Phobias: nature, assessment and treatment

Paul Rogers  Wales Office of Research & Development Researcher, Caswell Clinic, Glanrhyd Hospital, Bro Morgannwg NHS Trust

Gournary Kevin  Professor of Psychiatric Nursing, Institute of Psychiatry, Bethlam & Maudsley NHS Trust

Phobias are anxiety disorders that can have a significant impact on a person’s lifestyle, due to the distress and symptoms suffered. This article discusses the characteristics of the three classified phobias, their assessment and treatment, as well as self-help interventions

Aims and intended learning outcomes

This article discusses the characteristics of the different phobic disorders, their assessment and treatment.

After reading this article and completing the exercises, you will:

- define and differentiate agoraphobia, social phobia and specific phobia;
- state the general prevalence of phobias;
- describe two assessment measures used for phobias;
- describe two forms of psychological treatment used to treat phobias;
- discuss the role of nurse therapists in the treatment of phobias.

Mental Health Practice. 3, 8, 30-35. doi: 10.7748/mhp2000.05.3.8.30.c1673

Keywords:
Phobias - Anxiety - Mental health nursing
Childhood Fears and Phobias: Assessment and Treatment. Neville J. King1, Peter Muris2 & Thomas H. Ollendick3. 1Faculty of
Education, Monash University, Clayton, 3800 Australia. E-mail: neville.king@education.monash.edu.au 2Department of
Psychology, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, The Netherlands 3Department of Psychology, Child Study Center, Virginia
Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA, USA. The specific phobias in children, such as night-time fears and
animal phobias, should not be underestimated since they cause personal distress to the child and also much interference.