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### **Step One: Create a Look of Confidence**

#### Attire:

Consider creating a new style for yourself! Consult fashion magazines for ideas on developing your new style. A new style can really boost your self-confidence! Regardless of your style of dress, always make sure that your clothes are neat, clean and coordinated.

#### Hair Style:

Always keep your hair well groomed. You may even want to choose a new hairstyle!

#### Hygiene:

Always smell fresh and clean

Use fragrance

Fresh breath is a must!

Nails should be neat and clean.

For women: accentuate your natural beauty with makeup. Consult a make-up consultant at a fine department store.

#### Physical Fitness:

Exercise can boost self-confidence and it reduces anxiety. Experts recommend that you exercise for at least 20 minutes a day, 3 times a week. Eating a sensible diet is also a part of physical fitness.

#### Hold Head Up:

Hold your head up and focus straight ahead!

#### Walk Energetically:

Put a little pep in your step! Let your arms swing a little as you walk.

#### Pleasant Facial Expression:

A pleasant looking face sends a message of confidence. Practice your pleasant facial expression in the mirror.

Exercise:

For the next 5 days, complete the following checklist"

\_\_\_\_\_ Was well groomed  
\_\_\_\_\_ Had confident stride  
\_\_\_\_\_ Held head up as walked  
\_\_\_\_\_ Had pleasant facial expression

### **Step Two: Attack Self-Consciousness!**

Pre-Anxiety:

Typically even before you enter into a situation that makes you feel self-conscious, you worry in advance about how you are going to handle yourself in that situation. I call this "Pre-Anxiety". Just thinking about the upcoming situation causes you to experience anxiety or nervousness. Attack pre-anxiety by using what I call "pre-talk" such as:

"I refuse to get anxious about a situation before it actually happens."

Situational self-consciousness is the anxiety you experience while you are in an actual anxiety provoking situation. Either you assume that people are negatively thinking about you or you are highly critical of your behavior. There are many situations that give rise to self-consciousness:

Worrying about whether people think that you are acting awkward or strange.

Anxiety about what people think about the way you walk or how you talk.

Anxiety from being watched by people.

Anxiety about whether people think that you are too shy or unfriendly.

You may have to distract those automatic negative thoughts by using positive self-talk during those anxious times. Write down the following self-talk in a pocket notebook. Refer to them during the course of the day. You may even develop your own self-talk affirmations.

I am confident and at ease.

I'm not doing anything to make negative assumptions about what people are thinking about me.

I'm not doing anything to call attention to myself.

People are always looking at other people. It's nothing personal.

I'm a nice person. I don't have to worry about whether people think I'm nice. I don't have to be perfect.

### Post Anxiety

One of the most damaging aspects of self-consciousness is the anxiety that you experience after the situation has occurred. In some cases, long after the situation occurred. You continue to beat yourself up about how you handled yourself or you continue to feel embarrassed. I refer to this as "post anxiety". Post anxiety causes you to lose your self-confidence. You fear any future attempts of putting yourself in that situation again.

Immediately following a situation where you experienced self-consciousness, use what I call "talk-back" self-talk.

#### "Talk Back" Affirmations

"That situation is over. It is water under the bridge!"

"I release myself from situations of the past. I wipe the slate clean.

"Today, is a new day filled with challenges to grow!"

### Journal Exercise

Comment about any negative assessments that you believe people made about you. Of course you have no way of really knowing what people are thinking about you. You simply make negative assumptions about what you believe people are thinking about you. You could just as easily make positive assumptions. A part of this exercise is to think of alternative positive assumptions that people could have made in that situation.

#### Journal Example:

Day 1: (journal comment)

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Alternative positive assumption:

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### **Step Three: Make eye contact and speak up!**

It is very common for shy people to speak in a low tone of voice. Learning to speak up will take some practice. The following exercise will help you to develop a more clear sounding voice.

#### **Exercise 1:**

You will need a tape recorder. Write down several statements to practice speaking. Practice saying them until you have achieved a more audible sounding voice.

The following exercise will help you to gradually develop the confidence to maintain eye contact with the person to whom you are speaking. Make a comment about the experience in you journal. Note any improvements you can make the next time.

**Exercise 2:** Make brief eye contact and give a friendly "hello" or "hi" to someone you pass by. Repeat this exercise until you feel comfortable doing it.

The following exercise will help you to develop the confidence to make eye contact and speak with confidence!

**Exercise 3:** Give a compliment to someone. Perhaps to someone at work, at school, a neighbor or anyone. Make eye contact with a friendly facial expression. Put a little enthusiasm in your voice. You may want to practice this at home. Do this exercise several times. List any improvements you can make.

#### **Examples:**

"That's a nice car you have!"

"Hi, you look nice today!"

"I like that suit, where did you get it?"

#### Step 4: Discover the Magic of Being Spontaneous

Start thinking out loud! There are many examples throughout your day where you have asked yourself a question. Or perhaps you have thought to yourself that it was too hot or cold. There are many opportunities to just spontaneously say what you are thinking or feeling to someone else. The more you practice it the better you will get at it. You don't even have to worry about whether or not the other person makes a response. You are successful just by the fact that you have made the spontaneous comment! Repeat this exercise until you feel comfortable making spontaneous comments.

Examples of spontaneous comments:

"It's so hot today!"  
"Boy, I'm so tired!"  
"I can't believe how long this line is!"

For the next few days, make spontaneous comments to someone. You can make spontaneous comments to people at work, school, on an elevator, in a waiting room, or just about anywhere!

Make a comment about the experience. List any improvements you can make for next time.

Journal Example:

Day 1 (Journal comment)

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Improvements to make:

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### **Step 5: Gain the Confidence to Approach People**

In this step, you can develop the confidence to approach people. The purpose of this step is to prepare you for the next step which is to approach people in social situations to start a conversation.

#### Exercise 1:

Approach a sales clerk in a department store to ask where a particular item is located. Make eye contact with a friendly facial expression as you are approaching. Give a friendly "hi". Ask the person where \_\_\_\_\_ are located. Speak up and speak calmly. Thank the person for the help.

There are a number of places where you can approach people to get information. Be creative! Do this exercise until you feel confident doing it.

#### Daily Checklist for Journal:

- \_\_\_\_\_ made eye contact
- \_\_\_\_\_ had friendly facial expression
- \_\_\_\_\_ gave friendly greeting
- \_\_\_\_\_ spoke up clearly
- \_\_\_\_\_ spoke calmly

## **Step 6: Tips for Keeping a Conversation Going**

Ask open ended questions

Maintain good eye contact

Not your head up and down to acknowledge that you are following what the speaker is saying

You can also show that you understand the speaker by periodically saying things like

“Right”  
“sure”

Restatements: show that you are really comprehending what the person is saying by restating what the other person said in your own words.

## **Step 7: Social Goal Setting**

Use step seven to make long term goals for your social development. You might want to break them down into smaller goals. Write about each experience in your journal.

Example: Goal: To be more sociable at parties

1. Make a list of things to talk about.
2. Enter the party with the confidence and ease and maintain it.
3. Approach one person to introduce myself.

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I hope you have enjoyed and benefited from my 7-Steps to Beat Shyness!

**Email address:** *7stepstobeatshyness@comcast.net*