

Overcoming Anxiety, Fear and Phobias

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by Julian Aloysius Leicester

Julian A. Leicester looks at some of our common phobias and suggests how hypnotherapy can help

Malaysia is a natural and beautiful water sport haven. Yet many people are afraid of water. They cannot, or will not, learn to swim because they fear they will drown. Some are terrified that 'Jaws' dwells under their feet when at sea.

Snakes, spiders, high places and public speaking also make many people uncomfortable. But for some, these objects and settings cause overwhelming feelings of fear and apprehension - reaction defined as a phobia.

For sufferers, the road to fear can be treacherous, made worse because they feel they have no control. This results in loss of confidence and self-worth and increasing frustration, feeding energy into this unwanted emotion and making them strong and significant. You become a victim of your own emotions; negative emotions gone wild, unleashed in disarray, very rebellious and disruptive.

We all have fears, but they are not necessarily strong enough to cause us problems. We may not like spiders or snakes and may go out of our way to avoid them, but this is different from having a phobia about something. The phobic suffers the most acute fright. It is as powerful as being in fear of losing one's life. It brings on sweats, palpitations of the heart, nausea, fainting and the feeling that the hairs on your arms and the back of your neck are standing on end.

A phobia is a fear and may even be exaggerated by fear of the fear itself. It is a learned response; you are not born with it. It isn't necessarily caused by a terrible trauma; it can derive from something that now seems insignificant but made an impression on you when you were a child. Or it can be as simple as a mistaken reaction that has become a habit, or a reaction 'caught' from your parents or someone you admired - or even from someone you don't like. Phobias can be anything imaginable, or even unimaginable.

To complicate things further, a person may have a phobia about one thing when the true underlying fear is related to something quite different. Thus a therapist, doctor, psychologist or the sufferer himself or herself is left working completely blind, leading to the wrong conclusions and the result that the sufferer is still stuck with the phobia.

Work in hypnosis offers a gentle way out. It is widely recognised as a safe and effective treatment for people who suffer from phobias, anxiety, panic attacks and for many these make their life a misery. It is possible that a trauma related phobia can be cleared with suggestion therapy, which will normally uncover a trauma.

Hypnosis enables you to form a good habit or break a bad one with positive suggestions. An accepted suggestion is formed to instruct your inner mind. We need to find out how and why our fear is being fuelled and channelled with energy. Then we can starve the source, which in turn will stop the phobic attacks forever.

If the fear has been 'inherited' rather than based on some personal trauma, then simple suggestion therapy will clear it up completely and, generally permanently. The information lies in the subconscious, and the only route to the subconscious is through self-hypnosis or other neuro-linguistic techniques. Julian A. Leicester

www.beatfear.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT BEAT FEAR AT:

Suite A-17-8, Tower A, Menara Atlas, Plaza Pantai, 5, Jalan 4/83A,
off Jalan Pantai Baru, 59200 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

| T: 603-22834008 | F: 03-22834008 | E: training@beatfear.com |

| W: www.beatfear.com |