

Amelia by XRHealth Clinical Case

**Fear of Being Trapped;
Cleithrophobia**



**Health care professional with expertise in VR:
Michael Carthy**

Patient

Female, 26 years old.

Self confidence issues

Very pessimistic with low pervasiveness when explaining events.

Reference diagnosis

Clinical diagnose before VRT → **GAD, Cleithrophobia.**

Pharmacotherapy → **NONE**

Initial sensitising event → 5 years previous when the patient was **trapped in the tube underground for approx. 5 min**

Objectives

Objectives to be achieved.

- Train the patient on abilities to improve her sense of autonomy and control, with the use of VR.
- Reduce or eliminate the fear of being trapped.

Methodology

Therapeutic focus → Systematic desensibilization of fear response in elevators and in tube.

The sessions were organized in 4 sessions of 2 hours each.

- Familiarization with the VR
- Breathing exercises
- VR exposures
- Real world exposures

Development

Session 1: Introduction to VR → Grounding and Familiarity

- Being in the island → create grounding and familiarity with VR
- Continued to **small elevator** and then to **big elevator**, followed by **outside tube** → **Just looking, not entering.**
- When familiar with VR → **breathing exercises were introduced** (Just looking)

Session 2: VR exposure

- Elevator scene repeated 6 times
 - The patient was asked to control the level of exposure
- Session ends with **elevator breakdown, breathing and muscle relaxation exercises are played before, during and after.**
- When the session is over, the patient is able **use the elevator from 7th floor to the ground.**



Imagery for relaxation

The patient walks along a beautiful island where they can relax to the sound of the sea and the sight of a waterfall. As they walk, they can also engage in relaxation exercises.

▶ Start session

📖 Open guide



Virtual Environment

Development

Session 3: VR exposure Tube scene

- Client reports taking **elevators in real world**.
- **VR Tube** → Repeated multiple times starting outside, then the station then approaching the platform, then watching the train approaching.
- **Breathing and muscle relaxation techniques** applied when needed.
- Session ends with two train breakdowns first for 60 seconds and then repeated with second breakdown for 5 minutes.

Session 4: VR exposure + Real world exposure

- All environments were repeated again.
- Afterwards they left the therapy room and went to to the underground → **The healthcare professional and the patient got on the first train**, asking the patient to focus on her breathing and body posture.



☆ Small Elevator

This environment, unlike the previous one, allows the option of getting in the elevator and going to another floor. Once in there, people will get out and get in the lift, while the patient remains inside. If go to another floor is pressed one more time, the action will take place again.

Launch Environment ▶

Virtual Reality



☆ Big Elevator

The patient is located in a room and must get into the lift. Initially, these two spaces have people, although the presence or absence of people can be regulated using the People button. Specifically, you can choose that there is no one in the elevator, that there are few people (3 people), or that there are many people (7 people).

Launch Environment ▶

Virtual Reality

Results

At the end of therapy it was possible to observe:

- After 4 sessions of 2 hours each, the client reports she is **traveling to work on the tube everyday.**
- **No focus on the tube → Focus on her breathing and body posture.**
- She now **“Believes that she will be okay, even if the train stops for a while.”**





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