

Anxiety in Children and Adolescents

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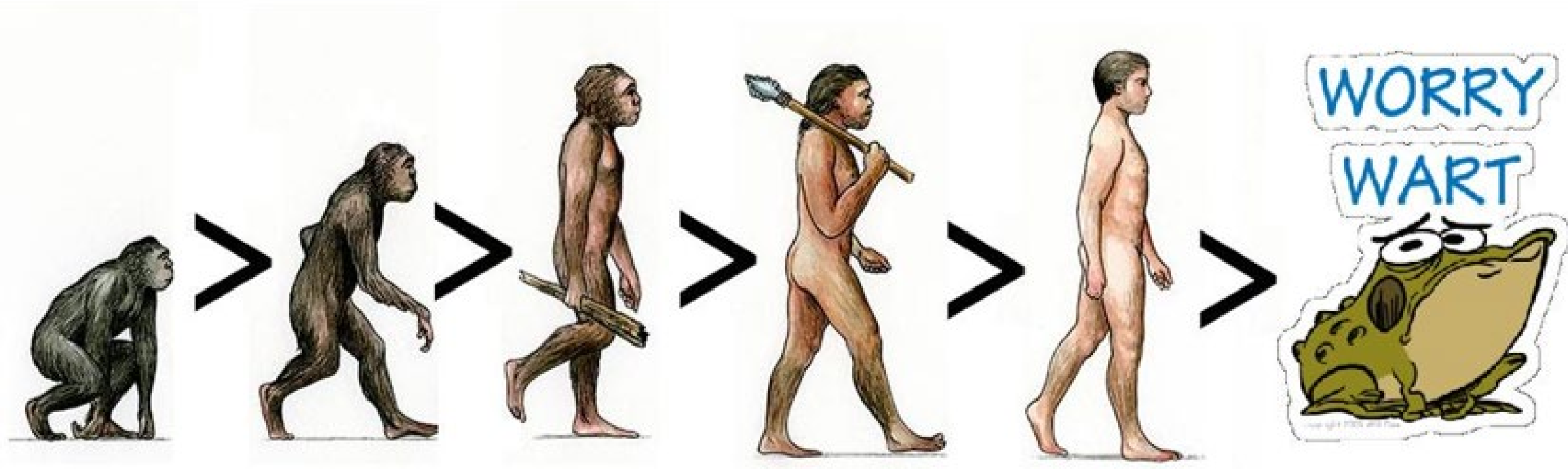
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Agenda

- Overview of anxiety and various presentations
- Introduce cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)
- Discuss strategies for responding to children who feel anxious
- Q&A



What is Anxiety?



Fear and anxiety keep us alive

Symptoms of Anxiety



Emotional

Anxiety, fear, not feeling "right", panicky, on edge



Physiological

Headaches, stomachaches, butterflies, nausea, tension, restlessness, BP/HR, lightheadedness



Cognitive

Negative outcomes, future oriented, exaggeration of outcomes and consequences
Recurrent, intrusive thoughts



Behavioral

Avoidance, clinging, withdrawing, aggression, oppositional, inattention



Helpful Anxiety versus Anxiety Disorders

Anxiety is helpful when it

- Protects children from harm
- Helps keep children stay focused and motivated

Anxiety disorders occur when children

- Experience anxiety in situations that are not dangerous
- Experience *too much* anxiety
- Interferes with day to day
- Avoids or has trouble making friends
- Leads to poorer grades
- Leads to family conflict
- Misses out on other important parts of childhood
- Leads to long term emotional and physical consequences

Types of Anxiety Disorders

Generalized Anxiety Disorder

- A lot of worry about many things
 - School, health, something bad happening
 - Excessive
 - Uncontrollable
 - Hard to pay attention because of the worry



Social Anxiety Disorder

- Fear of being evaluated negatively or embarrassed in social and performance situations
- Fear of judgment or being teased
- Often leads to avoidance
- Common anxiety disorder- think public speaking



Panic Disorder

- Repeated abrupt onset of physiological symptoms
 - “Out of the blue”
- Fear that the panic and anxiety symptoms themselves are threatening
 - “I am having a heart attack”
- Worry that the panic attack will happen again



Separation Anxiety Disorder

- Anxiety from being away from attachment figures
- Fear that harm will come to themselves or loved one
- Avoidance, reassurance seeking, sleep disturbance, physical symptoms



Specific Phobia

- Irrational and intense fear of certain, specific things
 - Snakes
 - Bugs
 - Dogs
 - Heights
 - Storms
 - Blood

Most people have irrational fears- to be a disorder, the fear has to interfere with life in some way



Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

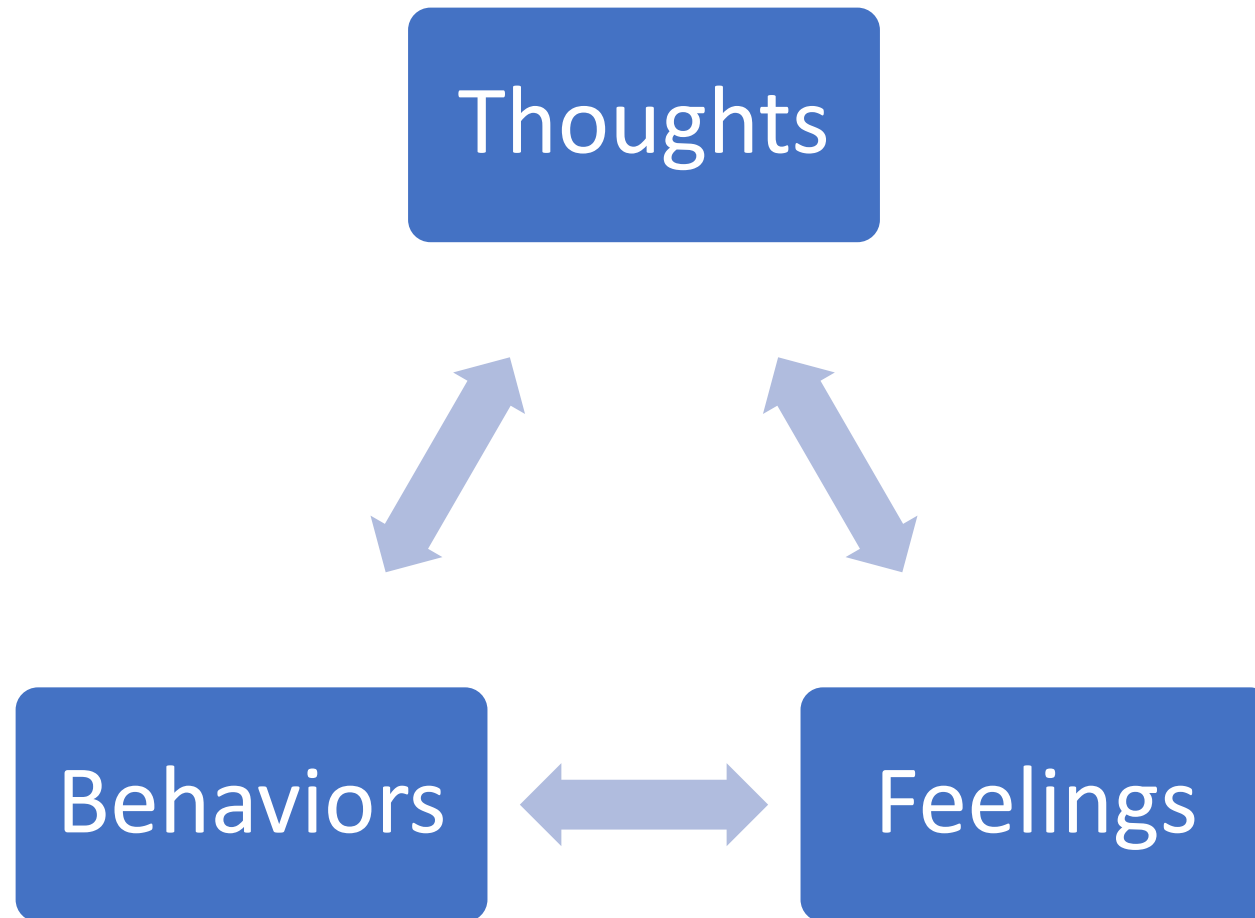
- Obsessions
 - Intrusive thoughts, images, or impulses that lead to anxiety/distress
- Compulsions (Rituals)
 - Repetitive behavior (mental or physical) to reduce anxiety/distress
- Examples:
 - Contamination
 - Harm
 - Right/Wrong
 - Symmetry and Exactness





Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

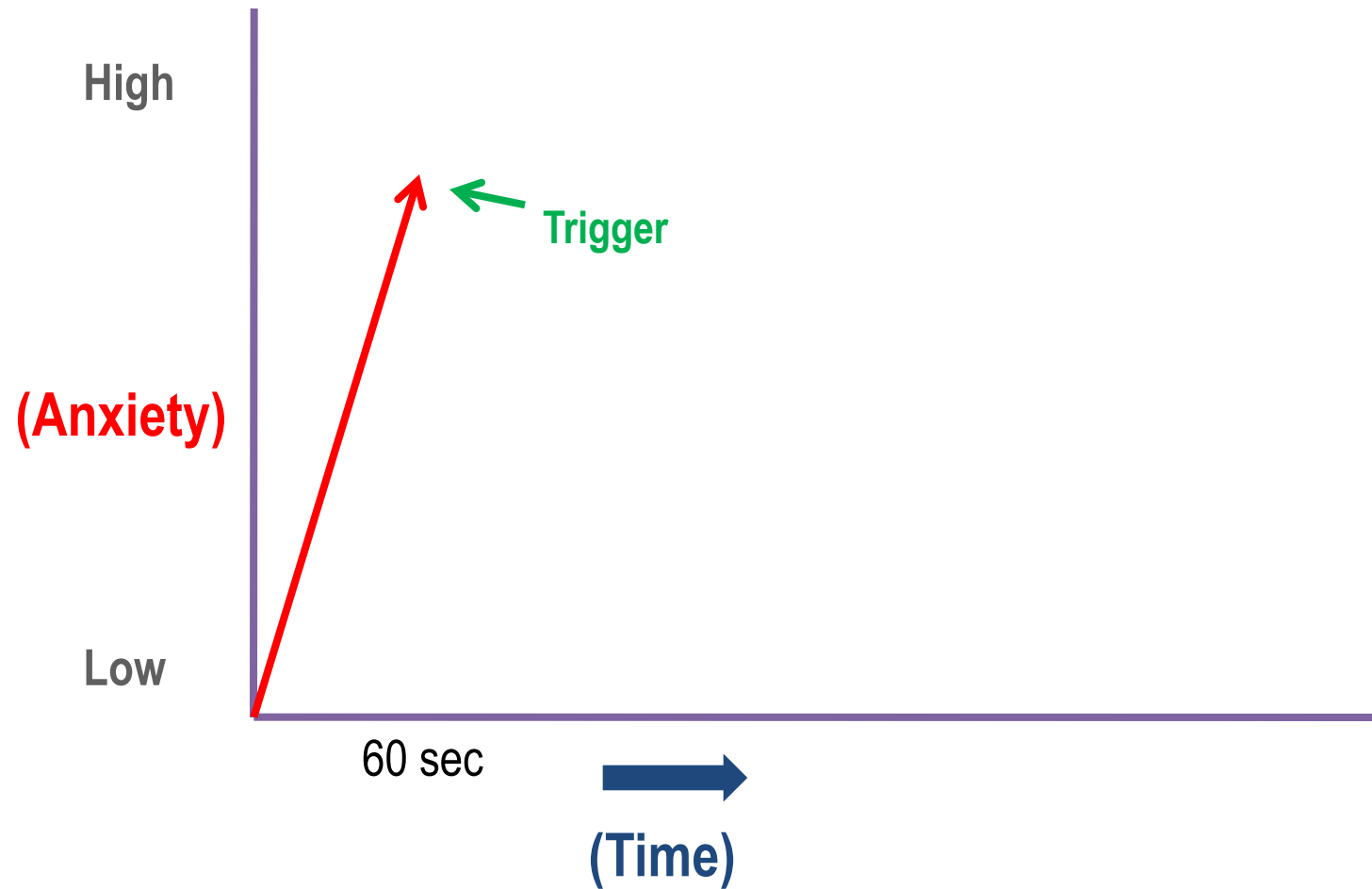
CBT Triangle



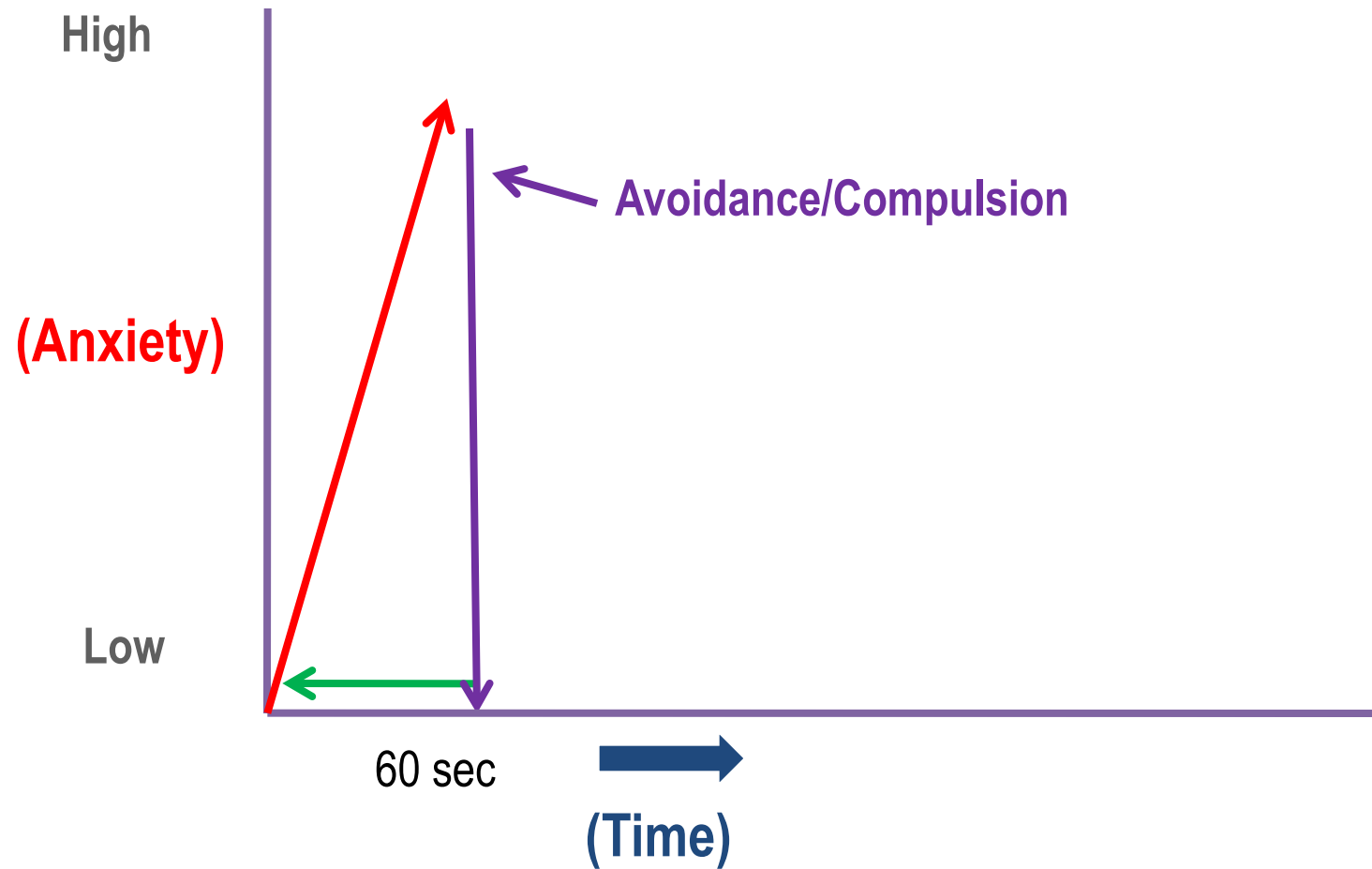
Remember
the Cycle?



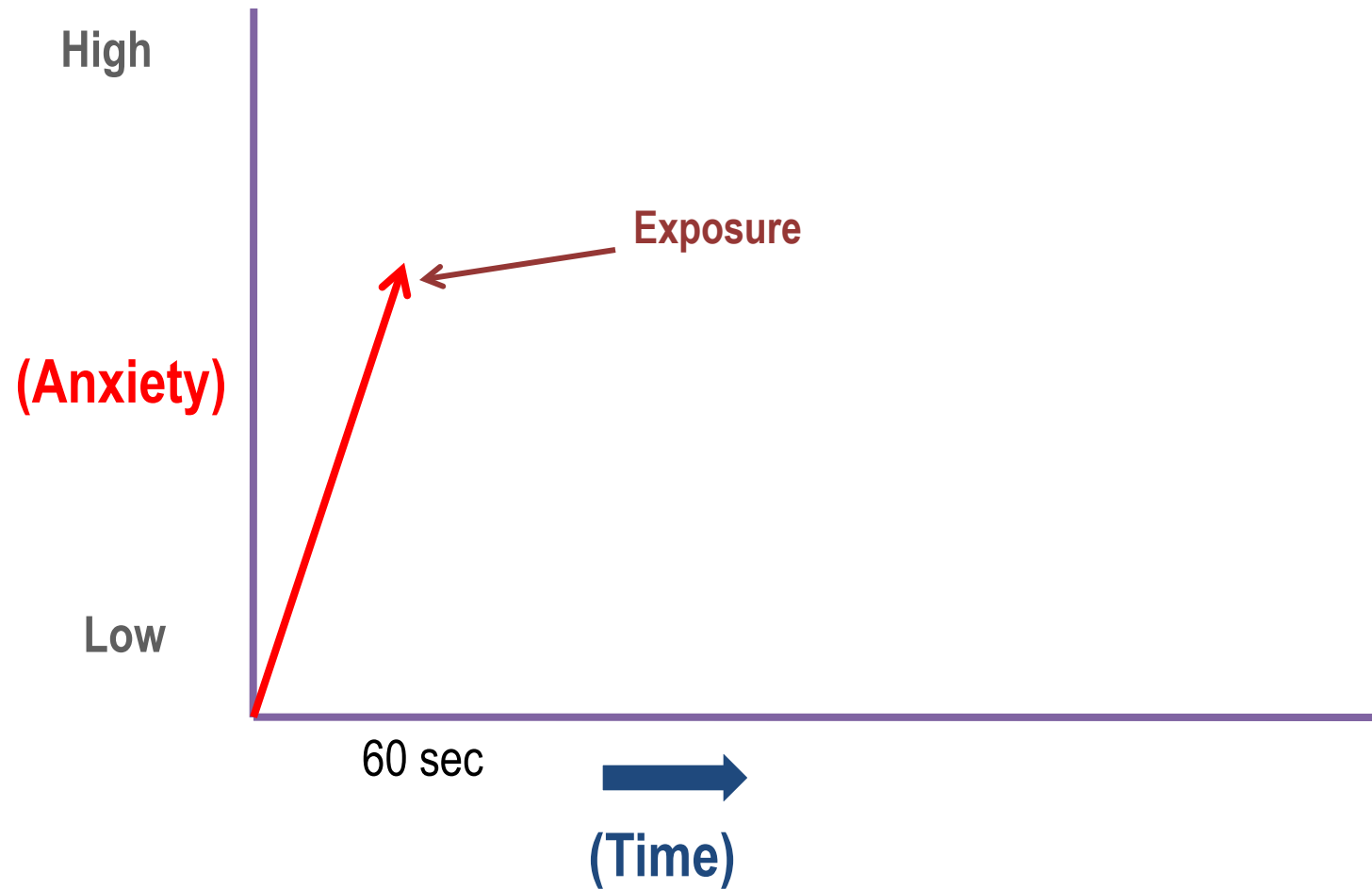
Typical Anxiety Scenario



Typical Anxiety Scenario



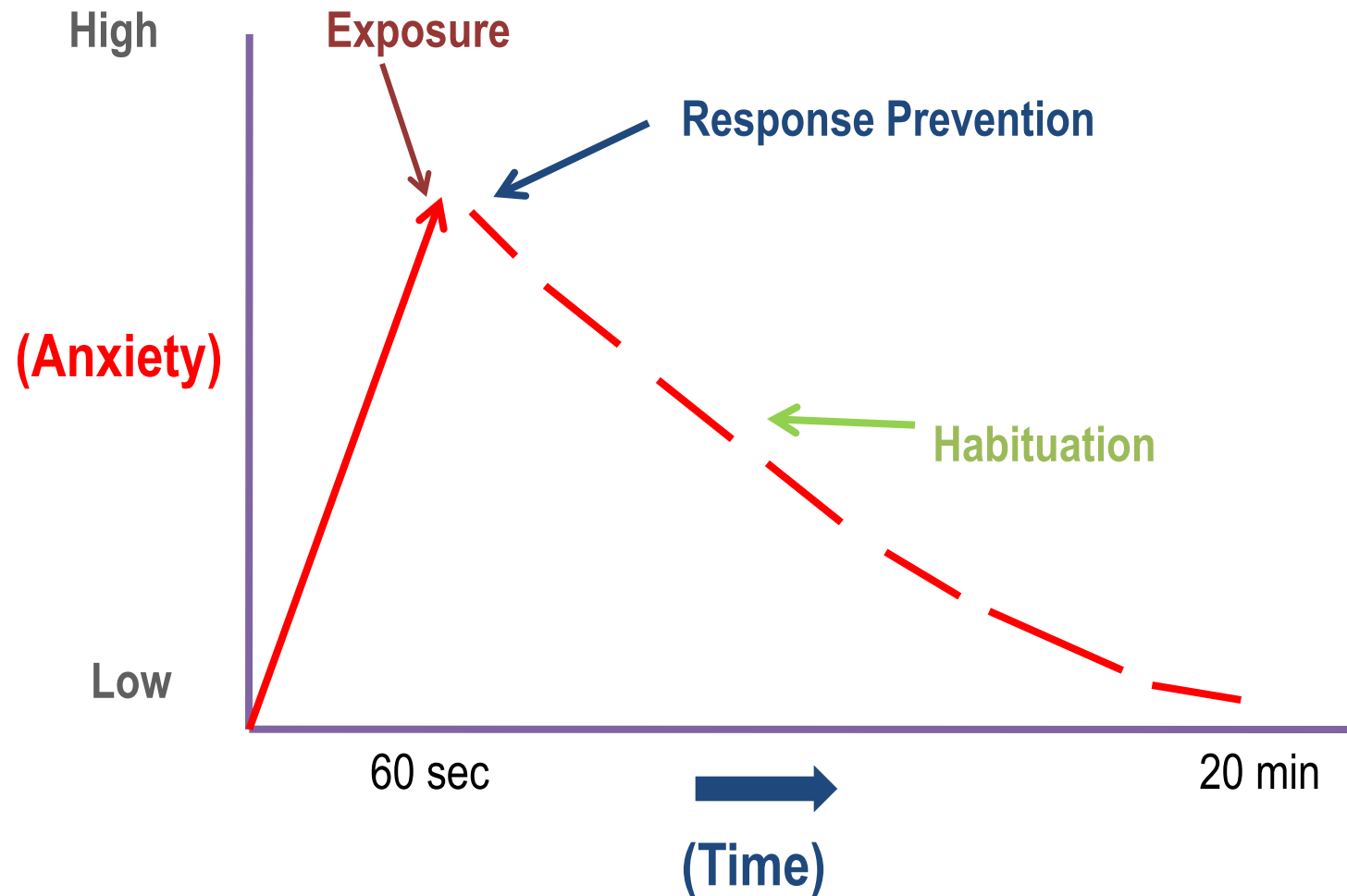
Exposure and Response Prevention



Exposure

- Engaging in a task that leads to anxiety. You go towards the feared situation instead of avoiding it
 - Needs to be **structured**
 - Needs to be **repetitive**
 - Needs to be **gradual**
 - Need to learn from the exposure!!!

ERP Within Trial Habituation

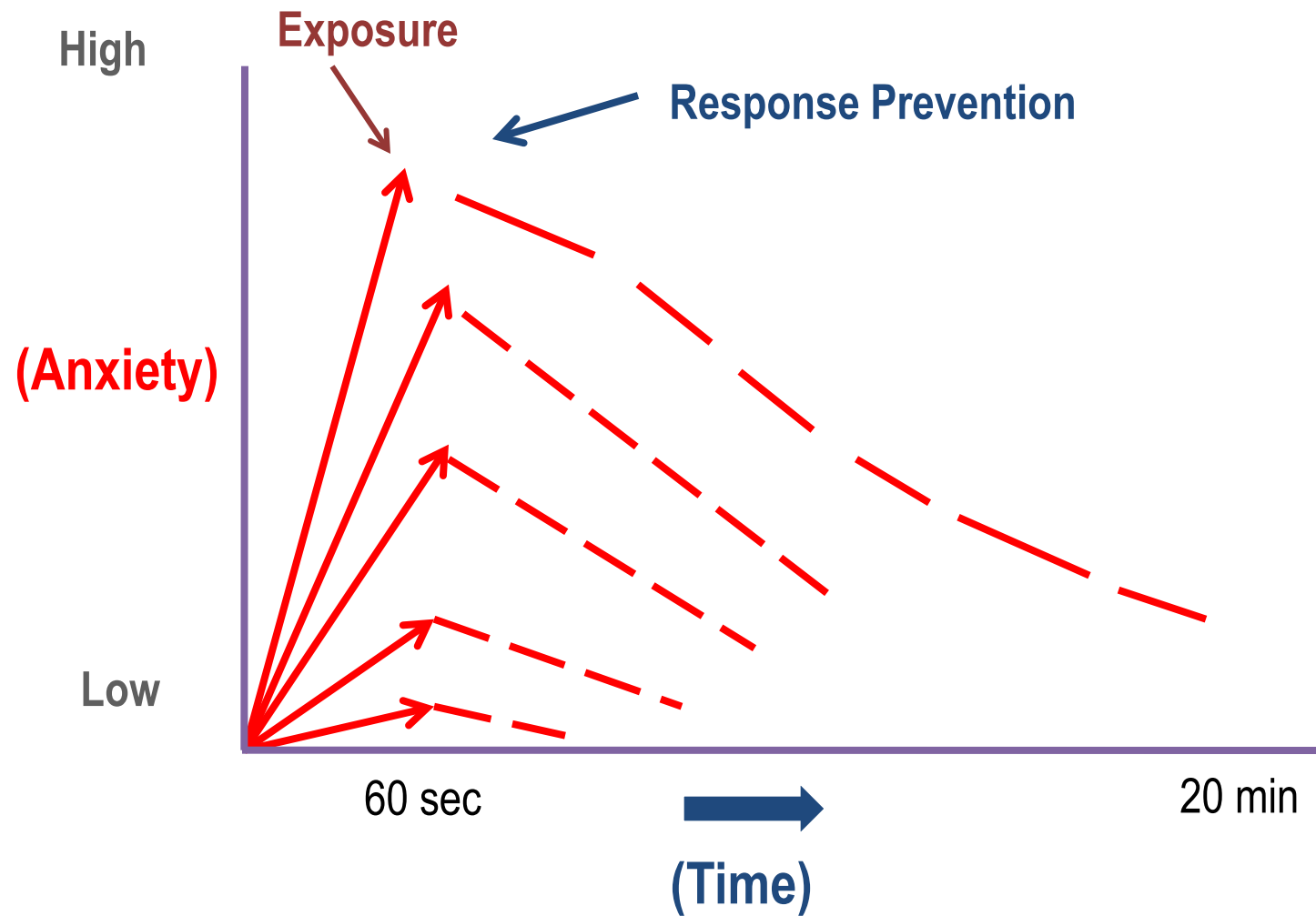


Response Prevention

- Prevent all avoidance, safety behaviors, and compulsions (rituals)
 - Avoidance
 - Safety behavior
 - Order at restaurant and don't make eye contact
 - Ask reassurance questions
 - Need parent to be with them as they do the exposure
 - Compulsions (Rituals)
 - Washing hands
 - Checking



ERP Between Trial Habituation



**Table
1**

**Sample exposure hierarchy for a patient
with specific phobia (animal type)**

Activity	Fear level (0 - 100)
Letting several large dogs lick my face	90
Petting several dogs in an enclosed space	85
Letting a large dog lick my face	80
Giving a large dog a treat	75
Petting a large dog	70
Going inside the dog park and letting dogs brush up against me	65
Going to a dog park and standing outside the park	60
Watching Animal Planet dog shows	55
Watching a real-life dog children's movie	40
Watching a cartoon dog movie	35
Looking at pictures of small and large dogs	30



In Practice

Normalize

Remember those cave men?



Encourage



Reassurance/Accommodation from Family Members

- Decreases anxiety in the short term, but leads to more anxiety and more reassurance seeking in the long term
- Reassurance Seeking
 - Is it safe to go outside by those bugs?
 - Do you think I'm going to get sick from touching this?
 - Is this elevator safe?
- Accommodation
 - Checking for bugs before the child goes outside
 - Ordering at a restaurant for the child
 - Cleaning the counter again because of child's fear

Support Statements

- Statements that include acceptance of anxiety AND confidence that the child can manage their anxiety
- Possible Statements
 - I know anxiety makes situations like these really tough, and I believe you can cope
 - I know this is difficult and I also know you are strong enough to fight your anxiety
 - I know you really want reassurance. What can you do instead?
 - What do you think?
- Can make the statements related to the anxiety symptoms
 - I know it is really hard for you to go outside by those bugs, and I believe you can do it
 - I know your anxiety makes going to basketball practice really tough and you've shown you can manage it

Statements that are NOT Supportive

- I see how worried you are, if you don't want to do X, you don't have to
- I'm here, don't worry, I got this
- Stop having anxiety. You got this!
- Give me a break! Just do it!



Reward



Techniques if Anxiety is Extremely High

- Remain calm and present
 - Remember- anxiety is not dangerous- don't model as such!
 - Brave body language
- Use support statements
- Relaxation/Grounding Techniques
 - Deep breathing
 - Lemon Squeeze
 - 5 senses
 - Change Temperature
 - Physical Activity



Remember
the Cycle?



Questions?

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Exposure Example

Exposure Table

Exposure Task: Walk underneath the deck

Amount of time each day and how often: Once per day

Safety behaviors to eliminate: Running, putting a helmet on, putting a sweatshirt on, reassurance seeking with mom, keeping my head down

How anxious do you THINK you will be (on a scale of 0-10)? 6

What do you think will happen? How likely is it to happen as a percentage?

A bird will attack me (50% chance)



Date	Anxiety level you predict (0-10)	Peak Anxiety Level (0-10)	Anxiety level after (0-10)	Comments/what you learned. Did the negative outcome you expected come true?
7/1	6	7	2	No, a bird did not attack me, and I was able to feed the dog and get my football
7/2	6	6	2	Same
7/3	6	5	2	Same
7/4	5	4	1	I saw a bird close to the deck, but it did not attack me.