

The Misery of Shyness

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Feelings about one's self may affect a person greatly. People with positive attitudes toward themselves often face the world around them with confidence. They do not constantly have to adjust themselves in accordance with the wishes of others. Moreover, they can take criticism and regard it as a suggestion for improvement. On the contrary, if you are not feeling good about yourself, such as feeling bashful in the company of people, others will also be uncomfortable with you.

Shyness causes many people to be unhappy. Shy people tend to be too concerned about their own appearance and actions and, thus, become anxious and self-conscious. They often experience troubling thoughts about what kind of an impression they are making on others. Besides, shy persons are likely to assume a negative attitude toward themselves. They can easily deal with neither a criticism nor a compliment. For them, criticism confirms the feeling of inferiority while praise feels like a lie rather than a comfort.

Fortunately, people can eliminate or reduce shyness through determination and patience. Here are some helpful steps to overcome shyness and build self-confidence:

1. Recognize your own strengths and weaknesses by means of setting aside time to self-examine and to be with others. Time spent this way helps you learn more about yourself. As you accept both your good and bad sides, your shyness will naturally lessen and, finally, may vanish away.
2. Set reasonable goals and learn to reevaluate goals on a regular basis. It is because impossible aims lead to sense of inferiority.
3. Do not waste time and energy on guilt and shame. If you do something that hurts another person, do not sink into self-blame. Just apologize, remember the lesson, and do not repeat the same mistake in the future.
4. There are numerous approaches to all issues. Speak up about your opinions and do not worry about whether they are right or wrong. No opinion is entirely right or wrong.
5. Do not reject yourself by making negative comments about yourself. That is, avoid

describing yourself by using unpleasant concepts such as stupid, ugly, or worthless. Think of yourself in a positive way, instead of saying "I am just a failure." Positive attitudes make things going well.

6. Accept criticism thoughtfully and face it bravely. For example, if a friend complains about your cooking, then assume that the criticism is merely of your skill, not of you yourself.
7. Remember that everyone will encounter failures and disappointments sometimes. Learn to profit from them. Often frustration becomes the turning point toward success.
8. Practice being in the social situations and do not allow yourself to become isolated. If you feel awkward at parties, try to make one acquaintance at a time and converse with just one or two persons. Gradually you will become accustomed to large groups and learn how to cope with them skillfully. However, stop associating or end relationship with those who persist in making you feel inferior even after you try to handle them about the problem.

Each one of us is a unique individual with great capabilities to obtain self-fulfillment and to achieve the fullest potential possible. Self-acceptance is an important step in overcoming shyness. Do not permit shyness to block your opportunities for a fruitful life. You can overcome shyness.

Annotations of Words and Expressions

1. misery n. great suffering (of mind or body) 不幸; 痛苦
There are poor people without homes and living in misery.
2. positive adj. practical and constructive 積極的
We need positive suggestions from our friends.
3. attitude n. way of feeling, thinking or behaving 態度; 意見; 看法
I dislike her unfriendly attitude.
4. in accordance with adv. phr. in agreement or conformity with 依照; 根據
Everything has been done in accordance with the rules.
5. improvement n. improving or being improved 改進

6. on the contrary prep. phr. 相反地
"Have you finished?"—"No, on the contrary, I have not yet begun."
7. bashful adj. afraid to meet people; unsure of oneself 害羞(羞怯)的
8. be concerned about v. phr. to worry about 擔憂
I am very concerned about her safety.
9. impression n. effect produced on the mind or feelings 印象
First impressions are often misleading.
10. assume v. to take for oneself 採取(...的態度)
to take as a fact 認為
11. negative adj. passive; refusing 消極(否定)的
Don't give your friends negative criticism.
12. deal with v. phr. to manage; to handle; to deal with 處理
He is able to deal with difficulties of his position.
13. criticism n. unfavorable judgment 批評; 非難
14. compliment n. expression of admiration etc. either in words or by action 恭維
What he said was not a sincere compliment.
15. confirm v. to make (ownership, opinions, etc.) stronger 證實
The news confirmed the rumor.
16. inferiority n. state of being inferior 較低下; 較不重要
inferior adj. lower in rank, importance, etc. 較差的
I won't pay top prices for goods of inferior quality.
17. praise n. expression of admiration
The new film received high praise from everyone.
18. eliminate v. to remove or get rid of 消除
Can the government eliminate poverty?

19. determination n. firm intention 決心
Judy is a woman of great determination.
20. recognize v. to see clearly; to be aware 認清; 察覺
She recognized that she was not qualified for the post.
21. vanish v. to go out of existence 消失
The thief ran into the crowd and vanished from sight.
22. reevaluate v. to find out again 重新評估
The teacher reevaluated the performance of each student.
23. sink into v. phr. to come to a lower level or state 陷入
He sank into despair.
24. apologize v. to say one is sorry 道歉
You must apologize to her for being so rude.
25. approach n. way; path; road 方法; 通路
You must take a new approach to the learning of English.
26. speak up n. to give one's opinions without hesitation 毫不猶豫地說出自己的意見
If you thought that wasn't fair, why didn't you speak up?
27. reject v. to refuse to accept 拒絕
She rejected his proposal.
28. comment v. to give opinions 評論
I won't comment on what people say.
n. opinion given briefly in speech or writing about an event 評論
29. concept n. idea underlying a class of things 概念
A little boy has no concept of right and wrong.
30. encounter v. to be faced by something bad or to meet unexpectedly 遭遇; 邂逅
31. turning point n. phr. critical point in place, time, etc. 轉捩點

There was a turning point in the negotiation yesterday.

32. awkward adj. clumsy 笨拙的; 不自在
33. acquaintance n. person whom one knows (less intimately than a friend) 相識的人
He has a wide circle of acquaintances.
34. isolated adj. separate; putting or keeping apart 隔離的; 孤立的
35. be/ become accustomed to v. phr. to be/ become used to 習慣於
The boy soon became accustomed to hard work and poor food.
36. persist in v. phr. to insist on 堅持
She persists in wearing that old-fashioned hat.
37. fulfillment n. performing or completing a task, duty etc. 實踐; 完成
After many years, his plans have come to fulfillment.
38. block v. to make movement difficult or impossible 阻礙
All roads were blocked by the heavy snowfall.