

“How I know others think badly of me”: information-processing biases in social phobia

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A fear of negative evaluation from others is considered a core feature in the onset and development of social phobia, and social anxiety more generally. To date, cognitive models of social anxiety propose that several information processing biases are responsible for excessive fear and distress experienced by people in social situations which can then result in increased avoidance of social encounters. The following paper provides an integrative summary of theoretical and empirical evidence of information processing biases of attention, interpretation, ruminative processing before and after social performance, as well as memory bias in social phobia. Even with an already existing abundance of literature, the area of cognitive biases in social phobia warrants greater research attention given the inconsistencies and intricate complexities for some components of information processing, and their function in real world social situations.