

English

Definition essay

Phobia

The 40°-Celsius weather was miserable when we were going on the trail to my grandmother's house in Bucaramanga, Colombia. We had been traveling about seven hours and were in El Pescadero, which is the curviest and dizziest part of the trip.

Twenty minutes before El Pescadero, my parents had the "great idea" that we should eat lunch. That idea was the worst decision my parents could have made, because my brother usually gets motion sickness on every trip. As a result, in the middle of El Pescadero, my brother started to feel really bad and, as usual, he vomited in the car. I started to feel really bad and nervous; furthermore, my body was sweating and my breathing was getting worse by the minute. Then, I lost control of my breathing and I started to cry and we had to stop the car until I calmed down.

After that experience in the car, I realized that I had a phobia of vomit and that I had to find a way to deal with it. I am still trying to find solutions to control myself when that situation happens, but the first step that helped me was finding out the exact meaning or the definition of the word phobia.

The first time that I heard the word phobia was when my family and I arrived at my grandmother's house after the incident in the car. My father, who is a psychiatrist, helped me to calm down. I asked him if he knew what could be wrong with me and he told me that I might have a phobia to something that happened in the car. A couple of months later, I went to the psychologist for the first time. I explained to him that I always felt really anxious before a trip and that I was scared of getting motion sickness or that somebody else would have it. Also, I told him my experience in the car the day of the trip when we were going to Bucaramanga, Colombia. He said that I had a big fear of something that was happening on my trips and that I could have a phobia of vomit, because when somebody was vomiting, I could not control myself.

After the explanation of my psychologist, at first I thought that the word phobia was the same as the word fear. Both could be similar words in the way that when a person is feeling a phobia or a fear, he could feel anxious and be scared about something, or an event in particular. However, we can find the difference between those words in the reaction. A person with a fear might react by controlling himself in a rational way. For example, a lot of people can be scared of snakes and get really anxious and nervous when they see one, but they will just try to leave the place where the snake is and can be calmed down without help. On the other hand, a person with a phobia will not be able to control his body and mind; therefore, his reaction would be completely irrational.

Furthermore, finding out my exact feelings and thoughts before, during, and after the experience also helped me to define the word phobia. Consequently, based on my experience, I can say that my two biggest fears are to get sick in the car or that another person would get motion sickness and vomit. For that reason, before any trip, I start to think about what might happen and I imagine the bad things that could happen on the trip. I get really apprehensive and lose my appetite, because of my anxiety. Therefore, I can not sleep very well the night before the trip. Then, when I am on the trip, my anxiety doubles and my body gets completely tense. During the experience of the phobia, I always drink water and take relaxing pills. However, when the phobia gets out of control, the pills do not really relax my body, because my mind gets stronger than my body and it takes control of everything. Therefore because of the tension, my body and mind are completely exhausted after the trip. Also, I get scared and nervous about the next trip.

In addition, after analyzing the feelings that I felt in my phobia experiences, it seems logical that there are three conditions in order to have a phobia. The first condition is to have a big fear about something or a specific situation. The second is that the feeling of the fear is irrational. That means that it is not a normal or common fear like being scared of the snakes. It has to be a fear that the person cannot control in his mind and his thoughts. Finally, the third condition is to have a reaction in a disproportionate way. That happens when a person loses control of his body and mind, and his acts are completely irrational.

In conclusion, we can say that the word phobia could have similar meanings to anxiety as fear, but different reactions. Phobia is an uncontrollable fear, because when the person is having the phobia, he won't be able to control himself physically and mentally. Furthermore, the reactions are irrational, because the fear takes control of the mind and thoughts of the person. In addition, now that I know the meaning of the word phobia, it is easier for me to deal with and control my phobia of vomit. When I am living through the situation, I can understand what is happening to me and that helps me to find a lot of ways to control my mind and to stay relaxed.