The fear of losing control and its role in anxiety disorders
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The study
Radomsky's findings were published this October in the Journal of Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders, co-authored with PhD student Jean-Philippe Gagné.

It's the first in a series of related projects Radomsky is undertaking, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

"The 133 undergraduate students who participated were given bogus EEGs. They were randomly assigned false feedback that they were either at low or high risk of losing control over their thoughts and actions," explains Radomsky, Concordia University Research Chair in Anxiety and Related Disorders.

"We've shown that people who believe they're going to lose control are significantly more likely to exhibit checking behaviour with greater frequency," says Adam Radomsky, a psychology researcher in the Faculty of Arts and Science.

"So, when we treat OCD in the clinic, we can try to reduce their beliefs about losing control and that should reduce their symptoms."
The findings were consistent with what he and Gagné expected.

"We hypothesize that people's fears and beliefs about losing control may put them at risk for a range of problems, including panic disorder, social phobia, OCD, post-traumatic stress disorder, generalized anxiety disorder and others," Radomsky adds.

"This work has the potential to vastly improve our ability to understand and treat the full range of anxiety-related problems."


Provided by Concordia University


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