Single session treatment of specific phobia

Specific phobia is one of the most prevalent of all psychiatric disorders in the general population with a lifetime prevalence of about 13%. However, few people suffering from specific phobia apply for treatment, mainly because they are not aware of the treatment possibilities, or they are afraid that the treatment itself will be worse than having the phobia.

Professor Öst has developed a rapid treatment that is carried out in one single session, which is maximised to 3 hours. The treatment is based on a cognitive behaviour analysis of the catastrophic beliefs the patient has in relation to a possible confrontation with the phobic object or situation. Prolonged exposure is done as a series of behavioural experiments to help the patient test the catastrophic beliefs they have. During the workshop the participants will get video demonstrations of how specific phobias can be treated in a one-session format using prolonged exposure and modelling.

During the last 25 years Professor Öst has conducted 13 randomised clinical studies on phobias of spiders, snakes, blood-injury, injections, dental care, flying and enclosed places in adults and on various specific phobias in children and adolescents. The mean treatment time varies between 2 and 3 hours and the proportion of clinically significant improvement between 80-94%. The effects are maintained, or furthered, at the 1-year follow-up. These results have been replicated in at least 31 RCTs carried out in Holland, Great Britain, Germany, Austria, Norway, Belgium, Spain, USA, Canada, and Australia.

About the Presenter
Lars-Göran Öst is professor emeritus of clinical psychology at Stockholm University, Sweden, and also has a part-time position as professor at the University of Bergen, Norway. He has published 265 articles, book chapters and books.

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Cost of 1 day workshop:
£130 including lunch