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Pushing the envelope on exposure-based treatments for anxiety disorders

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Exposure therapy is a well-established set of psychotherapeutic strategies that have stood the test of time in demonstrating robust effects across the full spectrum of anxiety disorders. Over the past four decades, research on exposure therapy has shifted from demonstrating therapeutic efficacy to the study of change mechanisms and augmentation strategies to improve short-term efficacy and reduce return of fear. During this invited talk, Professor Telch will present an overview of his research program investigating a variety of approaches for enhancing the effects of exposure therapy. The following exposure augmentation approaches will be reviewed: (a) cognitive appraisal strategies; (b) attentional strategies; (c) physiologic feedback strategies; (d) safety behavior fading strategies; (e) antagonistic action strategies; (f) compound extinction techniques; (g) pre-exposure fear retrieval/activation strategies; (h) use of pharmacological strategies for boosting fear extinction learning and fear memory reconsolidation update.

Biography

After receiving his PhD and Postdoctoral Training from Stanford University, Michael J Telch joined the Clinical Psychology faculty at the University of Texas at Austin where he is currently Professor and Director of the Laboratory for the Study of Anxiety Disorders. Internationally recognized for his scientific research on the nature and treatment of anxiety-related disorders, his work has tackled a broad range of questions related to the nature and treatment of pathological fear across the full spectrum of anxiety disorders, and has utilized multiple research strategies including clinical trials, prospective risk studies, and controlled laboratory manipulations of exposure augmentation strategies.

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