

51 Ways to Overcome Low Self-Esteem and Shyness

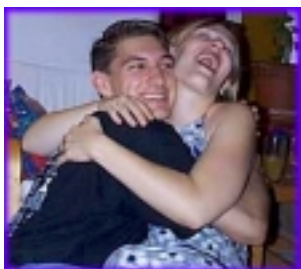


If you Google “low self-esteem,” you’ll get over 1,600,000 articles. Google “shyness,” and you’ll get over 6,000,000 articles. People really want to know how to overcome these things. Low self-esteem and shyness are socially debilitating. They can be very difficult to overcome them. This ebook will give you some simple things to start.

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BASIC NEEDS

Every one of us has the basic need to feel important as a human being. This first set of tips will go over a few of them and help you understand their importance.

1. Attention

We are a society that needs other people. Everyone has the basic need to give and receive attention from others. As you acknowledge this you can start to understand yourself. A great way to start is by *giving* attention to those around you.

2. Meaning and Purpose

We all need meaning and purpose in our lives. Think about your own. Are you a student? A mom? A dad? A son? A daughter? A co-worker? Whoever you are, as you acknowledge your purpose get excited about it.

3. Connection

We all need to feel connected to others. As you look at your life, ask yourself who you're connected to. Here's a partial list to help you get an idea:

- Spouse
- Friends
- Children
- Grandchildren
- Co-workers

4. Creativity

We all have need for creativity in our lives. If we do exactly the same things every day, our lives will get boring, and it can lead to depression. Make sure you frequently add something creative, even if it's small, into your daily routine.

5. Intimacy

Intimacy is a very important human need. Babies need to be held, children need to be hugged, and adults need affection from other adults. Sometimes the search for this intimacy can become depressing, but you need not let it.

6. Control

As humans, we have a need to be in control of our own lives. Sometimes, though, it seems like life controls *you*. It's during these times that you need to step back and take steps to regain control. You can do this by:

- Planning out your day.
- Choosing what you do every day.
- Tackling problems head on.

7. Status

You need to know where you stand with the situations in your life. This status helps you to understand who you are and exactly what's expected of you. If you're unsure of your status in your life, depression can easily set in.



DEFINITIONS

Let's go over some definitions of terms and conditions that are commonly used together. Hopefully one of these will strike a cord and help you to understand your condition.

8. Depression

There are several types of depression, but it basically means being sad or down for more than a few weeks at a time. Depression can be made manifest by lack of energy, and motivation interest in normally pleasurable activities.

9. Shyness

According to wikipedia.com, the definition of shyness is "a feeling of insecurity or awkwardness that certain people experience while being among others, talking with others, asking favors of others, etc."

10. Social Anxiety

5.3 million adult Americans suffer from social anxiety. Again, wikipedia.com's definition of social anxiety is an experience of fear, apprehension or worry regarding social situations and being evaluated by others. It's also sometimes described as "crippling shyness." Many people that have social anxiety have had it all of their lives.

11. Low Self-Esteem

Low self-esteem is seeing yourself in a negative way. It can lead to shyness and depression. Not all people who suffer from low self-esteem are shy, however. Many people try to hide their low self-esteem by being funny, talkative, and loud.



START SMALL

Now that we have our definitions, let's talk about some things we can do about them. This first set of tips will give you some ideas on simple things to start doing on a daily basis.

12. Graph Your Days

Graphing your days is a great way to get an idea about your self-esteem. Every day before bed, get a piece of paper and graph your day from the time you get up until you go to bed. If part of the day was good, make your graph higher accordingly. If part of your day was bad, make your graph lower. This can give you a pretty good idea of how you view your world.

13. List Good Qualities

Getting a piece of paper and listing all of your good qualities is a great way to raise your self-esteem. It may be tough at first, but as you start acknowledging that you have some good qualities, you'll be on your way to feeling better about yourself.

14. Positive Thinking

Start thinking positive. Rather than playing the "what if" game, thinking of bad things that could happen, start thinking of good things that could happen. When not-so-great things *do* happen, try to think of a positive spin on it.

15. Stop Comparing Yourself To Others

One of the most self-destructive things you can do is compare yourself to others. The only person you should compare yourself to is you. This is important, because you need to have a clear view of your own talents and abilities.

16. Stop Putting Yourself Down

How many times have you thought to yourself, “I’m so stupid,” or “I never do anything right”? This kind of self-talk is very self-destructive. Try to make a conscious effort each day to add positive self-talk to your thinking.

17. Affirmations

Giving yourself positive affirmations throughout the day is a very important way to raise your self-esteem. A great way to do this is by making it a habit to constantly acknowledge your good points.

18. Accept Compliments

A person with low self-esteem finds it very hard to accept compliments. Practice saying “thank you” in the mirror. Learning to accept compliments sincerely will start you on the road to higher self-esteem.

19. Be Around Positive People

If you surround yourself with negative people, then chances are you will also be a negative person. It’s important that you’re around positive people so that you’ll start to think more positively about your life as well.

20. Voice Your Needs

Many people with low self-esteem think that they don’t deserve to have their needs met. This is absolutely not true. The sooner you start voicing your needs, the sooner you will feel like a worthwhile person.

21. Compliment Others

A big step in feeling good about yourself is to compliment others. This will get you thinking about those around you and help you to transition into healthy conversations.

22. Have Fun

It's easy to forget to have fun when you're depressed or have low self-esteem. Plan at least one fun thing to do each week that's just for you. Try to remember the good feelings you have when you do enjoyable things, and find ways to feel them at other times.



CONVERSATION HELPS

Sometimes engaging in conversations is agonizing for shy people or people with low self-esteem. This next set of tips will help you start conversations and make you feel better about talking to people.

23. Ask Questions

One of the simplest ways to start a conversation is to ask a question. Here are a few to start with:

- How are you?
- Where do you work?
- What's your major?
- Where are you from?

24. Talk To Someone Every Day

Make it a goal to talk to someone outside of your comfort zone every day. It doesn't have to be an in-depth conversation, as long as you're connecting with someone. It can be a cashier, another parent, the person sitting next to you on the bus, etc.

25. Learn Stuff

People love people who are experts on a lot of things. It's important to learn new things every day. This will really help your conversation skills. You could say something like, "I see you're reading Stephen King's new book. I heard he..." Instant conversation starter.

26. Smile

Smiling is probably the easiest thing that you can do to connect with people. It lets people know that you're a friendly person and makes them *want* to talk to you. Many times if you simply smile, *they* will start the conversation.

27. Eye Contact

Making eye contact when you're talking to someone is important. It lets the other person know that you're genuinely interested in what they have to say. This may be hard at first, but try practicing on your loved ones and those you feel comfortable around first.

28. Use less "I" and More "You"

When engaging someone in conversation, try to steer the topic towards the other person as much as you can. People love talking about themselves, and if all you do is intently listen to others, they will deem you a great conversationalist.



DATING

Dating can be very scary for a shy person or a person with low self-esteem. But we all need companionship. This next set of tips will give some dating ideas for even the most shy people.

29. Online Services

There are lots of ways to meet people online these days. These services are great, because they let you get to know a person via emails and chat before you meet in real life. Be careful that you don't make it *just* about online dating, and that you *do* take it to the next step and meet people in real life.

30. Group Dating

It's great to get a group of people together and do something fun. No two people are really paired together, but there are guys and girls and plenty of time for conversation. Many people like group activities rather than one-on-one dating because there's less pressure.

31. Phone Dating

There are a lot of companies that offer a "meet local singles" type service. Lots of shy people prefer to start there, because talking on the phone is easier than meeting someone in person. Like dating online, however, phone dating should be a means to an end, with the end being to eventually meet that someone in real life.

32. Bring a Buddy

If you're headed to a club, bring a buddy. It's easier to look and feel comfortable if you're with a friend. And the more comfortable you are, the easier it will be to talk to a member of the opposite sex.

33. Flirting

If you have your eye on that special someone, but are still scared to strike up a conversation, try flirting! Here are some ideas:

- Smile.
- Have flowers delivered.
- Leave a note for him or her.



TREATMENTS

There are several treatments out there for low self-esteem, shyness, depression, and other related problems. This next set of tips will help you to get an idea of what's out there.

34. Medications

There are many medications out there that help with depression and, in turn, help with shyness and low-self esteem. Your doctor can help you decide which treatment is best. Here's a partial list:

- Prozac
- Serzone
- Zoloft
- Effexor
- Paxil
- Netazadone
- Luvox

35. Hypnosis

Many people have received help with depression and shyness through hypnosis. It can be quite pricey, however. If you go this route make sure you do your research and find a hypnotist that has had lots of success in this area.

36. Counseling

Counseling has helped millions of people to overcome shyness, depression, and low self-esteem. The trick is finding the right counselor for you. If you're looking for a counselor, don't give up; you may have to go through several before you find one who will truly help you.

37. Coaching

Coaching is much like counseling, in that it consists of an outsider helping you overcome things in your life. A coach is different, though, because he or she is a bit more involved in your life and is a bit more aggressive.

38. Meditation

Meditation can be a very effective tool for overcoming shyness and low self-esteem. It involves turning inward and being aware of yourself on that level. There are many helpful CD's that can guide you through the meditation process.

39. Relaxation

Relaxation is a great technique that people are using more and more. It especially helps people who are nervous or anxious. When you find yourself in a stressful social situation, make a conscious effort to relax. No one but you need know what you're doing, and it can really help. Here are some things that you can do:

- Take deep breaths
- Relax your body, one limb at a time.
- Relax your thoughts.



TAKE ACTION

Once you're ready, it's important to take an active part in overcoming your shyness and low self-esteem. This next set of tips will give you some ideas you can try.

40. Take a Class

It's always great to learn new things. Putting yourself in a classroom type environment will give you lots of social opportunities. Plus, you have an opportunity to excel in something you have an interest in.

41. Join a Gym

Joining a gym is a great way to start feeling good about yourself. A healthy body helps you have a healthy inner self. And, as with taking a class, there are lots of opportunities to strike up conversations with people.

42. Take a Walk

Taking a short walk every day can really help you feel good about yourself. If you make it a goal to take a walk every day, rain or shine, it will really help overcome depression.

43. Hobbies

Find a hobby that you can get excited about. Whether it's painting, golf, singing, or crafts, finding something that you love, and can do on a regular basis, is very important.



OTHER HELPS

There are many other helpful things, methods, and ideas out there that can help you overcome shyness and depression. This last set of tips will give you even more tools that you can use.

44. Books

There are thousands of great self-help books out there specifically designed to guide us into being who we want to be. Here are some good ones:

- **Self Esteem: A Proven Program of Cognitive Techniques for Assessing, Improving, and Maintaining Your Self-Esteem** by Matthew McKay and Patrick Fanning
- **Living Fully with Shyness and Social Anxiety: A Comprehensive Guide to Gaining Social Confidence** by Erika B. Hilliard
- **Depression-Free, Naturally: 7 Weeks to Eliminating Anxiety, Despair, Fatigue, and Anger from Your Life** by Joan Mathews Larson

45. Keep a Journal

Writing in a journal is a great way to get in touch with who you are. You can also use your journal to set goals and keep track of all the good things in your life.

46. Visualization

Visualization is a great technique that helps people achieve positive outcomes in their lives. If you're going on a date, and you're nervous about it, take a few minutes to visualize yourself on that date. Picture yourself smiling, having fun, and engaging in great conversation. You'll be surprised at how much this can help.

47. Reward Accomplishments

While trying to overcome your shyness and low self-esteem, be sure to acknowledge and reward even the smallest accomplishments. It doesn't have to be a big reward; a small treat is great.

48. Help Others

Finding a way to help and serve others is very important, especially if you're trying to overcome depression. Make a goal to find a way to help someone everyday, no matter how simple.

49. Make Your Life Pleasurable

Make sure to fill your life with things you like. When doing things, do *fun* things. Surround yourself with nice people. Play fun music. When looking for employment, look for work that you'll enjoy doing.

50. No Drugs or Alcohol

Some shy people believe that drugs, especially alcohol, can help them in social situations. This isn't true. Instead, you'll become more and more dependent on alcohol to get you through social situations, all the while your true self never comes out.

51. Be Yourself

In your quest to overcome shyness, low self-esteem, and depression, it is so important that you stay true to yourself. As you do, you'll learn to love yourself, and so will others.