THE EFFECTS OF VIDEO AND NONNEGATIVE
SOCIAL FEEDBACK ON DISTORTED APPRAISALS
OF BODILY SENSATIONS AND SOCIAL ANXIETY¹,²

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Summary.—The effects of video feedback and nonnegative feedback from other
people were examined as possibly ameliorating distorted appraisals of bodily sen-
sations, as well as subjective and physiological anxiety in socially anxious individ-
uals. Nonnegative feedback from a confederate emphasized the absence of negative
outcomes (e.g., did not seem to tremble) rather than the presence of positive out-
comes (e.g., looked calm). Socially anxious students were randomly assigned to
either the experimental group, which received video and social feedback (n = 12),
or the control group (n = 13). Participants were asked to give a videotaped speech
twice. After the first speech, the experimental group watched the videotape of
their speech and received feedback from a confederate, whereas the control group
watched the video of another person’s speech. The intervention improved distorted
appraisal of bodily sensations and anticipatory anxiety for the experimental group.
However, there were no differential effects on anxiety between the groups during
speeches.

Social phobia is characterized by a strong and persistent social anxiety
that refers to a fear of social or performance situations in which an individ-
ual might feel embarrassment or humiliation (American Psychiatric
Association, 2000). Cognitive models of social phobia (Clark & Wells, 1995;
Rapee & Heimberg, 1997; Hofmann, 2007) emphasize negatively distor-
ted appraisals of bodily sensations (e.g., palpitations, trembling, sweating,
and blushing) as a key factor in the maintenance of social phobia symp-
toms. Previous research has shown such distorted appraisals of bodily sensa-
tions seem to involve (1) socially anxious individuals’ overestimating the
extent to which their bodily sensations are visible to other people
(McEwan & Devins, 1983; Bruch, Gorsky, Collins, & Berger, 1989; Alden &
Wallace, 1995; Mansell & Clark, 1999) and (2) socially anxious individuals’
fears of negative evaluation by other people who might observe the bodily
sensations (Clark, 2001; Roth, Antony, & Swinson, 2001). Kanai, Sasagawa,

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