

Agoraphobia Treatment

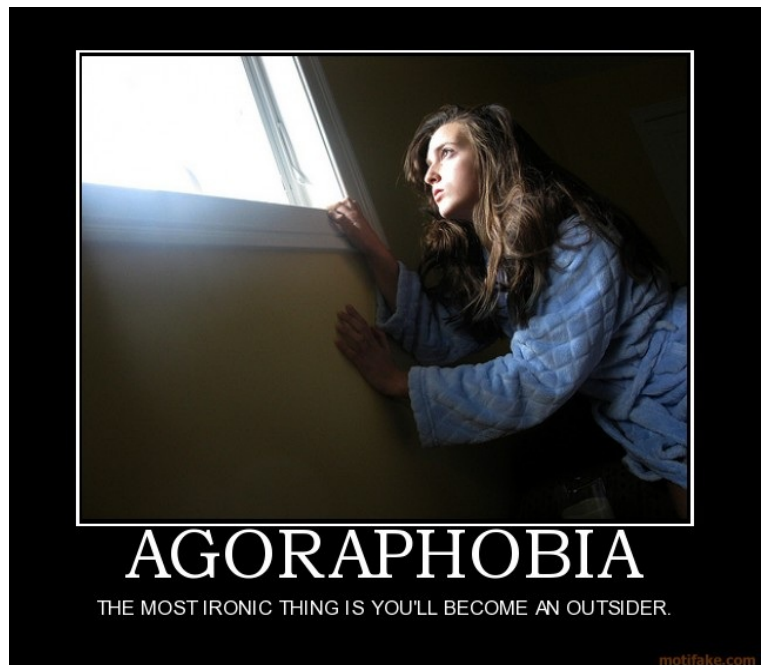
The term 'agoraphobia' includes a number of anxiety disorder symptoms under its purview. Agoraphobia treatment deals with the identification and treatment of all these indications....

Are you scared of going to an unknown place? Do you feel paranoid at the thought of having to travel alone? Do you get the creeps when you find yourself at a crowded place full of unfamiliar faces? Do you feel vulnerable when you leave the secure precincts of your home? You're probably an agoraphobic if you've answered more than one of these in the affirmative. I mean, it's okay to feel slightly uncomfortable or nervous when travelling alone, or going to an unknown place for the first time—but every time? Well, that's certainly an issue. This article deals with agoraphobia treatment options that would tell you of ways to get rid of anxiety symptoms that are typical to this Generalized Anxiety Disorder (FAD). However, before venturing towards the treatment part, let's get familiar with agoraphobia itself.

What is Agoraphobia

Agoraphobia is the phobia of the unknown—usually unknown places and settings. A person suffering from this phobia feels highly insecure and may display symptoms of fear and paranoia when, on finding himself at a place or situation upon which, he has little or no control. For instance, such a person may feel *exposed* or vulnerable at large open space, say a shopping mall or an open stadium, and may feel that there is not enough opportunity for him to run anywhere nearby for taking cover! He may not have to take cover at all but the What if....factor is so great in his case that he feels paranoid at the thought that he would not be able to hide, if the occasion arose, in such an open setting! Another variant may be when a person is afraid of going to unfamiliar places and travel alone. The same social

insecurity, arising out of his distance from familiar surroundings, comes to play here and he feels vulnerable all the time. An extreme form of agoraphobia is complete reluctance to venture out of one's house and total avoidance of people! Those who have watched the movie *Nim's Island* must have, by now, identified Alexandra Rover (played to perfection by Jodie Foster) as the being the exact personification of agoraphobia! As such, agoraphobia causes, symptoms and treatment fall under the purview of social anxiety disorders.



Possible Causes of Agoraphobia

Although no specific cause can be attributed to the occurrence of agoraphobia, possible causes include high stress levels, presences of other social and anxiety disorder, extreme shyness and substance abuse. Spatial disorientation, owing to a weak vestibular system in most agoraphobics, is also a possible cause behind this phobia. Sometimes, a person with little or no