

### **Anxiety - Understanding Shyness and Social Anxiety**

Did you know that shyness is normal? Yep, even though our society devalues shyness and introversion, these traits are perfectly normal (and even envied by those of us who are more extroverted and often have to fish our feet out of our mouths!). Another normal trait is social anxiety. Both introverted and extroverted people experience social anxiety in some situations. But, there are individuals who experience social anxiety with such severity and in so many situations that it substantially limits their relationships. And, because relationships with God and others are the only thing that make people truly happy in this life, such persons eventually become quite isolated and depressed. This is a tragedy in my opinion, as social anxiety is very treatable. If you suffer from heart palpitations, sweaty palms, blushing, and multiple fears of negative evaluation/judgment in a variety of social situations, there is help. If you are afraid of seeking out a small group or an individual counselor's help right away in overcoming your social anxiety, let me suggest you begin with a book that will help you with your initial stages of recovery. My favorite one is by Antony and Swinson called, "The Shyness and Social Anxiety Workbook".