

Shyness and its effect

Life



I have been a shy girl most of my life and it's has really limited me in a lot of ways. The shy person is the one who withdraws from social contacts and participation because he/she feels particularly vulnerable to criticism and rejection by others. The fact that most people experience shyness and other forms of inferiority feelings at some time or other is an indication that such feelings cannot be very abnormal . its not easy to change the pattern of shyness, and such changes a do not occur must take place over a long period of time, shy person do not conquer their shyness in a day , a week, or even one or two months. The story of john malloy illustrates the long and tedious road that leads from a life limited by shyness to one of greater active participation and social usefulness.

John Malloy grew up in a middle class home in a small town. He was the oldest of four boys. His father, an accountant for the railroad, had started as a telegrapher. He was ambitious for his sons. The whole family worked and saved to send all four boys to college, and great things were expected of them, particularly John.

John was a painfully shy, timid, and retiring boy. He is frequently beaten by other boys , he disliked vigorous sports , and he was constantly humiliated by his younger brothers, who excelled at aggressive play. He “ escaped” by reading, taking long walks in the woods and country, and working in his home chemistry laboratory. He was not active socially in high school, but he made almost straight A's. As a result of this record he was selected valedictorian for the graduating class.

He does not know still this day how he was able to struggle through his speech. As he stood before the audience his knees almost gave way, and he gripped the microphone to support himself. The only thing he wanted to do was to run away. Why he stayed he does not know. How he was able to remember the speech, he does not know. It was just as though he were standing far off and someone else was giving it. Why the audience applauded, he does not know

John went to college in another state. His academic talents and his interest in chemistry brought him honors and attention. He was even persuaded to join a fraternity. However, in all things he studiously avoided situations that might lead to speaking before groups and invested most of his time and energy in chemistry. He graduated with honors and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

But he took no real pleasure in his success. As far as he was concerned, he had failed. His father had wanted him to go into something practical life business administration but he had wasted his time on chemistry just because he couldn't keep away from it. When he graduated in 1937, a man with a bachelor's degree in chemistry was not very employable, and so he could not support himself. He was so depressed by what he felt was complete failure that he seriously considered suicide. To make matters worse he was in love with the daughter of a dean, in defiance of his father's specific orders that he was not ever to look at a girl until he was ready to support a wife

In the end it was his fiancée who helped him through. She urged him to visit the college placement bureau. The counselor at the placement bureau

suggested that he put in his name for a fellowship in ceramic technology. Much to his surprise he was granted the fellowship. This is the turning point in his psychological development. Encouraged by his success he married his fiancée and she took a job while he worked through his Ph. D.

During this period he began to discover himself, he was having real successes. He was valued both for himself and for his useful talents. He was able to achieve independent thoughts and actions he had never known before, but he was still painfully shy. Although he was capable of highly original thinking, most of it never saw the light of the day as he was unable to talk to his supervisors with ease and confidence about anything much less his own ideas.

Meanwhile his idealized self was undergoing a marked reorganization. The old idea that he was a failure because he was unemployed and had not taken a business course was still there in essence, but he felt that he was now in a better position to attain a goal in keeping with his father's expectations. He knew he could have a teaching job in college with a Ph. D., but felt that this was an easy way out. He felt he would have to make his mark in business to be successful in his own eyes. When he had come to that decision he took his first step; he enrolled in a course in public speaking. Although it was frightening at first to face a group and make a speech, he became quite successful as long as it was the class he was addressing. He still could not talk to his superiors and when as part of the course, he had to give a talk on ceramic technology to the local Rotary Club, here was a recurrence of some of the symptoms he had when he delivered his valedictory.