

Significant Emotional Events (S.E.E.'s):

A Significant Emotional Event is nothing more than a fancy name for a negative life experience, or a negative memory.



In this article I am going to go in detail on what S.E.E.'s are and why uncovering them, and treating them with EFT is so important.

Why Are These “S.E.E.’s” So Important?

Uncovering the S.E.E.’s related to your social anxiety is so important because these negative life experiences (S.E.E.’s) are at the root of your current social anxiety disorder.

They are the building blocks that the walls (the walls are the negative limiting beliefs) of your social anxiety dungeon are made of.

While negative limiting beliefs can also be formed through cultural/societal/familial programming, most often they are learned through negative life experiences (S.E.E.’s).

Let me explain...

So we are born and we start to have experiences. Some are positive, some negative, some neutral.

The neutral ones we don't remember as there was no emotional intensity attached to them (try to remember what you ate 3 weeks ago on a Wednesday for lunch... You don't remember unless it is routine or there was something special going on which had emotional relevance to you).

The experiences that did have a lot of emotion to them we *do remember*.

Some of these experiences where you experienced intense negative emotion became lodged in your subconscious mind and **these old traumatic memories get triggered again in our day to day lives by situations that remind your subconscious of these earlier traumas.**

When this happens, our subconscious perceives you to be in the same situation as you were during the painful experience, and you therefore end up experiencing the same negative emotions you felt *back then*.

S.E.E.'s are basically (mini) traumas that get re-triggered in daily life.

According to Dr Scaer, a leader in the field of research on trauma, we experience trauma when we are faced with a threat to our well-being, our survival. And that doesn't have to be trauma like rape, torture, kidnapping etc.

It can be a threat to your identity.

It can be something like losing a job, being ignored by your dad when you are little, getting ridiculed or bullied in school, etc.

It's a situation that you perceived to be traumatic combined with a state of helplessness where you had no control over that event.

What happens when we experience something that we perceive as being traumatic, we freeze. And we store the trauma in our subconscious.

Then every time something similar happens to us in the future we get the same emotions back (shame/fear/embarrassment/humiliation/anger/etc) that we felt during the traumatic experience (S.E.E.).

Say that you for example got bullied in class about you having big ears and you felt humiliated. And due to your emotional state at the time, your beliefs gathered throughout life, and other factors, it was traumatic for you. You froze, and all the details of the experience got locked inside your mind.

This S.E.E. is now lodged in your subconscious mind.

If you're then in a future situation where people are talking about getting their ears pierced and they ask you if you ever thought of doing so, your subconscious mind might perceive this situation as similar to the one where you got ridiculed and you will start to get that same feeling of humiliation back that you felt back then.

This is because your subconscious generalises experiences, and it perceives this current situation to be similar to the traumatic experience (S.E.E.) where they made fun of you.

The negative feelings from the negative experiences we had in the past (S.E.E.'s) get triggered by experiences in our current life.

Most of the negative emotions we experience in our day to day life, especially the more intense ones, are actually just old S.E.E.'s that get triggered.

Therefore, when you use the tapping in the way I'll describe to you, and you release the trauma from a S.E.E., those feelings from *that specific experience* can no longer get triggered in your day to day life.

You will need to treat the earliest, most intense, and latest S.E.E.'s (luckily you don't have to clear all S.E.E.'s of your life! There is a generalisation process that happens -more later on this-). As you start doing this, you will start feeling more and more calm as less and less things trigger you.

Plus, each time you clear a S.E.E. you get rid of one of the building blocks of the walls of your social anxiety dungeon.

Negative Limiting Beliefs Trigger Your Social Anxiety

As you learned earlier, you experience anxiety in social situations because your subconscious mind perceives you to not be safe in social situations (and responds by firing off the FFF response to this perceived danger).

And this perception of danger is the result of negative limiting beliefs that you have about yourself, others and the world.

These beliefs are the walls of your social anxiety dungeon. The S.E.E.'s are the building blocks, or the bricks of these walls.

Changing these negative limiting beliefs is the main key to overcoming your social anxiety.

Because once your subconscious mind no longer perceives these (social) situations as dangerous, it won't fire off the (FFF) anxiety response because it won't be necessary anymore.

By experiencing (mini) traumas (S.E.E.'s - negative life experiences) you learned most of these beliefs.

By neutralising these S.E.E.'s you are destroying the evidence that your subconscious has for holding on to these negative limiting beliefs.

Every time you neutralise a S.E.E. you are eliminating one building block, or one brick, of some of the walls of your social anxiety dungeon.

Important To Know When Using Finding S.E.E.'s

One of the main key steps to become anxiety-free is to clear the past traumatic events (S.E.E.'s) from which we formed the negative limiting beliefs we have.

And for EFT to be most effective it is important to:

Treat the earliest time you can remember a certain S.E.E.

This because the younger we were the more vulnerable we are to trauma.

And when you have 50 memories of rejection, it is *the oldest memory* (where you were the youngest) that holds the original trauma.

The earliest memory is the one where the trauma was learned and when that one is released successfully, the S.E.E.'s that happened thereafter are much more easily released as well.

If you for example are looking for a S.E.E. where you felt rejected it is most beneficial if you come up with the first time you can remember feeling rejected.

So it's much better to come up with the time you felt rejected when you were 6 as opposed to a time you felt rejected a few days/weeks/months/years ago.

By going for the oldest memory we find out where you **learned** the feeling of rejection. Once we have that S.E.E. we can treat it and 'unlearn' the feeling of rejection.

So look for the earliest memory (S.E.E.) you can find when I advise you to look for a S.E.E.

There is one exception to clearing the earliest memory: when you have a highly charged trauma.

When there is a S.E.E. that is not the earliest, but has so much emotional intensity to it that you can't think of anything earlier, treat it first.

When this happens, we first want to treat that highly charged experience before we start looking for the earliest experience.

Relax about this. When you look for the earliest S.E.E., simply go with the first thing that comes to mind. Sometimes, the earliest time is not available to your conscious mind yet. And when you ask yourself of the earliest time you can remember, you come up with an experience you think is not the earliest time. That's OK. Your subconscious mind gives you what you need to work on first.

Trust the process.

Your subconscious might give you an experience at age 13 first that was really painful. It will be the earliest thing you can remember. Only after you have cleared this experience (or while you are clearing it...) you will be able to remember the earliest experience when you were 8 years old.

Trust your subconscious.

An example:

John has a fear of rejection. I ask him to bring up the feeling of rejection.

Once he feels that rejection (by imagining getting rejected for example) I ask him to go with the first thing that comes to mind as I ask him when he felt that for the first time.

Now the earliest time John felt this (I later find out...) is when his dad went to sea and rejected his goodbye hug. He was only 5 years old here.

However, when I ask John the question, the first thing that comes to his is when he was 9 years old, had broken a window, and his dad was furiously angry with him.

Because this event was so powerful in a negative way for John, we first had to neutralise this S.E.E. (or at least start tapping on it, as sometimes the earlier experience pops into your mind when you are working on a specific experience) before we could move on to the earliest memory.

Whatever the subconscious brings up first when we ask it a question is what should be treated first. But in general we *almost* always need to clear the earliest memory we have as this is the memory where the original trauma is held.

Now negative memories (S.E.E.'s) can literally be anything. And it does not have to be related to social situations. It can be something really traumatic, or something that seems rather insignificant at first.

The reason why it is a S.E.E. is that it has been traumatic for you because it was too much for you to handle *in that moment in time* (again, as a small child things that seem insignificant to you now as an adult can be a BIG DEAL to a 5 year old...) given the resources, beliefs and mental state you had. It could have been something simple such as a look from someone, or a frown.

It's about what was traumatic to YOU. So don't judge what comes up as "no big deal and I shouldn't have been upset about that". If you got upset, you did. And you should treat it. Be sensitive to the way you felt.

“Big T” and “Small t” Trauma

There are two main types of trauma: Big T and small t trauma.

Big T trauma can involve a single event or a chronic, repetitive series of events. They are the kind of events that would be hard to handle without some sort of emotional distress.

Here are some examples:

- War
- Disasters
- Rape
- Childhood sexual or physical abuse
- Car wrecks
- Crime victimisation
- Witnessing violence or death
- Domestic Violence

Small t traumas are the ones that are harder to recognise, but they impact you in your day to day life big time. When they happened to you, others may have considered them to be no big deal. What you experienced as traumatic might not be traumatic for someone else, and vice versa. The small t's are the daily hurts that occur across time and build on each other.

Small t traumas are the ones that trigger you, and once they're triggered you're reliving the emotions from that trauma. We focus in the SCS on uncovering these, neutralising them, and moving past them.

Here are some examples:

- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect
- Failure Experiences
- Phobia related experiences
- Losses
- Stress at work or school
- Lack of empathy from others
- Minor accidents

And then there is relational trauma (this is copied from Dr. Caudill's website who explains this perfectly):

Relational trauma can be either Big T or Little t trauma that occurred within the context of a relationship and is now triggered by the interactions you have in your current relationships.

Relational trauma that is very intense, occurs for long periods of time, or happened in childhood has a bigger impact and sets the stage for life struggles with depression, anxiety, stress, and relationship and marriage problems.

The younger the age at the time of the relational trauma, the greater the potential impact due to the effect on the attachment, or emotional bond, with the primary caregiver. This is because the quality of attachment actually affects the developing brain of the child.

With a healthy attachment the child comes to expect a sense of security, being valued, and enjoyment from relationships; whereas, with an unhealthy attachment the child comes to expect insecurity, being devalued, and stress from relationships.

These early attachment experiences begin to lay the foundation for our future self-esteem and how to be social with others. It's where we begin to learn about interpersonal boundaries and what our role in a relationship is. It's where we learn how to recognise our social and emotional needs, and how to fulfil them.

Whether it's with the primary caregiver, family members, teachers, friends, or romantic or marriage partners, it's in relationships that we form beliefs about ourselves and our world. When those relationships are infused with Big T or Little t trauma, our belief systems become distorted.

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In the SCS we focus on uncovering these relational traumas, and we aim to neutralise the traumas, and alter the beliefs learned from them.

Now we mainly focus on uncovering small t traumas here. If you ever find yourself uncovering a big T trauma, I suggest you keep tapping continuously as eventually the emotion will calm down. But this can be intense, as you relive the emotions from the experience.

If you have had a, or multiple big T traumas in your life, I recommend working with a therapist who's experienced in releasing trauma.

List Down Your S.E.E.'s

Through the Social Confidence System you will do various exercises to uncover key S.E.E.'s that have led to loss of self esteem, self-acceptance, and sense of safety.

I strongly suggest you keep track of all the S.E.E.'s that you uncover and work on so that you know what you have done, and you can see the progress that you're making.

I recommend you create a document and you store it on your computer/ mobile device, or you take a notebook and you write them down there.

There is a set amount of key S.E.E.'s that you have to treat. Every S.E.E. you deal with gets you one step closer to where you want to be. It's inspiring to see you're progressing, and by having a list you can see what you have already treated, and you can also start to see patterns within the S.E.E.'s as you move forward.

Create a document now, and then write down a few S.E.E.'s you already can remember. Don't worry about creating a comprehensive list now, just write down a few that come to mind immediately. The rest you will uncover automatically as you do the exercises in the SCS.

The Generalisation Effect

Throughout the SCS you will be neutralising many S.E.E.'s.

Luckily, you won't have to treat all S.E.E.'s you've ever experienced in your life!

A generalisation effect takes place when you treat 5-10-20 S.E.E.'s around a specific theme.

When you work on a feeling of rejection for example, and you treat a 5-10 S.E.E.'s the general feeling of rejection diminishes A LOT. And it can disappear altogether with persistence.

I recommend eventually (after having worked through the SCS) treating ALL the S.E.E.'s you can remember, as the more you treat, the more naturally happy and confident you will feel.

However, for now, simply stick to the instructions at each step of the SCS as it helps you uncover specific S.E.E.'s that are contributing to your social anxiety.

When you find a S.E.E., give it a short name (examples: Harry made fun of my virginity, I got told I was incompetent by my boss, Ramona rejected me in the club, The teacher called me a dumbass, Tony slapped me in the face, I blushed when Jenny mocked me etc.).

Check the steps for writing down the memories below, and you know all you need to know about S.E.E.'s for now :-)

The Steps:

1. When you find a negative memory do NOT actually imagine the S.E.E. in vivid detail. But instead, GUESS on a scale from 0-10 (0 = no emotion at all, 10 = most intense emotion possible) how intense emotion you would experience IF you were to imagine it.

A guess is simply that, the first thing that comes to mind, go with that. Again, please do NOT imagine it yet (you don't want to traumatize yourself).

2. If this S.E.E. were a movie that you would play in your mind, guess how long it would be. It should be a singular event. Something that, back when it happened for real, did not last longer than anything between a second or a few hours.

IF you were to run the movie in your mind in the here and now, it should be no longer than 3 minutes. Again, do NOT run the movie in your mind

NOTE: If it's a memory that happened over days, weeks, months etc -an example would be "being bullied"- it is not one single S.E.E., but multiple S.E.E.'s. In this case, use the "Bundling Baggage Bundles" article and the "Bundling Baggage" video to get rid of all of them at once and/or treat the most intense or the earliest S.E.E. from that bundle as well.

3. Give the S.E.E./movie/memory/incident a name (If your guess in step 2 was higher than an 7 out of 10, give the movie a vague name. So rather "4th of July picnic" than "Uncle John molested me")

Summary:

1. Negative Limiting Beliefs are the walls of your social anxiety dungeon. They are the reason you don't feel safe socially. By changing the beliefs you will end up feeling safe socially. And that is the end of your anxiety.
2. Negative memories (S.E.E.'s) are the building blocks of these beliefs. By eliminating these one by one you are literally breaking down the walls of your dungeon. You are eliminating the evidence of the negative limiting beliefs being true. In doing so, you are getting rid of the reasons as to why your subconscious mind believes you are not safe socially.
3. While uncovering S.E.E.'s, it is most powerful to clear the oldest memories: The S.E.E.'s where you were the youngest.
4. Sometimes there is a S.E.E. that is so intense that you need to first clear that one (in case of a Big T trauma, you should consider working with an experienced therapist who can help you move past it), or tap down some of the emotional trauma of it, before you can treat the earliest S.E.E.
5. TRUST YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS MIND! Whatever comes to mind is what should be treated first. Relax about this. Forcing yourself to find the core initial event is counter productive. Being easy about it, and going with what your subconscious gives you is the quickest way to healing and empowerment.
6. When you find a S.E.E., make sure it's a single memory, not a series of memories. So a memory of something that happened which lasted between a second to a few hours only.
7. When you find a S.E.E. don't vividly imagine it, but simply name it (the time when...) and GUESS how intense you would get on a 0-10 emotional scale IF YOU WERE to visualise it.
8. There is a generalisation effect that takes place after clearing many related S.E.E.'s.