

Coping with Agoraphobia (*Interview Transcripts*)

Joseph Siegel, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, OSF HealthCare

“The name kind of means ‘fear of open spaces’ but it is not that. It is this fear of having a physical reaction in a certain situation or a certain environment. It is possible to be agoraphobic and the fear is being afraid to be home alone because XYZ might happen, so you always need to have someone there with you.” (:25)

Joseph Siegel, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, OSF HealthCare

“One of the dilemmas – especially early on when people are first experiencing this – is that even if they would be happy to face their fear, they don’t know what it is. They don’t actually know what’s causing this thing. They don’t know what causes it the first time and there is a bit of confusion about what is causing it now.” (:21)

Joseph Siegel, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, OSF HealthCare

“People who have it manage it in all kinds of ways. Celebrities who reportedly have this probably manage it just like anyone else would manage it. They kind of set themselves up for success. They also may avoid those things that they know are going to cause them to possibly have a reaction.” (:21)

Joseph Siegel, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, OSF HealthCare

“Sometimes people do subtraction problems in their head. I like to have people say the alphabet backwards which is another thing you kind of have to focus on because it is hard to do. It’s all about trying to get your brain to reset on something else other than the fact that this thing is happening that you may not be able to control. The thoughts kind of drive it forward, so refocusing the thoughts it super important. At the same time that you try to regulate your body a little bit.” (:28)