

## **Understanding Anxiety: Psychological, Biological, and Existential Factors**

In this session we explore the experience of anxiety, and the common anxiety-related disorders such as generalised anxiety, panic disorder, phobias, and obsessional symptoms. We will seek to integrate understandings from Scripture, neuroscience, and psychology, and overview possible approaches to the management of anxiety and worry.

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### **A. Worry: the experience of 'worrying'**

### **B. Normal and excessive worrying**

### **C. When worrying becomes a disorder**

1. Generalised Anxiety Disorder
  - a. Symptoms

- b. The physical dimension of anxiety

## 2. Panic Disorder

## 3. Phobic Disorders

## 4. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

### **D. Predisposing Factors**

#### 1. Genetics and biological factors

#### 2. Early childhood

3. Situational factors

4. Cognitive styles (thinking habits)

### **E. Common professional approaches**

1. Medication

2. General management including sleep hygiene

3. Psychotherapy and counselling:  
a. Behavioural/cognitive

b. Insight/interpersonal

## Resources

1. Van der Hart W & Waller R (2011) *The Worry Book*. IVP UK  
*Good all-round introduction to worry and anxiety, with strong cognitive emphasis well integrated with scripture*
2. Welch E (2007) *Running Scared: Fear, Worry and the God of Rest*  
*Strong on biblical response to the faulty cognitions of worry and fear, and their underlying idols. Less good on integrating biblical perspective with insights from psychology*
3. <http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfoforall/problems/anxietyphobias.aspx>  
*A range of simple 'fact sheets' written from secular psychiatry perspective. Simple, helpful, common sense but not biblically framed.*