

Top 10 Methods to Help Overcome Social Anxiety

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If you find yourself getting anxious at the thought of meeting new people or speaking in front of a group, you may be suffering from social anxiety.

Social anxiety causes one to avoid social situations. Many people rely on self-medication or the abuse of drugs and alcohol to get them through these situations.

Luckily, there are methods you can use to find relief in healthy ways!

Try these effective strategies to overcome social anxiety:

- 1. Put yourself out there.** It can be a daunting prospect, but try to accept any invitations you are given, even if you don't particularly want to go. With a positive attitude, the more you practice, the easier it becomes.
- 2. Get help from a professional.** Of course, talking to a close friend about your anxiety may help, but remember that they aren't trained for this. Make an appointment to speak to a professional therapist. **They may be able to suggest some customized coping mechanisms that would work for you.**
- 3. Strengthen your overall health.** Poor health can leave you feeling anxious. Eat nutritious foods and exercise regularly. Healthy food and exercise both uplift your mood and can decrease stress and anxiety. Exercise also helps to release feel-good hormones.
 - Besides getting some exercise, joining a local fitness class would also allow you to practice meeting new people while those feel-good hormones are in full effect. This will make it easier for you to cope with meeting them.

Plus, who knows - you might meet your new best friend!

4. Write it down. List the times that you have managed to overcome your fears. What did you do to overcome your fears in this situation? How did you feel when this happened?

- Whenever you encounter an event where you are feeling socially anxious, write that down, too. How does this situation compare with the ones on your list?

- **Regular reflection of the times you were successful in combating your fears can help with current situations.**

5. Congratulate yourself. You may not be confident in public, but you have plenty of other things that you can be proud of! Recognize and remind yourself of any achievements you have made. This will help boost your confidence, which will help you overcome social issues as well.

6. Practice your social skills. Learn how to make introductions and give compliments. Practice making eye contact and remembering names. Listen to what others have to say and keep the focus on them - not you.

- These few skills will not only help you through a social situation, but the other person will walk away from the conversation feeling like a million bucks!

- **Remember - others will not always remember what you said, but they will remember how you made them feel!**

7. Join a support group. Talking to others who are undergoing the same challenges as you are can be comforting. Plus, you will all be able to encourage each other and offer support and advice from your own experiences.

8. Try going somewhere new. When you go to new places, you'll meet new

people. **Using your new skills to interact with them will give you more practice and confidence in dealing with social situations.**

9. **Remember that you don't need to be perfect.** Those with social anxiety have a tendency to think that they need to be perfect. Yet, perfection isn't attainable for anyone! Instead of trying to be perfect, try and enjoy the moment and have a "that'll do" attitude.

10. **Read a self-help book about overcoming social anxiety.** There are many inspiring stories about others with social anxiety who have transformed their lives after overcoming their social fears. These stories can inspire you to keep trying as well.

Breaking the cycle of social anxiety will take some time and practice, but you can do this! **Reward yourself for each small step you make.**

Focus on the journey ahead and the steps you can take that will bring you success. Before long, you won't have to worry about social anxiety again!