

AM I Cured? (Success)

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Am I cured?

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On Wed May 15 bbsinva wanted "to hear someone finally become CURED, if there is such a thing". On this Board we usually talk about recovery rather than cure. But I think one or two posters have claimed to be cured, and I now want to add myself.

I have posted my story before - developed moderate AP at the age of 16, and began to confront it in my mid-30's. I am now 63. For years I would freeze up at urinals if anyone else was around. In my part of the world (Australia), they are mostly troughs, at floor level. Very occasionally they will be troughs at thigh level - hopeless for boys! Dividers between wall-bowls are almost unknown. And I didn't like to use cubicles, because for me it raised concerns about my masculinity. I wanted to pee alongside other men, but couldn't. My recovery was a fact before I discovered the IPA site just over two years ago, but the site has been a great encouragement and has re-enforced my recovery. These days I use public restrooms at every opportunity (without actually contriving them), and do so without any sense of anxiety. I expect success, and for over two years now, have suffered only two misfires, each in a similar very-busy restroom situation with no urgency to go on my part.

I have posted what I regard as the reasons for my recovery before:

1. Graded exposure (i.e. peeing in a public restroom, but probably averaging no more than one occasion a week, over the years. These days since IPA, more often). I work from home.
2. The daily practice of "deep relaxation" of about 10 minutes (also known as self-hypnosis, and using visualization techniques. See BOB Sun Oct 15, starting from the bottom of the list). This has made me a more relaxed person in ANY situation. I do not practice any relaxation strategies in restrooms. During the bad old days, I would multiply 2-digit numbers by 9, in my head, waiting for my stream to start. These days I just go and do it.
3. Coming to some understanding of my emotional hang-ups about myself. This did involve some professional counseling. I have never been on any medication.

I would claim to have no more difficulty these days at urinals with other men around, than the average non-AP person. Therefore I would claim to be "cured". Of course, I will never forget that I have suffered from AP, and to that extent am not quite the same as the average non-AP person.

My recovery took some years, but I am sure that it would have been much more rapid if IPA and the net had been around then, to say nothing of pee-buddies and support groups, which have not yet been part of my life. I hope to be active in support group work in the Sydney area when I retire there in just under two years' time. Currently I live and work in a small community 2 hours out of Sydney, and because I am a slightly public figure, my graded exposure frequency in public facilities has had to be kept at a minimum. This also has meant that my recovery was slower than it should have been.

God bless you all. John W.