

## **BC-10B**

### **“Mental Disorders”: PART 2**

#### **Depression, Manic Depression (Bipolar Disorder), Schizophrenia (Bizarre Behavior), Panic Disorder With Agoraphobia (Anxiety), Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Alcoholism (Addiction)**

##### Assumptions:

1. We must rule out a spiritual problem before we look to a physical problem.
2. All Diagnoses assume nothing physiological or organic problem as the source of the disorder. If there are physiological markers, they are symptomatic (or psychosomatic) in nature only.
3. We are confident that those we are counseling are born-again followers of Jesus Christ.

#### **IV. Panic Disorder With Agoraphobia (Anxiety Disorders in General)**

##### **A. The World’s Perspective**

##### **1. Diagnosis (DSM-IV—modified to include other Anxiety disorders)**

###### A. Both (1) and (2):

(1) recurrent unexpected Panic attacks (discrete period in which there is a sudden onset of intense apprehension, fearfulness or terror, often associated with feelings of impending doom. During these attacks, symptoms of shortness of breath, palpitations, chest pain or discomfort, choking or smothering sensations, and fear of “going crazy” or losing control are present.)

(2) at least one of the attacks has been followed by 1 month (or more) of one (or more) of the following:

- (a) persistent concern about having additional attacks
- (b) worry about implications of the attacks or its consequences (e.g. losing control, having a heart attack, “going crazy”)
- (c) a significant change in behavior related to the attacks.

B. The presence of Agoraphobia (anxiety about people, places or situations and the possibility of panic attacks which may prove fatal because of such situations—or may be difficult to escape from).

C. The Panic attacks are not due to direct physiological effects of a substance or a medical condition.

##### **2. Prescription**

**Control feelings of panic through drugs.**

Most common way of doing this: Anti-Anxiety drugs (Atarax, Ativan, BuSpar, Inderal, Serax, Valium Xanax), Antidepressants (Prozac, Paxil, Luvox)

## **B. The Bible's Perspective**

### **1. Diagnosis**

#### **i. Panic/Anxiety is the result of fear.**

The body is just responding to what is taking place through the other bodily action (emotion) of FEAR. When fear (as an emotion) is not controlled, the “over-loaded” sensory preceptors in the body trigger additional and more severe physical symptoms (pain, suffocation, etc.).

#### **ii. Fear is a God-given emotion and is never sinful.**

Paul had fear (1 Co 2:3)...

AND we may have fear over many things (losing our jobs, being rejected by others, death, etc.) and such fear is not (as an emotion) is not sinful.

(However)...

**iii. Fear (through panic or anxiety) \*can point to unresolved sin in our behavior (thinking/actions) especially if such fear is: hindering/ preventing us from doing things that God wants us to do, or is causing to act strange (“Irrational/Unreasonable fear”).**

Ex. of fear pointing to unresolved sin (Gen 3:8-10): moving away from God and covering up became a part of this also.

Ex. of fear hindering/preventing us from doing things that God wants us to do: (Heb 10:32-39)

This is why cowards go to Hell (Rev 21:8)—because their fear is not being controlled by their thinking and actions—but rather is paralyzing them. And this is key...

Fear is (again) not sinful—BUT it must be controlled otherwise its out-of-control- state shows that our behavior is no longer submitted to God.

Ex. of fear causing strange behavior: (Pro 28:1)—guilt causes fear and strange behavior!

Ex. where what the fear is pointing to is not sinful behavior: they don't want to go home because they know there are several armed men waiting to kill them inside (“Rational/Reasonable Fear”).

## 2. Prescription

**Control fear and feelings of panic through changed behavior (thinking/actions).**

- i. **Determine what the fear is pointing to based on what the anxiety or panic is causing them to do.**
- ii. **If sinful behavior (thinking/actions), teach them to confess it as such and immediately repent every-time they experience it.**
- iii. **Encourage them to grow in four crucial areas:**

### **a. Their Fear of God.**

(Psa 112:1,7,8) – this is what will produce obedience. (remember: Rev 21:8; 1Sa 3-Eli)

### **b. Their assurance and depth of God’s love for them.**

(1Jo 4:17-18)

*“Although under other circumstances a mother might be frightened by a mouse, she is not immobilized by the fear of a wild animal attacking the child she loves. Foolishly or otherwise, her love overcomes fear and casts out it out as she throws herself into the fray. Love thus demonstrates itself as greater. A man with a phobia for crossing bridges, upon hearing of an automobile accident involving his children drove heedlessly over two bridges to reach them, experiencing no fear whatever in the process. A few days before he had refused to cross those very same bridges.” ~Jay Adams*

### **c. Their understanding and acceptance of God’s sovereignty.**

This is key as it relates to the Agoraphobia and the fear of having a panic attack (that has not yet happened)...

(Deu 29:29)—We are not to act like we know what we don’t know and has been reserved to God’s sovereignty.

We are instead to acknowledge and trust His sovereignty in all things (Psa 103:19; Eph 1:11; Psa 11:1-7).

### **d. Their understanding and trust in God’s wisdom.**

(Pro 3:5-8) (Psa 62:8, 125:1) (Rom 11:33-36) (Psa 104:24)

### **e. Their practice of Christian power, love and discipline (thinking/actions)**

(2Ti 1:7)

*“Practice makes perfect” (Heb 5:14)*

*CLOSING QUESTION: Is it okay to use anti-anxiety meds until a person learns how to control their problem?*

Yes.

*Why?*

*-Because the anxiety is causing real physical (versus psychological) pain.*

*-Because the drugs themselves have a very quick titration rate.*