

How to Cope with Social Anxiety ^[1]

Anonymous ^[2]60.3K reads

Social anxiety is more common than you might have thought, so it is very likely that you, or a loved one, may be struggling with it. There is, of course, nothing wrong or shameful with that, but you probably don't need much convincing to know that you'll be much happier, if you could cope with social anxiety more effectively.

Having the ability to connect with more people and engage in more social interactions, will inevitably help you create a more fulfilling life for yourself. Although social anxiety can be a severe problem in people's lives, it is not an unsolvable one. Here you will find a comprehensive course into dealing with social anxiety, but first – complete a short quiz ^[3] to figure out how strong your anxiety is.

What is Social Anxiety?

Once you have determined the approximate effect of social anxiety on your life, it is time to move on to defining anxiety ^[4] and looking into some of the most common symptoms of social anxiety ^[5]. You may have found that your behavior and feelings correspond with some or all of the symptoms, but how did that happen? Well, another important point, before moving on to coping strategies, is to understand what causes social anxiety ^[6].

How to Personalize Your Coping Strategies

Now that you understand social anxiety a bit better, the time has come to make things more personalized and look into your own life. Don't worry, this information is personal and for your benefit only. What you need to do is identify those situations, which worry you the most ^[7]. Once you have done that, you would be able to understand the psychological mechanisms ^[8], which make those situations bothersome for you. Social anxiety is often linked with assumptions about the outcome of things and a great approach to revealing those tricky assumptions, is to ask yourself two invaluable questions - "why" and "what" ^[9].

Your Best Bet

One of the best approaches you can adopt, on your way to coping with social anxiety, is creating a thought journal ^[10]. Even though it may feel silly or unnatural at first, we guarantee that it is the key to a more satisfying life. With the help of the journal, you can challenge your negative thinking patterns ^[11] and then find alternative, reality-based thoughts ^[12], to replace

the negativity with. This process is not always as simple as it may sound, because of 3 main mistakes [13], that we are prone to making. Once you have identified what they are, you can start to worry functionally [14], because worrying is a normal part of life, as long as it doesn't turn into anxiety.

Approaches to Social Anxiety

A method that has been proven effective by the experience of many, who have struggled with social anxiety, is called exposure [15], and we will help you figure your way around it. During and after your exposure, it is crucial to interact with others [16], and know the right cues of communication. One of the key elements to remember is that you need to be assertive, but never rude [17], while interacting with others. The details of effective and enjoyable social interaction [18] may sometimes seem illusive but, with a few tips, you can easily straighten them out and thus start building a strong social network [19]. Once you have understood the rhythm of social interactions, dating will become easier and more enjoyable [20]. However, for that to happen, you need to go out into the world and try new experiences [21]. In doing so, you will constantly "update" your mental health and wellbeing [22].

Tools for Dealing with Social Anxiety

When we talk about social anxiety, we often say that is closely connected to worrying either about the future, or the past, rather than "living in the now". This is why together, we are going to investigate the relationship between being future-oriented and present-oriented [23]. Then, we are going to look into mindfulness [24] and all the ways in which you can use to your favor. As effective as mindfulness can be, there are also other essential relaxation techniques to master [25], if you want to cope with social anxiety. Another great approach is learning from other people's positive social behavior [26].

Misconceptions and Their Effects

Social anxiety is, unfortunately, often covered in a veil of misconception, which may be getting in the way of your coping efforts. Therefore, we will examine the 10 most crucial misconceptions about social anxiety [27], which will both enable you to deal better and will help others understand your social anxiety more accurately. As you probably know, social anxiety can have a negative impact on your career [28] as well, which is something we will try to mend. This process can also be helped along by eating and drinking the right things [29]. Of course whatever you do, social anxiety will remain a part of your life, if you engage in anxiety-inducing habits [30].

An Extra Bit of Knowledge

Lastly, we will delve into effective strategies for an excellent presentation [31], which is often a big issue for people struggling with social anxiety. In addition, we will examine the relationship between shyness and social anxiety [32] – how the two differ and why we should never assume that they are interchangeable concepts.

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