Generalized Anxiety Disorder



Anxiety Disorders: Generalized Anxiety

- Generalized anxiety disorder involves excessive worry on everyday things such as job responsibilities, family health or minor matters such as chores, car repairs or appointments
- **Interferes with daily activities**
- This is the person who is worried excessively about **EVERYTHING**

Anxiety Disorders: Separation Anxiety

- Excessive fearfulness about separation from those with whom he or she is attached.
- This feeling is beyond what is appropriate for the persons' age (at least 4 weeks in children and 6 mos in adults)
- This person may be persistently worried about losing the person closest to them, refuse to sleep away from home or without that person, or may experience nightmares about separation
- Physical symptoms may develop in childhood but can carry through adulthood



Pharmacologic Treatment



- The **good news** is there is treatment!
- Make sure no physical symptoms causing anxiety i.e. Hyperthyroidism
- Medications Types:
 - Anti-anxiety (generally prescribed for a short period of time)
 - **Antidepressants** (ie SNRIs)
 - Beta blockers
- Honorable Mentions: **Hydroxyzine and Gabapentin!**

Non-Pharmacologic Treatment

- Psychotherapy or “talk therapy”
 - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT): Thoughts → Feelings → Behaviors
- Meditation
- Exercise i.e. Yoga
- Avoid Caffeine!

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- American Psychiatry Association. 2017. What are Anxiety Disorders. Psychiatry.org
- Fowers A., Wan W. 2020 June 2012. Depression and Anxiety Spiked among Black Americans After George Floyd's Death. Washington Post.
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