

Social Anxiety Treatment at the Emotional Health Clinic:

What You Need To Know

What treatment options are there for me?

SOCIAL ANXIETY GROUP TREATMENT PROGRAM

If you choose to participate in our group you will have access to our highly effective 12 week treatment program. This program has been developed through our research unit over the past decade and includes innovative treatment techniques that have been shown to be superior to commonly used treatment approaches. Each group consists of between six participants, and is led by a therapist with specialist skills in clinical psychology and the treatment of social phobia.

In addition to receiving our best-practice treatment, you will also be taking part in a new treatment component that aims to increase your motivation for overcoming your anxiety. This involves attending 3 individual treatment sessions with a psychologist prior to the start of the group program. These sessions will focus on discussion of your reasons for wanting to change, things that might make change difficult, and issues that might arise in the course of the group treatment. This is an exciting opportunity to participate in a program that continues to research ground-breaking methods for maximising people's success in overcoming their social anxiety.

COMBINED ALCOHOL & SOCIAL PHOBIA (CASP) TREATMENT PROGRAM

Many shy people drink alcohol as a way of coping with their anxiety. Because alcohol use and social anxiety tend to feed each other in a vicious cycle, it makes sense to tackle these two problems together. Our research is aimed at testing two different types of treatment for people with both social anxiety and drinking problems. This research will contribute important information to help improve the care of people with drinking problems and social anxiety. If you choose to participate, you will be randomly allocated to *EITHER* treatment for social phobia and problems drinking *OR* treatment that is targeted only at problem drinking. Random allocation means that the type of treatment you receive is determined by chance (like a toss of a coin). We have chosen these treatments because they both have been shown in previous research to be effective in reducing social phobia and problem drinking. However, if you have not seen marked improvement within three months of finishing treatment, we will be happy to offer you an alternative method of treatment.

Both treatments involve 10 individual sessions of cognitive behavioural therapy, and you will learn practical skills and strategies to help manage problem areas and improve your quality of life. All treatment is conducted by qualified clinical psychologists who have received further specialist training at our clinic in the treatment of social phobia and problem drinking.

General information about participating in our treatment programs:

How do I get involved in the program?

Step 1: Before you come in to our clinic an intake officer will conduct a short telephone interview with you to briefly discuss your current concerns.

Step 2: If we feel that one of our programs may be able to help you we will arrange an initial assessment interview with one of our psychologists, and send you some questionnaires to complete. The assessment session will take approximately 2.5 hours and will be held in our clinic rooms at Macquarie University. This assessment will involve discussing your current concerns as well as related emotional and physical health problems. At the end of the assessment you and the psychologist will make a decision about whether you will participate in the program. If it is decided that our treatments will not provide you with the required help we will arrange a suitable referral for you.

Step 3: If you decide to join our programs, you will be contacted by someone from our research team who will inform you of the start dates for treatment. Please be aware that there may be a wait of 3-6 weeks before your program commences. The social anxiety group program runs over 16 weeks. This includes 3, 1-hour individual sessions one evening a week, followed by 12 group sessions on the same evening (6-8:30pm). The CASP program runs for 10, 1-hour sessions over approximately 16 weeks.

What commitment does the program ask of me?

The development of our treatment programs and the continued advancement of our knowledge about social anxiety would have been impossible without the support of the many clients over the years who have generously offered their support to our research endeavours. We ask every participant in our program to donate some of their time to helping us with this ongoing research into the nature of social anxiety. This usually involves an appointment of approximately 1.5 hours both before you commence treatment, and at the end of your treatment. During this appointment you will be asked to fill in some questionnaires and complete some tasks. Further information on this will be provided to you when you are offered a place in the program. Participation in this additional research is voluntary.

What follow-up is involved after the program?

You are asked to attend 2 individual follow-up sessions after the end of the program so that we can assess how you are going. We will also ask you to complete some more questionnaires at these times. The follow-up sessions are free of charge and are completed at the following times:

Group Program: Individual session in the week following the group and 3 months after treatment.

CASP Program: Individual session 3 months and 6 months after treatment.

Who do I talk to if I want to know more?

Social Anxiety Treatment Program – Contact Clinic Reception on 9850 8711

CASP Program - Contact the CASP Office on 9850 8670