

Social Fitness Training with College Students

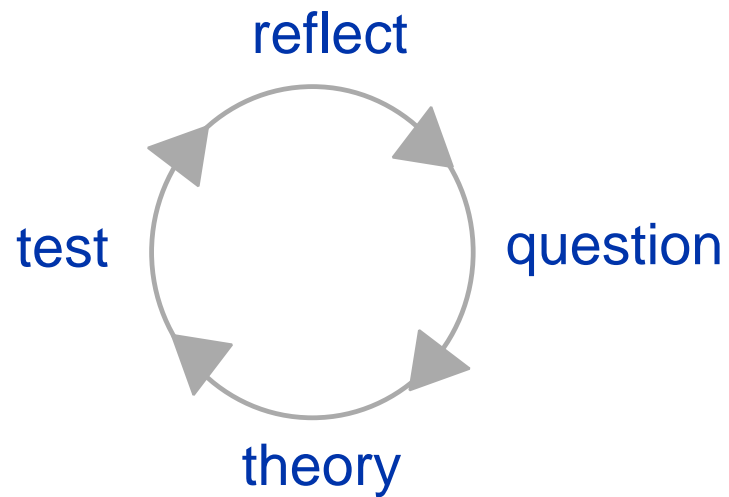
Lynne Henderson, Alejandro Martinez, Philip Zimbardo
Stanford University, USA

International Conference on Shyness and Self-Consciousness
Cardiff, Wales, UK
July 16, 1997

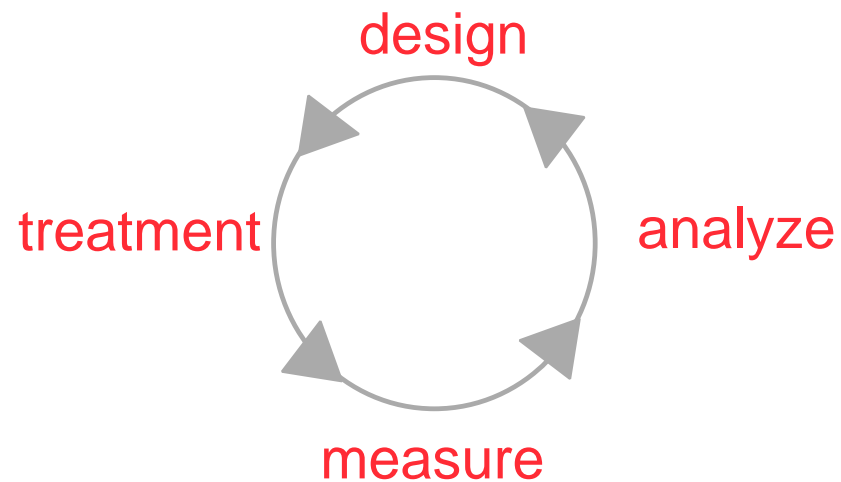
Overview

- Research in the Field
 - Research and Practice
- Social Fitness and Shyness
 - Shyness: definition and treatment
 - History
 - Vicious Cycles and Infinite Loops
- The most recent iteration
 - An Experiment
 - Findings
 - Discussion
- Conclusion

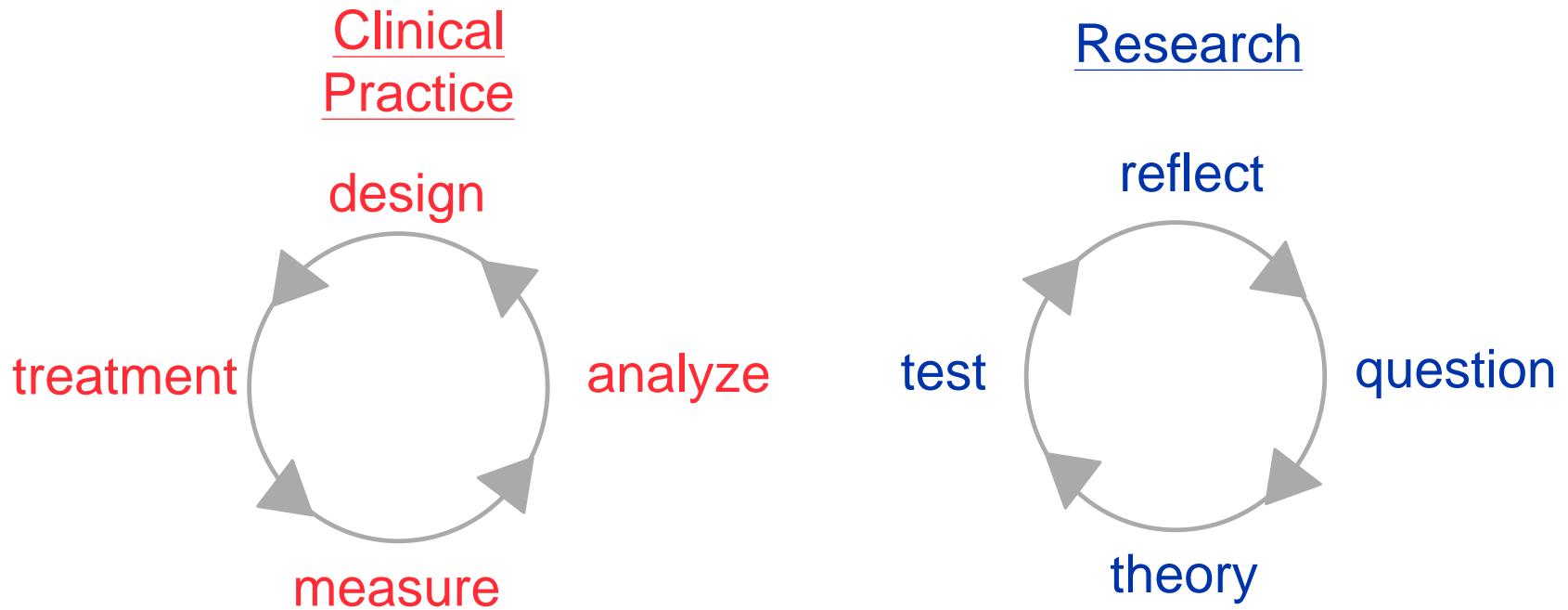
Perspective: from Research



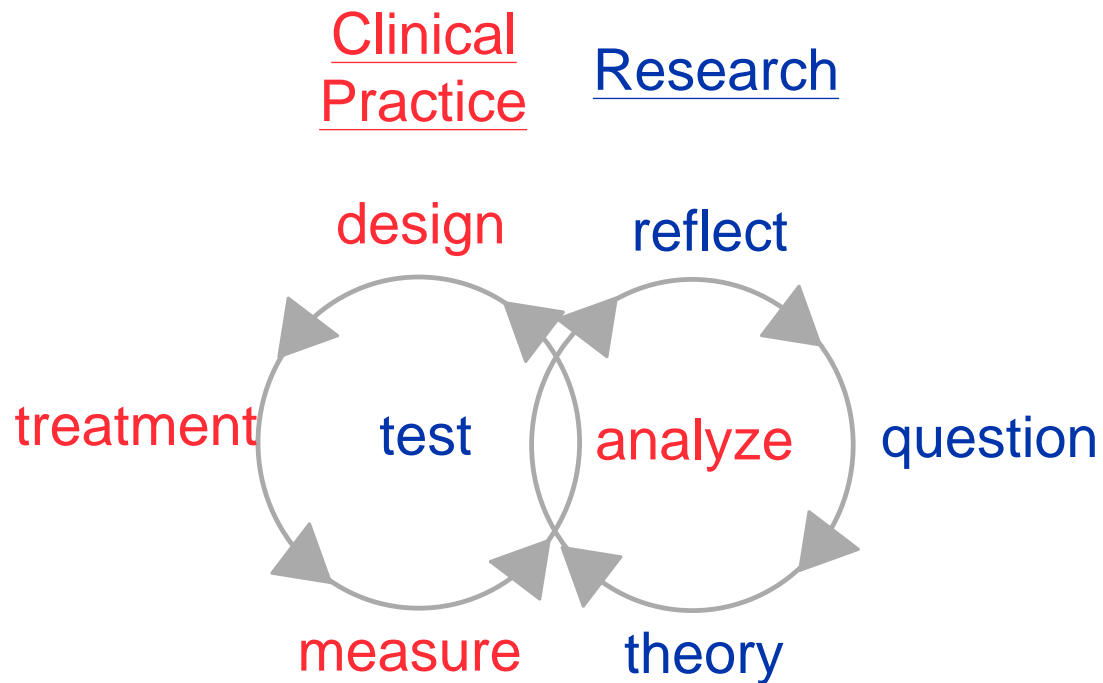
Perspective: from Clinical Practice



Perspectives: Co-informing



Perspectives: Integrated



Shyness vs. Introversion or Natural Reserve

- Shyness implies want to be closer to people, but fear holds back. Approach/avoidance conflict.
- Relates to what people will attempt - cannot achieve what will not try
- Formal definition indicates distress and/or avoidance, inhibition.
- **DISTRESS and DYSFUNCTION - INTERFERENCE** with goal-directed behavior
- **DSM IV - Social phobia - persistent avoidance and/or marked distress in one or more social situations that interferes with functioning (incidence 2-12%)**

Four Domains of Shyness

- Cognitive - negative thoughts about self, situation, others
- Behavioral - the fight or flight syndrome: avoidance, inhibition or overactivity
- Physiological - "SUDS" - heart races, palms sweat, light-headed
- Affective - embarrassment, insecurity, shame
 - We treat all four:
 - Cognitive, attributional, self-concept restructuring
 - Social skills - coaching
 - Exposure to feared situations and practice
 - Expression of feelings - group support "I'm not alone"

Our Social Fitness Model

Twenty-six Weekly Two-hour
Cognitive-Behavioral Group sessions

- Daily Workouts
 - Self-Monitoring, Self-reinforcement
- Exposures with Cognitive Restructuring
 - Attribution and Self-concept Restructuring
- Social Skills Training - meeting and conversing
 - Communication Training - Where do I go from here?
 - Building intimacy - self-disclosure, handling criticism, conflict
 - Expression of Feelings
 - Empathy - listening
- Attentional Focus Flexibility Training: self- other, empathic response
- Video Taping

Previous Research and Clinical Observation

- Doing better, feeling worse; SHAME
- Negative therapeutic reaction?
- Self-enhancement bias is reversed
- Internal attributions are made for negative social outcomes
- Shyness is negatively associated with attributions of control
- Clinical observation suggests shame and self-blame are important variables
- Self-schema research suggests negative bias
- More relevant for some than others? who?

Arnold Buss's Model (1980)

- Early developing shyness (fearful shyness)
 - fear of novelty and intrusion
 - physical reactivity
- Later developing shyness (4-6 years; self-conscious shyness)
 - excessive parental evaluation of observable aspects of a child's behavior

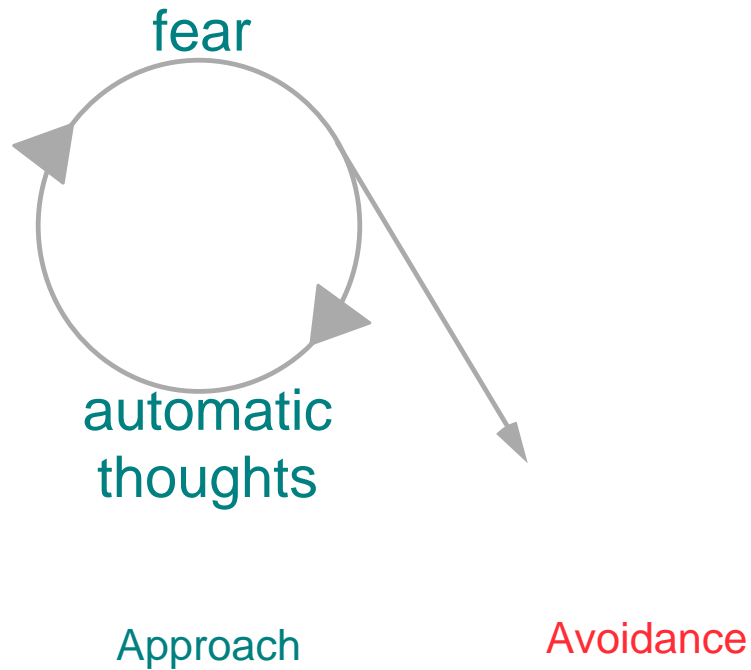
Shyness and Attribution-style: Our Research

- Buss's self-conscious shys predicted to be higher in self-blame and shame than fearful shys
- Added self-blaming attributions as dependent variable
- Fearfulness, not shyness, predicted self-blaming attributions for interpersonal failure
- Both fearfulness and shyness predicted internal attributions and state shame in hypothetical interpersonal failure situations and both predicted trait shame.
- Shyness was still a negative predictor of control

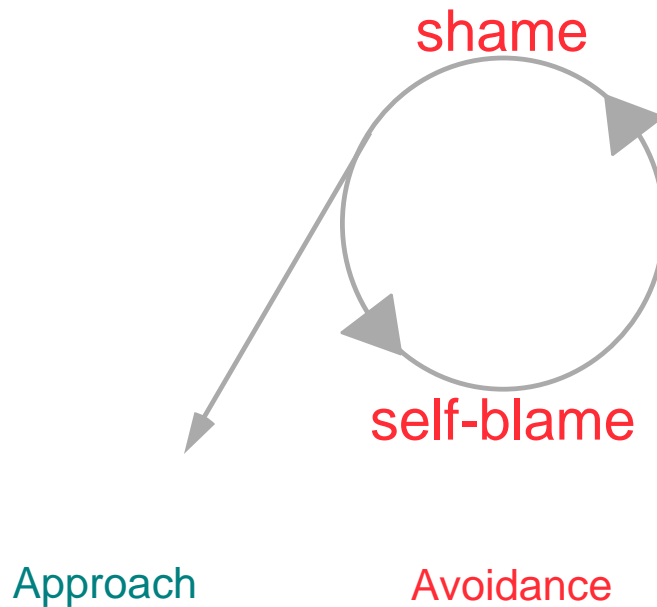
Private self-consciousness

- Protects against self-blame and state shame in situations with negative interpersonal outcomes at low levels of fear, but begins to exacerbate at high levels.
- Exacerbates the association of both fear and shyness with trait shame

Vicious Cycles: Fight or Flight



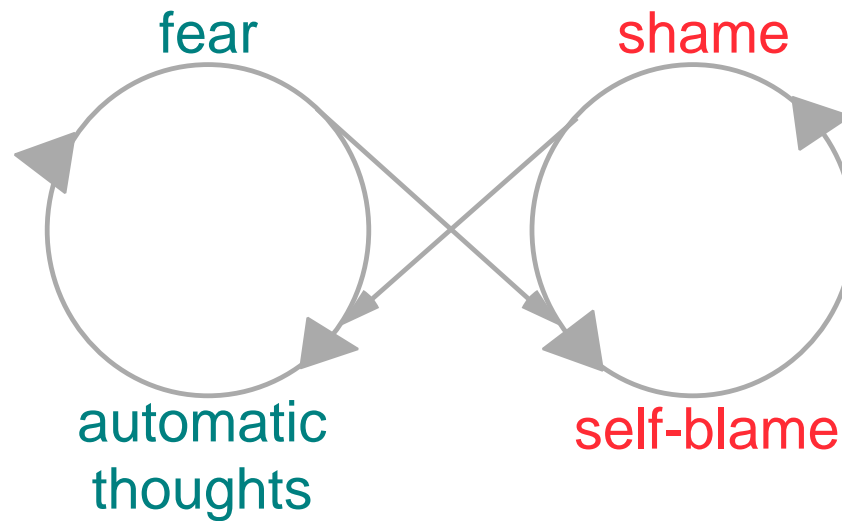
Vicious Cycles: Shame & Blame



One Infinite Loop

Fight or Flight

Shame & blame



Approach

Avoidance

The question: Can we change it?

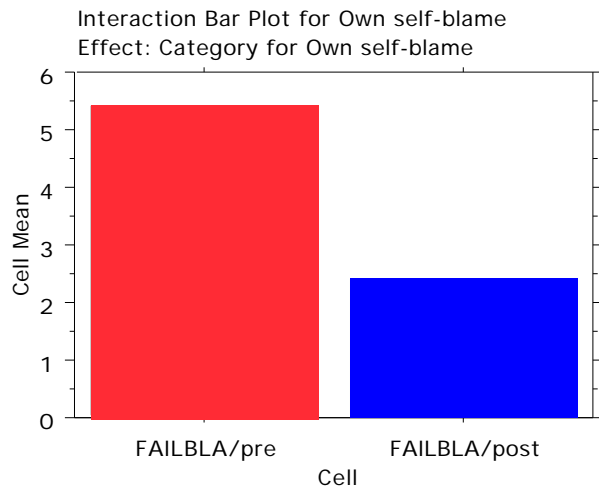
- Can we educate people about:
 - reversing the self-enhancement bias
 - self-concept distortions?
- Can we develop techniques to change it?
- The next iteration:
 - 2-year study with 8-week Stanford student groups
 - Exposures with attributional and self-concept restructuring techniques

Preliminary Results with Social Fitness Training in Eight-week Groups for Students at Stanford

- Students show significant reductions in internal, stable and global attributions for negative interpersonal outcomes, and in self-blame and accompanying state shame
- Students also show significant reductions in social anxiety, social avoidance and distress, trait shame, depression, and social phobia.

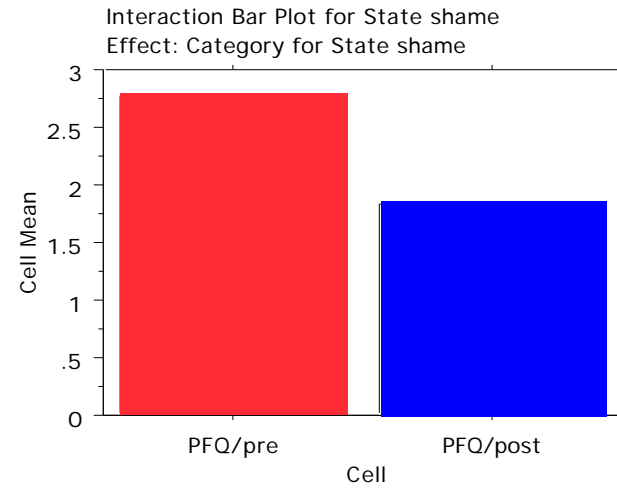
Results

Self-blame



29 cases were omitted due to missing values.

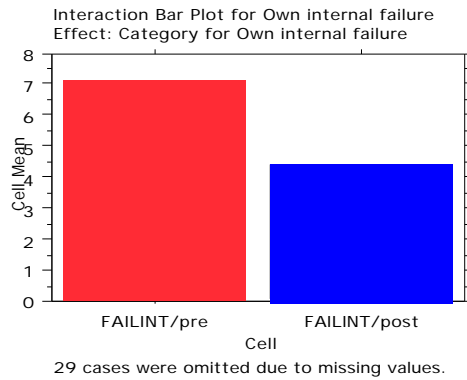
State-shame



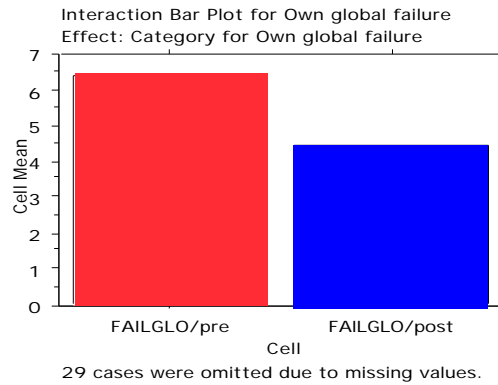
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Results

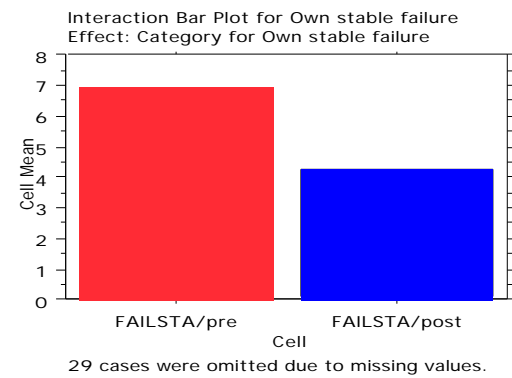
Internal



Global



Stable



Results

- Fear (N=25) F 4.52, p.044
- Depression (N=27) F 8.86, p.006
- Fear of neg eval (N=26) F 28.48, p.<.0001
- Social Anxiety (N=25) F 19.82, p.0002
- Social Avoidance and distress (N=26) F 23.02, p.<.0001
- Trait Shame (N=26) F 17.76, p.0003
- Trait Guilt (N=26) F 6.96, p.0142
- Mattick social phobia (N=26) F 15.65, p.0006

Conclusion

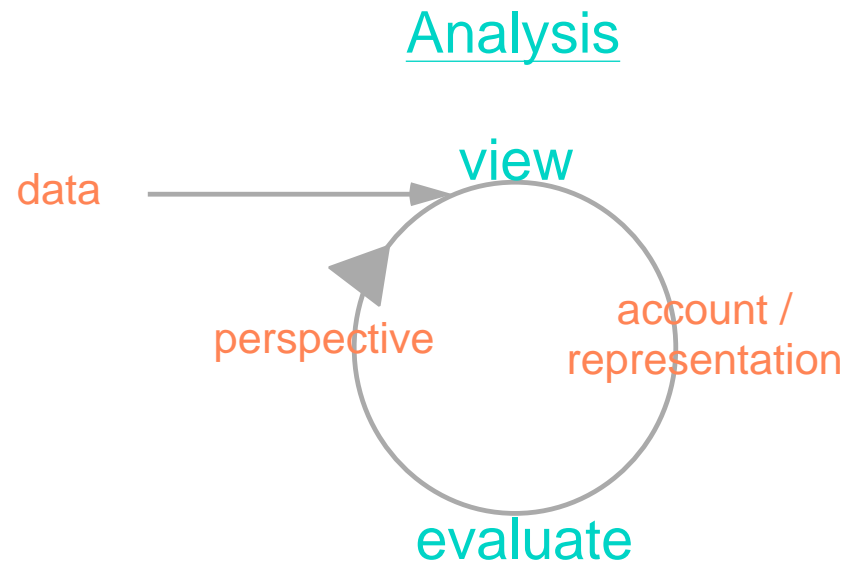
- Attribution style can be changed.
 - Question: How do we maintain these changes?
 - booster sessions
 - on-going "workouts"
- Challenged self-concept distortions
 - Questions:
 - how long will it take to change them?
 - how do we measure the changes?

Thank you

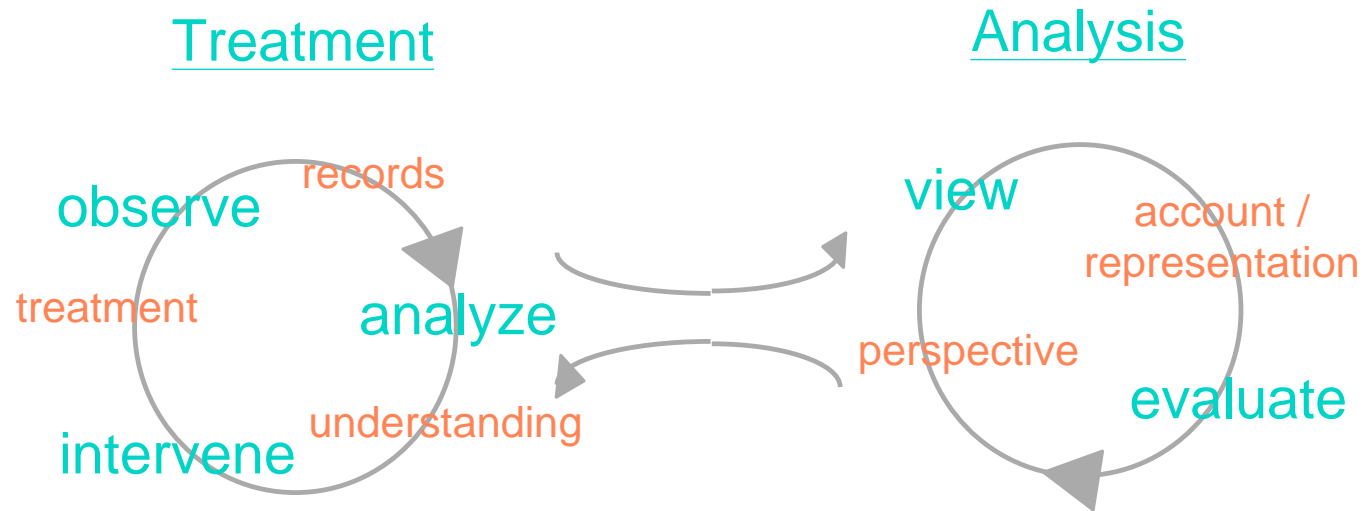
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----- Early and Alternative slides -----

Research: Analysis



Research: In service of Clinical Practice



The Experience of Shyness

SAD FIX'S

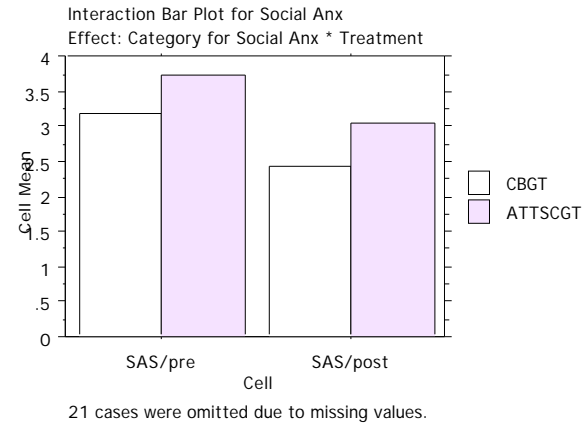
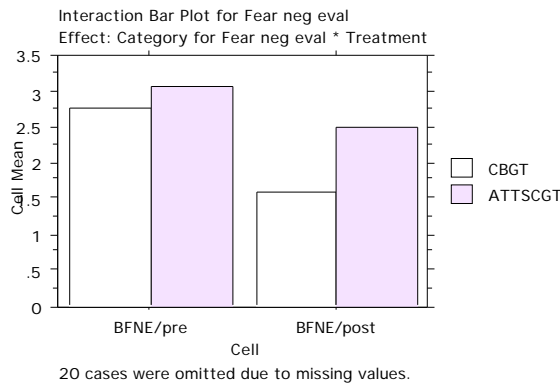
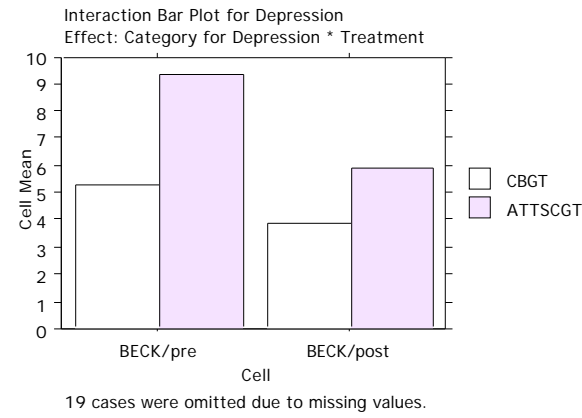
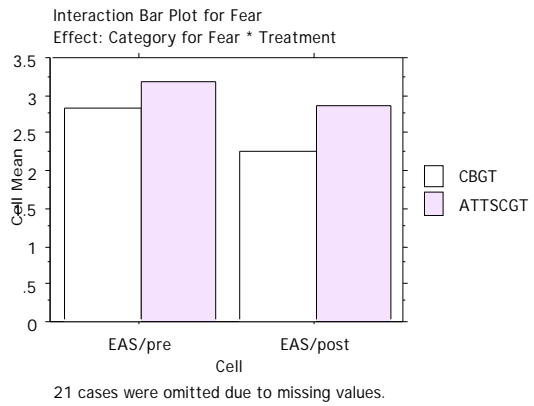
- S elf - Blame and Shame
- A voidance
- D istress
- F ear of Negative Evaluation
- I Must, but I Can't!
- X -posure: fear of both failure & Success
- S elf - Sabotage

Chronic debilitating shyness

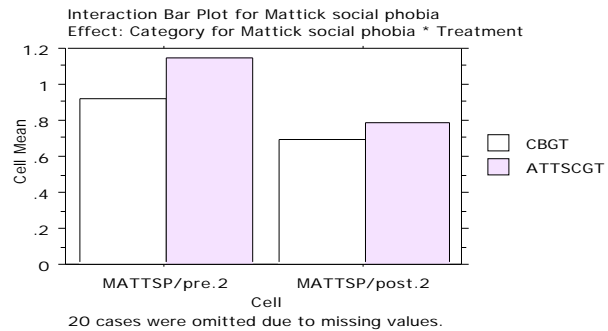
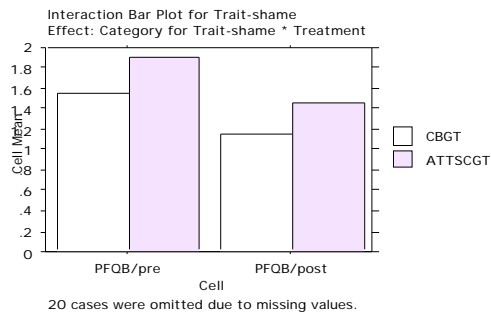
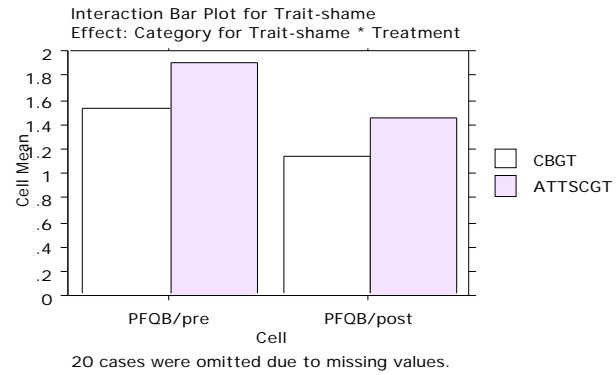
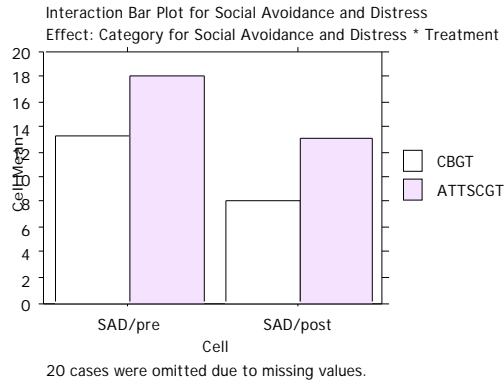
may be a nature/nurture interaction

- Approximately 15% of the population may have genetic tendency or constitutional vulnerability (Jerome Kagan, Harvard; Arnold Buss, U. of Tex.)
- However, learning (conditioning) is considered a large part of variance

CAPS Outcome Data



CAPS Outcome Data (Con't)



Let's start with Adolescents: Four Studies of High School Samples

- High School Health Fairs
- 100-150 students come to our shyness booth
- Self-report of responses in an imagined situation of communication "failure"
- How shy are they? How self-aware? How empathic? What is impact of self-blame?

Study 1: Self-blame: Regression Results

- Both self-blame and private self-consciousness predicted social anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, accounting for approximately 22% and 21% of the variance

| Criterion variable | Predictor variables | sr2 | b | T test | p |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----|-----|--------|------|
| Social Anxiety | Self-blame | .12 | .69 | 3.66 | .000 |
| | Private sc | .10 | .33 | 3.47 | .001 |

$F(2,84) = 15.47; p < .001$

| Criterion variable | Predictor variables | sr2 | b | T test | p |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----|-----|--------|------|
| Fear Neg. Eval. | Self-blame | .13 | .73 | 3.81 | .000 |
| | Private sc | .08 | .29 | 2.99 | .004 |

$F(2,84) = 14.24; p < .001$

Study 1: Self-blame: MANOVA

Mean Social Anxiety, Fear of Neg. Eval., and Self-conscious Scores

| | | Self-blame | | Non-self-blame | |
|------------------|----|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| | | Shy (n = 34) | Non-shy (n = 11) | Shy (n = 20) | Non-shy (n = 22) |
| Social Anxiety | M | .69a | -.55c | -.05b | -.84c |
| | SD | .85 | .62 | .80 | .73 |
| Fear neg eval | M | .66a | -.40bc | -.02b | -.80c |
| | SD | .66 | 1.02 | .91 | .85 |
| Private Self-con | M | .16a | .22a | .25a | -.58b |
| | SD | 1.03 | .97 | .65 | 1.05 |
| Public Self-con | M | .13ab | -.70b | .30a | -.12ab |
| | SD | 1.01 | .95 | .94 | .94 |

Note M and SD standardized; $p < .05$

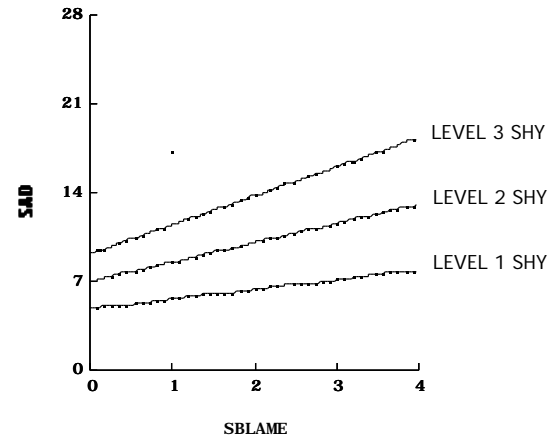
Study 2: Self-blame, not control, predicted social avoidance and distress

Table 3.

SOCIAL AVOIDANCE AND DISTRESS

Adjusted squared multiple R: .44

| VARIABLE | coefficient | std error | P(2tail) |
|------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
| constant | 4.90 | 2.18 | .026 |
| SHY | 2.17 | 0.63 | .001 |
| OUTGOING | -1.10 | 0.59 | .063 |
| SHY*SBLAME | .76 | 0.18 | .000 |



Self blame increasingly predicts social avoidance and distress at higher levels of shyness (shyness and outgoing tendencies held constant).

Study 3: Self-blame, Control, "Second Effort"

- Social Anxiety

51% of variance in social anxiety is accounted for by:

| | partial R ² | p |
|------------------------------|------------------------|-------|
| + shyness | 0.28 | 0.000 |
| + self-blame | 0.06 | 0.000 |
| + private self-consciousness | 0.02 | 0.037 |
| - second effort | 0.05 | 0.002 |
| - other-blame | 0.04 | 0.005 |
| - impression control | 0.06 | 0.005 |

Fourth High School Study: Shyness, Self-blame, and Empathy, and the Continuing Importance of "Second Effort"

- Self-blame, like shyness, is associated with empathic concern for others, but not with perspective taking.
- Self-blame is negatively correlated with "second effort" and a non-blaming attribution style.
- Private self-consciousness is associated with taking others' perspectives, except when one is shy and self-blaming.

Adaptation

- Develop awareness of self and others, test hypotheses, and make choices
- Inhibited exploration of self and others interferes with contributions to society and personal happiness

Can we create an atmosphere that engenders self-confidence as opposed to increasing shyness and social insecurity?

- Absolutely it is attainable if we are willing to work toward common human goals
 - Create emotional safety through empathy
 - Create an accepting, supportive environment where experimentation is sanctioned, mistakes are a given, and many truths are allowed
 - Adhere to idea that there are multiple pathways to similar goals
 - Promote practice and sense of mastery that is not competitive in nature
 - Exemplify the importance of commitment with simultaneous openness to change and diversity