

Scared Cocoon to Social Butterfly

Overcoming Shyness to Enhance Your
Personal, Professional, and Social Life

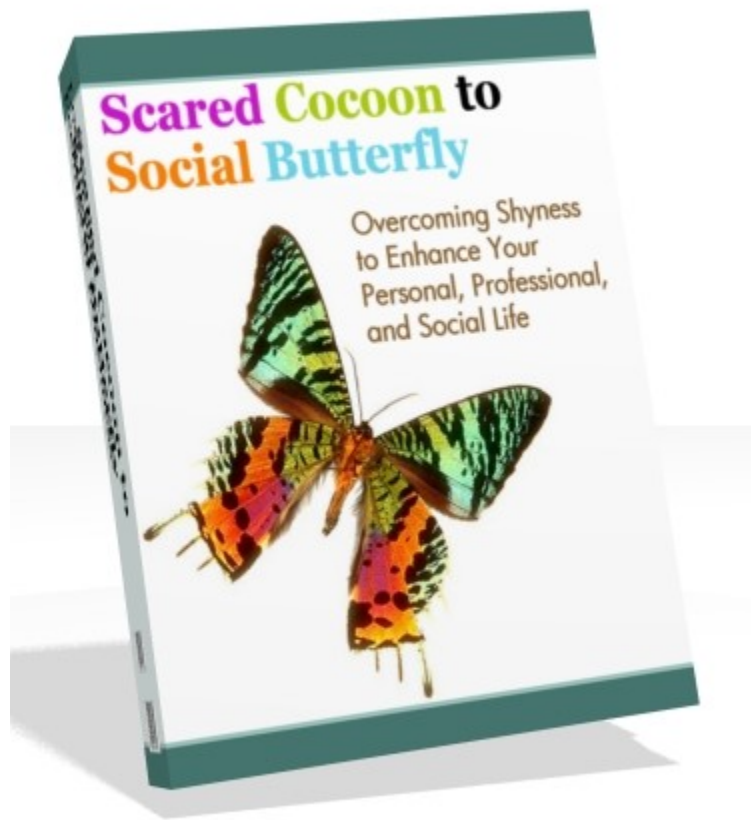


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Disclaimer and Rights.....	2
TABLE OF CONTENTS	3
INTRODUCTION	4
CHAPTER ONE – What Shyness Is & What It Isn’t.....	6
Shyness vs. Social Anxiety.....	8
Introverts & Extroverts.....	8
CHAPTER TWO - Are You Shy?.....	11
CHAPTER THREE – The Consequences of Shyness.....	22
The Shy Student.....	23
Misuse of Alcohol.....	24
Health Issues.....	24
Friendships.....	26
CHAPTER FOUR - Shy Children.....	28
CHAPTER FIVE - What Can You Do About It?.....	30
Release.....	32
Mental Rehearsal	33
Desensitization.....	35
Medication	36
Neuro-Linguistic Programming.....	37
CHAPTER SIX - How to Be a Good Conversationalist In Spite of Your Shyness	38
Body Language.....	38
How to Start a Conversation.....	39
Closed-ended	42
Open-ended.....	42
Closed-ended	42
Open-ended.....	42
Discussion Not Arguments!.....	43
CONCLUSION	46

INTRODUCTION

“Everyone is shy—it is the inborn modesty that makes us able to live in harmony with other creatures and our fellows. Achievement comes not by denying shyness, but, occasionally, by setting it aside and letting pride and perspiration come first.” - Kirkpatrick Sale

You step into a room full of strangers and look around. There's not a single person that you know there. Your heart starts pounding, your hands begin to sweat, and your mouth goes dry. Just as someone comes up to speak to you, your mind goes completely blank. You barely remember your own name and you'd tell them what it is if only you could speak. You're blushing so hard, you're positive you're as red as a lobster and those butterflies in your stomach are flying in formation.

Sound familiar? Almost everyone, at some point in their lives or another, has experienced these feelings of panic and disorientation. Even folks that seem like the life of the party have had moments like these. It's a common problem, more common than you might realize.

Fifty percent of the population in the USA say they're shy and eighty-nine percent of these shy people say they've been shy all their lives. Only eleven percent, of the population says they've never been shy. The good news is that seventy-eight percent of these shy people believe they can overcome their shyness.

Doctors feel that this shyness is wired right into your nervous system. Your brain is constantly taking in information and processing it; and whenever you think again of an experience you've had, your brain will respond in exactly the same way as when it first happened, reinforcement as it were. Your conscious mind knows the difference, but your subconscious mind just processes the information and stores it with everything else; making social phobia the third most prevalent psychiatric disorder.

In this eBook, we'll discuss the whys and wherefores of shyness. There are ways to overcome this social phobia and we'll discuss how to apply them in your own life. It is possible to feel calm and comfortable in social situations.

“Man is the only animal that blushes, or needs to.”-Mark Twain

CHAPTER ONE – WHAT SHYNESS IS & WHAT IT ISN'T

“Scientists have found the gene for shyness. They would have found it years ago, but it was hiding behind a couple of other genes.” - Jonathan Katz

Shyness is an ever-increasing problem and made worse, many feel, by the technology available nowadays. Online dating, email, and virtual anonymity are realities in today's world. For most of us, these are merely conveniences; but for many, these are simply ways to avoid directly connecting to others.

They are literally in hiding from the world. Reaching out and touching someone is terrifying to the seriously shy and socially phobic. There's much less awkwardness when dealing with others via the internet. No one would see them or hear them; they feel safe.

For many, it's only in unfamiliar situations that they show symptoms of shyness. They're perfectly fine in normal situations; they know how to act and what to say. Anything different throws them for a loop and into a panic. A crowded room becomes a scene of terror for the socially phobic.

The problem is they tend to avoid the unfamiliar at all costs. The more they avoid it, the worse the fear becomes. By not allowing themselves to experience something new, they are in fact perpetuating the fear.

Shyness occurs in different degrees in different people. There are actors who may be bold and outgoing on camera, but become shy and soft-spoken when speaking one-on-one with an interviewer. Some people might be open and comfortable with their own gender, but become absolutely tongue-tied around the opposite sex. There are others who are happy and outgoing with their friends and family and clam up anytime strangers enter the picture.

Most people attempt to hide their shyness and many may not even appear to be shy, nervous, or ill at ease. However, attempting to hide the shyness does not lessen the suffering it causes. It's always there, under the surface, no matter how hard they try to hide their misery.

As for what causes shyness, it can vary. One of the hypotheses is that shyness is at least partially genetic. If your parents were shy, there's a great chance you might also be a bit shy. Another is that it has a great deal to do with the environment in which one is raised. If your parents were very strict and unforgiving, it could cause you to be shy, especially around authority figures.

Shyness can also develop in a person after harsh treatment on the part of teachers or fellow students. You may have been laughed at, ridiculed, or tormented by others. This creates an innate shyness, which is very difficult to rid yourself of later. Each time you find yourself in a similar situation, you may experience the same feelings of anxiety.

Yet another cause of shyness could very well be due to brain chemistry or reactivity, which is your inborn temperament; you may just be more sensitive about your behavior, more easily embarrassed than others may be.

You may possess a faulty idea of who you are; your own self-perceptions can cause you to feel shy in certain circumstances. You may have a problem adapting to new situations or you may be going through some life transition such as a divorce, a new job, new school, or maybe you're recently widowed. All these things can change your life to such a degree that you no longer feel comfortable in certain situations.

Whether it is nature or nurture, shyness evolves as we grow older and have to face new and different circumstances and challenges. Many people go through different phases of shyness and even grow out of it. Unfortunately, others may experience such disappointments and traumas that they just give up hope and withdraw from the world.

Shyness vs. Social Anxiety

Shyness, which starts with self-consciousness, should not be confused with social phobia. Young people may experience shyness, since they are trying to develop their social skills, but it usually dissipates as they mature and grow. It's not so much a matter of overcoming shyness, as it is learning to be more comfortable in social situations.

Shyness is not the same thing as social phobia or social anxiety. Shyness can be dealt with more easily; you can learn how to handle social occasions with grace and dispense with self-consciousness. New situations might cause you to feel a little nervous, until you learn how to handle them. The trick is not to let them control you. Once you get used to something, it ceases to be frightening; it becomes more familiar and you start to feel more comfortable in that situation.

Social phobia tends to influence your entire life. You begin to avoid all social occasions because you don't feel safe or comfortable. Avoidance becomes a habit that's impossible to break; it builds on itself. Before you know it, you're avoiding everything that frightens you and everything frightens you, so you become totally isolated. It's true that no man (or woman) is an island. We need interaction in this world; we need each other.

Introverts & Extroverts

According to Carl Jung, whether you're an introvert or extrovert depends on your psychic energy. A person whose energy flows outward is an extrovert; if it flows inward, he's an introvert. Modern psychologists consider this whole theory to be obsolete. In this day and age, it's more a matter of feeling energized in particular situations.

One study discovered that introverts have more blood flow in the frontal lobes of their brain and the frontal thalamus. These are areas that deal with internal processing such as memory and problem solving. Extroverts have more blood flow in anterior cingulate gyrus, temporal lobes and posterior