

Phobias and Their Characteristics



The state when a person feels tension caused by the pressing problems is called agoraphobia. Those suffering from such a phobia may feel uncomfortable when being in crowded places. For this reason, they try to avoid jammed places and do not really like to interact with people. In order not to suffer from constant fear and nervous tension, people with such a disorder escape from the situations that may cause the said state. Some people struggling with agoraphobia live a normal life just keeping away from the things causing problems, while others do everything possible to avoid social life as they cannot cope with their fear. Identifying those with agoraphobia is quite easy since they always hesitate over whether to leave their home or not, avoid the situations/things that can make them feel depressed, etc. Such a disorder can be treated in several ways, i.e. medication, therapy, and a combination of both. The dose of medicine prescribed by the doctor depends on the severity of agoraphobia which a patient suffers from. According to the latest research, women tend to suffer from such a disorder more than men and the reasons for such a state of things are nervous tension and psychological trauma. Moreover, it is detected that people who are 20 years old only may also suffer from the mentioned disorder. A good thing is that the number of people affected by agoraphobia is less than 1% of the whole population.

Social anxiety is considered the second type of phobia. Identifying this kind of phobia is very complicated since it is still poorly explored. People suffering from social anxiety/phobia are characterized by extreme nervousness in daily life. They may feel uncomfortable and discouraged even when someone is looking at them. In addition, those struggling with this kind of phobia experience fear and worry while studying at their educational establishments, or undertaking some kinds of social activities. At work, people suffering from this disorder may

also encounter difficulties when communicating with their colleagues as they are unable to cope with their anxiety. As to the symptoms, the sufferers often feel jittery while speaking what may lead to unpleasant situations causing panic, irritation, and stress. That is why such people usually do not have friendly relationship with their colleagues. The item that affects human brain and, as a result, causes a social phobia is called Amygdala. This structure impacts the areas in brain responsible for managing anxiety and fear. This phobia can be treated in two ways: by psychiatric therapy and specific medication. As well as with agoraphobia, the dosage of the prescribed medicine will depend on the level of worry. As to the psychiatric therapy, it is considered obligatory when it goes about treating such a phobia. The therapy includes several stages, i.e. determining what causes stress and fear, training sufferers to handle stressful situations, and teaching people to practice deep breathing and master their communication skills what will help them feel more confident. Usually, social phobia affects people ranging from 18 to 54 years old and it is believed that about 4% of the population of the USA, the majority of which is female, start suffering from this disorder annually.

The third type of phobia is called specific. In comparison with two aforementioned phobias, it is less severe. This type of phobia can be characterized by the state of nervousness which people suffer from when they either face a specific situation or have to deal with certain objects. In other words, this phobia is nothing else but a common feeling of fear usually experienced by all people. This phobia may be intrinsic to people being afraid of heights, some insects, elevators, dark spaces, etc. People suffering from a specific phobia try to avoid the things causing anxiety. However, it should be stated that this anxiety is not as severe as that caused by agoraphobia. Three major causes of a specific phobia are the following ones: discovery and circumstances, traumatic, and socio-cultural. The first cause depicts the fear that appears as a result of accidents relating to airplanes. The second cause, the traumatic one, occurs as a result of dealing with the things that horrify or shock people. The third cause is believed to be the most extraordinary as it makes people suffer from a specific phobia because of the terrible feelings

which they experience when facing different magic and spiritual issues. Panic attacks are considered the chief symptom of this type of phobia. Being in a state of a panic attack, people suffering from a specific phobia try to bear the fearful feeling they are experiencing. The sufferers strive to avoid the things terrifying them by reminding themselves of the feelings they have experienced being in a specific situation. However, such state leads to severe stress and nervous tension. Since this phobia is considered lighter than those described above, it can be treated easier. The key purpose of treatment is to help people dispel their fear. It can be done in a few ways one of which is cognitive therapy that is believed to be the most effective means of treatment. It involves three stages, i.e. identifying the fear a person suffers from, learning to dispel it, and using the methods devised for removing stress and overcoming fears. Another way of treating this phobia is undergoing the Psychodynamic therapy that helps people determine their traumas and find out how to recover from them by decreasing the level of their anxiety and worry. The adults who cannot use the mentioned ways of treatment may take specific medicine prescribed by their doctors. The medicine that is used for treating this phobia will help the sufferers “calm down” their nervous system and reduce stress. It is also worth admitting that hypnosis and acupuncture can be also used to relieve nervous tension. Additionally, one should know that a specific phobia is also regarded as a general one. It means that more than 11% of people suffer from their own kinds of a specific phobia and the majority of them (about 80%) are women. One more thing that should be added is that there is no specific age for this phobia. Both children and adults may suffer from it.

To conclude, the phobias can be divided into the agora, social, and specific one. They differ from each other in the severity of anxiety which people suffer from. The therapies that are usually applied to treating patients are the psychodynamic and cognitive-behavior ones. The said phobias affect women mainly since those can be scared easier than man. People can be cured from phobias completely and live a normal life.