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HELP FOR THE WATER WARY

Got a pool but afraid to jump in? You're not alone, hydrophobia is a common affliction. You can spot sufferers at the beach on a summer's day: they'll venture into the water but never very far and they'll often pretend to swim but with one foot still on the bottom. Like most phobias, fear of swimming isn't rational but it is real and with it usually comes an equally irrational feeling of shame.

"There's no reason to be ashamed of something that you haven't yet learned to control. Phobias often go back to childhood or even earlier. It's not your fault and it can be cured," says Catherine Bouquet of *Etre & Devenir* in Théoule.

Catherine (pictured) and partner Raphael hold workshops to cure the fear of water. The whole process takes 2 to 3 days — in the sea in summer or in the Hotel Miramar Beach pool in winter. Often former sufferers come along to sessions to offer support. "They know how real your fear is and that they've gotten over it. You can too."

Weekend courses involve both physical and psychological methods to relax and vanquish your dread of the water. Age is no object, "We often get grandparents who have always been fearful of joining their grandchildren in the pool," says Catherine.

Count about 100 euros a day for sessions in the sea in summer and 135 a day in winter at the pool with lunch included. *Etre & Devenir* also organises package tours to Corsica to vanquish hydrophobia. See page 32 for contact information ... and let us know how you do! *M.M.*



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