



Shyness: What It Is, What To Do About It

Philip G. Zimbardo

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Dr. Philip G. Zimbardo's ground-breaking studies have found that there are more than 84 million shy people in America today, including such "secretly shy" celebrities as Carol Burnett, Barbara Walters, and Johnny Carson.

In this best-selling book, Dr. Zimbardo analyzes shyness with a personal understanding of the emotions involved. He then presents advice, exercises, and encouragement to help shy people strengthen their social skills and their self-confidence. If you're troubled by shyness, or love someone who is, reading *Shyness* can open new worlds.

Shyness: What It Is, What To Do About It Details

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Carol says

This is an extraordinarily popular book by noted psychologist Philip Zimbardo (of the student "prisoner" experiments and the introductory psychology textbook). I would have given it four or five stars when it first came out. It is still eminently readable as a self-help book but its scientific and theoretical basis is quite dated. Dr. Zimbardo, in the 1970's, developed a questionnaire that he administered to thousands of people worldwide began a self-help program for self-described "shy" students to improve their relations with others. The self-help part of the book is still quite readable and useful; an interesting feature is interviews with celebrities such as Carol Burnett, who said she felt quite "shy" singing a "straight" rather than a "character" song.

However, the theoretical parts of this book are mired in 1970's fads such as encounter groups, communal living, and behavior modification. While some benefit might be found in these trends, it is nevertheless true that a behavior found in one-half to one-third of "normal" adult samples is not necessarily a "pathology" that needs "fixing." More troubling is the suggestion that cultural norms in countries such as Japan make them breeding grounds for pathological shyness; such a viewpoint seems ethnocentric. Also lacking in this work are evidence from later studies using genetic mapping and brain scans that have presented a clearer picture of the influences of genes and prenatal and early life experiences in shaping the neural substrate underlying adult differences in temperament and behavior.

"Shyness" is still a worthwhile read but needs to be read together with newer works with updated information.

Geri says

This book was a godsend and literally changed my life! I read the earlier version of it back in the '80s. I was painfully shy as a child & teenager. I read the book, did the exercises & followed Zimbardo's recommendations. I was able to deal with my shyness. I won't say I completely overcame it because it seems to lurk in the back of my mind, but I still use the skills I learned whenever I feel shyness getting in the way of my perceptions of myself & my life. Because of this book, I became interested in psychology which led to a counseling career in the fields of criminal justice, domestic violence & now mental health crisis work. I credit Dr. Zimbardo as one of the people who has transformed my life forever. Even if someone does not suffer from shyness, this book will provide a valuable lesson in human behavior.

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Agnes097 says

Po ksi??k? si?gn??am z polecenia przyjaciela. Autora ju? znam, wi?c nie obawia?am si?, czy b?dzie wystarczaj?co pomocny. Spodziewa?am si?, ?e zrozumie? mo?liwie ca?e zagadnienie i liczy?am, ?e b?dzie sposób dla mnie, ?eby radzi? sobie z nie?mia?o?ci?. Czy by?o tak? By?o. Sposoby s?, okazuje si?, ?e cz??? z nich sama mo?na powiedzie?, ?e praktykowa?am i nak?ada?am na siebie przedtem.
Ksi??ka otworzy?a mi oczy na kilka wa?nych aspektów, jakich nie dostrzega?am przedtem, a teraz b?d? mia?a na uwadze. Dobrze ukierunkowuje, daje nico do my?lenia. Pozosta?o teraz zwalczy? mo?liwie nie?mia?o??, która uprzykrza mi ?ycie sukcesywnie, ale jestem dobrej my?li i wierz?, ?e dam rad?. Styl pisania jest bardzo przyjemny w odczycie. Ksi??ka sama jest wci?gaj?ca.
Jedynie w moim wydaniu widz? literówki, na co jestem uczulona, ale si? tego nie czepiam, bo to nie wp?ywa na moje oceny zwykłe.
S?owem: Polecam. :)

Valeria Vozzheva says

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Shyanne Diaz says

This book is a bit outdated; one chapter refers to calling the phone operator to get your foot in the door with talking to people. It stood out and made me smile. There is also outdated research. But if you look past the fact of the book being old, one will benefit with reading this book. I am a shy person because of the recent situations I find myself in. This book has helped me realize just that: people who are shy are not unworthy people, just people struggling to get through a point in their life, a point needing to realize that he is better

than the shy personality. This book is filled with many exercises for "understanding yourself" and "understanding your shyness." Even though it is outdated I would still recommend it to anyone trying to overcome their shyness, to anyone who knows someone dealing with shyness, or parents and teachers who have shy children.

Sarah Elma'Alawy says

I think it's a good book

Alireza says

I became tempted to read this book after Dr. Zimbardo connected the prisoner-guard relationship in the Stanford Prison Experiment to the outer-inner self. In *Lucifer Effect*, he proposed that our subconscious-self may be playing the role of a correctional officer that criticizes us for every private thought, permanently paralyzing us in the time for taking actions and making us obedient to its authority in judgment and decision, which in turn leads to a condition known as shyness!

Even though the book was written some 30 years ago, it is oddly relevant to the current social norms and does not feel outdated. In the book, we first learn about what shyness is, and how it impacts the individuals and why it should be addressed at all levels of the social hierarchy, starting from the self to the entire nation. We then learn about the practices that can help people overcome their shyness.

Sarah Arlen says

I am a big fan of Dr. Philip Zimbardo since having read *The Lucifer Effect*, and this book, while not as grand or up-to-date in scope, is a good reminder of the way society functions and how we, as individuals, function in it. The initial reason for me picking it up, besides having loved his other book, was because I feel shyness as a French speaker, and needed something to trigger the skills I've been good at most of my life into re-emerging in a foreign tongue and society. Now a little out of date because of its time period '80's references and lingo, there are some passages which remain important and even predict the situation I find America, in particular, in today. Zimbardo talks very pointedly about the dangers of having a "shy" society where people would rather be falsely protected and self-involved than counter any arguments or even offer discussion with anyone in any type of authority position (like the government) and what horrible ramifications this shyness could have, such as war under false pretenses with no people's voice to oppose it...Hum. It may have been written in the 1980's, but it is, in its best moments, completely timeless.

Chris Tempel says

[rambling, partial take] i like the idea of an expert-- not someone afflicted with the disease, but attached to it nonetheless (professionally, in this case)-- giving critical thoughts on shyness. ive spent decades trying to embrace it, live in it, justify it, find some artistic, social, or literary merit to it but when the day is done I too want it to just go away. the merits: it has sometimes helped me find friends that are less status-seeking, more

into books, more thoughtful, less into the drunken idiot scene. the downside: it can be arrogant and i dont have connection to many people because i just dont know what to say. it only runs in my family because we are a bunch with relationship & social issues, albeit relationship & social issues that are different from those that tend to misrepresent themselves. nothing is remarkable if it doesn't adhere to strict guidelines that make me comfortable, and that's a burden.

Jenny says

I had the old version, which was published in 1977. The examples were very dated and used quotes from 70's movie stars. Perhaps the new version would be better. Still, a pretty good book. After reading this, I decided that, for the most part, I quit being shy about 10 years ago. I am going to quit calling myself shy.

Valerie says

I think this is the book I read, except I remember the edition having a green background.

In common with most self-help books, this book is very good at delineating a problem; not so good with solutions. It doesn't help to tell shy people they've just got to pull up their socks (what socks?) and be more assertive. As with most social conditions, there're the usual number of people who really haven't examined their situation. But most shy people are introspective by nature, and they know very well what benefits AND costs shyness has. They're about as likely to be able just to stop being shy as I am to be able to walk across a grating I can see through. Intellectually, I know that the grating (probably) won't collapse; but my gut won't hear the 'still, small voice of reason', and the gut can induce panic. Which do you think will triumph, reason or panic?

Amani Haak says

This book contains the best information to understand and overcome shyness. I think it is a must read for all who suffer from shyness.

Mela says

This book was priceless for me. I was very shy (I am still a little) and this book helped me very much.

Sergey Grinev says

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