

THE NEXT LEVEL...

OVERCOME SHYNESS

DISCOVER YOUR INNER CONFIDENCE
TO OVERCOME SHYNESS



THE NEXT LEVEL SERIES, BROUGHT TO YOU BY FS PUBLICATIONS

Overcome Shyness 101

*Discover Your Inner Confidence
to Overcome Shyness...*

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Overcome Shyness 101

Table of Contents

Chapter 1	
Why Are We Shy?	4
Chapter 2	
When Shyness Can Be A Problem	11
Chapter 3	
Discovering The Inner You	17
Chapter 4	
Shyness In Business	22
Chapter 5	
Shyness In Social Situations	29
Chapter 6	
Using The Internet To Overcome Shyness	33
Chapter 7	
Taking A Step Towards Joining Groups	38
Chapter 8	
Taking A Class On Public Speaking	40
Chapter 9	
Do You Need Counselling?	42
Chapter 10	
How To Remain Free From Being Shy	45

Overcome Shyness 101

Chapter 1

Why Are We Shy?

When we think of someone being shy, we may think of a child who is hiding behind the leg of her mother because she fears strangers. Shyness was once considered to be an asset for little girls as well as women because it was associated with modesty. I can remember my daughter hiding behind my leg when she was a little girl and thinking that it was so cute. I never saw shyness as an impediment and, like many other adults, found this type of behavior very “cute.”

Shyness is not cute. To the contrary, it can cause you all sorts of problems in life. People who are shy are usually unable to express their feelings and have a much more difficult time when it comes to building relationships. My daughter, for example, found it difficult to make friends as she got older and to talk to strangers at parties. While people found her to be cute as a child as she hid behind my leg, they found her to be aloof and unfriendly as she blossomed into adulthood.

Before we can overcome shyness, we have to figure out why we are shy. There is no easy answer to this question. Some people appear to be born shy and have a hard time coming out of their shell to others. Other people seem to be more outgoing. I have done a bit of research into what makes someone shy and found that two things often figure into shyness - birth order as well as a lower self esteem. It is also important to realize that

Overcome Shyness 101

shyness is not always so apparent. Some people, in an effort to not seem so shy will go off in the opposite direction and appear to be very outgoing when they are struggling, on the inside, to overcome this affliction. I can relate to this as I am one of those types of individuals. Others often find me to be outgoing, but in reality, I get a sick feeling in my stomach when I have to meet new people or exert myself in social situations.

Being shy does not mean that someone has a low self esteem, but it can be an indication that their self esteem is a bit more fragile than someone who is not shy and is not, as a result, self conscious. Through my research, I have found that those who are shy tend to be very sensitive individuals who often make the mistake of thinking that everyone's attention is focused on them. They are afraid to make a mistake, say something silly or do something that will cause others to notice them. They would rather fade into the background than call attention to themselves.

Birth order also seems to play a roll in shyness. It is very often that the person who is shy has older siblings that are very outgoing. I have often felt that this was the reason why my daughter is so shy and the polar opposite of her older brother, who seems to be comfortable wherever he happens to be and has no problem at all with shyness. Many people who are shy are this way because they live in the shadow of an older sibling who is anything but shy.

There is also the female factor. Although I tried to raise my boy and girl the same way with the same set of values, I found

Overcome Shyness 101

that they are as different as chalk and cheese. I knew that despite what others may think about the “cute little shy girl” that shyness would not be an asset for my daughter. However, not everyone thinks this way. Some people still think that it is cute for little girls to be shy - that it somehow makes them more ladylike. This is not a plus when that little girl, as a woman, has to compete with other women as well as men for jobs and types of recognition in life. There are still people who are under the impression that shyness is a desirable quality in little girls. Because of this, they may be more inclined not to concern themselves with shyness in their daughters as much as they do with their sons.

Low self esteem is usually at the root of all shyness. A shy individual is usually afraid to say something or do something that will bring attention to them because they fear embarrassment. Many people are under the impression that a low self esteem is the result of bullying, a poor childhood or some sort of deficit that a child has to endure. This is not always the case. A child who is coddled by his or her parents can also develop a low self esteem. Those who are overprotected may not feel as though they are capable of taking care of themselves in the world and develop somewhat of a low sense of self worth. There are many reasons why people develop a low sense of self esteem and varying degrees of self esteem issues as well. Self confidence is something that can be built up in a variety of different ways to increase self worth and also allow someone to be less self conscious and shy.

Overcome Shyness 101

Many people are aware of the fact that they are shy and avoid being in the limelight as much as possible. Some people who are shy may over compensate for the fact that they feel shy and go overboard in trying to draw attention to themselves. For the most part, shyness is based upon a fear of rejection, most often due to a low self esteem. It manifests itself differently with every individual. Some people need only have their idea rejected once before they develop a low sense of self worth and an inferiority complex. Others can take a lot of rejection before it starts to affect them negatively.

Shyness should be seen as a deficit and something that should be addressed and overcome. Once you recognize the fact that you or someone who you care about is shy, you can take a look at the issue and see what you can do to correct the problem. While you may not be able to get to the point where you are ready to lead a parade, you can overcome some of your basic instincts that prevent you from opening up to people and forming relationships.

Here are some basic questions that you can ask yourself to see if you are shy:

- 1. When I go to a party where I do not know anyone, I...**
 - A. Cancel. I would rather die than attend a party where I didn't know anyone else.
 - B. Try to find a place where I can sit inconspicuously so I do not draw attention to myself.
 - C. Try to mingle a bit and then call it an early night.

Overcome Shyness 101

D. Find the life the party and do my best to integrate myself with the guests.

2. In school, if I knew the answer to a question, I would...

A. Not do anything. What if I wasn't sure?

B. Wait to be called on by the teacher.

C. Raise my hand to answer the question.

D. Make sure the teacher saw that I knew the answer by waving my hand.

3. My ideal job would be...

A. A job where I could be alone in my own cubicle

B. A job where I didn't have to interact with others on a regular basis.

C. A job where I worked in a team setting.

D. A managerial job where I was in charge of others.

4. If I like someone and want to form a relationship with them, I...

A. Follow them around and wait for them to make the first move.

B. Try to put myself in their way so that they notice me.

C. Arrange to be at parties and other gatherings where they may be.

D. Tell them and let the chips fall where they may.

Overcome Shyness 101

5. During a job interview, I...

- A. Answer questions that are asked of me only and feel nervous.
- B. Try to stick to saying as little as possible about myself
- C. Ask questions and answer those questions presented to me.
- D. Assume that they are the ones I am interviewing, instead of the other way around.

Answers:

If you answered mostly **“A”** for the above questions, you are very shy. You find it difficult to be the center of attention in any setting and find yourself turning down opportunities because you are shy.

If you answered mostly **“B”** for the above questions, you are shy, but not overtly shy. You feel uncomfortable in certain settings but are aware of this and are trying overcome your discomfort.

If you answered mostly **“C”** for the above questions, you are average. You may want to be a little bit more outgoing, but no one will accuse you of being a wallflower.

If you answered mostly **“D”** for the above questions, you are very outgoing to the point of being an extrovert. This may come naturally or may be the result of over-compensation for being shy. You might want to tone down your approach a bit.

Overcome Shyness 101

Being shy does not always manifest itself in a way where someone behaves like a shrinking violet. In some cases, a shy person may feel so self-conscious about the fact that they are shy that they behave in a manner that is just the opposite of what they want to do. While it is good to try to overcome shyness, you do not want to go to the other end of the spectrum where you appear abrasive. It is good to hold back a little bit with others, but not to the point where you are allowing opportunities slip through your fingers.

This book will teach you how to recognize shyness in yourself and how to overcome this personality trait with tips and exercises that will help you emerge from your shell.



Overcome Shyness 101

Chapter 2

When Shyness Can Be A Problem

So when can shyness be a problem? Just about any time. It can interfere with both your personal life as well as your professional life. It can prevent you from getting what you want out of life in many different ways. This is why shyness should be addressed and overcome.

One example of how shyness can be a problem is in the job market. If you are trying to get a job, chances are that you are going to have to compete with others who will also be seeking a way to find employment. If you are shy and try to make yourself as non-descript as possible, you can quite easily be overlooked when you are seeking employment.

Employers take a look at hundreds of different applicants for jobs. As they are interviewing job applicants, one person blends into the other. If there is something about you that stands out above the rest, you are more likely to get the job that you are looking for. If you do not stand out, however, then you are more likely not to be remembered and passed over for a job. Obviously, if you are shy, you are going to look for a way where you will not stand out when you are applying for a job. This can be detrimental to your job searching as there will be nothing extraordinary about you that your prospective employer will remember.

Overcome Shyness 101

Many people think that in order to get a job, the only thing that they need to do is to have the right qualifications on their resume. They feel that their resume will speak for itself and get them into the job that they are seeking. What they do not realize is that in order to attain the job, they have to pass an interview. In some cases, there may be more than one interview that a person must be subjected to in order to get hired for a job. A person who is shy may come off as too timid during a job interview and get passed over for a job for which they are well qualified. Employers are human beings and tend to choose those for the job with whom they have the best rapport.

Shyness is clearly not an asset when you are looking for a job. A person who has a hard time talking to strangers and who does not feel comfortable around others will have even a more difficult time in during a job interview. They may end up having to interview for three times as many different jobs before they get hired, as opposed to the person who is not shy who has an easier chance of getting hired based upon their performance on their job interview.

Shyness also affects your personal life as well. People who are shy find that they pass up all sorts of opportunities to meet new people because they allow their shyness to hold them back. They will usually not attend functions or gatherings unless they have someone else to go along with them as a crutch. As a result, they often find that they move in the same circle and are limited in both their friendships and their activities.

A shy person simply does not have the same advantages of a person who is not shy. They are encumbered by their shyness

Overcome Shyness 101

just the same as if they are encumbered by some other type of handicap. Being shy in the world today is similar to having a nice car without a driver's license. You are not able to enjoy the same things that others are enjoying, such as the thrill of meeting new people.

When it comes to dating, a shy person is more inclined to stick with someone who they may not even care for rather than go through the trouble of changing their routine. They may stick with the same circle of friends even to the point that it stunts their emotional growth.

Young people who are shy often fall in with “the wrong crowd” when they get to Junior High and High School. This is because they are so afraid of not fitting in that they tend to cling on to those who befriend them from the start. They may resort to taking drugs, drinking or smoking in order to feel accepted by their peers. This can prevent them from trying to expand on their dreams and spread their wings at a time when it is most crucial to do so.

The title of this chapter is “when shyness can be a problem.” The answer to this hypothetical question is that shyness is always a problem. It can affect you as a child, as a teenager and as an adult. It impedes on your social life as well as your work life. It invades every aspect of your life and not for the better.

One thing that you can do to overcome shyness at any age is to be aware of the fact that you are shy and work on different ways to overcome the problem. You should push yourself a

Overcome Shyness 101

little bit every day towards breaking out of your mold. This can be something as simple as saying “hello” to a new person every day. The one good thing about shyness is that it is not forever. You do not have to stay shy if you do not want to be shy. You can train yourself to overcome this problem.

Here are some ways that you can work to overcome shyness:

1. Volunteer

If you take some of your time to volunteer for a community cause or event, you will be forced to interact with others on a social level. It is not difficult to find opportunities where you can volunteer and help others. This costs you nothing but time, but will help you interact with other people and get you out of your comfort zone.

2. Talk to strangers

When you are in the bank, grocery store or cleaners, learn to make “small talk” with strangers. The more you talk to strangers, the easier it gets to meet others and be able to make conversation. You do not have to get into in depth conversations with people, you can talk about the weather, the day or general topics of interest. The more you talk to people, the more second nature it becomes.

Overcome Shyness 101

3. Join a club

There are clubs that you can join that are for people who have certain interests. You can go on www.meetup.com to find clubs that are in your area and promote a certain interest that you may have. You do not have to feel shy to go to these clubs as a great many of those who attend are doing so on a solo basis.

4. Take care of yourself

If you feel like you look good, you will have more confidence in yourself and this will be reflected to others. The more confident you are in your appearance, the more inclined you will be to exude that confidence to others. Take the time to take care of yourself and put your best foot forward when it comes to your appearance. You do not have to be movie star glamorous in order to have confidence, either. You just have to look the best that you can look for the moment.

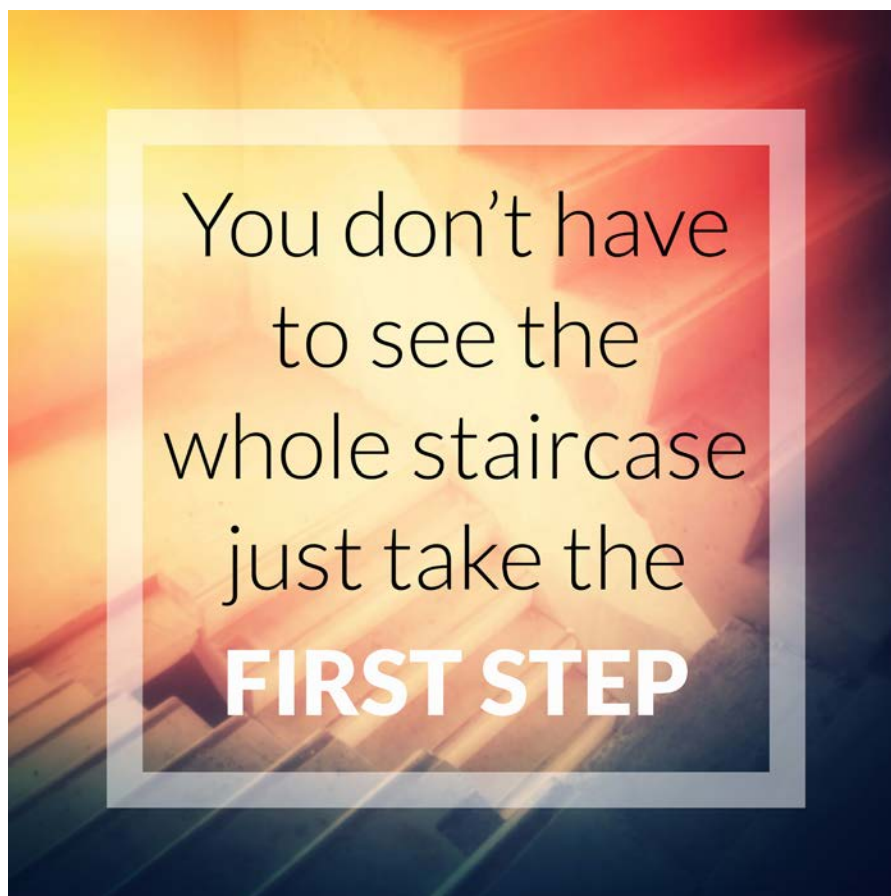
5. Do not take everything personally

One of the major components of shyness is fear. Fear of being rejected is one of the reasons why people are so shy. You need to lose this fear if you are to get anywhere in life. Stop imagining that everything is all about you - chances are that those to whom you are talking have many other things on their mind than you. One thing that is different in a shy person and a not shy person is their perception on how others view them. A shy person is more inclined to think that others are talking about them or judging them in some

Overcome Shyness 101

manner, whereas a non-shy person is more likely to believe that others are not as concerned with them as they are with themselves. Stop fearing rejection and taking it personally. This is one of the key factors to overcoming shyness.

You do not have to do the above five steps right away. You should take your time when you are breaking free from the shy mold that you have created.



Overcome Shyness 101

Chapter 3

Discovering The Inner You

Do you have an “inner you” that is striving to break free? Chances are that you do. You most likely wish that you did not feel so shy all of the time or else you would not even be reading this book. Part of you would love to be comfortable around people and be able to make friends with ease. The good news is that this is possible no matter who you are.

If you are not happy with the way that your life is working out, it is up to you to change it. Too many times, people wait for others to come in and make the changes that they want in life instead of making the changes on their own. It is not difficult to change your life. You just have to realize what you want to fix and then take steps towards a goal that you have in mind for yourself. Your goal, in this case, should be to not be shy any longer. This is a long term goal. You will not lose your shyness overnight, but over a period of time, you can discover the inner you and become a more outgoing person.

The first thing that you need to do to discover the inner you is to figure out what about you makes you unique. Stop thinking negatively about yourself and concentrate on the positive aspects of your personality. Do not worry about your physical appearance as this is not as important as you think it is when it comes to having an outgoing personality. You have probably noticed people who were very attractive but who did not come

Overcome Shyness 101

off as someone who you wish to get to know. You have probably also noticed those who are not as attractive as others and who tend to draw people to them.

A case in point can be made over a friend I had in college. When I first met this friend, I will call him Bill, I was not very much taken with him as I saw only his physical appearance, which could best be described as average. He sat next to me in one of my classes one day and I was mildly annoyed. I had been hoping that a good looking guy who I noticed earlier would sit in that exact seat.

A funny thing happened after that. I got to know the good looking guy and Bill and quickly realized that Bill was the one person I wanted to get to know better. The good looking guy was nice to look at, but had zero personality. Bill, on the other hand, had a bevy of girls drawn to him all of the time. He had a dynamite personality and despite the fact that he had an average appearance, was far more attractive than the good looking guy whose name I cannot even remember.

Many people are so wrapped up with the way that they look that they put their personality on hold. They are so self conscious of how they appear to others that they concentrate exclusively on how they look as if having good looks will automatically draw people to them. While it is important that you look as nice as you can for your own self confidence, good looks only go so far. Having a positive personality and letting the inner you out of your shell is far more effective when it comes to winning friends and influencing people. No one can afford to just rely on their looks alone.

Overcome Shyness 101

In order to discover the inner you, you have to let go of the outer you and stop letting your appearance speak for you. This is not to say that you totally let your appearance go and do not pay attention to how you look, but that you do not rely on your appearance to do all of your talking for you. You need to focus on the inner part of you that most likely remains hidden from the world.

All of us have aspects to our personality that are pleasing and some that are not so pleasing. You will want to accent the positive and minimize the negative when you let the inner you come out. You can make a list of your positive personality attributes as well as those that you see as shortcomings. Then you can take a look at your shortcomings and see how you can turn them into a positive, or minimize them so that they do not comprise your personality. Remember that shyness should be seen not as an asset but as a deficit.

You should also realize that the negative components of your personality do not account for your entire personality. They are just components and many of them can be changed. If you have a quick temper, for example, this can be seen as a negative component of your personality. It is better that you do not have so quick a temper in order to put your best foot forward. You may want to try some exercises at controlling your temper if you feel that it can get in the way of you allowing your inner you to shine through.

There are most likely some aspects about your personality that you really like. This is what you need to capitalize on when

Overcome Shyness 101

you are allowing your inner self to shine through. Make up a list of these positive attributes and see how you can use them to your advantage to overcome your shyness.

Most people who are shy are very sensitive individuals. Sensitivity is often seen as a weakness, where it really is a strength. You can use this strength in a way that will allow your inner self to come through by focusing on helping others. There are few things that you can do to boost up your self confidence more than helping others who are less fortunate than you. You will not only feel better about yourself and be able to take a step towards overcoming your shyness when you help others, but you will also be doing a good turn for someone else at the same time.

If you have an artistic soul to you, make sure that you can let this out as well. You will want to share your artistic expressions with those who are more likely to appreciate it. You should not be afraid to let your creative nature out and should move in circles where there are other creative people if this is a strong suit of your personality.

Take a look at what interests you and see where your interests lie. Then try to gravitate towards others who share these interests. This will give you a sense of self confidence and will also help you define your personality.

You should not be afraid to let your inner self come out. Those who are hampered by fear of letting their true self out in the open become a virtual prisoner of that fear. No matter who

Overcome Shyness 101

you are, no matter where your interests lay, you can find others who also share these interests and who will accept you for who you are. Do not allow imprison your inner self - allow it to breathe free.

Letting others sneak a peek into your true self can be very scary for some people. This is why it is a good idea to start with a group of like minded individuals. You are more likely to get acceptance from this group and can then move on to others. Once you are not afraid to allow your true self be exposed to the world, you will not feel as shy.

Do not allow your appearance dictate who you are to others. Take control of your personality and be the person that you envision yourself to be, not just a person in the mirror. Freud had a theory of who we really are that stated that we are who we imagine how others envision us. This is an accurate statement about our inner selves and also means that we have the ability to control not only how others see us, but also how we see ourselves.



Overcome Shyness 101

Chapter 4

Shyness In Business

Few things can hurt your career as much as being shy. If you are shy in business, chances are that you are going to have a harder time getting a job, keeping a job and getting a promotion. You will most likely be one who is sitting on the sidelines and watching others who started with the company after you move up the ladder while you remain in your same job. There is no place for shyness in the business world.

We can get back to the image of the cute little shy girl. Years ago, before women entered the business world, it was considered to be a personality asset for a woman to be demure. It was considered to be ladylike. This no longer holds true today. Women and men have to both be outgoing if they want to compete in the business world. There is no place in the world of today for a shy little girl. Or a shy little boy.

If you find that you are shy and are worried about not getting ahead in business, the best thing to do is to address the problem right away. The first chance that you will get when it comes to addressing shyness in the business world is at the job interview. During your job interview, you have the opportunity to sell yourself to the company where you are seeking work. It is important that you do not behave modestly at this interview. This is your opportunity to talk proudly of your accomplishments and toot your own horn.

Overcome Shyness 101

One way that you can overcome shyness in an interview is to practice an interview with a friend. Most interviewers will ask questions that are designed to give them a tip into your personality. The more interviews you attend, the more you are used to these sort of questions that they will ask. Some of the most commonly asked questions in a job interview are the following:

- Why do you want to work here?
- What do you see as your greatest weakness (my personal favorite)
- Do you have a problem getting along with others?
- How do you feel about working overtime?
- What makes you feel that you are the best qualified for the job?
- What do you know about this company?

These are all questions that are most likely to be asked during a job interview. Here are some tips on how to answer these questions so that you will feel more self assured and less shy when you are getting a job:

Why do you want to work here?

The answer to this is to give them information that is flattering about their company and tell them how proud you would be to be part of their team. The answer is never because you need money or because you have nowhere else to work. You should make the answer to this question be about how it will benefit them to have you work there, not how it will benefit you.

Overcome Shyness 101

What do you see as your greatest weakness?

This question has been asked in just about every job interview that I ever had. There must be some pretty dumb people out there who answer this question truthfully (I guess it would be my problem with honesty or the fact that I am often late for work). This is a leading question and should always be countered with a positive answer. My favorite answer for this is that I tend to ‘work too hard.’ You cannot go wrong with this answer. Never answer this question in a way that reveals anything negative about yourself.

Do you have a problem getting along with others?

This is another leading question that needs to be answered with an affirmative “no.” You never want to reveal that you have a problem getting along with some people or that you left a job because of a personality conflict. You will be seen as a troublemaker even if you did nothing wrong. You could have been working with Atilla The Hun and if you spoke up against him, you would be looked upon as being in the wrong.

How do you feel about working overtime?

You love it. You want to work overtime as much as possible. In fact, it would be nice if they could arrange for you to have a shower and bed in your office. You should be receptive to any type of question that they ask you about job performance such as this.

Overcome Shyness 101

There is an exception to this rule, however, and that would be if you cannot work overtime. If you are not able to work overtime because of another job or other obligations, you should be up front with the employer.

What makes you feel that you are the best qualified for the job?

This is your chance to highlight what you know about the company and how you feel that you would be an asset to them. Again, you want to make sure that you answer in a way that will seem beneficial to the company and not so much to you. Be sure to highlight any experience or education that you have that will help you get into the company.

What do you know about this company?

Never go to a job interview unprepared. You should learn as much as you can about the company before you go for the interview. You should make sure that you only discuss the positive information about the company and never bring up the negative (wasn't this the place that the CFO was fired for embezzling money last year?) when you are on a job interview.

Now that you have a good grasp of how to answer job interview questions, you can feel less shy in the business world. Most job candidates are a bit nervous during interviews and employers often understand this. The more you practice your interview skills, however, the less nervous you will be.

Overcome Shyness 101

However, there is still the job to consider as well as how it will be affected by your shyness. When you begin a new job, you will most likely feel nervous on the first day. Be sure to make an effort to be friendly to others and to invite yourself to lunch and to other activities that are open to others. If someone invites you for lunch, be sure to accept. Do not wait for others to invite you to go to lunch, you can make the effort to ask others on your first day. This can be one of the most difficult aspects of the first day of any new job, but the more outgoing you are, the easier it will be for you to overcome your shyness.

If you ask others to join you for lunch and they decline, do not take it personally. Simply continue to ask around until you get a lunch set together. Office politics can be brutal for someone who is shy, but must be navigated with panache none the less. Be friendly and obliging when you start your new job and also keep your ears and eyes open as to how the office politics are run.

You should avoid saying anything negative about anyone and also stay away from gossip. Those who are respected in the workplace are those who not only know their job, but are also careful to steer away from negative influences and gossip.

You may be approached by someone who is the bad egg of the company on your first day. This often happens as the old saying “misery loves company” often applies when it comes to work. If you are approached by someone who has nothing but an axe to grind about the company, you should be pleasant but make it clear that you are happy with your new job.

Overcome Shyness 101

Navigate office politics carefully as it can make or break your career. A good rule of thumb to use when you are working is to not say anything to others that you would not want to get around the entire office. If you keep your eyes and ears open and your mouth shut more than open, chances are that you will do well when it comes to business.

While you do not want to brag about yourself all of the time when you are working, you should also be sure that the higher ups know about your accomplishments. Be sure that they know when you are working overtime and if you are going above and beyond in your duties. This is where a shy person is often at a disadvantage. They may want to appear modest and be not willing to boast of their accomplishments at work. But if you do not let others know the good that you are doing, they will not know. Get used to letting your superiors know when you are doing well so that they will remember it when it comes time for raises and promotions.

When it comes to raises and promotions, a shy person is also at a disadvantage. In most cases, you will not be offered a raise or a promotion and you will have to ask for it. This can be difficult even for someone who is not shy. If you feel that you are entitled to a promotion or a raise, you should write down your accomplishments and discuss how you can benefit the company better if you get a raise or a promotion. You still want to use the same ideology that you are doing what is good for the company instead of just what is good for you. You should never ask for a promotion or a raise based solely on the fact

Overcome Shyness 101

that you need more money. You should be willing to take on more responsibilities for more money and a higher position.

Getting a job by going through an interview. Navigating office politics and making friends and seeing to it that you are paid well for your work all take someone who is not too shy to speak up. As you can see, there is not a lot of room for someone who is shy in business. This is why you need to try to overcome your shyness for the sake of your business career.



Overcome Shyness 101

Chapter 5

Shyness In Social Situations

Just as shyness in business situations can be a career killer, shyness in social situations can find you sitting alone on most weekends, afraid to go out and meet people. If you want to date or have friends, you have to be able to make some sort of effort on your behalf. If you are too shy to talk to others, you are destined to spend a great deal of your time alone.

Most people display some sort of shyness when it comes to meeting new people. The difference between the perennial shy person and the one who just gets a few butterflies in their stomach when introduced to a new group is that the person who is very shy will actually allow their condition to prevent them from engaging with others. They may skip parties in order to not subject themselves to the discomfort of having to interact with others.

Shyness in social situations is just as bad as being shy in a business situation. A person in a business situation may be able to get a job being shy and, if the job does not entail them having to interact with people on a regular basis, may be able to keep that job. But a person who is shy will find it very difficult to have a fulfilling social life.

There are certain things that you can do to help yourself overcome shyness in social situations. You have to be aware of

Overcome Shyness 101

the fact that you are shy and be willing to extend yourself a bit so that you can meet a new group of people.

The first thing that you need to do in order to overcome shyness in a social setting is to take the focus away from yourself. Most people who are shy tend to focus on themselves and imagine that everyone is staring at them - waiting for them to make a bad move that will prove embarrassing. This is not the case, but a shy person tends to feel as though all eyes are on him or her and acts accordingly. Before you can hope to overcome shyness, you have to be willing to realize that the focus of everyone else is not on you. Others are focused more on themselves and their own needs and are not likely to be worried about what you are and are not doing.

Once you have that mindset in your head, you can then set about trying to overcome your shyness in social situations. One way that you can work on this is to go online. Making online friends is the shy person's dream as they do not have to risk the same rejection that they have to risk in a real life situation. As the fear of rejection is very dominant in the mind of a shy person, it helps to minimize this fear as much as possible. One way to do that is to cut the fear by creating a situation that is a lot less personal.

There are many online groups that you can join where you can meet many friends. A social networking group, such as Facebook, can expose you to a number of different people who are also in the same boat as you. Most people join these type of social networking groups because they are lonely and

Overcome Shyness 101

are looking for some sort of social activity in their lives. As an increasing number of people work from home and find themselves cut off from society in many different ways, they find a way to reach out to others.

It is important to reach out to other people when you feel lonely as human beings are not meant to be alone. Human beings are social animals and need interaction with others in order to thrive. There are various reports and studies done that indicate that human beings who are isolated live a shorter lifespan than those who are not lonely. Shyness will lead to a lonely life if you do not take steps to prevent it.

Joining a social networking group is one way that you can make internet friends. While these are not the same as making friends in real life, it is an outlet for you to interact with other people and also practice social skills. The more you interact with others on social networks, the more inclined you will be to seeking out others in real life with whom you can interact.

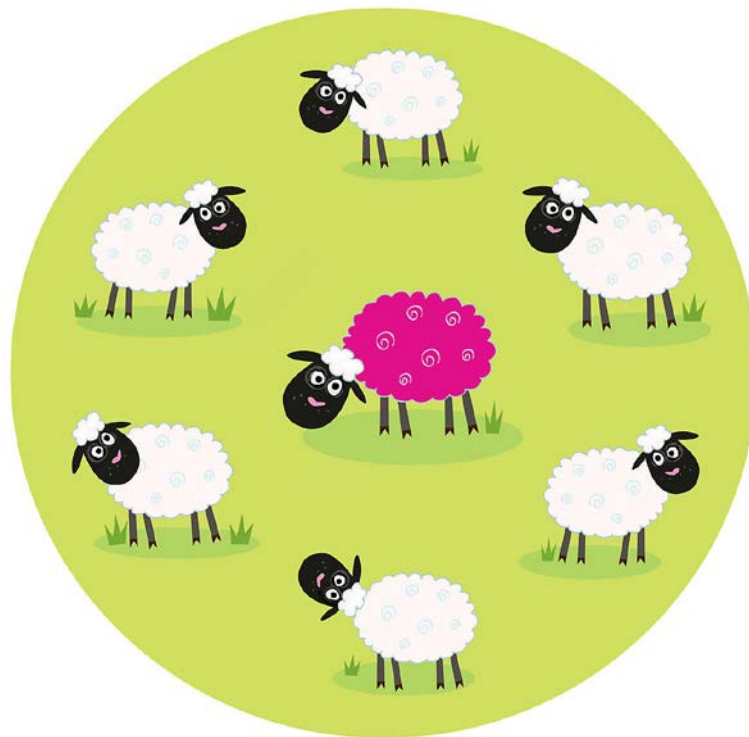
You still have to make an effort to reach out to others when you are on social networks. You have to reach out to others to get them to join you as a friend and also keep them as a friend. One way to do this is to spend time greeting them and sending them messages such as “have a nice weekend” or even wishing them a happy birthday.

Another way to meet friends on social networking pages is to join groups. There are various groups that you can join that can connect you with others who have interests similar to your own.

Overcome Shyness 101

Do not feel that you have to make as many friends as possible. You should concentrate on the quality of your friendships when you are on a social networking site, rather than the amount of friendships that you have. This is the way that you can start to learn to build online relationships. This can prepare you for building relationships off line as well.

In addition to building online relationships in order to overcome your shyness in social situations, you can also work on learning to talk to others when you go out. You can start out by being friendly when you run errands. Talk to the person at the bank, at the grocery checkout and at different places that you go. The more you get used to talking to others in the course of your day, the easier it will be to overcome your shyness.



Overcome Shyness 101

Chapter 6

Using The Internet To Overcome Shyness

We have already talked about using the internet as a way of overcoming shyness by discussing social networking sites that can be one step that you can take to help you meet new people and not feel so self conscious about yourself. There are other ways that you can use the internet to overcome shyness as well. A few of them include the following:

- Dating groups
- Meet up social groups
- Online social groups
- Forums

All of these get you to interact with others on a different basis. Some of them are created so that you can get to know others for dating experiences. Some are created so that you can get to know others with whom you have something in common. A word of caution here - you are better off to overcome your shyness as much as possible before you enter dating groups. While it is desirable for most people to have a special someone with whom they can share life, dating groups open you up to the most rejection. You are better off to join other groups, build up your self esteem and self confidence and then join dating groups to meet others.

Here is a rundown of what to expect when you use these internet functions:

Overcome Shyness 101

Dating Groups

There are hundreds of different dating sites that you can join to meet a significant other. You are better off to go into these sites with your eyes wide open and not have great expectations. While many people report meeting the love of their life on these sites, there are those who report meeting those who have been less than truthful with regard to their financial and matrimonial situations on these sites. Therefore, you should approach dating sites with caution.

That being said, dating groups are a good way to meet those with whom you might want to start a relationship. They are the singles bars of the new era and are a very acceptable way for single people to meet with one another. You should take it slow if you decide to meet others on these sites, spend time emailing them back and forth before arranging to meet and then also take the relationship slow. Just as you should not rush into any dating relationship no matter where you meet someone, you should not rush into a relationship with someone who you meet online.

Many people are scared of the idea of meeting a “stranger” online. What they do not realize is that most people are strangers. Even if you are fixed up with a mutual friend, you do not really know this person. While someone else may vouch for them, they only really know them as much as the individual lets on. We are all basically strangers to one another until we allow each other into our lives. It is not more scary meeting someone online than it would be at a club or in the supermarket.

Overcome Shyness 101

You should take precautions, however, whenever you meet anyone online. You should only agree to meet them in a public place. You should get to know someone before you are alone with them. You should take the same precautions that you would take when you meet any other stranger. That being said, you can have fun when you join an internet dating site and have the opportunity to meet many new people. The more you meet, the less shy you will be.

Meet Up Groups

There are off line meet up groups where you can meet with others who have similar interests as you. These groups are ideal for those who want to meet friends who will be in simpatico with them when it comes to their interests. You can go to www.meetup.com to find a group that is in your area or in the area of your interest.

One of the best aspects about using a site like Meet Up is that those who attend the meetings are all usually on their own. Everyone is pretty much in the same situation as you and are all looking to connect with others who share their interests. This is even a better step to take than a dating site as you get to interact with several people at once and do not have the pressure of having to meet one on one.

If you decide to try a meet up group, do yourself a favor and go by yourself. Many people who are shy will go with a friend so that they have someone to talk to for the meet up. While this may make you feel a bit more comfortable, it will not help you

Overcome Shyness 101

meet new people as you will most likely rely on your friend for conversation. Most of the people who attend these groups do so solo, you can, too!

Online Social Groups

There are social groups that you can join online that are clubs where you do not even have to leave your home to interact with people. While you do not want to live your life entirely on the internet, you can help yourself overcome your shyness if you join these groups and practice interacting with others. You can join online social groups that have a variety of different interest focus and learn to chat with others when you are online. This is one step towards helping you overcome being shy and learning to interact with others. Even though you are only interacting on an internet level, you are still getting out of your shell. You can find an internet group if you go to Yahoo Groups or even on social networking pages.

Forums

There are many different online forums where you can interact with others. Some of them offer live chat while others are used just for posting messages back and forth. You can enjoy forums that specialize in a variety of different interests. This is one way that you can learn to interact with people on somewhat of a social level with a minimum risk to yourself regarding rejection.

The internet can be an ideal way for a shy person to overcome their shyness. You have to be careful that you do not use the internet as a substitute for actual human interactions. You should use it as a pathway to help you get to know others,

Overcome Shyness 101

how to interact with other people and as a gateway towards forming off line relationships. It is an ideal way to help you overcome being shy and start mingling with others in a non-threatening manner.



Overcome Shyness 101

Chapter 7

Taking A Step Towards Joining Groups

Groups are one of the best ways that you can enjoy the company of others and also do something that you enjoy doing. You should join groups based upon your own interests. This way, the people who you meet in these groups will also share these interests.

There are many groups from which to choose when you are looking for a way to expand your horizons. There are exercise groups, social groups, eating groups, political groups and just about everything in between. You should take a look at groups that meet close to where you live and where you can visit regularly and form a relationship with others.

It can be difficult at first to join a group and many people would rather get their teeth pulled out with Novocain than to join a group on their own. However, you will find that when you join a group where there is a common interest, there will be many people who are also there on their own. Again, you want to stop thinking that everyone is concentrating on you. Most of them who are at the group are all thinking of themselves and their own interests and are not worried about what you are doing there or how you are behaving. Stop feeling so self conscious and take a step towards joining a group.

One place that you may find a good group to join is at church. Take a look at your local church to see if they have

Overcome Shyness 101

a group for those who want to interact with others. Singles, teens and those who are looking for spiritual enlightenment will often find groups that are sponsored by the church and are close to home.

Your local community center is another place where you can find groups that will cater to your interests. Take a look at what type of classes and groups they offer and feel free to sign up.

If you belong to a health club, this is a great way to not only meet others and stay in shape, but also to join groups and clubs. Many health clubs have exercise classes on a regular basis. You can get yourself in good physical shape as well as mental shape by joining these groups and meeting others.

There are also political groups and those that are dedicated to certain causes. If you feel strongly about a certain issue, one of the best ways to do something about it is to join a committee and volunteer your time towards bringing about the change that you envision. This not only gets you out of being shy, but can also do good for your community as well.

There are hundreds of different groups and activities right in your own community that you can join to bring you out of your shell and help you overcome shyness. You need to take advantage of these groups and find one that will be of interest to you. Give the group a few tries before you decide it may or may not be for you. The more you continue to meet with others, the easier it will be to overcome shyness.

Overcome Shyness 101

Chapter 8

Taking A Class On Public Speaking

One way that you can really overcome shyness is to take a class on the subject. One class that will really break you out of your mold is a class on public speaking. According to studies, public speaking is even more feared than death. The fear of death is actually second to public speaking.

Obviously, you are not alone if you fear speaking in public. But few things will give you more confidence than being able to speak before a crowd. There are classes that you can take to help you learn how to speak in public and not feel self conscious. You can find these classes at your local community college.

If you are in a business situation, you are going to want to learn how to speak in front of others. This can help you in your career more than you can imagine. Those who are unable to speak in public usually have a very hard time in the business sector. They find it difficult to make presentations or to get their ideas across to others.

The good news is that speaking in public is not only a way to help you overcome shyness, but also something that can be learned. When you take a class in public speaking, those who are in the class are in the same boat as you. They are all

Overcome Shyness 101

nervous about speaking in front of a large group of people. You will find that your confidence soars when you learn how to speak in front of other people.

Speaking of classes, this is yet another way that you can learn to overcome your shy nature and interact with others. Chances are that you live close to a community college where you can take a class on just about anything. If you want to learn a foreign language, learn an art skill or learn about the stock market, you can find what you are looking for if you take a class. This is one way that you can interact with other people as well as add to your knowledge base.

Taking a class on a foreign language is another good way to help yourself overcome your shyness. This is similar to taking a class on public speaking as you will have to speak to others in the class to practice what you have learned. Both a class in public speaking as well as a foreign language class force you to actually speak in front of the class and get you out of your shy mode.



Overcome Shyness 101

Chapter 9

Do You Need Counselling?

If you are so painfully shy that you cannot talk to others and feel that it is impeding on all aspects of your life, you may want to consider getting group counselling for the problem. If you cannot bring yourself to try any of the activities in this book, then you may do well with some sort of counselling that is designed to get you out of your shell.

Throughout this book, I have referred to shy people as being in a shell. This is a cliché, but also a very accurate analogy of what the shy person is feeling. A shy person tends to surround themselves with a proverbial shell. This hard shell is something that they tuck around themselves to prevent themselves from being injured mentally. In order to experience life, however, you have to be willing to come out of that shell that you use to protect yourself. You also have to be willing to experience some of the pain that is associated with dealing with other people.

If you feel that you are totally unable to deal with others and cannot bring yourself to interact with other people and suffer from loneliness as a result, you should seek out counselling. There are plenty of selfhelp groups that can help you understand why you are shy and will teach you different ways that you can overcome your sense of insecurity. Remember that being shy stems from being insecure. The more you face the fact that

Overcome Shyness 101

you are having these feelings of insecurity, the more you can overcome being shy.

If you cannot afford counselling, you can find some free or sliding fee counselling services from your local community center. You can speak to someone at your local municipality to see if they offer counselling services that can help you overcome shyness.

You should do something to overcome your shyness and should not just ignore this problem. If you are unable to join groups, make an effort to talk to people and feel unhappy as well as lonely, then you should seek out help just as you would if there was anything else bothering you. You do not have to live with shyness on a permanent basis. You can overcome this problem with the help of some counselling as well as making an effort on your part.

Counselling will encourage you to open up about your feelings and may also help you get to the root of why you are shy. As shyness is often the result of having a low self esteem, counselling can do wonders. You may find that not only are you not as shy after you have completed counselling, but that your own self image has been completely boosted.

If you decide to go to counselling for your shyness, you should seek out a therapist who has experience in dealing with those who want to overcome their personality deficits. You should start to make progress right away when you enter into counselling for shyness. Be aware that many of the tips and

Overcome Shyness 101

ideas that are stated in this book will be suggested when you enter counselling. You may find that having the counsellor to speak with gives you more courage at combating some of these exercises and that it is easier for you to join groups and interact with others while taking their help.

If you have insurance, they may pay for counselling services as long as your condition is interfering with your life. In some companies, they have employee help programs that also pay for counselling for those employees who are experiencing problems socializing and fitting in on the job. You should take advantage of any type of help that you can get as being shy can be detrimental to both your personal and professional life.



Overcome Shyness 101

Chapter 10

How To Remain Free From Being Shy

Overcoming shyness is not something that occurs in one day. Someone who is shy usually has to try to work on their shyness throughout their life. There can be a tendency to want to slip back into your comfort zone so that you do not have to worry about exerting yourself with others.

If you are a shy person, you should make sure that you stay on top of the problem and do things that will help you continue to relate with others. The more you convince yourself that you are not shy, the more this problem will not affect you.

You can convince yourself that you are not shy and actually fulfill this destiny. If you continue to tell yourself that you are outgoing and have no fear of meeting people, you will find that you behave accordingly.

Being aware of the fact that you are shy and that this is a shortcoming is the first step towards making sure that you are well and do not slip back into the routine of being shy and alone. Continue to see each day as a challenge and make it your business to grow as a person on a daily basis. This will help you stay focused and not give in to the tendency that you may have to be alone.

Overcome Shyness 101

The main thing that you have to remember is that everyone's attention is not on you all of the time. You can move about, join groups, meet friends, go places and have fun without feeling as though every one of your moves is scrutinized by others. The more you start to realize that other people are not judging you all of the time, the less self conscious you will be with regard to your actions, the more self confidence you will have in your life and the less shy you will be when meeting others.

Good luck in living a shy-free life!



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