SECTION – A

Answer the following questions in 1000 words each. 3 x 15 = 45 marks

1. Explain the nature of anxiety disorder. Discuss the techniques for helping children with anxiety disorder.

Ans: Anxiety disorders are different, though. They are a group of mental illnesses, and the distress they cause can keep you from carrying on with your life normally.

For people who have one, worry and fear are constant and overwhelming, and can be disabling. But with treatment, many people can manage those feelings and get back to a fulfilling life.

Types of Disorders

Anxiety disorder is an umbrella term that includes different conditions:

- Panic disorder. You feel terror that strikes at random. During a panic attack, you may also sweat, have chest pain, and feel palpitations (unusually strong or irregular heartbeats). Sometimes you may feel like you’re choking or having a heart attack.

- Social anxiety disorder. Also called social phobia, this is when you feel overwhelming worry and self-consciousness about everyday social situations. You fixate about others judging you or on being embarrassed or ridiculed.

- Specific phobias. You feel intense fear of a specific object or situation, such as heights or flying. The fear goes beyond what’s appropriate and may cause you to avoid ordinary situations.

- Generalized anxiety disorder. You feel excessive, unrealistic worry and tension with little or no reason.

Techniques for helping children with anxiety disorder are:

Step 1: Teaching your child about anxiety

Regardless of the type of anxiety problem your child is struggling with, it is important that he or she understands the facts about anxiety.

- Fact 1: Anxiety is a normal and adaptive system in the body that tells us when we are in danger.

- Fact 2: Anxiety can become a problem when our body tells us that there is danger when there is no real danger.

As an important first step, help your child understand that all the worries and physical feelings have a name: anxiety.

Step 2: Teaching your child about GAD

Like all anxiety disorders, children and teens with GAD become anxious when they are faced with a trigger for their worries. But what is the trigger in GAD?

Children with GAD become anxious whenever there is uncertainty or they are unsure about something. This is why kids with GAD worry about everything. Since most things in life are uncertain, there is always something to worry about!

Step 3: Encouraging your child to stop seeking reassurance

Children with GAD often seek reassurance many times daily from their parents, in an attempt to be 100% sure that everything they are doing is okay. Parents often find this quite tiring and frustrating.

A good way to address this is in two parts:

Tell your child this is his or her GAD talking: That is, your child is always asking for reassurance because the anxiety is bullying him or her.

Work with your child to beat back GAD by not giving reassurance.

A plan you can try is the following:

Tell your child that he or she can only ask you something once.

Afterward, answer your child’s repeated questions for reassurance by saying, “I don’t know,” or “Well, if you aren’t 100% sure, what is so bad about that?”

Step 4: Building your child’s toolbox

The best way to help your child deal with anxiety and worries is to give him or her tools that can be used against worrying.

For GAD, tools in the toolbox include:

- Tool 1: Learning to calm anxiety by slowing down your breathing

- Tool 2: Learning how to calm anxiety by relaxing the muscles in your body

- Tool 3: Making “coping cards” with your child.

Because it is difficult to face anxiety, it is a good idea to give your child some “coping cards” to carry with him or her throughout the day.

For some tips on how to help your child use coping cards:

- Tool 4: Becoming comfortable with some uncertainty

Because children and teens with GAD feel anxious whenever things are uncertain, a good way to fight back worries is to help your child become more comfortable with uncertainty. They do this by deliberately taking action when they are not sure what will happen. Like any tool that involves facing a fear, it is important to start small. The following are some exercises your child can do:

- Completing homework without asking family whether it was done correctly (or only asking once).

- Calling a friend spontaneously and asking him or her to come over to play without making plans in advance.

- Start doing things that your child has been avoiding (for example, if your child doesn’t watch the news because of fears about war or community events).

- Deliberately making a small mistake on homework so that it isn’t perfect (crossing something out; making it a little messy).

- Coming to school a few minutes late.