

## The Developmental Process of Panic Disorder: Focusing on the Psychological Dynamics of a Family Therapy Case

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**Abstract :** Introduction: This study analyzed a family therapy case involving a female client in her thirties with panic disorder (PD) in South Korea. We identified five stages of the psychological process in the development of PD and examined external situations, family dynamics, and psychological experiences at each stage. Method: The client, mother, sister, and husband participated in therapy. Researchers analyzed the transcripts, notes, and video recordings of the therapy sessions. A thematic analysis was used to examine the data and display our findings using a network. Results: The developmental process of PD was as follows: (1) formation of anxiety, (2) sheltered life, (3) crisis, (4) loss of safe haven, and (5) inner breakdown. Conclusion: The family dynamics that developed as a result of coping with external situations in each stage contributed to clients' psychological experiences. These psychological experiences triggered anxiety, which led to the development of PD. Moreover, this study empirically suggests that family dynamics can be associated with a person's internal experiences that could lead to PD. Our findings highlight the significance of functional family dynamics and coping patterns when facing difficult external situations or crises.

**Keywords :** developmental process, family therapy, panic disorder, psychological dynamics

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