Models Of Generalized Anxiety Disorder: Does The Emotion Dysregulation Model Aid Our Understanding?

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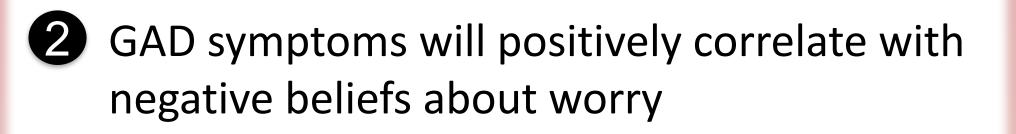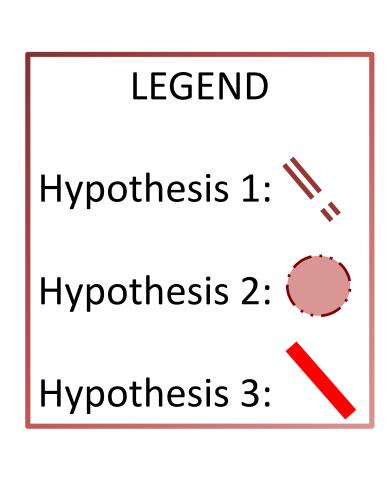**WAHA Lab** Worry and Health Anxiety Lab

Introduction

- Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) consists of excessive anxiety and uncontrollable worry lasting at least 6 months (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)

- The Emotion Dysregulation Model (EDM) proposes that individuals with GAD have issues understanding, expressing, and managing emotions (Mennin, Heimberg, Turk, & Fresco, 2002)

- There is a lack of research providing support for the utility of the EDM. Research has yet to examine this model in comparison to more established models

- The proposed study examines if the EDM helps explain GAD symptoms when compared to a well established model, the Metacognitive Model of Worry (MCM)

- The MCM emphasizes that those with GAD have negative beliefs about the dangerousness and uncontrollability of worry (Wells, 1995)

Hypotheses

1. GAD symptoms will positively correlate with emotion dysregulation

2. GAD symptoms will positively correlate with negative beliefs about worry

3. Emotion dysregulation will predict GAD symptoms independent of negative beliefs about worry
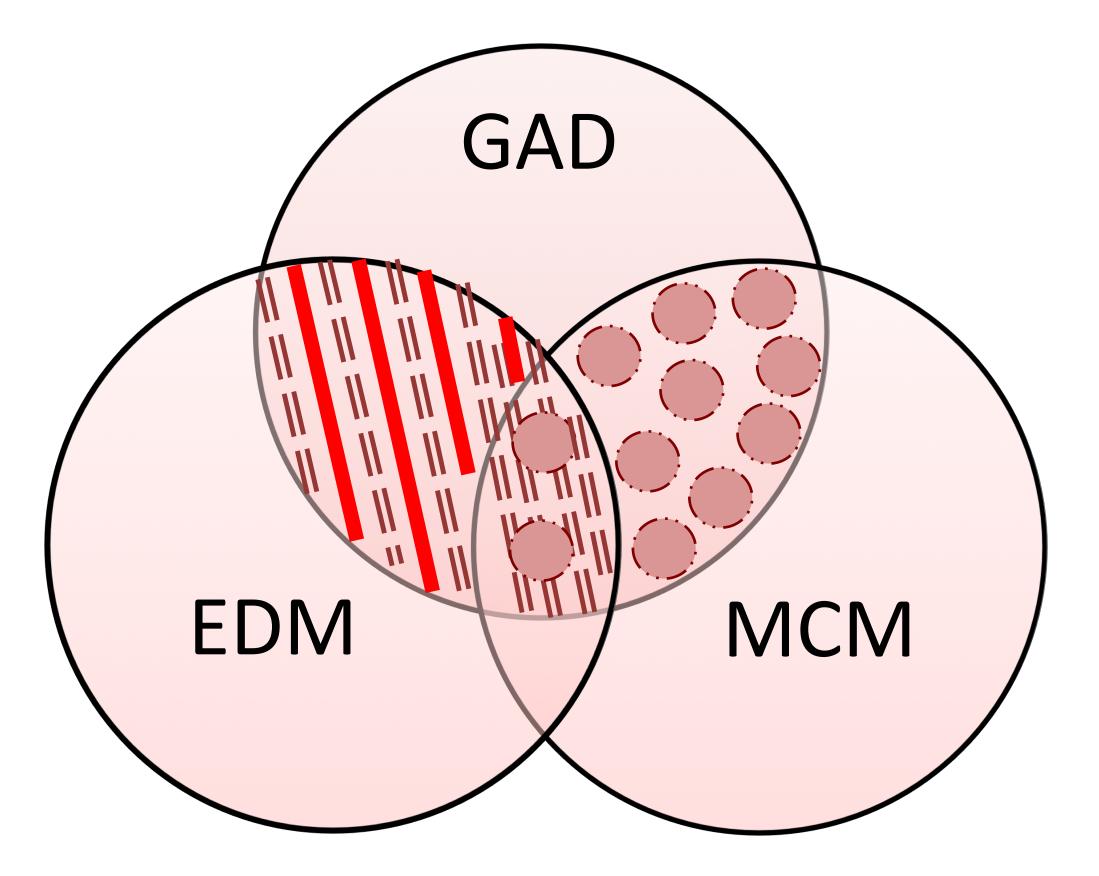
Methods

- Non-clinical undergraduate students (N = 400) will be included in this study

- Participants will complete a demographic measure followed by several self-report measures previously used in research of the EDM and the MCM to investigate which measures uniquely predict GAD symptoms

GAD Measures	EDM Measures	MCM Measures
• Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7-Item Scale (Spitzer, Kroenke, Williams, & Lowe, 2006)	• Trait-Meta Mood Scale (Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey, & Palfai, 1995)	• Metacognitions Questionnaire-30 (Wells & Cartwright-Hatton, 2004)
• Worry and Anxiety Questionnaire (Dugas, Freeston, Provencher, Lachance, Ladouceur, & Gosselin, 2001)	• Berkeley Expressivity Questionnaire (Gross & John, 1997)	• Meta-Worry Questionnaire (Wells, 2005)
• Penn State Worry Questionnaire (Meyer, Miller, Metzger, & Borkovec, 1990)	• Affective Control Scale (Williams, Chambless, & Ahrens, 1997)	
	• Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (Gratz & Roemer, 2004)	

Expected Results

Expected Relationship Between Symptoms of GAD, EDM Measures, and MCM Measures

LEGEND

Hypothesis 1:

Hypothesis 2:

Hypothesis 3:

GAD

EDM   MCM

Implications

- Improving the theoretical understanding of GAD
  - The role of emotion dysregulation in the maintenance and development of GAD

- Implications for treatment of GAD
  - Encouraging an approach focusing on emotion psychoeducation
  - Developing effective emotional regulation strategies

Key References

American Psychiatric Association (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th edition). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association.

Mennin, D. S., Heimberg, R. G., Turk, C. L., & Fresco, D. M. (2002). Applying an emotion regulation framework to integrative approaches to generalized anxiety disorder. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice, 9,* 85–90. doi:10.1093/clipsy.9.1.85
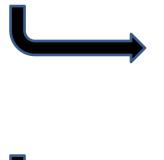
Wells, A. (1995). Metacognition and worry: A cognitive model of generalized anxiety disorder. *Behavioral and Cognitive Psychotherapy, 23,* 301-320. doi:10.1017/S1352465800015897