

# Main body causes of shyness



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Shyness is an emotional feeling that affects how a person behaves around others and how they feel about themselves. It can be identified as feeling uncomfortable nervousness, self-conscious, timid, insecure or even bashful. It can range from feeling mild to moderate discomfort in one or more areas of a person's life. One might fear to meet new people, attend social gatherings, making cold calls at the work place or speaking in public. Intense shyness is described as social anxiety, panic disorder or social phobia (Gilbert 1). Those people who are shy often experience physical sensations such as feeling speechless, blushing, breathless or even shaky. They avoid doing things to avoid being noticed and usually feel unsure about themselves and the things they do.

Most scientists in the field of psychology believe that shyness is a genetic inclination which is caused by the wiring in the brain. The implication is that if the parents are shy, the offspring are bound to be shy as well. Philip Zimbardo and Bernardo Carducci argue that the number of shy people seems to be on the increase (McKay 1). They say that technological advances contribute to this phenomenon because it avails opportunities for people to make fewer interpersonal interactions especially through the internet and phones.

### **Shyness in us**

Shyness may affect just one area of a person's life and hence it is likely that shy individuals may seem outgoing when viewed by another person from outside. We have heard of actors who are timid and shy in the real life circles but when they are on stage they give a brilliant performance. You should be aware that Albert Einstein, Orville Wright and Tom Hanks are among the

public figures known to have been/are shy. The reason behind this is not hard to comprehend. When in the workplace we are often given a suitable role to play that legitimizes us in the eyes of other and in our own eyes. The calling of the shots is not necessarily for us but actually on behalf of the company. The rejection of such a call on our behalf is far more personal. If the call was on behalf of the company, its rejection means that the company will take part of the failure.

In a study that was published in 1975 by Zimbardo, it showed that 40 percent of the 800 respondents to the survey that he conducted were shy (McKay 1). Twenty years down the line in 1995, Carducci published the results obtained from a similar study. The percentage of people who admitted that they considered themselves shy increased to 48 percent. Many of us consider ourselves shy. However, not all of us allow shyness to define us. Majority of those who experience feelings that might bring out shyness do not give room for shyness to interfere with the desire to pursue personal and professional objectives and targets.

Dr Renee who is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist says that he is a ‘recovering shy person’ as he has never been able to overcome his shyness. Something comes along to catch him off guard just when he thought he had vanquished the shyness. The familiar old feelings of wanting to run for cover, dive under the nearest table and hide come rushing back to him. However, he has learnt how deal with them and they no longer rule his life (Renee 1). “As for me, you know those feelings where your temperature rise, the heart start to race and you feel like the stomach has dropped to the feet? They come rushing whenever I encounter shyness. However, these feelings are no

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longer strong. When they come calling, they are only a blurred memory and last for just a short time because I've learnt how to deal with shyness. One only needs to know where to begin in countering shyness" (Renee 1).

## **Encountering New People and Situations**

Shyness can be brought out by unfamiliar and new situations such as meeting strangers, talking in front of a group of people for the first time or the first day in school. One is likely to feel shy especially because they are not sure how they should act. The fear of not knowing what will happen when all the eyes on the person and how others will react may bring about shyness. A person who knows what to expect is less likely to be shy. Shy people often take more time in order to get used to a change. They often prefer continuing with what is familiar (Lyness 1).

## **Effects of Shyness on Career**

There are indications by researchers that shy people begin their careers late in life. Non-shy people start their careers significantly earlier. The shy people are prone to declined promotions. They often choose careers that do not require a lot of interpersonal relations. They are often undecided about the line of profession to pursue. Those people who are shy find it hard to create career identity at the workplace as successful and competent individuals in line with the career track (Macky 1).

## **Self Esteem**

Shyness especially the extreme variety leads to one becoming very nervous and having difficulty when making a conversation. This is especially if the shy person has to meet strangers who necessitate congeniality. When this

happens, the person's self esteem suffers badly. Everybody would want to feel comfortable in all situations, be talkative and be more outgoing. It is embarrassing to be awkward in the company of other people and one feels like they want to run and hide. When you relate talking out with pain and embarrassment, you will do all that is possible to avoid it. This is the driving force behind shy people going into solitude. Introverts are not forced in solitude by this force but they rather prefer it that way (Jonnes 1).

### **Extreme shyness**

Extreme shyness can be as a result of nature or nurture. If one or both of the parents were shy, it would mean that the shyness is genetically passed from parents to children. If the individual was an outgoing and happy when they were a child, it reflects that the nurturing of the child was probably of abusive nature (Jonnes 1). For people who are naturally quiet, the fear of talking may arise from a few bad experiences especially at the early stages of childhood. When a parent, guardian or any other adult's reaction to a child's attempting to express him/herself is dismissive and angry, it is natural for such a child to shy away from trying to express themselves in the future as they take the experience as personal. The fact that such an episode may have occurred once, the human nature is such that people tend to exaggerate such incidents until they become monsters naturally ("Overcoming Shyness". 1).

### **Overcoming Shyness**

Shy people would very much want to be like any other non-shy person in terms of lack of shyness. The origins of shyness are similar to those that cause social phobia only that social phobia is rather serious disorder. Dr

Heimberg described social phobia as ‘shyness gone wild’ (McKay 2).

Shyness cuts those who have it from many things that life has to offer such as social interaction, family and love. He further observes that he has researched on treatments aimed at social phobia and shyness. He indicates that individuals who received a particular drug that is aimed at treating depression and cognitive-behavioral therapy showed noteworthy improvement. Those who received drug therapy relapsed but a small percentage of those who were given cognitive-behavioral therapy did.

## **Understanding Oneself**

One of the key personal approaches to overcoming shyness by the person is recognizing the meaningless perceived sights as they do not help much in escaping from the realities of life. When another person reacts negatively to a shy person, the shy person should not take it personally instead he/she should try to imagine the perspective of the other person. Such perspectives might reflect the other person’s attempt to cover their own inadequacies or may be they are in bad mood. Such consideration of the perspective may go a long way in putting the reaction in its proper context. The person should also strive to expose him/herself to social situations such as parties. They should also try to work in environments that expose them to interpersonal communication (“Overcoming Shyness” 1). It takes practice to overcome shyness. Shy people in most cases give themselves lesser chances to interact with others. It is not surprising as to why shy people are not as socially confident as those individuals who are outgoing. The more a person practices social behavior, the easier the interaction becomes and the more natural they tend to be for a person.

## **Gradual Progress**

Taking slow but steady step towards overcoming shyness is critical. When a shy person steps back from a situation that may trigger shyness often keep the shyness at a level which is hard to get past hence reinforcing shyness.

One can develop confidence to interact by making one step towards eliminating shyness at a time. Most shy people feel awkward when a situation presents itself. They are afraid that they will feel uncomfortable and awkward (Lyness 2). This perception should not let a person keep away from doing or saying what they want. Feeling awkward in some situations is perfectly normal for any human being. For example, it feels awkward to ask for a first date as you are not sure what the response will be. Keeping away from asking implies that you will never get that much desired date. It is recommendable that shy people seek the advice of a professional psychologist. They should also learn how to manage their shyness.

## **Forget Bad Experiences**

Fighting to forget bad experiences is fundamental if one is to shake-off shyness. Much more frightening feeling grows other than reality when one dwells on a bad experience. The more an individual thinks about a bad experience, the more powerful the feeling about it becomes. It is unnecessary to keep on blaming oneself about a bad experience. Being true to oneself is important as one cannot change the true inner self. If one has a shy style that is natural or the shyness holds one back, one might consider trying to develop a sense of ease around situations that make them nervous. Majority of shy people find that the more they practice these tactics, the easier socializing becomes. Practicing conversation, assertiveness, confident

and friendly body language goes a long way in helping overcome shyness, achieve more enjoyment from daily experiences and build confidence (Lyness 3).

## **Humans are not so Different**

Those who suffer from shyness should realize and internalize that other individuals are basically the same as themselves. All human beings are insecure and fear embarrassment. Those who are shy should know that other people may not be as smart as one would think. If one has doubts or a question, there are high chances that somebody else is also wondering about the same thing.

## **Conclusion**

Shyness can range from feeling mild to moderate discomfort in one more areas of a persons life. Intense shyness is described as social anxiety, panic disorder or social phobia. Most scientists in the field of psychology believe that shyness is a genetic inclination which is caused by the wiring in the brain. Shyness can be brought out by unfamiliar and new situations such as meeting strangers, talking in front of a group of people for the first time. Majority of those who experience feelings that might bring out shyness do not give room for shyness to interfere with the desire to pursue personal and professional objectives and targets. One only needs to know where to begin in countering shyness. When a shy person steps back from a situation that may trigger shyness often keep the shyness at a level which is hard to get past hence reinforcing shyness. Everybody would want to feel comfortable in all situations, be talkative and be more outgoing. Letting go of bad experiences is fundamental if one is to shake-off shyness. All human beings



are insecure and fear embarrassment. Those who suffer from shyness should realize and internalize that other individuals are basically the same as themselves.