

THIS BOOKLET WAS DESIGNED TO HELP ANYONE LOOKING TO TREAT THEIR PHOBIA UNDERSTAND THE THERAPEUTIC STRUCTURE AND FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THEIR THERAPIST.

REVIEW FILIPE'S CERTIFICATIONS, LEARN ABOUT YOUR TREATMENT AND DISCOVER WHAT OTHERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THEIR JOURNEY



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Word cloud data extracted from actual client reviews of The Phobia Specialist

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1 INTRODUCTION

I CHOSE TO SPECIALISE IN PHOBIA TREATMENT TO HELP MY CLIENTS
LIBERATE THEMSELVES FROM UNNECESSARY IRRATIONAL FEAR

HOW CAN I HELP?

It's the key that
opens the door
that is important
in therapy, not
the nature of the
lock

STEVE DE
SHAZER

I know how debilitating phobias can be but also know they're treatable. When administered by a specialist, treating a phobia can be achieved online just as easily as face-to-face. Understanding in detail how the mind works is fundamental to the process, as is having the right toolkit for the job. For many, it isn't possible to find a specialist locally, whilst for others visiting a treatment room simply isn't feasible. I believe phobia treatment should be accessible to all and that's why I chose to provide specialist online phobia treatment. I'm 100% dedicated to helping people overcome their fears. This makes the session content and techniques highly focused to help eliminate your fear quickly and easily.

ABOUT ME

I'm an experienced hypnotherapist that has an in-depth knowledge of how phobias manifest and more importantly, how to overcome them easily. I've made professional phobia treatment extremely accessible by providing comprehensive webcam sessions that follow the same structure as traditional face-to-face therapy.

- Qualified clinical psychotherapist since 2008
- Awarded Hypnotherapy Practitioner Diploma (NCFE Level 4) and Diploma in Hypnotherapy & Psychotherapy
- Professionally trained in Solution Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT)
- Fully accredited by the UK government's Complimentary & Natural Healthcare Council and the National Council for Hypnotherapy
- Accreditation requires mandatory Continual Professional Development (CPD) and that I'm fully insured to practice



PROVIDING TRADITIONAL PHOBIA TREATMENT IN THE MODERN WORLD.
SPECIALIST TREATMENT IN THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN HOME



FAST

A phobia is created and maintained by a vigilant part of the mind below your awareness. The associated anxiety you experience is in response to a pattern being matched where the trigger is a perceived threat to your wellbeing or survival. With this in mind, it's easier to appreciate why phobias respond well to treatment that disrupts this response subconsciously at its root. This eliminates the need for lengthy, potentially costly treatments and provides a safe alternative to uncomfortable exposure therapies.

EFFECTIVE

Therapy should be empowering! Being capable means not having to look to an external source for strength. Succeeding without reliance on therapy or medication. Through a Solution Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) approach, you'll uncover strengths and resources that will help you move forward confidently. True personal empowerment comes from natural internal changes that are both effective and lasting. Furthermore, everything's completely personalised so you get the most out of the treatment.

ONLINE

Overcoming your phobia has never been more convenient. Webcam sessions make it possible to deliver the same high standard of conventional face to face therapy by meeting online. All you'll need is a stable internet connection, webcam, microphone and preferably earphones/headphones. The professional platform we'll be using is simple to use and completely secure. Fully accessible on your favourite device.

3 ABOUT THE TREATMENT

FROM BEGINNING TO END THE STRUCTURED SESSIONS ARE SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO HELP YOU OVERCOME YOUR FEAR QUICKLY

THREE STAGES

1

PRESENTATION

Comprehensive and informative, each session starts with a presentation where you'll learn all about the psychology of phobias. You'll gain a full understanding of how the treatment works and the significance of each therapeutic step we'll take.

2

TREATMENT

A panic response is a subconscious response. Therefore, the treatment addresses your phobia at this level. We'll utilise an incredibly simple and effective techniques to access the template that triggers your fear and neutralise it at its root.

3

REINFORCEMENT

The final part of the session shifts the focus to all the advantages of being phobia free. By using exceptional Solution Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) techniques to establish what's most important to you, you'll get completely personalised reinforcement.

TREATMENT SUPPORT PACK

To ensure everything stays on track, you'll be given supporting documents and a general relaxation mp3.

You'll receive step by step instructions for incredible techniques that reinforce all the work we do together in the sessions and maintain correct focus.

These tools are easily doubled up to help in other areas of life too! Following the treatment, you'll get to keep these for future reference should you ever require them again.



FREE ASSESMENT

This is a great opportunity for us to meet and discuss a therapeutic plan. You'll have all your questions answered too.

COMPLIMENTARY AUDIO

A general relaxation mp3 that you get to keep. A great tool for staying relaxed and confident whenever you need it!

TREATMENT EXERCISES

You'll learn techniques that can help you cope with all sorts of events in life. You'll be provided with easy to follow guides.

WHO'S THE TREATMENT FOR?



Being delivered via webcam makes this an extremely convenient way to get your phobia treated quickly and without the need to travel or search for a specialist in your area. The treatment is constructed to help anyone:

- That avoids situations or activities due to their fear
- That worries excessively about their trigger
- That panics when faced with their trigger
- That has tried to overcome their fear (including through therapy) but still suffers from their fear
- That wants to overcome fear without the use of medication or any uncomfortable direct exposure therapy

TREATMENT EXPECTATIONS

An advantage of providing specialist treatment is that the service is 100% dedicated to helping people overcome their fears. This means you can be sure the session content and techniques are highly focused to help you eliminate your fear quickly. Hypnotherapy and Neuro-linguistic programming have helped thousands of people overcome their fear in the most relaxed manner possible.

- Relieve the panic response when faced with the old fear trigger
- Calmly retain intellectual control when you need to
- Overcome fear naturally without the use of medication

ISOLATED PHOBIAS	COMPLEX PHOBIAS
<p>Animal phobias – dogs, spiders, snakes or rodents</p> <p>Environmental phobias – heights, the dark or storms</p> <p>Situational phobias – visiting the dentist or flying</p> <p>Bodily phobias – blood, vomit or having injections</p>	<p>Complex phobias aren't specific to any one thing and are generally linked to the anxiety of a particular situation or circumstance. The most common complex phobias are social phobia and agoraphobia</p> <p>During the treatment, we would identify the areas that cause you the most distress and work on these individually together. This invariably means there will be multiple sessions</p>
<p> 3 sessions - 60 minutes each</p>	<p> Will be discussed in the consultation</p>

4 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ANSWERS TO SOME OF THE MOST COMMON QUESTIONS. PLEASE GET IN TOUCH IF THERE'S ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO ASK

WHAT CERTIFICATIONS DO YOU HOLD?

This is a great question that everyone should ask their therapist! Complementary therapy is largely unregulated and anyone can call themselves a therapist or coach without any training or background checks. This means that the onus falls to you to select a trained and competent therapist. If you would like to view copies of my certificates, they're available on the homepage of my website.

I have been a qualified therapist for over 14 years. My qualifications in hypnotherapy (NCFE awarded) & Solution Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) were obtained in 2008. I'm Fully accredited by the National Council for Hypnotherapy and the UK government's Complimentary & Natural Healthcare Council. This not only ensures my competency but also that I am kept up to date through Continual Professional Development (CPD).

HOW MANY SESSIONS (ISOLATED/SPECIFIC PHOBIAS)?

For isolated/specific phobias the treatment is conveniently packaged into just 3 sessions. Each session will last approximately 60 minutes

Here are some examples of isolated phobias:

Animal phobias – dogs, spiders, snakes or rodents

Environmental phobias – heights, the dark or storms

Situational phobias – visiting the dentist or flying

Bodily phobias – blood, vomit or having injections

HOW MANY SESSIONS (COMPLEX PHOBIAS)?

Complex phobias like agoraphobia or social phobia may require more sessions. The likely amount will be discussed as part of the free assessment.

When additional sessions are required, they will last approximately 60 min each.

HOW CAN I MAKE AN APPOINTMENT?

You can book a free (no obligation) assessment easily through the website calendar. The free assessment allows us to meet and discuss a treatment plan and is a great way to get the ball rolling. I'll answer any questions you may have and let you know what to expect from the treatment. Alternatively, you will have the option to skip the free assessment and book the full treatment immediately.

IS THERE ANY EXPOSURE THERAPY?

You'll be pleased to know there is no direct exposure to your phobia trigger as part of the treatment. Unlike uncomfortable exposure therapy, the treatment is completed in a relaxed manner.

DO I NEED TO KNOW HOW MY PHOBIA STARTED?

No, we don't need to pinpoint exactly how your phobia started to treat it. Most clients have no recollection of this and go on to successfully overcome their fear. Furthermore, as a Solution Focused Brief Therapist (SFBT), the treatment is mainly future goal orientated rather than past problem-orientated. We will, however, discuss previous phobic incidents you've had to better understand and treat the phobia.

WILL THE TREATMENT WORK FOR ME?

I have years of experience helping clients successfully overcome irrational fear. All clients gain an in-depth understanding of phobias and, more broadly, anxiety. Therefore, I can say that my clients conclude their treatment in a better position than when they started. As a team, our ultimate goal is to eliminate the instant irrational fear response you currently experience when exposed to the stimulus. This is achievable approximately 75%-85% of the time. It would be highly misleading to suggest, as some therapists do, that this type of success is achievable for every client. That said, I've helped clients lift lifelong phobias within three sessions or less. All that's required is a bit of effort, determination and motivation.

WHAT IS HYPNOSIS AND HOW CAN IT HELP?

Hypnosis is a perfectly natural state of mind that everyone has experienced. We all experience it several times a day but don't label it as such. Maybe a conversation ends and you suddenly realise a car alarm has been sounding outside. Maybe you're reading a book and zone out a conversation people are having behind you. These are examples of a relaxed focus we experience naturally all the time, and it's this state of mind we could call hypnosis/trance. Therefore, unlike stage hypnotists who would like you to believe, it's not a sleep and is far more ordinary than one might imagine. Anyone can achieve this naturally occurring calm state of mind, and therapeutically, it's a huge advantage when treating anxiety-based issues and phobias. Hypnosis is a tool in therapy that allows us to work through your treatment together in a relaxed manner. It facilitates solution-forming outlooks without anxiety getting in the way of real progress. It's certainly one of the reasons phobias can be treated quickly in just a few sessions.

We'll only need a general level of relaxation that anyone can achieve

DO I NEED TO PREPARE ANYTHING?

The treatment is available via video call and on any device. It's completed in the comfort of your own home and as such, there's not much you need to prepare. Find a comfortable space where you won't be disturbed. Have a comfy seat you can lean back on. It's recommended to bring headphones/earphones to the sessions. Always ensure your device is on charge and you have a stable internet connection.

CAN YOU HELP WITH OTHER ISSUES?

I currently specialise in phobia treatment. However, I'm qualified to help with other anxiety or depression-related issues too. If you would like help with something else, please drop me an email and I'll come back to you.

5

CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

I'M PASSIONATE ABOUT HELPING PEOPLE OVERCOME IRRATIONAL FEAR
HERE'S SOME EXTERNALLY VERIFIED REVIEWS LEFT BY PREVIOUS CLIENTS

Stella (fear of dogs) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The treatment has helped me overcome not only my phobia but face my fears. I feel my confidence is growing everyday in all areas of my life where I have always felt trapped, demoralised, guilty and restricted. The treatment has made me realise that I can be in control of my thoughts and not to let negative thoughts define who I'm and what I need to do in order to grow. Thanks to the deliver of the treatment by Filipe, he is patient considerate and makes the session about you and no one else. He kept me focussed and relaxed during the treatment. The duration of the sessions were not dictated by the timescales, but by the content that needed to be covered. Thankyou so much, the treatment changed my life massively and will recommend it to anyone who is experiencing what I have experienced.
e to the phobic stimulus

Duncan (fear of heights) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Very helpful sessions. I have had a debilitating fear of heights all my life but after working with Filipe only recently I feel much more confident and liberated around things that would previously have made me panic. Filipe has a kind and considerate manner, explains the concepts that underpin his work clearly and simply, and is very easy to work with.

5 stars; would recommend.

Victoria (fear of vomit) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The treatment was excellent! A phobia I had been suffering from for decades, getting progressively worse, was neutralised after 2 sessions. I will never 'love' my phobia but I have been in several extremely triggering situations since and each time, have been amazed at my ability to either not notice, not think about or ignore. Filipe was extremely credible, knowledgeable as well as being kind and compassionate – would thoroughly recommend.

Lucy (fear of dentist) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Thank you Filipe for helping me with my dental phobia. I have dreaded the dentist for over 10 years and have always allowed my anxiety to take ownership of me, not any more. Today was the first time visiting a dentist without my anxiety taking over and I am very proud of myself. I have moved on from the past and left all my bad experiences where they should be, in the past. I highly recommend anyone who has a phobia to work with Filipe, you will not regret taking the steps needed to create a positive future. Amazing work Filipe, thank you

Elaina (fear of flying) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I suffered from a fear of flying for about 20 years. Since I also lived 3000+ miles away from my family during that time, flying was something I regularly needed to endure if I wanted to see them. I'd tried many different approaches in the past to help me, from different anti-anxiety medications to becoming a casual expert on airplane safety and operation. Nothing helped for more than a short time, and I would often have anxiety/panic attacks during flights whenever we encountered turbulence.

I just had my first flights since working with Felipe, and I'm happy to report that there's been a dramatic improvement. Here are some before & after highlights:

Before – I used to experience a great deal of anxiety around the idea of flights and flying. This would happen when discussing holiday travel plans with my family (my brain would skip over the excitement of seeing them and go straight to the dread of flying), when I would see an airplane flying overhead or even images/videos of the inside of an airplane, and when searching for and booking flights.

After – I had virtually NO anticipatory anxiety this time around, which is amazing. Preparing for a trip is always a bit stressful, but it was refreshing to just experience a "normal" amount of travel stress as opposed to the massive anxiety I felt in the past.

Before – I would often obsessively check the weather in my city of departure and arrival prior to flying.

After – I didn't feel the need to do that this time around. In fact, it wasn't until I went to pack my bags that I realized I had no idea what the weather was up to where I was going. Again, a big victory for me!

Before – On the flight itself, I used to be incredibly preoccupied with things like when the pilot turned off/on the fasten seatbelt sign, or making sure that I was able to sit next to and look out the window in an effort to control my fear.

After – I didn't pay too much attention to those things this time around. In fact, at one moment the flight attendants needed to interrupt the drink service and take their seats due to some turbulence, and I didn't think too much of it. In the past, this exact same situation sent me into a full meltdown.

Before – When we would encounter even the slightest turbulence, I'd need to look out the window to try to reassure myself that everything was okay and calm down. My anxiety and fear would tick up and accumulate with every little bump. If we encountered bigger bumps or longer stretches of turbulence, I would basically have a meltdown, and I would struggle to calm myself down for the rest of the flight.

After – With the mild turbulence and little bumps along the way, I wasn't too bothered. I was able to continue watching films, eating my meal, etc. I *did* experience some feelings of fear the few times we encountered moderate turbulence, but unlike in the past, I was able to observe and reflect on the fear that my body was experiencing. It didn't take over me, and I was still able to think rationally. This meant that I could use some simple relaxation breathing to help myself calm down, which wouldn't have been possible prior to my work with Felipe. Also, I was able to completely calm myself back down very quickly once the turbulence was over. Within minutes I was watching a movie or reading again like nothing had happened.

In short, I think the progress is wonderful even though there was still some nervousness, and I trust that I can just keep improving with more practice. Thank you so much for the help, Felipe!

Rob (social phobia) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

A very knowledgeable, professional and helpful therapist. I came to try to tackle social phobia and I'm leaving feeling empowered and ready to take my life back! Thank you

Anonymous (fear of spiders) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Filipe was amazing, so helpful all the way through the process, making sure I understood what to expect throughout. The actual treatment has been a huge success already. Almost straight after the first session I felt better, and was actually excited to see a spider for the first time ever! This was such a debilitating fear beforehand and my only regret is not doing it earlier.

Cathy (fear of falling/heights) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I turned to Filipe because of my fear of falling, particularly when out hiking. Thanks to the two sessions plus a wonderful digital recording I no longer have this fear. I'm on a holiday in the Dolomites and thoroughly enjoying hiking and going on téléphériques whizzing high up in the mountains! Thank you

Shelby (fear of spiders) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I have lived with arachnophobia for as long as i can remember, I was at first sceptical if treatment would help me as I truly thought I was beyond treating! But I kept an open mind and I'm so glad I did, I am so pleased to be able to live my life without being paranoid or thinking about spiders 24/7 and that's all thanks to Filipe! It's clear Filipe is passionate and is very good at what he does! I would highly recommend to anyone with a phobia to take the plunge, it's worth it 1000x over!

Susan (fear of dogs) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Having a Dog phobia, affected my life for many years. I always had to plan every event. I avoided places and where there was dogs I would leave quickly.

Having the help from Filipe It was a pleasure working with him, Very relaxed, calm and patient. I've put in to practice what I've learned, I now feel more confident and relaxed in situations when I see dogs. It's helped my health as well.

Many thanks Filipe x

Tracey (fear of birds) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Filipe is kind & patient, with the knowledge & skills required to guide you through your session & relieve the fear & anxiety surrounding phobias. I felt completely relaxed & comfortable working with him. I cannot praise him enough for his excellent support throughout. Anyone unsure about trying this treatment....give it a go, you won't regret it.

Michelle (fear of heights) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Thank you Filipe for your help on my heights phobia, I feel the sessions covered so much more, not just on my phobia of heights but also on everyday situations and on how to handle them. I have since experienced visiting a place that normally would cause me problems, but I approached it in a different manner and in a different way of thinking and it really helped. I'm now looking forward to new challenges that will no longer restrict me.
Thank you .

Ozge (fear of spiders) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I had arachnophobia (well, fear of all sort of bugs really) for my entire life but now I feel liberated from my phobia. Filipe is great, very friendly and experienced. He seems genuinely interested in his clients' feelings and their improvement after the sessions. I wish I have done this earlier!.

Anonymous (fear of dogs) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

We'd have no hesitation in recommending The Phobia Specialist, We found Filipe to be very generous with his time, expertise and skills.

He clearly understood the disabling effect of a dog phobia and had clear strategies to help overcome it.

Filipe really wanted us to understand the therapy being offered and why and how it would work. I have to say that I was initially a little doubtful that it would work as the phobia seemed so embedded, but I've been delighted to be proved wrong! The results so far have been life-changing, the fear of dogs no longer stops us doing the kind of everyday activities that most people take for granted.

Kate (fear of snakes) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Filipe was so helpful with helping me with my fear of snakes. I have been petrified of them since I was little – I couldn't even look at photos or see them on a TV. Historically, I would throw the book or phone away at the sight of a snake. Since having my sessions with Filipe, I have been able to look at photos of snakes and see them on television, knowing that I am in complete control. I have even been able to look at them with a newfound curiosity! I am no longer dreading our holiday abroad later this year where we are very likely to see snakes. I highly recommend contacting Filipe if you have a phobia like mine – it was such an easy process, very professional, and has made such a noticeable difference to my life.

Helen (fear of spiders) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Filipe has been amazing over the two sessions.

I have suffered with arachnophobia since I can remember, I truly now have been given the mental strength and vision to overcome this awful fear which has held me back in so many ways over the years. I am so proud of what I have already achieved and am excited to carry this strength forward.

Thank you so much Filipe, you are truly wonderful.

Julia (fear of spiders) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Filipe was very kind and helpful! I have struggled with my arachnophobia all my life and was tired of letting it take up so much space in my brain and life. I was a little bit skeptical at first but decided to book the free consult and take it from there. I'm so glad I took that step!

After our first session I felt equipped to deal with spiders in a calmer and more controlled way, and when a spider did run at me and I felt that old, familiar panic creep up I was able to take back some control and assess the situation and understand that I wasn't in danger, it was purely an unpleasant situation.

I've just finished my second session and am actually looking forward to seeing what happens the next time I encounter a spider- that's not something I'd ever have thought I'd say and is a testament to Filipe's work!

Jay (fear of dogs) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I contracted Filipe after suffering a really bad phobia of dogs. After purchasing a family dog this year I knew it was time I needed to get help as I did not want to continue being anxious and scared around him. This affects him but also my family and kids as they can sense my behaviour which had a negative affect on my kids. After the first conversation with Filipe I knew he was going to help me. He took time to understand my fears, the reasons for this fear and from this was quickly able to establish how many sessions of therapy I would need in order to help me overcome this. After living with this fear for years I knew now was the time to finally overcome this. I can very happily say after 2 sessions with Filipe I am now able to play with my dog in great comfort, interact with him and the family which has made life within my house a million times better. I cannot thank Filipe enough for what he has given me. He is a genuine person who has a great passion for what he does and helping people with all different phobias. Highly recommend using Filipe if you wish to live a life of being free from fear and all this for the cost of a meal out in a restaurant!! Thank you Filipe and I will recommend you to anyone who asks me.

Doug (fear of heights) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Felipe beat my previous fear of heights, such that I could stay at the highest hotel in Europe, go on the highest cablecar in Europe, and in a helicopter over the Matterhorn – all things I couldn't even begin to contemplate doing before his help. What's more, I enjoyed them. Two sessions, and some homework inbetween; and I wasn't sure it would work, given my limited ability to visualise – but it did. Profoundly.

A nice guy too, very non-judgmental and relaxed, and the sessions are both very positive and one remains completely in control. It works. Go for it.

Alexandra (fear of needles) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I had 2 sessions of therapy with Filipe back in April to overcome a fear of needles that I had had for many years that caused me to pass out during blood tests. I recently had a blood test and managed to stay conscious the whole time and even talk to the nurse doing it. I feel very confident that this has played a big part in overcoming my fear and am very grateful for his help!

Hazel (fear of cats) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

This treatment has absolutely changed my life! I can't describe in words how grateful I am to have found Filipe. I had a severe cat phobia since I was a child, which meant years of avoiding friends and family's houses, crossing the road if a cat was in sight, literally screaming and running off if a cat came close to me, pure anxiety on holiday destinations with stray cats and so on. Since my two sessions with Filipe, I have been voluntarily stroking my partner's cat, I can now walk past it with absolutely no reaction, the cat has touched my bare legs and I'm starting to enjoy being around it. Everyone around me is shocked at how comfortable I am around their cats after years of having to move their cats into other rooms for me. Before the hypnotherapy, I had also tried CBT of around 6 sessions with no luck.. Now, I feel so liberated and happy, I wish I had found this therapy years ago. I can't recommend it enough! Thank you for giving me back my 'freedom'.

Catherine (fear of frogs) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I saw Filipe about a year ago regarding my fear of frogs. Up until recently, I hadn't seen a frog since the treatment. I then saw a frog the other day and have seen several since, and I cannot believe how calm I was! Before the treatment, even if someone told me there was a frog I would run off screaming. However, I was so calm these last few times, I even wanted to have a closer look and realised how cute they actually are! It was such a strange feeling because it all just felt so natural. I was expecting my panic to kick in, but it didn't. I just felt how I normally would in any situation. If you are looking to get your phobia treated, I cannot recommend this treatment enough. Thank you so much Filipe!

Lesley (fear of dogs) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The whole experience with Filipe was fantastic. Starting with the consultation, he immediately made me feel comfortable.

Then the two sessions after were very enjoyable, as I could feel my anxiety about large dogs hurting my little dog just began to diminish.

By the end of the second session I knew that the phobia had gone and I could carry on my everyday life without this continuous worry.

I can't thank Filipe enough he made it easy for me to explain my trauma without feeling silly. He made me feel relaxed with his empathic nature.

Hayley (fear of flying) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

For years now I have not been able to enjoy or look forward to holidays because of my fear of flying. There are so many places in the world I want to explore and I didn't want to look back on life and regret not travelling. I didn't know much about hypnotherapy before getting in touch with Filipe and he explained everything really well. Filipe made me feel really comfortable and I'm so pleased with the results. My anxiety has disappeared and am really looking forward to my next holiday and flight! Would highly recommend!

Natalie (fear of flying) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I can't recommend this treatment enough! For years I've had a fear of flying, but after seeing Filipe, I was able to go on a long overdue family holiday and can't believe how calm I felt on the plane. Filipe genuinely cares about your progress and after two sessions I was looking forward to the trip instead of dreading it. If you have a phobia, it's a no-brainer to book with him. It worked for me! Thanks Filipe!

Victoria (fear of vomit) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Having had a fear of all things related to sick for as long as I can remember, I didn't think there was a way to beat it. Filipe enthusiastically helped me understand my phobia and taught me how to overcome my irrational fear quickly. A very insightful and practical approach. Highly recommended!

Stephen (fear of dogs) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Absolutely fantastic and life-changing. I have had a crippling fear of dogs since I was a child, so bad that a few months ago, I decided to give up fell walking and other outdoor pursuits because of it. I would avoid parks, open spaces, even alleys where I might find myself in close proximity to a dog. I would cross the road to avoid a dog, even a small dog on a lead.

I was a sceptic about the effectiveness of hypnosis or CBT, but after just a single session, I was able to sit in the park and allow an off-lead dog to come right up to me, sniff me, etc. Previously I would literally have run out of the park the moment I saw it. The sheer panic and terror has gone completely. Now I can go where I wish, without fear of encountering dogs and I also have the tools to deal with other causes of undue anxiety. It has been a life-changing experience. I just wish i had found it 30 years ago!

Jackie (fear of spiders) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I have had my spider phobia for over 50 years and decided it was finally time to get some real help with overcoming it. I read the reviews on Felipe's website and was impressed with the comments there, so decided to make contact and ask for his help. I have just completed the treatment and can't recommend Felipe highly enough. The confidence I now feel going forward and dealing with any encounters with my eight legged friends is so comforting! Understanding where my fear has come from, and why I have held on to it for all these years, really has helped me to get to a place where I feel much more in control and empowered. Felipe is extremely personable and comes across as genuinely interested and determined to help you overcome your phobia.

Dee (fear of flying) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Filipe was extremely thorough and was able to significantly reduce my fear about the prospect of flying and I hope to be heading to tropical climes very soon!

Sian (fear of spiders) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

When I booked this I was honestly sceptical, I didn't understand how it could work, I didn't know if I would find the whole thing silly, I didn't feel all that confident about it but I was so desperate to try and improve my spider phobia that I just went for it anyway and I'm so glad I did. My phobia was an embarrassment to me, I renovate old properties and live in the countryside and spiders are everywhere! Not only would I have a meltdown at every encounter with an 8 legged individual but I started scanning rooms constantly, I'd turn my bedroom light off, start thinking of spiders and have to click it back on to check, multiple times a night and sometimes in the middle of the night. I started avoiding areas of the house that I considered high risk. These two sessions helped me without a doubt, I have successfully managed to deal with every spider since, I don't love them but I don't freak out and I don't do all the crazy checking, rechecking and (I'm ashamed to admit) random spraying to try and stop them. I feel like this is something that has helped me so much, I rarely write reviews but if one person reads this and decides to give this a go and it helps then it's worth it because believe you me I know how awful living with a phobia is and how you trick yourself into thinking it's part of who you are. Filipe is so easy to talk to too, it's like you're just chatting to your mate, but a mate that actually knows how to point you in the right direction! If you're considering this then at least take the step to book the consultation, it costs nothing and you can find out more. If it helped me and I was sceptical then it might help you too and I truly hope it does.

Oliver (fear of motorway driving) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I had a fear of motorway driving that worsened dramatically due to Covid. With motorway driving becoming essential for work, my fear started to have a direct impact on my position. I tried therapy and various courses that didn't help calm my anxiety. After just 2 sessions, I'm so happy to be able to drive on the motorway confidently now. Filipe is a patient, understanding and professional guy that knows his stuff. I could not recommend him highly enough. Thanks Filipe!

Sara (fear of needles) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Filipe is professional, helpful and very knowledgeable. After just two treatments I feel so much more comfortable about the thought of getting an injection – something that I have really struggled with in the past. I would strongly recommend Filipe to anyone who wants to overcome a phobia like mine – it feels amazing to know that I can now get an injection without it having an impact on my day to day life!

Louise (fear of spiders) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Filipe's approach to treating my spider phobia has been very successful for me. I have tried NLP in the past which didn't work, but Filipe's process is targeted and specific, meaning that for the first time in years I have been able to deal with a spider on my own. Being able to have the treatment online, from my own home worked really well and meant being more relaxed from the start. I am very, very grateful.

Harry (fear of flying) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I have had 3 hours hypnotherapy sessions with Filipe- which was only meant to be 2 1/2 hours! He was caring and compassionate during our sessions and made sure I was making progress every minute of every session! My flight anxiety had been increasingly worse over the past few years since a traumatic experience. Filipe managed to ease my mind of flying and make me feel stronger mentally whilst about to fly and whilst actually flying. His techniques are very similar if not identical to what I have experienced previously with other hypnotherapists but none of them were as good and enforced as Filipe's. I must also say Filipe did seem like he actually cared about my fear- which is something I can't say for all therapists I have seen previously. So a big thank you to Filipe, as I have just completed 2 flights back to back with little to no anxiety. I couldn't recommend his programme enough. Anyone experiencing high levels of flight anxiety and fear should definitely see to Filipe ASAP!!

Keren (fear of spiders) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I can't recommend Filipe enough! He helped me cure my phobia of spiders with just two virtual sessions! I must admit, I was sceptical. For over a decade now I have avoided my parents house due to always seeing a spider there when I would visit, and on the odd occasion that I would go there, I would avoid certain rooms like the downstairs toilet / conservatory where I had memories of seeing them. I wouldn't be able to sleep or relax whilst in their house and if I saw one, it would bring on a panic attack.

I looked into hypnotherapy as personal reasons meant I needed to move back into my family home. Just the thought was causing me an anxiety attack and it would consume my mind. Filipe understood and did everything he could to fit my sessions in at extremely short notice. I've now been at my parents for three weeks. Upon arrival I used the downstairs toilet which no one could believe and I've since encountered numerous spiders – each time feeling just as calm as I would as if I had spotted a fly.

Filipe as a person is also lovely – he makes you feel super comfortable and is incredibly responsive.

Ebony (fear of needles) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I had a massive phobia of needles, and I took 2 sessions with Filipe as the covid injections were compulsory to return to a normal life. I have found a way around getting any sort of needle for over 15 years, I was hopeless even speaking about them. My body would cease up, faint become aggressive if I was ever near one. I am so happy to finally be able to say that I was completely fine when the time came to get both injections done, I truly couldn't believe it. Something that has truly been a burden on me for half of my life, was overcome with 2 insightful sessions. Thank you so much Filipe, this has truly been life-changing!

David (fear of needles) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Thanks to The Phobia Specialist, I have finally overcome a lifelong needle phobia, enabling a successful Covid vaccination. Cannot recommend highly enough.

Alayne (dental phobia) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

What an amazing experience! My dental phobia is a thing of the past! My subconscious mind has dictated how I should feel about going to the dentist for many years, I have been scared, physically shaking and have constantly avoided going for a very long time. Because of my inability to cope with the worry I have ignored my dental issues. Recently they have become a problem that won't go away without extensive treatment. Therefore I researched what I was best to do to get over my fears. I found The Phobia Specialist online and decided to invest in sorting myself out. I am amazed at how confident I now feel about dealing with the issues. Filipe has made me feel like a different person. I highly recommend his therapy and am confident that when I have my treatments I will have the ability to calm my irrational fear and get on with the treatment required. Thank you so much!

David (fear of needles) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I have (or rather...had) suffered with Trypanophobia (fear of needles)/blood phobia for most of my life due to a traumatic experience as a child. This caused me great distress whenever vaccinations were due at school or a blood test was advised to the point where I avoided seeking medical treatment for fear of needing an injection. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic; the need for vaccination is greater than ever – causing me even more anxiety. I decided I needed to do something about it and sought out Filipe to help me get over this phobia that had crippled me for nearly 25 years. Whilst initially skeptical, Filipe explained in detail how phobias manifest themselves and through a series of hypnosis and other exercise-based sessions I have managed to overcome my anxiety to the point where I had 3 dental injections the very next day after our first session. I have had dozens since – even undergoing elective surgery shortly after our last session (2 total) – and I'm finally ready to receive my COVID vaccine. The exercises I learned will be with me for life – allowing me to apply the same techniques to other areas. Overall, the results speak for themselves and I would urge anyone else suffering with a phobia to seek out treatment so you too can overcome it and live a better, more stress-free life.

Jane (fear of spiders) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I wasn't sure what to expect, however, I couldn't be happier with the results. Having a fear of spiders has been a lifelong phobia and one that has become worse as I have got older. The sessions with Filipe have enabled me to come face to face with spiders without me going into my usual panic mode (no more screaming and shaking). Now, the new me, is calm and in control. The difference is amazing! I can't thank Filipe enough.

Adam (fear of heights) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

This really works. Two years ago I froze on a obstacle course. It was just too high and my fear wouldn't let me climb it. I have just run the same race and I flew over the cargo net. No fear. Not even a little bit. Amazing for just two short sessions a few weeks ago. I also learnt a lot about moving myself forward in other areas of my life. If you are considering trying it – try it.

Alex (fear of spiders) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I highly recommend Filipe to anyone looking to treat a phobia. As a lifelong arachnophobia sufferer, I never thought it possible to overcome my fear. Following my treatment, I'm able to calmly remove spiders from my home unaided! Thank you so much Filipe!

Anonymous (fear of dogs) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I was extremely skeptical whether the treatment will work or not. I am very happy that it has worked and I am able to go out and about without having to psyche myself about a dog interaction. Thank you

Jenny (fear of flying) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

It was an amazing experience with fast results. Filipe was a very understanding patient and calm guy. I seriously could not recommend him enough. Thank-you x

Farhana (fear of dogs) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I have lived all my life fearing dogs that has limited my outdoor activities greatly. Filipe was my last resort and after that I might have completely given up as nothing has previously helped me overcome my fear of dogs. Living with a phobia is like living in an invisible prison and Filipe has liberated me from this constant fear, panic attacks and given me freedom to go out for walks by myself. Right after one session with Filipe I was handling, playing and feeding a bulldog. I also went out for a long walk with my neighbour and his two dogs (husky and a Rottweiler). I can't believe that I can be so close to these dogs without triggering a panic attack. It's just unbelievable for me, my friends and my family ... I am ever grateful to Filipe for the session he had with me. I highly highly recommend him for any type of phobia. I wish I had found him long before and not suffer for years from phobia. Thank you, Filipe!

Rose (interview anxiety) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Phobia Specialist really helped me overcome the fear and anxiety I was experiencing due to an upcoming job interview. The session was so informative and professional. I've never walked into an interview with so much confidence and I have The Phobia Specialist to thank for a huge part of that.

6

THE THERAPEUTIC TOOLS

THE USE OF HYPNOSIS AND NLP AS PART OF A SOLUTION-FOCUSED APPROACH TO THERAPY.

HYPNOSIS

WHAT IT IS

Being in a state of hypnosis is a perfectly natural and very ordinary state of mind that we experience all the time. We might not recognise or label it in the same way but it's still the same relaxed state of mind. We've all experienced watching something interesting on TV or being so engrossed in a book that we begin excluding distractions in the surrounding environment. It's that narrowly focused attention we know as trance or simply a hypnotic state. It happens when the subconscious and conscious minds come together and begin focusing on the same thing.

The enormous advantage of this therapeutically is when in this state, we have access to the subconscious mind. This provides a way to disrupt or alter unwanted subconscious patterns of behaviour like a phobia response. Other than being safe and natural, it's also relaxing and benefits the mind in the same way as meditation. Clients often leave feeling refreshed or energised following their session.

WHAT IT ISN'T

Understandably most people haven't had much exposure to hypnotherapy or the use of hypnosis therapeutically. It's far more common for people to have seen or experienced stage hypnosis as a form of entertainment. The stage hypnotist is a performer that does what he/she needs to do to accomplish their goal. Due to the very nature of what they want to achieve, it's beneficial that they are perceived a certain way by the crowd. Being seemingly all-powerful and controlling with a mysterious demeanour can be entertaining. However, it also means carefully selected candidates are likely to feel under enough social pressure to perform when called on stage. Most misconceptions about hypnosis stem from its use in entertainment.

- Hypnosis is not a sleep
- You always have control
- You will be aware the whole time



Did you know?

You likely enter a hypnotic state every day. It's a perfectly natural state of mind. Common examples include driving home on autopilot, zoning out while reading a book, or becoming so engrossed in a television show

NEURO-LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING

We'll use NLP specifically for an amazing technique developed in the 80's that's been gradually refined since. Originally called Visual-Kinaesthetic Dissociation Technique (V/K Dissociation) it's still considered the single most efficient way to treat panic, phobias or trauma.

We know there's a subconscious template stored that fires off your panic when you're met with certain triggers. Combined with hypnosis, this technique works by accessing that stored template in a safe, controlled environment and whilst in a relaxed state. This provides an opportunity to reprocess the template, so it becomes ordinary or mundane to the subconscious mind. Once the phobia trigger is no longer perceived as a threat, the subconscious mind won't elicit the 'fight or flight' reaction or the associated panic. This effectively shifts the memory (template) to a more rational part of the mind where it's more appropriately processed by the intellect.

Considering the effectiveness of the technique the process is quite simple. You'll be guided into a nice relaxed state at which point we'll run through a few specific visualisations using a scene of your choosing. You don't have to be very visual either, just able to follow a few simple instructions

SOLUTION FOCUSED BRIEF THERAPY

WHAT IT IS

A goal-oriented approach to psychotherapy with the main objective of finding workable solutions by exploring what has worked in the past, is currently going well and through positively forecasting the future. SFBT is about empowering clients to build upon their resources and already existent strengths to help attain their goals. It's an incredibly positive approach to therapy that's designed to be brief. Therefore, clients can be sure to get on living without reliance on prolonged therapy. When it comes to treating a phobia, SFBT is powerfully combined with hypnosis and NLP to reinforce all the good work we do.

WHAT IT ISN'T

SFBT is not analytical and therefore is not concerned with delving into the past or exploring the provenance of problems.

SUMMARY

- The hypnotic state is perfectly natural, safe and relaxing
- We specifically use a single NLP technique called The Rewind Technique. This is considered the fastest and most comfortable way to overcome a phobia
- Solution Focused Brief Therapy is a goal-oriented forward-looking approach that's not concerned with exploring the root cause of an issue

7 PHOBIA PSYCHOLOGY

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PHOBIA IS THE FIRST STEP TO OVERCOMING IT.
LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THE PSYCHOLOGY OF A PHOBIA

QUICK OVERVIEW

WHAT IS A PHOBIA?

A phobia is an overwhelming and debilitating fear of an object, place, situation, feeling or animal. It's an irrational fear of or aversion to something.

Simply by defining a phobia we immediately ascertain a few things:

- Phobias are extremely wide-ranging with just about anything having the potential to become a trigger
- It's an irrational fear. Therefore, we know the conscious rational mind has little influence
- It's uncontrollable and debilitating to a sufferer

PHOBIA SYMPTOMS

Phobia symptoms are split into 3 categories:

- Cognitive – Irrational or out of proportion fear or anxiety triggered by an object, place, situation, feeling or animal.
- Behavioural – avoidance of the phobia trigger
- Physical – increased heart rate, sweating, dizziness nausea and other physical symptoms of panic and the "fight or flight" response

SPECIFIC OR ISOLATED PHOBIAS

As the name suggests, these phobias revolve around a specific trigger. The trigger could be an object, animal, situation, place, or activity. These types of phobias generally begin in childhood. As a person gets older the phobia may become less pronounced, but it may also intensify.

Animal phobias – dogs, spiders, snakes or rodents

Environmental phobias – heights, the dark or storms

Situational phobias – visiting the dentist or flying

Bodily phobias – blood, vomit or having injections

COMPLEX PHOBIAS

Complex phobias aren't specific to any one thing. They normally develop in adulthood and are generally linked to the anxiety of a particular situation or circumstances. The most common complex phobias are social phobia and agoraphobia.

HOW IS A PHOBIA CREATED?

THE PATTERN MATCHING MIND

The principles of pattern matching are key to understanding how the phobia establishes itself psychologically. We're constantly receiving a vast amount of information through our senses every second of every day. Naturally, not much of that information will reach our conscious awareness. That's simply not practical as it would severely impair our decision-making ability. So, the mind has a clever way of sorting and filtering through the data that comes in without us having to give everything much thought. It's estimated that only about 2% of the information ever reaches our awareness at all!

It's the subconscious part of the mind that has the responsibility of analysing data that's received, subsequently providing an appropriate response given the situation you find yourself in at the time. The subconscious is a pro at pattern matching. For the most part, it does a pretty good job as it drives unconscious automatic behaviours – like stretching out to shake a hand that's been put before you. Pattern matching isn't possible without something to match to, so the subconscious mind operates with the assistance of a huge library of reference material. A library full of templates that have been constructed from our experiences, but also includes "hard-wired" templates we were born with.

CLASSICAL CONDITIONING

This is a learning process where the mind learns to associate a neutral stimulus to an unconditioned response. This applies to isolated phobias and is much easier to explain with an example like the one below.

Infants and toddlers instinctively look to their parents for guidance as they begin to learn how to navigate a precarious world. One day the toddler sees a spider (neutral stimulus) but thinks nothing of it. Mum and dad then walk into the room and in an instant, their response to the spider is panic and fear. The parent's reaction (unconditioned response) is enough to elicit fear and concern in the toddler and an association is then formed leading to the creation of a phobia template. The next time there's a pattern match and the toddler comes across a spider (now a conditioned stimulus) fear is triggered (conditioned response). This process of learning has always been important to our survival as it keeps us away from danger. However, when irrational fear becomes unmanageable and is accompanied by avoidance, we're now in phobia territory. Furthermore, once created, the template is there to stay unless treated.

The memories associated with a phobia template are not processed in the same way as 'normal' less stressful memories. Effectively they are kept close to the emotional fear hub of the brain and don't tend to fade in the same way. Remembering a significant phobia response can often seem like it happened yesterday, when in fact years have already gone by.

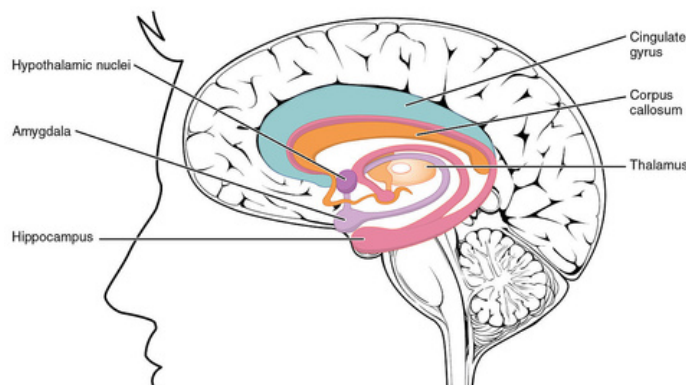
OPERANT CONDITIONING

This is about how a phobia is maintained throughout a lifetime once the phobia template is created. Sticking with the example above, the toddler is now aged 30 with severe arachnophobia. Their condition has never faded and may have even worsened as they got older. Why? Here are a couple of reasons:

- The phobia gets reinforced through subsequent encounters that are difficult for the phobia sufferer. Each time the phobia template was matched, they experienced extreme fear. It is as if the response itself validates the need for it subconsciously
- Avoiding a phobia trigger is a symptom of any phobia. Avoidance simply maintains the phobia itself. It can even strengthen the phobia template as it fits the subconscious narrative that the stimulus is truly a danger and worth avoiding at all costs. Avoidance may temporarily reduce the associated anxiety, but it only ends up reinforcing the phobia

THE LIMBIC SYSTEM

The limbic system is the part of the brain that deals with emotions and memories. It's located below the neocortex (the grey matter that makes up most of the brain). It's made up of four main parts – the Amygdala, Hippocampus, Hypothalamus and Thalamus. When it comes to phobic responses, the Amygdala and Hippocampus are major players.



THE AMYGDALA

The Amygdala is a collection of nuclei that form an almond-shaped cluster that we have on each side of the brain. Together they are called the Amygdalae. This is the emotional fear centre of the brain that has a strong connection with emotional learning. It plays an important role in creating and storing memories of emotional events. It's also the primary structure in the brain responsible for triggering the fight or flight response. The process of learning conditioned fear starts here. For example, we touch the hot stove once and learn not to try it again. Phobias are also a conditioned fear but on the other end of the spectrum and must include symptoms of impairment and avoidance too. Think of the amygdala as an observer, constantly on the alert and ready to trigger the fight or flight response if it perceives any environmental dangers. It's the 'pattern matcher' and has the ability to send and receive memory information from other important areas of the brain such as the hippocampus.

THE HIPPOCAMPUS

The hippocampus plays an important role in the consolidation of information from short-term memory to long-term memory. This is the huge pattern-matching library where the templates are stored. As mentioned previously, a phobia template is a collection of conditioned memories. But unlike regular memories, phobia memories don't go through the normal process of contextualization in the brain. This means they're always fresh and on hand for the amygdala to refer to. These are memories that represent a perceived threat to your well-being, so it makes sense they don't fade with time.

FIGHT OR FLIGHT?

The phobia trigger or potentially anything that resembles it is spotted and instantly a pattern match happens and the amygdala sounds the alarm! Freeze, fight or flight!

It's also worth noting that the response is instantaneous and triggered before any cognitive thought. This tells us that the subconscious can hijack or override our intellect in fractions of a second. From a survival perspective, this makes sense. If you were to come face to face with something truly dangerous like a sabretooth tiger. In that scenario, thinking could lead to hesitation and a delay like that could cost you your life. There's a direct relationship between anxiety and intellectual control that anyone with a phobia can easily relate to. The instant panic sets in all rationale goes out the window.

By now we can clearly see that one of the main priorities of the subconscious is to keep us away from danger. For example, coming face to face with that sabretooth tiger would instantly result in an increased heart rate, your stomach would churn, you'd grow wings and be off like a shot! To the subconscious mind, there for our self-preservation, the phobia stimulus and the sabretooth tiger are equal threats and so panic is triggered every time.



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