

## **Simon's fear of being a paedophile**

Simon has become preoccupied by a fear that he might be a paedophile after hearing that a friend of his had been sexually abused as a child. He regularly searches for information on paedophiles to try to ascertain whether he is one or not. If he is in close proximity to a child, he will monitor sensations in his genitals for any sign that he is becoming aroused. Simon was especially distressed one day when he became convinced that his penis had leaked fluid when he was near a child. He was anxious that this was proof of sexual arousal. Simon avoids close physical contact with his own children, especially if they are naked.

Simon also fears that, even if he is sure he is not a child-abuser, he will be accused of being one and so bring great shame upon himself and his family. He is extremely fearful of accidentally viewing child pornography online and then being accused of being a paedophile in consequence. This has led him to be cautious about using his computer, the internet or e-mail. Simon feels uncomfortable and anxious for many hours a day, feeling that he must constantly monitor himself as if he were a criminal under suspicion.