

Hi,

My name is Sebastiaan van der Schrier and I'm an ex-social anxiety disorder sufferer.



The information I share with you in this PDF is based upon more than a decade of study of social anxiety and the solutions to it, modelling top therapists, thousands of hours of coaching and being coached, research and experimentation.

While this information is a generalised overview and only the tip of the iceberg, it can change your life when you apply it.

You might be able to relate to parts of my story, and because of this, a bit about me first...

From the age of 11 or 12, I had Social Anxiety. This progressively got worse. Around age 16 it got really bad. I was constantly anxious, feared becoming anxious, and had a big problem with blushing.

I was especially anxious being in groups of people. When the attention was on me, I'd often blush. I felt intimidated by guys that were stronger than me. I was *very* awkward with girls I found attractive, and I was noticeably insecure and anxious around people that were popular.

I blushed when I was disapproved of, or when I did something "uncool". I felt uncomfortable around some of my friends. And socialising was often very try-hard as I overcompensated by pretending to be "cool and relaxed", while I was actually very anxious.

Due to all this discomfort socially, I started to avoid more and more social situations. I smoked a lot of weed, drunk a lot when I had to be social, and in weekends often came up with excuses to avoid going out. I often stayed at home in my room by myself.

I felt deeply lonely. I felt like it was me against the world. I saw myself as a big loser and was convinced that others thought of me as a loser as well.

I "knew" that most people didn't like me, and that they were always waiting for an opportunity to make me look bad.

I felt insecure, anxious, and I was horribly afraid of becoming embarrassed.

I was ashamed of who I was, I disliked most people, I was terrified of my future, and to say that life was a living hell would be an understatement...

For the longest time I had no clue what was going on with me. I just knew that it sucked, and that I was often overcome with intense negative emotions and had no control over it.

It wasn't until I stumbled onto some information that provided me the perspective that what was going with me was something many people were dealing with and that I could overcome these challenges.

I was taught that when I "simply" changed my negative limiting beliefs I would overcome my anxiety.

This change in my perspective gave me great hope because now there was something I could DO about my situation.

It turned out not as simple as I had hoped. But I had committed myself to do whatever it took and to keep going until I was anxiety-free. I had sworn to myself I'd make it happen. No matter what.

I was given some resources to change my beliefs and found plenty of my own. I worked through countless books, tapes, self-help and different forms of therapy.

I worked with an NLP Master, I tried hypnosis, I used the CBT techniques, I did exposures I was absolutely terrified to do, but nothing truly helped.

For years I tried various things and struggled to get results. The common understanding that was hammered into me was that "facing my fears" was the only way. I did that, on various occasions. But it wasn't enough for me to get lasting results.

I couldn't do these exposures consistently. It was too scary. I was scared days in advance in the knowledge I was going to face my fears. I wouldn't be able to catch sleep cause of the intense worries and fears about the dreaded exposures.

And the results I got after doing them only lasted for a brief period of time. Facing my fears daily felt impossible; it took too much out of me.

I kept working on changing my beliefs by doing affirmations, journaling, changing my thoughts, facing my fears, hypnosis, and whatever else I could get my hands on. In doing so I made very slow progress.

Eventually I stumbled onto "EFT" (Emotional Freedom Techniques).

This is a strange looking technique that combines Western Psychology with ancient Chinese medicine. It's like acupuncture, but instead of using needles you tap with the tips of your fingers on specific acupressure points on your face and body while simultaneously focusing on a problem.

As you do apply EFT while focused on a problem, the negative emotions connected to the problem reduce, and eventually release.

When I saw it at first I thought it was total nonsense, and probably some internet scam.

But I eventually did some research online and found tons of info teaching the basics for free.

I also found hundreds of videos of people sharing the basics, forums dedicated to it, and thousands of testimonials of people claiming it worked where nothing else had worked to resolve their long-standing issues.

I decided to give it a committed try. Since this was far too big to be a scam, I decided to make it work for me. Or at least find out with 100% certainty it would not work for me.

I had trouble with it in the beginning (I was numb to my emotions) so after a few months I eventually worked with an EFT expert on a workshop and had my first shift with it.

This was incredible.

I felt my shame and humiliation rapidly dissolving, and in place for it came a sense of calm peace.

That result lasted.

I have since worked with various EFT experts. Because that first shift was just the beginning of overcoming my social anxiety. It was just one piece of the puzzle.

It has taken me years to get rid of my negative limiting beliefs and completely resolve my social anxiety.

Thanks to EFT and the help of some brilliant therapist I'm now anxiety-free, and I have been for years. I'm fortunate to be able to connect with people effortlessly, I enjoy spending time with people, and am lucky to have a great social life with awesome, fun, loving people.

I believe this is possible for you too. And for most people this doesn't have to take as long as it took me. In fact, most people can experience relief within just a few minutes.

To overcome your social anxiety is a different story than experiencing relief though. If you belong to the "most people" group, you can experience a significant reduction in your social anxiety in just a few weeks. And with persistence, you can become anxiety-free too.

WHY you can become anxiety-free I explain in this article, along with one of the main key steps.

This is a 26-page article, but it's still just an overview; [the tip of the iceberg](#).

However, this article lays the foundation of your understanding, and I hope it inspires you to get rid of your social anxiety completely.

Enjoy :-)

How To Overcome Social Anxiety Completely

Here's an example of a common case I had. Let's call him "Mark".

When I first spoke with Mark he told me he had tried everything to overcome his social anxiety. Nothing had worked...

He felt hopeless, frustrated and depressed. He believed there was something terribly wrong with him, and he feared he'd have to live with his social anxiety for the rest of his life.

To his credit, he had done the work. He had seen a variety of therapists, read self help books, did exposures and tried out several programs that promise to beat your anxiety.

He basically tried anything and everything that was recommended, and still was experiencing intense social anxiety.

I could relate, and maybe you can also relate.

So why is this? Why does all that effort not pay off?

Because Mark had been focusing all his efforts on "beating his anxiety".

And while it makes sense to focus on overcoming the problem we're most aware of, in this case it doesn't work. And that is for a reason.

When we fight our social anxiety we're fighting the symptom of a deeper underlying problem.

And since this doesn't work, or doesn't work long term, this often leads to massive frustration and a fear that the social anxiety can never be resolved.

However, with persistence, focusing on the underlying causes of the symptom, and applying EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques - more on this later-) in the right way, social anxiety can be completely overcome.

Below follows an explanation that gives you an overall perspective on how to overcome social anxiety. This is from my limited perspective and experience a very effective way to get quick and permanent results.

Let's start with a provocative, true statement:

Your Social Anxiety Is Not the Real Problem

Don't get me wrong; it is a *massive problem*. But, it's not the main problem you should focus on to overcome it. Just focusing on beating your anxiety is like trying to mop the floor dry while the tap is running...



It's a lot of hard work, ineffective at best, and may not bring you lasting results.

When you “stop mopping” the anxiety will likely be back.

In order to overcome your social anxiety you need to focus on the *real problem*. You need to “close the tap”.

As you read this, I suspect you've tried many things to let go of your social anxiety. And your results have either not been as great as you expected, or worse, they've been non-existent.

And in some cases, your anxiety might have gotten worse (why that is the case is for another article...)

You might have made some positive changes, but these never seemed to last. And your progress -if there has been any- has been frustratingly slow.

You might even have tried EFT and have made more rapid improvements than before, but still haven't gotten the lasting results that you are hoping for.

Overall, you're still far from resolving your social anxiety and you are asking yourself why that is when you have worked at it so hard for so long.

So why is this?

Could it be because you've been fighting the wrong battle?

Let's start out with why you experience anxiety in the first place.

Why We Experience Anxiety

You experience anxiety because your subconscious mind *perceives* you to be in danger.

Whether that is a real danger like a wild bear approaching you, or the *perceived danger* of getting rejected or embarrassed makes no difference; it simply reacts to the stimuli.

To protect you from this perceived danger, it fires off a built-in, automatic early-warning system referred to as the fight, flight, or freeze (FFF) response.

Every time this FFF response is activated, adrenaline gets pumped through your veins, blood rushes away from your head and your digestive system into your outer limbs, and your throat tightens up.

Your heart races a hundred miles per hour, your mind blanks out and you feel a knot in your stomach or chest.

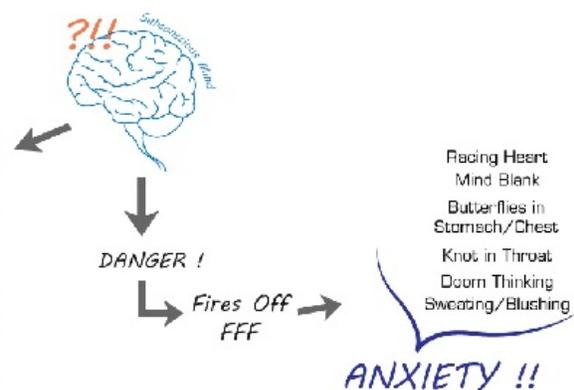
Sound familiar?

Or, when you're in a difficult social situation, do you find yourself doom-thinking, seeing everything through the filter of possible danger, being hyper-alert to whatever you fear might happen?

This is the FFF being activated.

All of these symptoms enable you to fight, run or hide from the danger your subconscious mind perceives. You might recognise these symptoms as what we generally call "anxiety".

Social Situation



Anxiety presents itself in a variety of ways, all of which are very uncomfortable.

As a result, you are acutely aware of the anxiety as the one thing you most want to get rid of. It's at the forefront of your attention.

But what you should know is that the anxiety you experience is only a symptom of a deeper problem.

So What Is the Real Problem?

We've established that anxiety is not the real problem, it is simply the set of feelings and physical symptoms you experience when your FFF is activated.

Let's take a closer look at what happens in a typical FFF activation:

Your subconscious *perceives* a danger or threat and fires off the FFF response. That FFF response sets off feelings of anxiety to prepare you to deal with the immediate threat.

Most social anxiety sufferers are too busy dealing with the aftermath of the FFF response to question what triggered it in the first place.

I invite you to reread the above sentence.

Why?

Because understanding that the cause of the trigger results in the social anxiety symptoms, is the key to the solution.

When your subconscious perceives that you are not safe, it activates your FFF response, which causes your anxiety symptoms to surface.

You can therefore try to get rid of the anxiety symptoms all you want, but until you address what activates your FFF response you'll never completely overcome your social anxiety.

You need to "close the tap" in order to be able to mop the floor dry completely.

The *real problem* is that your subconscious mind *perceives* that you are not safe in social situations.



And since the subconscious mind's main 'job' is to protect you and keep you safe, it's only going to stop firing off the FFF response *once it no longer perceives danger*.



Let's go back to Mark.

Since he had been fighting his social anxiety symptoms, he had been fighting his survival mechanism. And his survival mechanism will ALWAYS be activated when it perceives danger.

It wasn't until he understood and accepted that the anxiety symptoms were a normal response to (perceived) danger, and we eliminated the reasons for why Mark's subconscious perceived danger, that he started to make big improvements and was finally able to overcome his social anxiety.

What Causes This Perception Of Danger?

Let me ask you a question.

Why is it that certain people feel naturally comfortable in social situations, while you are terrified of being disapproved of, look foolish, or get rejected?

What is the difference?

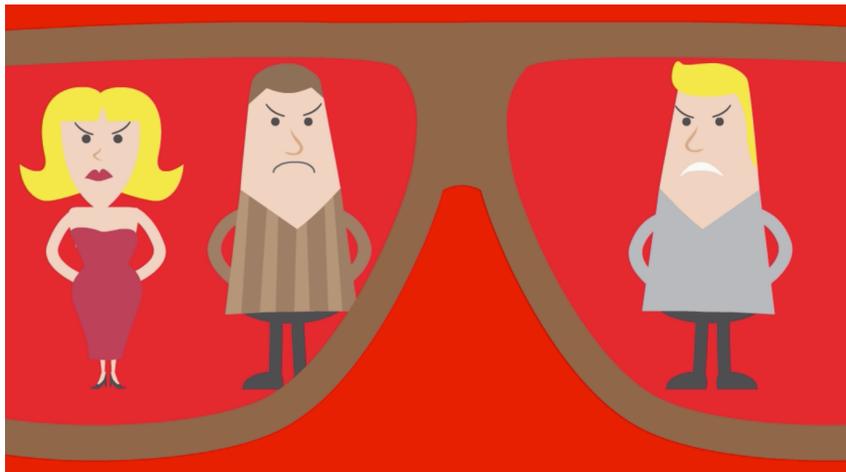
The difference is how we filter the incoming information.

What to one guy is a demeaning laugh aimed at making fun of him is to another guy in the same situation nothing but innocent laughter from someone having a good time.

Their perception filter is what makes all the difference. This perception is determined the beliefs you have. When you have negative limiting beliefs like the below:

- There's something wrong with me
- I'm different
- I'm not good enough
- I have to be perfect to be loved
- People are mean
- People are out to get me
- People don't like me
- I can't trust people
- The world is a dangerous place
- I must get everyone's approval

You might end up perceiving this:



When you filter the world through these negative limiting beliefs, the perception is one of danger, and the FFF will be activated and you experience anxiety.

When you operate from more supportive, positive beliefs like these:

- I accept myself the way I am
- I am unique
- I'm good enough
- I am loved in all my imperfection
- People are nice
- People want to make me feel good
- People like me
- I can trust people
- The world is a safe place
- I approve of myself

How different would you feel?

And how different would you filter the incoming information in a social situation?

You'll likely end up perceiving the same situation like this:



As you filter the world through these positive, supportive beliefs, there is no perception of danger → no FFF-activation → no anxiety.

Imagine how different you would feel if you believed that you're equal to anyone else in the world. And that you're worthy, loveable and deserving.

What it would be like if you were convinced that people are nice, respectful, friendly, and want to be your friend?

The key to overcoming your social anxiety completely is to change the negative limiting beliefs that cause the perception of danger to positive, supportive beliefs.

Change your beliefs and you change your life. Let's get into how to do this.

What Is A Negative Limiting Belief?

Let's first get into the basics. What is a belief?

“A belief is basically just a a thought/idea attached to strong feelings - an idea to which you have become emotionally attached due to conditioning and experiences.”

Examples:

“I'm not good enough”

“people don't like me”

“The world is a dangerous place”

I'd like to categorise beliefs into two categories:

1. Surface beliefs
2. Deeply ingrained beliefs

Surface beliefs, like “socially confident people are arrogant” have little or no emotional evidence. As a result, they are pretty easy to change.

You can use EFT tapping (more on this in a second) while verbalising the belief and as you challenge the validity of the belief (so in the whole world, there is not a single humble person who is also confident in social situations... Really??!) it will typically change quite quickly.

But here we will focus on how to change the deeply ingrained beliefs, as these beliefs take a different approach to permanently let go of.

And, as you change these beliefs you will notice a significant improvement in your life quality.

So what makes a belief deeply ingrained?

A. It *feels* strongly true, even though you might logically not agree with the belief (you can logically *know* you're not less than someone else, yet you can still *feel* inferior)

B. There is strong emotional “evidence” for the belief being true for you (you have experienced the belief to be true; you have been in situations where people didn't like you, for example)

Knowing this, let's understand beliefs a bit more.

Where Do Our Beliefs Come From?

Beliefs are formed as a result of life's experiences and programming.

The things that happened to you in life caused you to form beliefs about what those experiences meant.

You put your finger in the fire and you learned fire is hot.

When you got rejected a lot, the experiences taught you that you're "not good enough" or that you're "not OK".

If you were always blamed for everything, you might believe "I'm a bad kid".

If you were never acknowledged, or always ignored, you could've started to believe you were invisible. Or unimportant.

When you were always criticised, you might believe "there's something wrong with me".

And so on.

Our beliefs can come from many sources.

We can download them from observing our parents interaction with the world, we learn them from the way we are treated repetitively, we pick them up from our peer group, and we've got downloaded beliefs from our culture.

But we can in most cases track these deeply ingrained negative limiting beliefs down to Significant Emotional (traumatic) experiences.

Let's have a look at how this happens.

How Significant Emotional Experiences Create Beliefs

A significant emotional experience is nothing but a painful life experience, which you now remember as a negative memory.



When you experience a Significant Emotional Experience (mini-trauma) you experience such intense negative emotion that it completely overwhelms your ability to cope or integrate the ideas and emotions involved with that experience.

In order to keep you safe from becoming overwhelmed, your subconscious mind in that moment makes a generalised split-second decision about the experience in order to keep you safe.

It registers all the information of this traumatic experience in your memory and additionally, to protect you from having this experience again, your subconscious mind makes certain decisions, which form beliefs, based upon this experience.

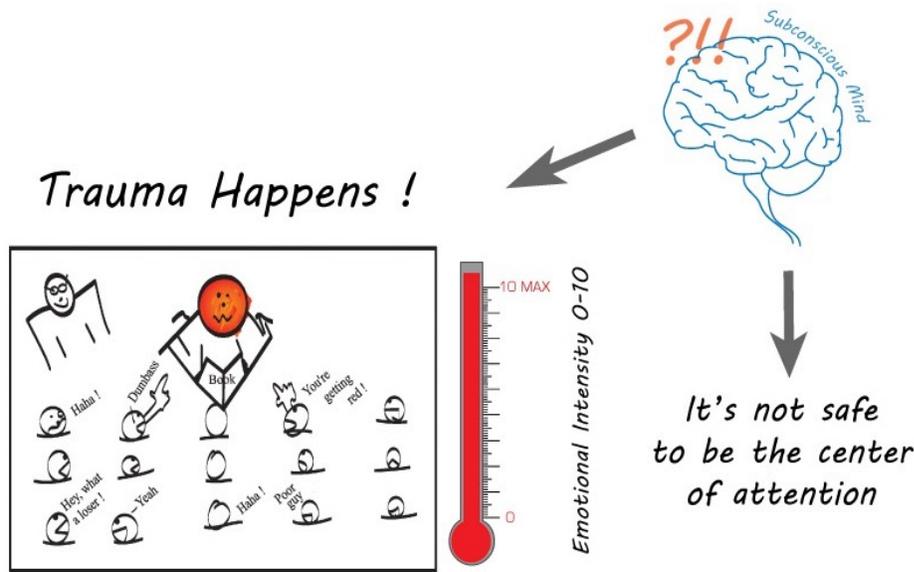
And these negative limiting beliefs form your internal roadmap for life.

Let's look at an example.

Say you are 8 years old and while reading out loud in front of the class you are made fun of and become totally embarrassed.

Because this is traumatic to you, your subconscious makes a split-second decision about what this experience means -in order to protect you from it happening in the future.

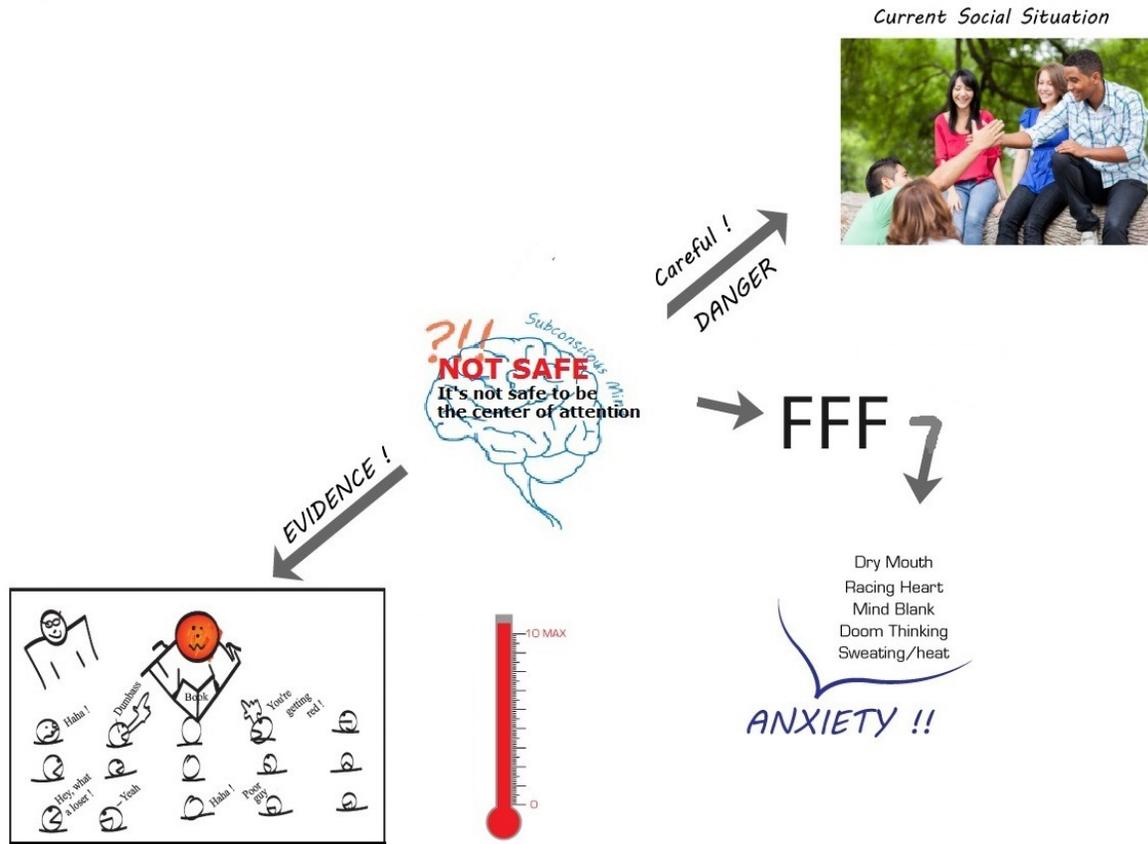
The decision may have been “it’s not safe to be the centre of attention”.



This belief has now become part of your automatic (subconscious) operating system.

Then, as you filter the world through this learned negative limiting belief, your subconscious perceives you to be in danger in a certain social situation where you are the centre of attention.

And because of this perception of danger it acts accordingly by firing off the FFF response, and you experience anxiety (see below image):



Currently, you likely have several negative limiting beliefs that you learned through Significant Emotional Experiences.

And these beliefs cause the perception of danger socially, which leads to the FFF activation, which results in you experiencing anxiety.

So the key is to get rid of these negative limiting beliefs. How do we do this?

How To Get Rid Of A Negative Limiting Belief

A belief is nothing but a thought that *feels* true. And when a negative limiting belief feels true, like “people don’t like me” it disempowers you and makes you perceive danger around people.

Once a belief *no longer feels true*, it’s no longer a belief, but just a thought that has no power over you.

So the key to changing your beliefs is to get rid of the emotional attachment to the belief.

Now as you learned, these beliefs you weren’t born with. You picked them up throughout life. You learned them. And you can “unlearn” them.

And a belief *feels true* because you have reference experiences (emotional evidence) to prove the belief to be true.

For example, if you believe “people don’t like me” you must have *evidence* of this being true.

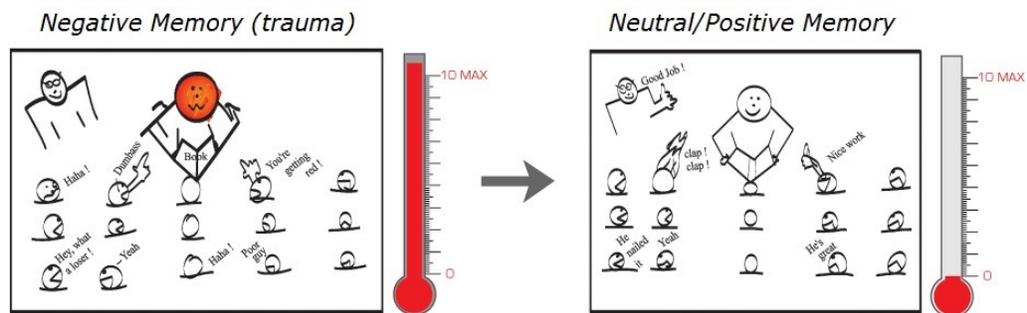
This evidence (evidence in the form of Significant Emotional Experiences or programming) makes it hard to simply change a belief by consciously choosing to believe something more empowering.

For example, it’s hard to convince yourself to believe that “people are nice and friendly” when you have *emotional evidence* to the contrary.

When you affirm to yourself “people are nice and friendly” your brain goes “uhh, I don’t think so, remember when Johnny pulled down your pants and ridiculed at you? And remember when those girls picked on you?”

When you believe that people don’t like you, you must have had Significant Emotional Experiences in life (emotional evidence) where you learned this to be true.

By using EFT (more about EFT in just a second) you can neutralise the negative emotions from these traumatic life experiences. In doing so you destroy the evidence.



Without emotional evidence that people don't like you, the belief no longer *feels* true to you and it no longer affects you; you have eliminated the belief.

Let's look at what this EFT tapping is.

Emotional Freedom Techniques (Tapping)

In a nutshell, EFT tapping is a psychological form of acupuncture, but instead of using needles you tap with the tips of your fingers on specific acupressure points on the body.

When you do this while focused in a problem (a thought, memory, or feeling) the negative emotions connected to the problem start to dissolve and eventually release.

While it might sound both weird and too good to be true if this is your first time hearing about it, I assure you it works. And it works powerfully.

EFT is scientifically proven to be effective. At the bottom of this article I share some links to the latest research.

EFT has helped me overcome my social anxiety, and I've successfully used it as my main coaching technique in assisting socially phobic clients in overcoming their social anxiety since 2009.

This technique is incredible and can change your life for the better when you learn how to apply it properly.

How To Overcome Social Anxiety Completely

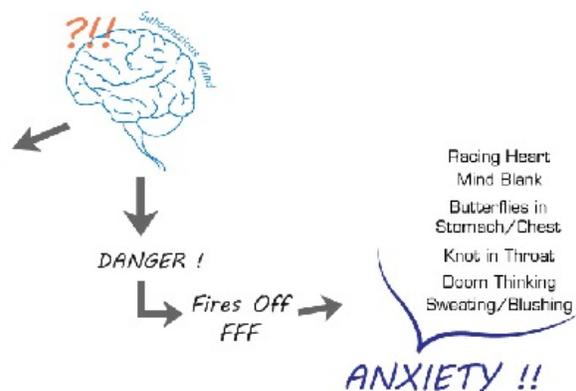
I have give you a lot to digest in this article. Let's summarise this and break it down into easily manageable steps.

1. Realise that your social anxiety is not the main problem. The social anxiety is a symptom of a problem. The real problem is the *perception* that you are not safe.



2. Because of this perception of danger your subconscious mind fires off the FFF response.

Social Situation

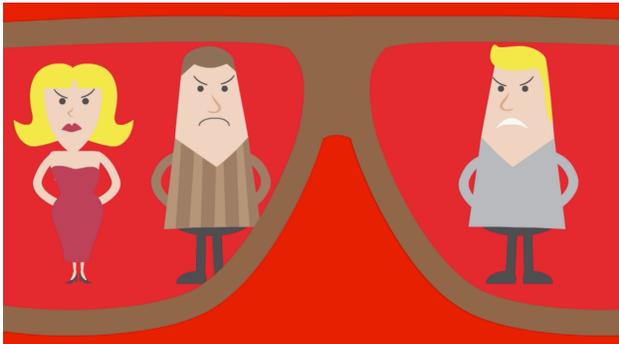


3. Since your subconscious mind believes this response keeps you safe it is resistant to letting go of the response and will sabotage your conscious efforts to beat your anxiety.

Trying to beat your anxiety is trying to beat your survival mechanism; it won't work!



4. The perception of danger is caused by the negative limiting beliefs that you learned throughout life.



5. In order to feel safe in social situations you need to overcome these negative limiting beliefs.

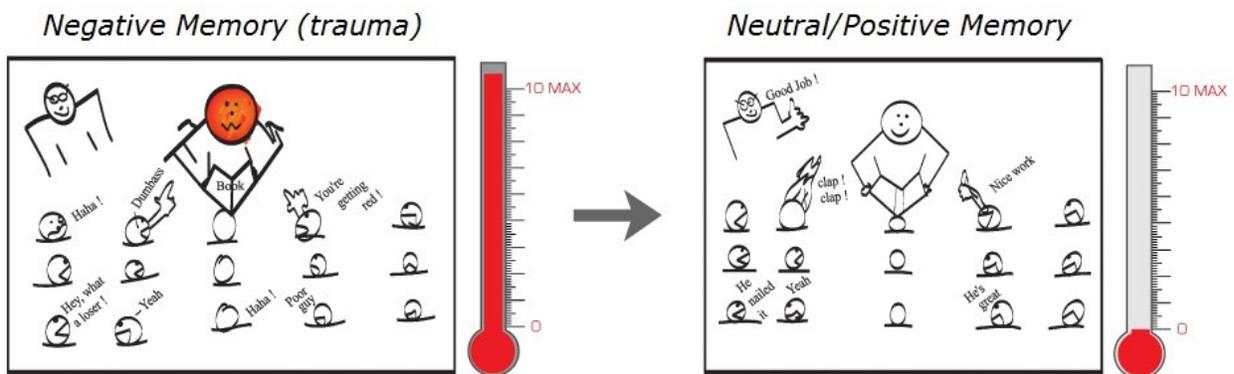
- ~~There's something wrong with me~~
- ~~I'm different~~
- ~~I'm not good enough~~
- ~~I have to be perfect to be loved~~
- ~~People are mean~~
- ~~People are out to get me~~
- ~~People don't like me~~
- ~~I can't trust people~~
- ~~The world is a dangerous place~~
- ~~I must get everyone's approval~~

6. These beliefs feel true because you have reference experiences (evidence) of them being true; Significant Emotional Experiences (traumas) where you learned these beliefs.



7. You collapse these negative limiting beliefs by eliminating the evidence of them being true.

You do this by using EFT tapping to release the negative emotions from earlier traumas in life where you learned these limiting beliefs.



8. As you get rid of these negative limiting beliefs that cause the perception of danger, there will no longer be a need to activate your survival mechanism. When you're safe, there is no FFF response. No FFF → No anxiety.



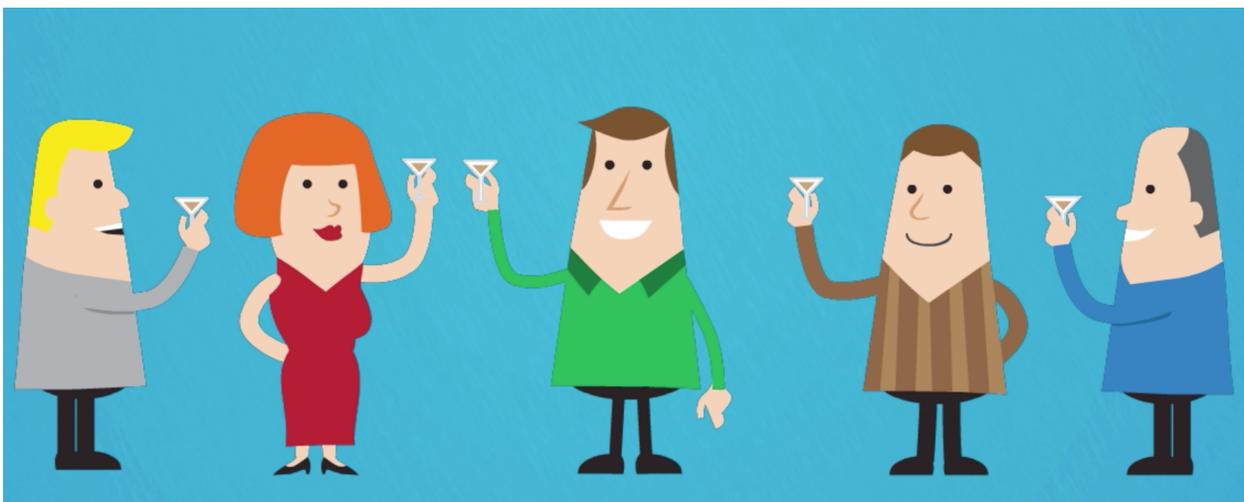
9. As you eliminate the negative limiting beliefs that cause the perception of danger one by one, old stuck emotions of shame, fear, anger and guilt are being released as you heal these old wounds (Significant Emotional Experiences) where you learned the beliefs.

Slowly but surely you find yourself feeling more confident, calmer, and better about yourself.

Your self esteem rises. Your self acceptance deepens. You're less emotionally reactive. Your self-consciousness starts to dissolve. You're more easy going. You're becoming more comfortable being yourself.

Your overall intensity of anxiety continues to decrease as it becomes safer to be you in more and more situations. And your anxiety symptoms will appear in less and less social situations.

Over time, as you persist, you get to feel totally safe being yourself. Now you can finally express yourself freely, connect and make friends easily, and create the relationships you want and live your life to the full.



Final Words Of Perspective

First of all, there is nothing wrong with you. You have a challenge with anxiety to overcome, possibly a big one.

However, *YOU* are *NOT* the challenge.

By continuing to take the right steps to overcome your challenge you will not only grow tremendously, get rid of painful emotions you experience daily, experience more freedom and joy, but I believe you can fully overcome your social anxiety.

That's the good news.

The less good news might be that this is not a quick-fix.

You can get results really quickly, but you won't be anxiety-free overnight. Progress overnight is possible, feeling a lot of relief and improvement in a few days is common, and typically most people see a reduction in their social anxiety within a few weeks.

The common belief is that it's really hard, if not impossible to overcome your social anxiety completely. That is true, when you use an approach that doesn't work!

From experience I can tell you that you can completely overcome your social anxiety.

People underestimate how quickly their life quality starts to improve once they start applying EFT in the right way.

Here's what I've found, after coaching socially phobic clients for over 5 years: It will take you some serious time, effort and dedication to overcome this.

BUT, it can be done. And by applying EFT it doesn't have to be hard. Relief happens really quickly. And you can start feeling better in days of applying it in the right way.

All it takes is the right resources, effort, time and persistence.

In this article I have given you a basic understanding on how to go about this. Below are the various other ways I can serve you more.

Continue Our Relationship: How I Can Help You More

Here are the best ways I can currently help you:

1. The best way I can help you is 1 on 1 Skype coaching sessions. Here are the details:

www.social-anxiety-solutions.com/social-anxiety-coaching/

2. The second best way is you working through my Social Confidence System.

This is a 12-Step EFT-based system where I guide you via articles, audios, and subtitled videos through your uniquely uncovered social anxiety challenges.

I've created this system as a result of insights from both my own journey, and from the insights in working with socially phobic clients since 2009.

I started to see more and more patterns in what we're dealing with, and found that the solutions I used for myself and for my clients were easy and simple and got consistent results.

I realised they could be recreated and put into a system. Things that worked over and over with my clients I've made into easy exercises and put it into the system.

It's since been tested. And refined. And tested again. I've put 1000's of hours of work into the system, and I've been dedicated to improving and optimising it since 2011.

In this system I guide you step-by-step to uncovering your challenges, and you follow me on-screen to release your challenges one by one.

This system is my life's work, and I'm convinced you will be able to gain massive relief, and start releasing your social anxiety step-by-step. This really works powerfully, for most people (it's not for everyone, see the page for more info).

For details on this:

<http://www.social-anxiety-solutions.com/social-confidence-system/>

Now not everyone can afford 1 on 1 work, or even to purchase my Social Confidence System. Below are some high-value free resources I have for you.

1. The Social Anxiety Solutions Podcast Show (May 1st 2015 in Itunes)

In my weekly podcast show I interview leading psychologists, healers, coaches and psychotherapists from both the Western traditional and the Eastern energy psychology world.

Each week we focus on one social anxiety related topic and we bring you the best techniques, strategies, stories of inspiration, resources and solutions to overcome your social anxiety once and for all.

2. My Youtube Channel

Here I bring you a new video each week (Thursday) with my latest tips, techniques, strategies and resources to overcome your social anxiety.

3. My weekly newsletter

Here I communicate with you about the latest and best solutions, share articles I've found useful, give away free 1 on 1 sessions each month, and hope to continue building a relationship with you and assist you in overcoming your social anxiety.

4. My Facebook page

Here I really aim to assist you in creating a mindset.

Through sharing resources I find helpful, and by giving my perspective on interesting, funny, or insightful social media pieces, I hope to both entertain you, and get you into the mindset of effortless social confidence.

If you have any questions, feedback, or suggestions to help me spread my message, you can contact me directly at:

<http://www.social-anxiety-solutions.com/contact/>

EFT Research

1. An excellent review of research by David Feinstein published in Review of General Psychology:

Feinstein, D. (2012). Acupoint stimulation in treating psychological disorders: Evidence of efficacy. Review of General

Psychology, 16, 364-380. doi:10.1037/a0028602

Download pdf from:

http://innersource.net/ep/images/stories/downloads/Acupoint_Stimulation_Research_Review.pdf

2. A review by Dawson Church published in the journal Psychology-

Church, D. (2013). Clinical EFT as an evidence-based practice for the treatment of psychological and physiological conditions. Psychology, 4(8), 645-654. doi:10.4236/psych.2013.48092

See the abstract and download a pdf version at:

http://www.eftuniverse.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=10957

3. The research section of ACEP - Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology provides a summary of all published studies on Energy Psychology:

<http://energypsych.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=5>

4. Research section of EFT Universe provides summary of all published studies on EFT:

http://www.eftuniverse.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=18&Itemid=21