



CASE STUDY (SCARY)

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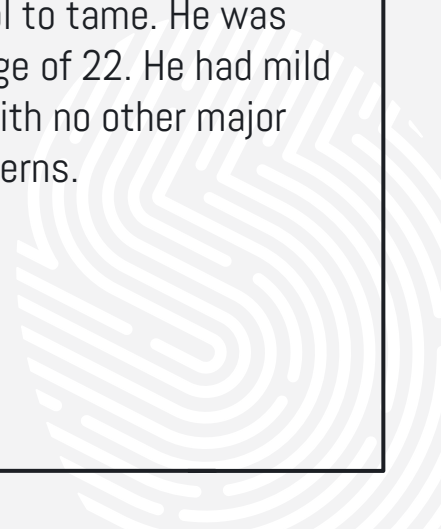




INTRODUCING BOOGER

Booger is a 28 year old male living in Chicago, Illinois. He has a bachelor's degree in computer science and lives alone in an apartment in downtown Chicago. He's a software engineer and is single. He enjoys things such as video games, sci-fi novels, and going through forest trails.

Booger suffers from generalized anxiety disorder, which he takes propranolol to tame. He was diagnosed with GAD at the age of 22. He had mild asthma in his childhood with no other major medical concerns.





BRIEF STUDIES

ACROPHOBIA: Frontiers in Human Neuroscience

- Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN) were 99% accurate with detecting acrophobia in patients.
- The study showed that VR exposure therapy effectively stimulates the fear in people with phobias.

GENERAL STATISTICS: SingleCare

- Estimated that around 19 million Americans suffer from at least one phobia
- Highlighted general symptoms such as breathing, heart rate, panic attacks, etc...
- Effective treatment options such as CBT, exposure therapy, VR therapy, etc...

🌀 ADDITIONAL FACTS ABOUT BOOGER



PANIC ATTACKS

Booger has had multiple panic attacks in the past when faced with high areas, which were bad enough to make him move into a new apartment only three stories up rather than his prior 7 stories.

FAINTING

On one occasion during a group bonding meeting at a rooftop venue, Booger fainted on the roof as he was hyperventilating and couldn't stand straight. He was removed from the venue shortly.

THERAPY

Booger has been attending therapy for these two issues as well as his anxiety, starting at age 24.



FAMILY HISTORY WITH MENTAL HEALTH



PARENTS

Booger's mother has been diagnosed with social anxiety disorder, alongside his father having general anxiety disorder.

OTHER FAMILY

Booger's sister suffers from panic attacks, and gets them semi-frequently. His grandmother and grandfather on his mother's side both have had a history of panic attacks as well.

WHY IS HE COMING TO ME?



CHILDHOOD

Booger had no abnormalities during childhood, he was adventurous and always getting active on the playground.



FEAR OF HEIGHTS

Booger's fear of heights developed at the age of 10 when he fell off a slide on his elementary school playground.



FURTHER PROGRESSION

His fear worsened following a friends birthday party at a rope course at 13, he slipped on a wooden plank and though strapped in, it did damage to his mental health around heights.



WORK RELATION

With Booger's job, he works in a high rise office, which has caused difficulties as his fear of heights causes panic within him and reduces productivity and increases stress.

01

DEFINING “PHOBIA”



WHAT ARE PHOBIAS?

The DSM-V definition of phobia is "Marked and persistent fear that is excessive or unreasonable, cued by the presence or anticipation of a specific object or situation (e.g., flying, heights, animals, receiving an injection, seeing blood)."

These excessive fears are often triggered by visual stimuli, but can sometimes be triggered by thoughts, scents, sounds, etc..

COMMON TRAITS WITH PHOBIAS

ANXIETY

Those with a phobia typically experience a sense of panic when faced with their stimulus.

RAPID HEART-RATE

Those with a intense phobia will experience a rapid heart rate and sweating

AVOIDANCE.

Commonly will go out of their way to avoid said things they fear.

SHORTNESS OF BREATH

These with a phobia can commonly hyperventilate, have shortness of breath, and become dizzy when frightened.

KNOWLEDGE OF IRRATIONALITY

Even when they know the fear is irrational, they still persist with said fear uncontrollably.



GENERAL FACTS ABOUT PHOBIAS

HOW COMMON?

A phobia is actually the most common anxiety disorder. About 7% of adults have experienced a severe phobia in their life,

GENDER DIFFERENCES

Women are slightly more likely to develop a phobia than men.

AGE AND TIME

Phobias can develop at any age. Whether child or elder you can develop new fears and phobias.

GENETICS

Phobias can run in families, which leads some to believe that phobias are mostly genetic.

AVOIDANCE

Avoidance actually makes the fear much worse as you're basically conditioning yourself to avoid at all costs.

EXPOSURE

Exposing yourself to what you're afraid of actually ends up helping with recovering from the phobia.

02

DIAGNOSIS



WHAT MAKES BOOGER HAVE A PHOBIA?



INITIAL CATALYST

Him falling off the jungle gym



PANIC AT EXPOSURE

Started panicking at the sight of tall areas



GAD DIAGNOSIS

Diagnosed with GAD at 22 which is linked with phobias.



PROGRESSION

Progressed to fainting at a company getaway.



FAMILY GENETICS

Family have history with panic disorders and anxiety.

HOW CAN WE BE SURE?

IS THERE AN ISSUE?

Booger has made it very clear that there is definitely an issue.

01

02

INTERVIEWS

I personally interviewed Booger to figure out his triggers and avoidance behaviors.

03

04

DIFFERENT DIAGNOSIS'

Rule out other diagnosis' that could be the case of these symptoms such as panic disorder, general anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, etc...

05

PHOBIA SCREENING TEST

I used a severity test to find out the fear intensity of Booger's mystery fear disorder.

EXPOSURE BASED ASSESSMENT

Provide a virtual reality height simulation to test how he reacts to being in high surfaces at a hands on level.

BOOGER HAS...

ACROPHOBIA!

!



03

TREATMENT



HOW CAN WE TREAT BOOGER?

01

COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY

Help reframe these thoughts related to heights and develop positive coping strategies.

02

EXPOSURE THERAPY

Start with gradual exposure to heights, such as a small step. Keep progressing.

03

VIRTUAL REALITY THERAPY

Use VR simulations to expose Booger to heights in a safe manner.

04

BREATHING AND MEDITATION

Develop Booger's coping strategies so he doesn't feel as intense of emotions when seeing heights.



TREATMENT RESULTS



1 MONTH

- Identifies his negative thought patterns
- Comes up with coping strategies
- Does slight exposure, such as exposure to steps or one story buildings.
- Starts his VR treatment

6 MONTHS

- Actively challenges these irrational fears and replaces them with more rational thoughts and ideas.
- Moves to more moderate exposure such as standing on balconies
- Handles more intense VR situations such as rooftops.

1 YEAR

- Significant fear reduction when encountering heights
- Can navigate high surfaces such as bridges and his high office building.
- No longer feels anxiety with VR simulations.
- Can ride Intimidator 305 with some excitement.

WHAT IS BOOGER'S FUTURE LIKE?



POST-TREATMENT RESULTS

FEAR STILL LINGERS

Though greatly lessened, the fear of heights will still somewhat be there, but manageable.

GENERAL ENJOYMENT

Booger finds life much more enjoyable without the panic and fainting instilled by height encounters.

AMUSEMENT PARKS!

He can ride roller coasters with minimal stress.

GROUP ACTIVITIES

Instead of just forest trails, Booger can now go on mountain trails.

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