

Decisional processes in obsessive-compulsive spectrum disorders : from neuropsychology to clinical implications

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DECISIONAL PROCESSES IN OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE SPECTRUM DISORDERS

PROPOSITIONS

1

Decision-making define those executive functions useful to modulate reward and punishment.

2

Making decisions in ambiguous or risky situations is a key function of everyday life.

3

The Iowa Gambling Task is a neuropsychological task thought to simulate real-life decision making, which assesses a subject's ability to balance immediate rewards against long-term negative consequences.

4

The Iowa Gambling Task is widely used in research on cognition and emotion. A recent review listed more than 200 papers that made use of this paradigm.

5

The incredible case of Phineas Gage, along with observations from patients with similar frontal lobe damage, offers convincing evidence that the human brain's regions for making decisions are strongly connected to emotional centers.

6

The Somatic Marker Hypothesis explains how emotions are biologically indispensable to decisions. Feelings normally accompany response options and operate as a biasing device to dictate choice.

7

The pattern of behaviour that patients with obsessive-compulsive disorder exhibit is encouraged greatly by the prospect of immediate reward (compulsions represent the immediate relief from anxiety due to obsessions) but is less sensitive to the future consequence of their choices (this reward has its consequence malfunctioning in daily life).

8

Obsessive-compulsive spectrum disorders may be conceptualized as a disorder of decision-making. This could lead to a better understanding of its physiopathology, to a new approach in its investigation and to novel treatment strategies.

9

The endophenotype is an internal marker (i.e. biochemical, neuropsychological, neuroanatomical) that is the halfway point between genes (genotype) and marks/symptoms (phenotype) of a disorder.

10

Praise to doubt (Edmund Craster). The millipede lived happy until the toad asked him joking: "Tell me, which leg do you move before and which after?" The question put it in such confusion that the millipede remained blocked in the ditch, reflecting on what should be the method to walk.