Assignment # 2
Anxiety and Decision Making
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The purpose of this assignment is to analyze, from a biopsychological perspective, the roles of
various brain structures in our emotional experiences. You will be asked to write a report of no
more than 1000 words that integrates material from your textbook, articles from the popular
media, and short video clips. In your report, you will analyze an important problem that affects
a large number of people, many of whom do not seek treatment….Generalized Anxiety
Disorder. This assignment is meant for you to continue to apply the skills learned in Assignment
1, taking into consideration the feedback received in your first assignment. This time, however,
you will work on your assignment individually (not in groups), and your report will be in essay
format.
The Problem Under Investigation:
Melissa often feels quite anxious and worried. In fact, many things seem to worry her, for
example, whether her children got to school safely, whether she made mistakes at work,
whether she will be able to pay all her bills, whether she hurt her friends’ feelings….and the list
goes on. In fact, she spends so much time worrying that she finds it very difficult to make any
kind of decision….big or small….she is just worried that she will make the wrong decision….and
then what???? As a neuropsychologist, your goal is to understand how anxiety might influence
decision-making from a neurobiological standpoint. What bodily mechanisms might make it so
hard for people like Melissa to make even the smallest of decisions?

In order to accomplish this task, you will begin by reading the following sources:
• Modules 3.2, 11.1 and 11.2 of your textbook (also refer to your class notes)
• The article entitled “How Does Anxiety Short Circuit the Decision-Making Process”

your work may help to d evise new treatments for Generalized Anxiety Disorder. Your report must address the questions below.

The following questi ons rep resent the sections of your report. Thus, make sure to provide a subtitle prio r to each section. The s ubtitle should consist of no more than 3-4 words that represent the content that is being discussed in that particular section.

Discussion Questions:

1. Using evidence from modules 3 .2 and 11.1 of your textbook as well as the articl e by Bergland (2016), explain the role of the Prefrontal Cortex and its various parts in d eci sion making.

2. Referring to module 11.2, explain the role of the amygdala in relation to fear and

anxiety. Show how the amygdala controls the stress response.

3. Using evidence from your textbook, the articl e entitled “Reduced brain conn ection seen in people with Generalized anxiety disorder” (2012), and the 2 short videos, explai n the role of the prefrontal cortex in controlling the activity of the amygdala in stressful situation.

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