

# CASE STUDY OF PANIC DISORDER WITH AGORAPHOBIA

James, a 45-year-old bus driver, presented for treatment because he was finding that he was increasingly unable to work. Two years ago he had been driving a bus which was full of passengers. The day was hot and the air conditioning was not functioning. As he drove, he became increasingly aware of how hot he was feeling, how stuffy the bus was, and how many people were crowded into the bus. As time went on, he felt increasingly that he needed to get off the bus, but he felt trapped because he knew that he could not do this due to the inconvenience it would cause. This led him to feel stressed and he felt his stomach "getting all queasy". He became convinced that if he was unable to get off the bus that he would soil himself and he was unable to rid his mind of the associated images. He managed to reach the terminus, park the bus, and get to the toilet "just in the nick of time". Ever since that event, he takes precautions before driving the bus (e.g., going to the toilet and not eating for three hours before a shift), has identified all toilets along his routes, and will go to the toilet each time he stops at a bus terminus whether he needs to go or not. These strategies have helped in the past, but the sensations in his stomach are becoming stronger, and he is terrified that one time soon he will be unable to make it to a toilet in time.