

Phobia

What is Phobia?

Phobia is intense fear of an object or situation when there is no real reason to be so afraid. The amount of fear does not match the amount of danger. Even when the person 'knows' that their distress is out of proportion with the reality of the situation, he or she still feels intense anxiety and fear. In these cases, there is a mismatch between the person's thoughts and the person's feelings.

Phobias seriously affect most of your life. You manage everything around the phobia. Anything that reminds you of the thing you're afraid of causes anxiety and distress. You start to avoid situations so that you don't have to confront the phobia. This actually makes things worse, as you never give yourself the chance to overcome the phobia and get back to normal life.

Common phobias include:

- ◆ Flying on a plane
- ◆ Visiting new places
- ◆ Going to the dentist
- ◆ Going outside (agoraphobia)
- ◆ Going into lifts or confined spaces
- ◆ Animals or insects, like snakes or spiders
- ◆ Meeting new people (social phobia or social anxiety)

There are many more. In fact, anything that might have badly frightened a person in the past, if not properly dealt with at the time, could cause a phobia.

Managing Phobia

1. Keep to normal life as much as possible. Ensure that you are observing normal healthy maintenance practices, such as a balanced diet, exercise, sleep and social interaction.
2. Learn and practice stress management techniques, such as regular physical exercise, breathing, meditation, self-calming and relaxation techniques.
3. Talk to a supportive friend or a competent therapist.
4. Don't ruminate on negative thoughts, especially about the phobia. Focus on the positive.
5. With the help of a competent therapist, face and overcome your fear.
6. Cognitive Behaviour Therapy is especially helpful in this process.

Mindfulness-integrated Cognitive Behaviour Therapy

Mindfulness-integrated-Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (MiCBT) is exceptionally efficacious in helping people overcome phobia. MiCBT works on both the causes and the effects of phobia. Mindfulness practices help manage and change the unpleasant physical and emotional effects of the phobia. CBT helps clients to identify and change the faulty beliefs that are causing the phobia.

This combined approach permits clients to face and overcome the phobia, allowing them to return to a normal, happy life. Contact us for details. Getting help and returning your life to normal is better than suffering and avoiding situations out of fear.

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