

Overcoming Fears and Phobias

by Leonie Remington

A phobia is defined as an extreme reaction to fear triggered by a stimulus, where the mind attaches feelings of severe anxiety to something that would otherwise be regarded as harmless.

Clinical hypnotherapist and NLP practitioner Leonie Remington describes exactly what is a phobia, highlighting four characteristics of phobia that differentiate it from normal fears and anxieties: the reaction is persistent, the response is irrational, the sufferer will go out of his/her way to avoid exposure to the stimulus and a phobia is disabling.

Pointing out that we are born with only two phobias – the fear of falling and the fear of sudden loud noises - the author discusses typical symptoms of phobia, and outlines the five key ways in which phobias are acquired: through traumatic experiences, transference, avoidance, severe stress and anxiety, and association.

Hypnosis has been recognized by the National Phobia Society as a particularly effective method of treating phobias, and several techniques can be employed, including: circle therapy, visualization, mental rehearsal, dissociation and regression.

Self-hypnosis is also a useful tool for a phobia sufferer, as well as post-hypnotic suggestion. The author also recommends a combination of Neuro-Linguistic Programming, reframing and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy to assist in modifying and eliminating the phobia.