

**Interviewee: Xuanjin Li**

**Background:**

**Marriage and Family Counselor**

**Satir Psychotherapist**

**Mentored by Dr. Lim Wen Cai from Malaysia**

**1. What do you think are the causes of shyness?**

The causes of shyness can be divided into two parts. One part is related to psychological factors, such as the social environment. Certain social situations and interpersonal relationships can trigger shyness in some people. For example, when we are pointed out in a social setting or need to give a public speech, the fear of not performing well or being judged by others can lead to feelings of shyness. The other part is related to biology, such as genetic factors or neurobiological influences. These factors fall under the realm of science rather than psychology, but they can indeed contribute to shyness in some individuals. For instance, certain genes may be associated with dopamine or serotonin in the body, and these substances are related to emotions and behavior patterns. Consequently, this can make some people naturally inclined to feel shy.

**2. Most people believe that shyness is usually seen in introverts. Is there a necessary connection between shyness and introversion?**

Personally, I don't believe there is a necessary connection. Shyness is an emotional reaction, while introversion is a personality trait. Extroverted people can also experience shyness, but in reality, introverted individuals are more likely to have shy responses.

**3. Do you think shyness is a manifestation of social anxiety?**

Shyness is a milder emotional response within the spectrum of social anxiety. Social anxiety is a broader and more intense emotional experience that can involve a wider range of scenarios. Overall, while both shyness and social anxiety involve emotional reactions in social situations, they differ in degree and scope of impact. Shyness may be temporary, whereas social anxiety is more persistent and intense and can potentially affect a person's daily life and social functioning.

**4. Extreme shyness or social anxiety has already affected the normal lives of some people. What methods could improve their situation?**

Professional psychological counseling and therapy.

**5. I have referenced cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) in psychology and want to help people with shyness overcome their fears through role-playing in different situational scenarios. Is this a feasible intervention?**

It is not recommended for non-professionals to attempt this. However, those with mild shyness who are willing to cooperate can try. For individuals with more serious issues, it is still advisable to seek help from professionals. In simulated scenarios, it is also not recommended to involve strangers. From a professional standpoint, involving familiar people is less likely to cause further harm to the person being treated, making the experience safer. This approach is responsible and considerate to the person in therapy.

**6. I want to try both individual and group therapy. Which do you think is more suitable for me to simulate and record in a non-professional setting?**

Group therapy is more suitable; individual therapy requires higher professional expertise, whereas in group therapy, you can act as an observer and simultaneously record observations more conveniently.

**7. In what kind of environment do you think situational simulation therapy would be suitable, where participants would feel more comfortable?**

In a calm and secure environment, individuals seeking to express their emotions naturally prefer a setting that feels safe. As an observer in scenario simulations, you are naturally involved alongside other volunteers or participants. This can create a sense of unity for the person being treated. External disturbances at this stage can impact their ability to genuinely express their emotions.

**8. Do you think I should have different people role-play in the same scenario, or the same people role-play in different scenarios to better help me test whether this intervention is effective?**

You can try role-playing with different people in the same scenario, or experiment with both methods.

**9. In specific practical operations, what aspects do you think need attention to facilitate my recording of their emotional changes?**

Feel free to stop at any point during the activity to check in with the person being treated about how they're feeling and if they're experiencing any relief. Ask them what would make them more comfortable moving forward. Try not to disrupt the entire activity too much; instead, let the person being treated lead based on their own feelings.