

Breaking the Agoraphobia Cycle



The cycle is maintained by understandable attempts to feel safe. Mapping it can reveal where a gentle change is possible.

The cycle

Trigger -> threat prediction -> anxiety sensations -> escape, avoidance or safety behaviour -> short-term relief -> stronger future fear.

Why relief can mislead us

Leaving proves that leaving reduced the distress, but the brain may wrongly conclude that danger was avoided only because you escaped.

Where change can begin

Pause before escaping, remain a little longer, reduce one safety behaviour, repeat a manageable step, and record what actually happened.

What progress looks like

Not zero anxiety. Progress may be staying, recovering, choosing freely, learning something new, or treating yourself kindly afterwards.

A quiet space to reflect

My usual trigger:

My feared prediction:

My safety response:

The short-term relief:

A different, manageable response:

Use this resource at your own pace. Exposure work should never involve genuine danger or ignore medical, sensory or accessibility needs. Seek qualified support if fear is significantly restricting daily life.